

# Annual Report

2021-2022



**BIDYADANGA**  
Aboriginal Community  
La Grange Inc.  
Est 1975

# ACKNOWLEDGING COUNTRY

**Bidyadanga Aboriginal Community La Grange Inc acknowledges the Karajarri people as traditional owners of the land on which we live and work.**

We appreciate the welcome from past Karajarri Elders for the Nyangumarta, Juwaliny, Mangala and Yulparija people to settle on this land and create the community of Bidyadanga. We pay respect to all Elders, past, present, and emerging.

## ABOUT US

**Bidyadanga Aboriginal Community (La Grange) is located on the Kimberley coast in Western Australia, 1590 kilometres from the capital city of Perth and 180 kilometres from Broome.**

The recognised traditional owners of the land are the Karajarri people.

Bidyadanga is the largest remote Aboriginal community in Western Australia with a population of approximately 850 residents and is home to the Karajarri, Juwaliny, Mangala, Nyungamarta, and Yulpartja language groups.

Rich in history, art, and culture and with a developing economy, Bidyadanga has many community facilities and infrastructure to support community's people.

The word Bidyadanga comes from a word for "emu watering hole" (pijarta or bidyada).

Bidyadanga Aboriginal Community La Grange Inc (BACLG) was incorporated in 1975 as a not-for-profit organisation to administer government-funded programs such as the Day-care service, Municipal Services, and agencies of Centrelink and Australia Post, for the community. A Council of community representatives governs the organisation.

The Council is comprised of two members of each of the five language groups that reside in Bidyadanga. Council elections are held every three years.

### Did you know?

The word Bidyadanga comes from a word for "emu watering hole" (pijarta or bidyada)

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# COUNCIL REPORT

**The Council is pleased to present this Annual Report to members for the 2021/2022 financial year.**

The work of the council is challenging and rewarding as well. While council members are elected by their language groups, the decisions are made for the whole community.

NAME	GROUP	ELIGIBLE MEETINGS	ATTENDED
Eugene Bumba	Juwaliny	3	3
Kathleen Bangu	Juwaliny	11	11
William Bangu	Juwaliny	11	11
Barbara White	Karajarri	11	9
Moses James	Karajarri	11	11
Maureen Yanawana	Mangala	11	9
Agnes Walbidi	Mangala	11	9
Natalie Hunter (Retired)	Nyangumarta	8	6
Eric Hunter	Nyangumarta	11	11
Danika Hunter	Nyangumarta	3	3
Andrew Minyardie	Yulaprija	11	9
Sue Mandijalu	Yulparija	11	7
Gregory Billycan (Resigned)	Yulparija	5	5

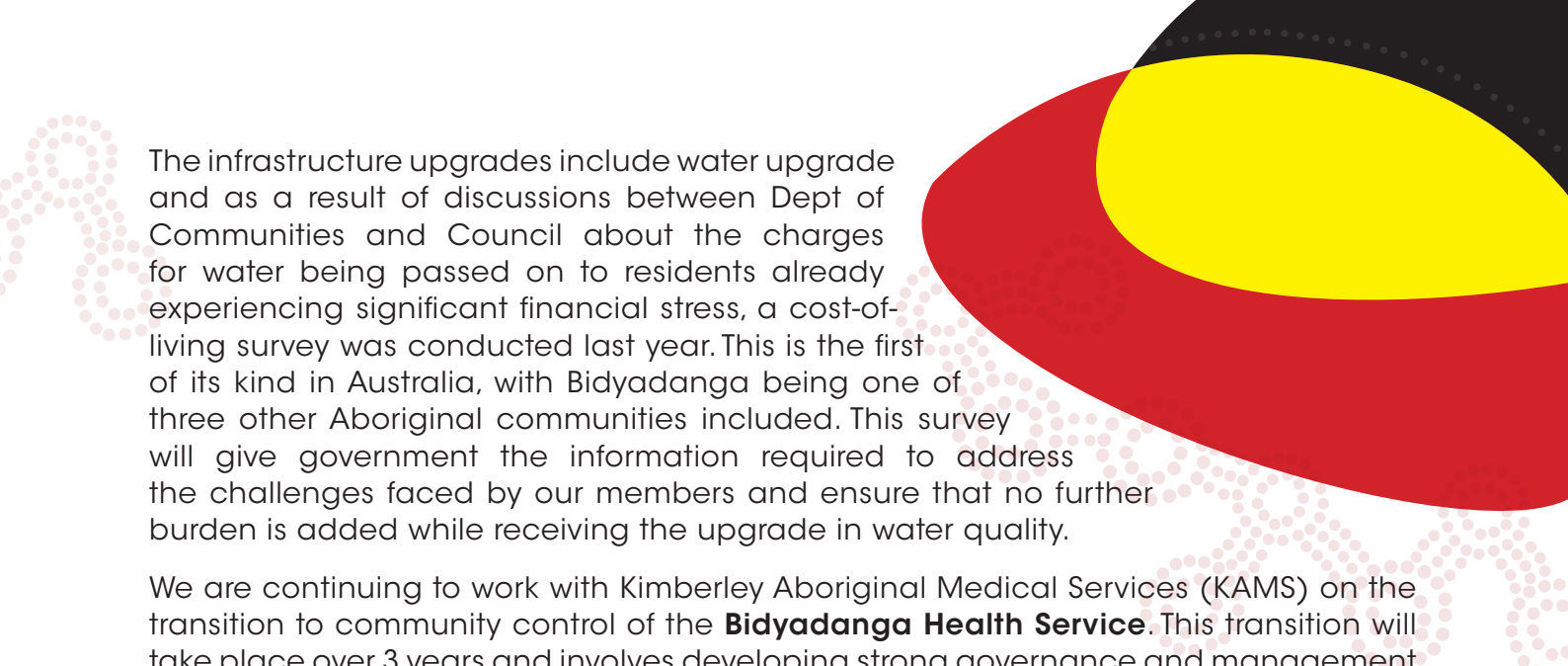
There were many significant issues that the Council worked on during the 2021-2022 year. Some of these issues have been discussions that have been taking place over several years.

We have been working with Karajarri Traditional Lands Association (KTLA) and the State government on the **Bidyadanga Land Activation Project (BLAP)**. This started with an MOU between Bidyadanga Community and KTLA, to prepare for future discussions. The MOU also showed how we can work together for the best interests of all people living in Bidyadanga now and in the future.

The discussions have continued and will result a vision for the future of Bidyadanga that will support our people and families to develop and succeed.

With the negotiations going ahead with BLAP, we are also working with the state government on the upgrade of internal roads, municipal services, and **infrastructure upgrades** for the community. Again, these discussions have been taking place over many years, so it is satisfying that real progress will be taking place.

Main Roads will be undertaking the **upgrade of internal roads** commencing in 2023, over a 3 to 4-year period. Employment opportunities will be available for Bidyadanga residents with this project. These opportunities will allow people to take the skills they learn to other projects, giving career pathways as well.



The infrastructure upgrades include water upgrade and as a result of discussions between Dept of Communities and Council about the charges for water being passed on to residents already experiencing significant financial stress, a cost-of-living survey was conducted last year. This is the first of its kind in Australia, with Bidyadanga being one of three other Aboriginal communities included. This survey will give government the information required to address the challenges faced by our members and ensure that no further burden is added while receiving the upgrade in water quality.

We are continuing to work with Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services (KAMS) on the transition to community control of the **Bidyadanga Health Service**. This transition will take place over 3 years and involves developing strong governance and management protocols to take on the responsibility of managing the health and well-being of the residents of Bidyadanga.

There is also a link with this and the BLAP as discussions about construction of a new clinic building are prioritised. The discussion around the construction of a new clinic has progressed with KAMS submitting a grant application to the Commonwealth government. Planning has commenced with a site selected that is suitable to the community as it is next to the current site. Next will be building plans to fit with the site. Community consultation will commence in early 2023. Clinic staff will have significant role to play around this planning as they are in the best position to understand how the building will work.

The **partnership with Shamrock Gardens** which commenced last year is continuing to develop. Employment opportunities for our people are available along with training opportunities in the agriculture sector. This is a very exciting project as the farm will grow produce that will be sold all around the state, nation and potentially internationally as well. The new entity is called **Pijarta Produce trading as Bidyadanga Fresh Food**, a name that will become known as the crops are sold to supermarkets around the country.

These employment opportunities will also provide a range of career pathways in the agriculture industry. And the location of the farm allows people to continue to live in Bidyadanga, commuting each day. Our work with the state government and **Minderoo Foundation** with the **Early Years Initiative (EYI)** commenced in November 2021. This is a long-term project that aims to help communities target issues that are important in early childhood development.

The vision is a future where every child has the opportunity and confidence to flourish. The mission is learning together with communities to design and implement solutions that improve development, health and learning of children up to the age of 4 and create lasting change.



Children, families, and communities are the focus and listening to the wisdom, strengths and knowledge that exists within these groups, will direct efforts to achieve outcomes.

We are fortunate that our Community Capacity Building Officer – Francis Fernandez, has significant experience in Bidyadanga from his previous role teaching at the school. His understanding and relationships with children and families will mean that the EYI in Bidyadanga has the best foundation for success that we could hope for.

We will have employment opportunities as part of this project as well, with community connectors working with children and families.

Minderoo Foundation is also working with us on another exciting project – the **Indigenous Communities Project**. This is an international project that uses documentary film making to share how indigenous families in South America, North America, and Australia bring-up children.

The aim is to support families in indigenous communities by developing a computer application that will help parents and children learn from each other. Bidyadanga is the Australian representative.

**Minderoo Foundation and the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation** are working with us to develop an online language platform, promoting the five language groups in Bidyadanga.

We are fortunate that our Community Services Manager – **Clare McLean** has worked on recording Yawuru language in Broome, and Councillor Maureen Yanawana has been teaching language in her role at the school for many years, so we have a wealth of experience within our organisation to see this project through in the coming years.

Finally, with the **COVID-19 Pandemic** still causing a great deal of concern for us, we appreciate the work that Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service, state and commonwealth governments are doing to roll-out vaccination drives that are the only real protection from this life-threatening disease.

While we had our own close call in March 2022, we have been spared death rates experienced elsewhere.

We look forward to reporting the successes and updates to come in the next year.

# CEO'S REPORT



**Tania Baxter**  
CEO

**The 2021-2022 year included many challenges, not the least of which was the threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.**

We had a close-call with COVID in February 2022 with false-positive results that required the community to lock-down and quarantine for 5 days. Once the situation had been clarified, it was only two weeks until COVID cases were actually active. Fortunately, with high vaccination rates we have not had any loss of life due to COVID so far.

This Annual Report highlights the achievements made during the 2021/2022 financial year.

## Thank you

I would like to acknowledge our hard-working, dedicated staff who contribute to the successful outcomes that took place in this year. I would like to thank **Clare (Louise) McLean** our Community Services Manager, **Francis Fernandez** our Community Capacity Building Officer, in the Admin Office we have **Latoya Thomas, Rhiannon McKenzie** and **Annie Brown**, along with **Julia** and **Scott Dyball** our Store Managers, for their leadership and support in their areas of responsibility.



# BUSINESS AND INVESTMENTS

## BIDYADANGA STORE

**With Broome, the closest town 360kms there and back, the Bidadanga Store ensures that there is a wide range of grocery and household items for sale.**

While we are a small business, pricing on healthy foods like fresh fruit and vegetables, bottled water, bread and milk is comparable to Broome pricing.

The store operates well because our staff work hard to ensure that the store opens each day, there is stock on the shelves, and it is clean and tidy. I would like to acknowledge **Yvonne and Paul Robinson, Bev Rodgers, Jason Dean, Holly Clancy, Dwayne Spriggs**, and many others who have worked at the shop during the 21/22 year.

The Takeaway food sells a variety of healthy and fast food and is open 7 days a week. **Janelle Mussared** has been the Takeaway Coordinator since 2015, and along with another long-serving staff member – **Sharna Bumba**, they make sure the community is well-fed. They were joined by **Kathleen** and **Bill** in July this year after a period where the Takeaway was unable to operate due to staffing issues.



## BROOME INVESTMENT PROPERTY

**The community benefits from ownership of several residential and commercial properties in Broome. This investment portfolio underpins the financial stability of the organisation to ensure that future generations will have access to the services that are provided by BACLG Inc.**

The property market in Broome was fairly stable during 21/22, however a shortage of residential rental properties will see rental income rise after a decline in the last 5 years. Commercial properties with long-term tenants, have been performing steadily.

Council is working on developing the vacant land and Sober-up Centre site at Stewart Street in Broome. This project has the potential to diversify the investments located in Broome and return steady rental income for years to come if it goes ahead.

### Did you know?

The Takeaway food sells a variety of healthy and fast food and is open 7 days a week!

**COMMUNITY  
SERVICES**



# COMMUNITY SERVICES

## MUNICIPAL SERVICES

**The Municipal Services program is an essential service the success of which is largely about what we don't see.**

We receive compliments all year from visitors who comment on how tidy and well maintained our community is. This is due to the efforts of the staff working in our Municipal Services program. Collection of rubbish, maintenance of roads and equipment, maintenance of the airstrip and maintenance some of the gardens and lawns, are included in the duties of this team. When this program works well, the community works well.

This program has been one of the core services provided by BACLG and our team have acquired skills over the years that will ensure we are well placed to continue this program into the future.

Our MUNS team work outdoors in all weather conditions. The work is hard and dirty, but they do their best to make the community better. **Graham Lynn, Adam Billycan, Moses Nardada, Ashley Balbal, Graydon Bangu,** and **Regino Santos** are joined by new member **Eugene Bumba**. They are an inspiration to the whole community.

## HACC/COMMUNITY CARE

**Our Meals On Wheels service provided meals over 1500 meals for our clients for 21/22 year.**

Bidyadanga Community Care team have worked tirelessly supporting our elders in the community during the covid restrictions. Meals on Wheels have been delivered, daily welfare checks are in place, support with transport, washing and social activities have been offered.

**Bradley Coyne** and **Rob Pimblett** have been keeping services going since our Coordinator, Faye Dean, retired this year. They are doing a magnificent job supporting and advocating for our clients.

It is with sadness but appreciation that we have said goodbye to our amazing **Faye Dean**. Faye has worked tirelessly at the Centre for many years supporting our community Elders and we would like to thank her for her dedication and hard work.

**Thank you**

Faye Dean for your  
hard work

## Services the Community Care Centre provided this year are:

- Day Centre activities-Sudoku, memory games, painting, music, and TV
- Outings-camping, transport to town, fishing, bark collection
- Laundry
- Gardening
- Social support
- Personal care
- Shopping
- Transport

## We have also provided:

- Dementia training for groups and families
- Elder abuse education
- Historical photo session
- Hosted visitors from other communities

## The Community Care Centre is supported by several stakeholders including:

- Community Support Workers from Kimberley Aged Care Services (KACS) 1 x month
- Remote Care Coordination from KACS 1 x month
- Continence nurse



## COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE

### The CRC provides access to computers and printers for community members to access government services, banking, and other online services.

There are many visiting agencies running services and programs from the Community Resource Centre including The Department of Transport, Cyrenian House, Boab Health and Broome Circle. These services have continued to run from the CRC during the year.

Our back courtyard has been upgraded. The area now consists of lawn and plants. We thank those involved in creating this space. We have also had upgrades to our Video Conferencing facilities in the meeting room and the old library.

The CRC regularly host individual and group video conferencing meetings. We liaise with the hosting agency to connect the video call and print all documentation required by the participants. Many organisations regularly use this service including indigenous ranger groups, land councils' lawyers, financial support and training officers, fitness instructors and mental health councillors. This has been an extremely valuable tool during periods of community lockdown due to Covid.

The centre hosts **Broome Circle** services that provide support for community members in financial stress in areas such as accessing superannuation, negotiating on overdue bills, and budgeting. This vital service also acts to advocate and represent individuals with lending institutions, private and government.

**Men's Outreach** delivered their Change 'Em Ways program, a successful program that supports men and families to build strong, healthy relationships.

**Nirrumbuk** delivered training for participants looking to gain employment with the Main Roads internal roads project.

This year we welcomed back **Bernadette Yambo**, who has returned after staying in Derby.

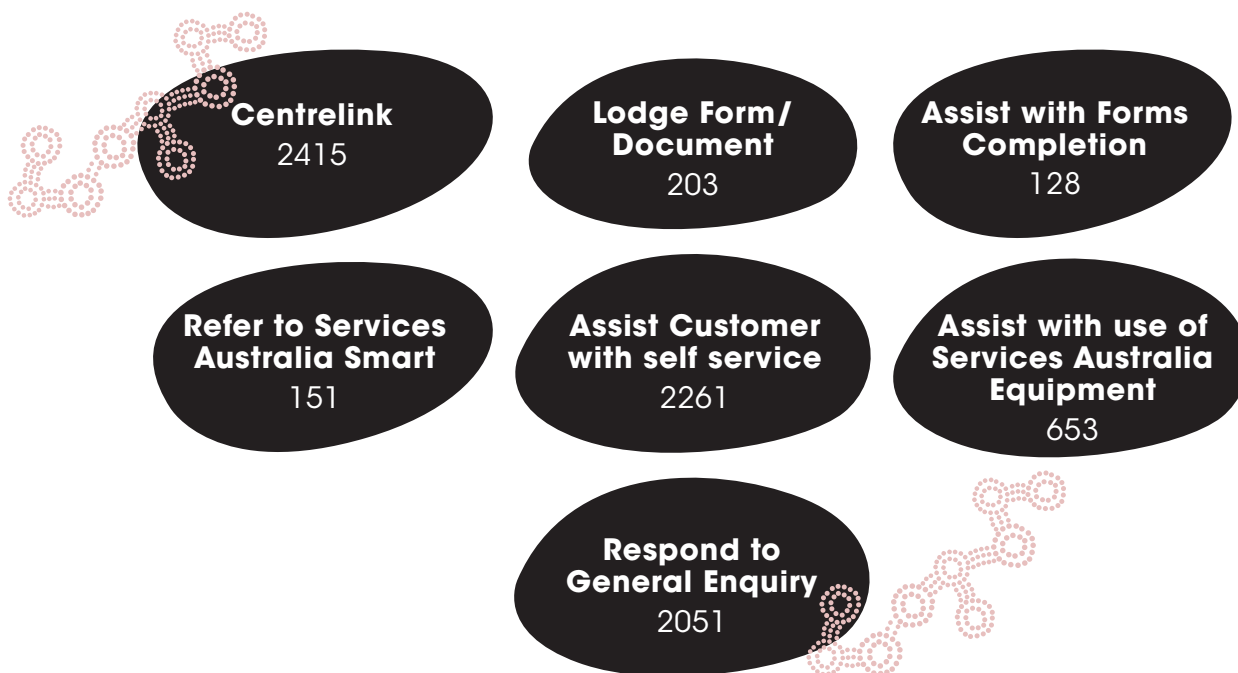


## **CENTRELINK AGENCY**

**Centrelink Agency provides a locally based Centrelink Officer allowing community members to obtain support in dealing with services in Bidadanga.**

**Paula Grey** is our long-serving staff member, who has been supporting community members with their Centrelink enquiries and obligations for many, many years.

These are the number of supports Paula has provided for the year in the most popular services.



## AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

**Breakfast Club continues to be a worthwhile, vital activity.**

Children can stop at the Admin Office on the way to school for a healthy breakfast Monday to Friday during school term. Numbers of attendees are steady with between **15-20** children each day.

Other Youth Activities included collaborations with Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services, Kullarri Regional Indigenous Communities, Police, Royal Life Saving WA, Department of Communities, Garnduwa and La Grange Remote Community School.

Some of the highlights include:

- Beach activities
- Pool activities
- Healthy food promotion
- Basketball competitions
- Discos/Pool Parties
- Solid fit activities

### Did you know?

We have various support groups for the community. Reach out to us to find how we can help you!

## MENTORING, EDUCATE AND TRAINING (MET) PROJECT

**The intent is to deliver a range of support services to families in Bidyadanga with school aged children that will aim to improve attendance, improve retention of students at high school level and support individuals to transition from schooling to employment.**

There is also a Family Support element to the project. This involves a series of workshops and mentoring programs around empowerment, life skills and parenting, family and domestic violence, young mums support and leadership.

The Women's Centre is used as an ideal venue to deliver a range of activities and support, particularly now that we have **Ingrid Elmitt** as the Coordinator. Ingrid is responsible for the rejuvenation of the centre and the high rates of attendance to events and activities shows.





The vision is  
"a future where every  
child has the opportunity  
and confidence to  
flourish"

## THE EARLY YEARS INITIATIVE

**This project has been many years in development, so in November 2021 when we began to establish programmes here in Bidyadanga, it was with a sense of achievement and optimism.**

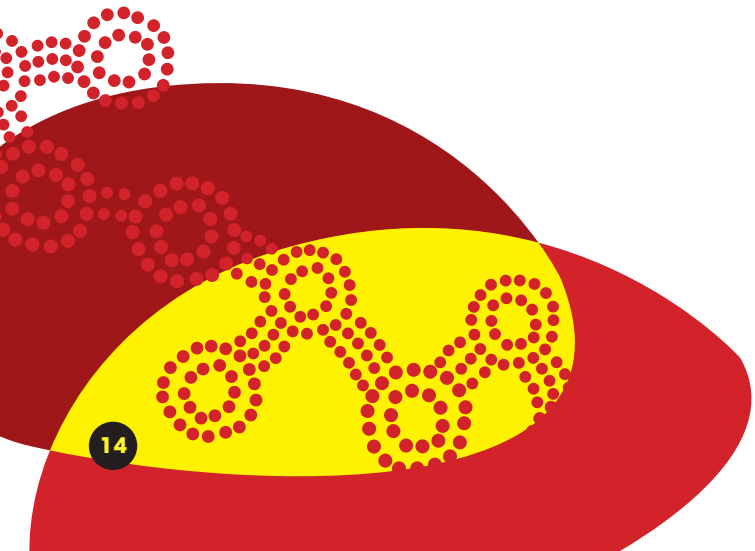
The funding comes through the Minderoo Foundation in partnership with WA government and Telethon Kids as a key stakeholder providing evaluation.

We are so fortunate to have **Francis Fernandez** driving this project with **Clare McLean**.

The vision is "a future where every child has the opportunity and confidence to flourish".

This is community directed project, with community member input determining what activities are provided, in a culturally secure way. This local decision-making for local people and families, will make this project unique.

Bidyadanga is one of four other sites, which includes Armadale in Perth, Great Southern and Derby.



## WOMEN'S CENTRE ACTIVITIES

**The Women's Centre in collaboration with Kullarri Regional Communities Indigenous Corporation has been a hive of activity again this year.**

The Women's Centre is an outlet for arts and craft production (small business development), promoting community cohesion and engagement after Covid-19, education, leadership, and family support.

Some of our highlights include:

- Camera Story with Broome Circle
- RUOKA Day Pamper event
- Joint Strapping Workshop with Dr Nat from the clinic, who delivered a workshop on how to strap injuries before playing sport. This came about after women asked about it for footy season.
- Building Babies Brains with WAARDI
- KAMS Solid Fit/Football training-tackling Indigenous smoking, leadership with weekly visits
- Palya Mayi from Boab Health, with a healthy cooking and lifestyle program
- Market nights for people to sell food and products made during the week
- Art and Craft Nights every month, which also create products to be sold at the markets
- Christmas Dinner event
- Breast Cancer awareness workshop
- Community Christmas Party
- Harmony Day
- Easter Craft Day
- NAIDOC Week events and activities
- Op Shop
- International Women's Day
- Kimberley Stolen Generation link-up support
- Orange Sky Laundry service has been operating since October 2021. During 2022, there have been 1889 loads of laundry, 795 hours of yarning and 159 shifts. This has been a huge support to our community, and we appreciate the support from Judith Meiklejohn at Orange Sky.



### Women's Centre Activities

Promotes community cohesion and engagement after Covid-19, education, leadership, and family support



### Camera Story

Camera Story has completed four workshops in Bidyadanga. The workshops were focused on building capacity and confidence amongst the women. Covering basic camera functions; photographic techniques; portrait photography; documentary photography and visual storytelling techniques; studio photography and lighting; colour grading/basic editing of photos for print. When the project is complete there will be large format prints, outdoor prints, and smaller ones for sale for an exhibition.

### Broome Fringe Festival

There were **70 artworks and 30 artists** from Bidyadanga, at this event.

Attending the Broome Fringe Festival was an opportunity for our artist to:

- Meet other artists and network
- Market and promote their artwork
- Interact with customers
- Attend workshops

### Did you know?

The workshops were focused on building capacity and confidence amongst the women.

## Leadership with Garnduwa

A Garnduwa Women's Football workshop was conducted with the high school students.

This was a follow up from the Women's leadership program covering themes such as confidence building, teamwork, improving self-esteem, effective communication, strategizing for the game and life, goal orientation, regular attendance, leading the team, social media protocol, bullying and harassment, jealousy, balancing family obligations and organisational skills, reliability, and time management.

## Building Babies Brains with WAARDI

Building Babies Brains Is a culturally sensitive parenting program designed in the Kimberley for Kimberley families, based on current research, statistics and community input. The program builds participant's awareness around what is necessary to build a supportive environment for healthy, happy children. It provides entertaining processes that describe early brain development, early relationships, and oral language development: encompassed with social, emotional and wellbeing strategies for parents of children.

Covid lockdown has not slowed the production or sales of our art centre



## ART CENTRE

**The Art Centre has been a great place for people to develop and extend their art production.**

The year has seen an increase in activity at the Centre with some young and emerging artist showing their talent. Covid lockdown has not slowed the production or sales of our art and through promotion and marketing at events and on social media we have seen an increase in art sales.

Some of the highlights of the year are:

- Open Night event
- Broome Fringe Festival participation
- Broome Circle Christmas markets in Broome
- Worn Art event in Broome
- Royal Life Saving Society WA - art works sold to produce merchandise for RLSSWA
- Environs Kimberley Art Exhibition
- Derby Empowerment Camp
- With Broome Circle on the Artist Away from Home project
- Revealed Art Exhibition

In the 20/21 financial year, we provided support on more than 1200 occasions for fuel, power, and emergency food relief hampers





## CONTAINERS FOR CHANGE

The recycling initiative of Containers for Change was introduced this year. It created the opportunity for the community to get money for recycling their containers. This was operated from behind the Community Store and a total of **21,310** containers were counted. This is a large amount of rubbish that did not end up in landfill.

**Jason Dean** was the lead person in receiving the training involving data entry, scheme ID and counting the cans. He did a fantastic job for the community.

Unfortunately, there were issues with staffing and a suitable venue for this to continue in 2022, but alternative options are being investigated.

## BENEVOLENT RELIEF AND CULTURAL SUPPORT

Provision of funding to assist families with funerals and sorry camp.

Provision of funding to assist families experiencing financial hardship by assisting the purchase of power and fuel; Provision of assets and resources for community members to attend funerals in other communities and the provision of food hampers for travelling and hardship.

In the 20/21 financial year, we provided support on more than **1200** occasions for fuel, power, and emergency food relief hampers. Cultural support is provided with producing funeral booklets.



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**BIDYADANGA**

Aboriginal Community  
La Grange Inc.

Est 1975