



**for
all things
arts
and
culture**

2016

arts northern rivers
annual report



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CHAIRS REPORT

2016 was a year of achievement for our organisation. Two projects stand out in particular and include the final performances and celebrations of our highly acclaimed *If These Halls Could Talk* project as well as the production and launch of *Our Way Stories* a book celebrating the lives of Aboriginal Elders from our region.

If These Halls Could Talk has been a significant success for Arts Northern Rivers, not only capturing the imaginations of communities across our region but also attracting local, metropolitan and national media coverage. The project has shone a spotlight on the humble community halls in our region and celebrated the important role they play in the lives of regional communities. Our Executive Director presented this project at Artlands, the Regional Arts Australia conference held in Dubbo in October, which generated great interest and has led to negotiations for the project to be commissioned into other regions across Australia and internationally. These are exciting developments that reflect the acclaim this project has generated.

Our Way Stories was a genuinely heart-warming project that told the life stories of ten Elders from across the region. Despite the challenges and hardships examined in this book the Elders' stories show their resilience and strength, their hope for the future and their overwhelming love of family, their love of country and their love of culture. It was a wonderful project that is an example of the powerful work Arts Northern Rivers delivers for our region.

In amongst these major projects Arts Northern Rivers continued to deliver services across the region for artists and arts workers, our local government stakeholders and the wider Northern Rivers community.

The organisation continues to employ a full time Indigenous Arts Development Officer who provides an extensive outreach service assisting Aboriginal artists across our region with skills development opportunities, grant applications and professional development programs.

Following the local council elections in 2016 Arts Northern Rivers farewelled a number of our Board members and welcomed new representatives. I would like to extend my appreciation to Jenny Dowell (Lismore), Cr. Robert Mustow (Richmond Valley Council), Cr. Paul Spooner (Byron Shire Council) and Cr. Katie Milne (Tweed Shire Council) for their support and work for Arts Northern Rivers. And I welcome our new members Hayley Hancock and Cr. Jill Lyons (Richmond Valley Council), Cr. Warren Polglase and Cr. Reece Byrnes (Tweed Shire Council), Cr. Sharon Parry (Ballina Shire Council), Cr. Elly Bird (Lismore City Council), Cr. Jan Hackett and Cr. Jeannette Martin (Byron Shire Council) and Cr. Deborah Novak (Clarence Valley Council).

I would also like to extend my thanks to our seven Northern Rivers councils who continue to support the important work of Arts Northern Rivers ensuring our creative communities are supported through access to arts and cultural activity and resources. I also acknowledge our major funding partner Arts NSW.

And finally, I extend my thanks to our Executive Director and his dedicated staff who worked above and beyond expectations to deliver an extraordinary year of activity in 2016. We look forward to offering our region another year of arts and cultural excellence in 2017.

Jude McBean
Chair, Arts Northern Rivers

OUR VISION

A diverse, vibrant and resilient arts and cultural community, valued in our region and recognised nationally and internationally.

OUR MISSION

As the peak arts organisation for our region we deliver services and projects that foster artistic innovation and excellence and work to ensure access and engagement with arts and cultural activity.

WE DO THIS BY

Developing quality programs in collaboration with our stakeholders. Extending our reach across the region to encourage participation in and promotion of our vibrant arts and cultural sector. Ensuring we remain viable as an organisation through good governance practice and financial management.



ENGAGEMENT + COMMUNICATION

Aims

- // Raise awareness of and participation in arts and cultural activity across the region
- // Position Arts Northern Rivers (ANR) as the 'go to' organisation for all things arts and culture
- // Increase audience numbers for our projects and services
- // Grow new audiences for arts and cultural activity in our region

Communication is a significant area of activity for ANR. It is embedded in our strategic plan and is one of the core services we offer, to promote and celebrate the arts and culture of our vibrant region.

We build and access various communication platforms to amplify the arts and cultural activity of the Northern Rivers and we are dedicated to using these platforms to help our partners and stakeholders communicate with a broad and engaged audience.

We communicate @ ...

artsnorthernrivers.com.au
 facebook.com/artsnorthernrivers
 twitter.com/arts_nr
 instagram.com/artsnr

We update and promote activity to over 3,200 of our subscribers, who receive monthly news outlining opportunities, exhibitions and significant projects in our region. ANR works strategically with our media partners including ABC North Coast, ABC Open and The Northern Star.

STATISTICS

WORKSHOPS + FORUMS	PRESENTED WITH ...	AUDIENCE
Best Practice for Artists	NAVA / Arts Law	85
Mono Printing Intensive	Arone Meeks	11
Public Art Forum	Arts Northern Rivers	10
Indigenous Mural W'shop	The Sauce	13
Meet the Candidates	Creative Lismore	64
Community Engagement Toolkit	Arts Northern Rivers	45
Tweed Cultural Plan Forum	Tweed Shire Council	18
Show + Tell - If These Halls Could Talk	Tumbulgum Hall	120
	Eureka Hall	50
	Meerschaum Vale Hall	60
	Broadwater & Rileys Hill Hall	220
	Eatonville Hall	75
	The Channon Hall	180
	Bonalbo Hall	120
EXHIBITIONS		
The Bundjalung Project	Arts Northern Rivers	583
Plunge Festival Pop Up	Clarence Valley Council	1512
PERFORMANCES + EVENTS		
Our Way Stories launch	Byron Writers Festival	92
If These Halls Could Talk events	Tumbulgum Hall	320
	Eureka Hall	1700
	Meerschaum Vale Hall	150
	Broadwater & Rileys Hill Hall	250
	Eatonville Hall	120
	The Channon Hall	300
	Bonalbo Hall	250
MARKETING + COMMUNICATIONS		
Subscribers		3200
Facebook	facebook.comartsnorthernrivers	2978
Twitter	twitter.com/arts_nr	1272
Instagram	instagram.com/artsnr	1261
Web: Arts Northern Rivers	sessions with site	24,724
Web: If These Halls Could Talk	sessions with site	9347
TOTAL		

49,130

PROJECTS

ANR delivers a diverse program of activity through both core and project funding. This activity is informed by the priorities outlined in the ANR strategic plan.

If These Halls Could Talk

The Northern Rivers is a region of villages, most with a hall that lay at their heart. Some sit proud on hills, some tilted with age but all are places of stories and keepers of secrets. *If These Halls Could Talk* was a multi-arts project celebrating these halls and the role they play in our communities.

The project invited people to nominate their local hall for a chance to be involved. Seven halls from across the Northern Rivers were selected to have a renowned creative team collaborate with their community to create a site-specific work inspired by the unique narrative of their hall.

The two year project commenced in 2015, the result of two successful funding applications to Arts NSW (Regional Partnerships) and the Federal Government's Regional Arts Fund (RAF). The project also attracted over \$50,000 of in-kind support from project partners to help deliver this unique place-making project for our region.

If These Halls Could Talk captured the imaginations of audiences and media alike, with coverage of the project achieved across local, state and national media outlets. ABC North Coast came on board as our media partner, which included the recording and transmission of oral histories associated with each hall via the ABC Open program. The project was aired on ABC TV's The Mix in February 2017.

The final events took place between September and December 2016 and attracted sell-out crowds and national publicity.

The artists and creative teams were:

- // The Channon Hall - Internationally acclaimed artist Craig Walsh;
- // Bonalbo & District Memorial Hall - Southern Cross University Associate Professor and media artist Dr Grayson Cooke;
- // Eatonsville Hall - Local Yaegl artist, Frances Belle Parker;
- // Eureka Hall - NORPA's new work *Dreamland*;
- // Broadwater Rileys Hill Hall - Spaghetti Circus in collaboration with Joey Ruigrok van der Werven and Roundabout Theatre;
- // Meerschaum Vale Hall - Local film makers H.W. Collective;
- // Tumbulgum Hall - Performing arts company, Opera Queensland.

The final phase of the project will take place in 2017, which includes an exhibition program showcasing the final events of the project in each of the regional galleries of the Northern Rivers.

ANR is currently in negotiations with major Australian and international arts festivals exploring commissioning options for the project.

More information about the project can be found at:

Web	ifthesehallscouldtalk.com.au
Facebook	ifthesehallscouldtalkproject
Instagram	ifthesehallscouldtalk



PARTNERSHIPS

ANR amplifies its work by joining with other organisations and individuals to develop, present and promote a range of innovative programs, targeting various sectors within the arts and creative industries.

Some of our partnership projects ...

Plunge Festival // Pop Up Hub

As an initiative to fill empty spaces and encourage arts and creative industries in the Clarence Valley, ANR partnered with Plunge Festival 2016 to present a Pop Up Hub that housed exhibitions, a program of workshops and an artist in residence for the duration of the festival.

Making use of an empty warehouse in an under utilised section of the Yamba industrial estate the focal point of the Pop Up Hub was an all female exhibition titled *This is She* curated by local artist Rochelle Summerfield.

Artists included Carmel Debreuil, Cass Samms, Cassandra Palmer, Chris Hazel, Frances Belle Parker, Julianne Gosper, Julie Hutchings, Julie McKenzie, Kathlene Davis, Kerrie Howland, Pam Fysch, Penny Stewart, Rhondella Hyde, Rindi Salomon, Rochelle Summerfield, Sue Harris and Tracy Pateman.

Alongside the exhibition local artist Graham Mackie undertook a residency in a purpose made space, using his time there to further investigate the Clarence landscape.



PARTNERSHIPS

Murwillumbah Art Trail MAT

In 2016 ANR supported the expanded program of the Murwillumbah Art Trail project (MAT). With a mixture of pop up spaces, workshops, exhibitions and street art, the MAT project provided access to affordable spaces for artists in the Tweed region.

Along with financial and logistical support ANR provided marketing and communication services ensuring the program was promoted to a broad audience across the Northern Rivers region.

Creative Lismore

Creative Lismore is an alliance of arts, cultural, business, tourism and education partners. In 2016 we continued to support the alliance through participation on the management committee as well as convening a Meet the Candidates forum during the 2016 Federal Election.

This public forum gave the arts community an opportunity to hear the candidates for Page outline their understanding of and commitment to arts in our region.

Artlands Dubbo – Regional Arts Australia Conference

This national biennial conference is the largest arts gathering in Australia and in 2016 marked its return to NSW for the first time in 14 years.

ANR worked with Regional Arts NSW and the Regional Arts Network to contribute to the design and themes of the conference.

In addition the ANR Executive Director was part of the Artlands speaker program, presenting an overview of the acclaimed *If These Halls Could Talk* project.

CASP

Each year Arts Northern Rivers manages the Country Arts Support Program (CASP) for our region. This is a devolved funding program from Arts NSW and aims to support locally determined arts and cultural activity for regional communities.

In 2016, as with every year, the Northern Rivers generates the largest number of applications for projects across the state. With a funding pot that rarely grows and which is divided evenly across the 14 Regional Arts Development organisations, there are always far more applications than funds available.

Arts Northern Rivers convenes a panel of independent artists and arts workers from across the region to assess applications. In 2016 the following applicants were successful for projects that will take place in 2017.

Byron Youth Theatre
// *Here Today* - \$5,000

Public Act Theatre
// *Home?* - A Community Forum Play - \$5,000

Northern Rivers Community Gallery
// *Life Long Learning Creative Programs* - \$5,000

Kyogle District Arts Council
// *Yarn Spinning Phenomena* - \$4,700

INDIGENOUS ARTS PROJECTS

Indigenous arts development is one of ANR's strategic priorities. Since 2005 we have employed an Indigenous Arts Development Officer tasked with supporting and developing projects that support Aboriginal artists across our region.

The Bundjalung Project

Final Exhibition

The Bundjalung Project was funded by the Federal Government's Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support (IVAIS) program and developed to reconnect Indigenous artists with early Bundjalung art making.

The idea was to encourage artists to create contemporary work that was inspired by the designs and mark marking found on Indigenous artefacts such as shields, boomerangs and clubs.

As part of the project ANR identified over 30 artefacts held in local museums and historical societies across the Northern Rivers.

Over the last two years we have held a number of exhibitions that have featured some of these artefacts alongside the work of painters, sculptors and weavers, who have all been inspired by these ancient art-making techniques.

For this final exhibition, artists were invited to submit works exploring Bootheram Lore that used landscape and the sky as a reference for this Creation Lore.

The exhibition showcased works by:

Charmaine Bancroft-Davis, Chenaya Bancroft-Davis, Tamay Beam, Charlie Caldwell, Kylie Caldwell, Luther Cora, Alina Cora, Mark Cora, Luke Close, Penny Evans, Jenny Fraser, Tim Ives, Burrie Jerome, Kim Healey, Lauren Jarrett, Vikky King, Jock Kridland, Kyra Kum-Sing, Gilbert Laurie, Magpie, Sarah-Jane McGrath, Digby Moran, Nikki, Frances Belle Parker, Michael Philp, Oral Roberts, Rhoda Roberts, John Turner, Fiona Vlody, Jai Walker, Lewis Walker, Brenda Webb, Jacqui Williams, Kay Williams and The Wake Up Time group.

As part of the open call for the exhibition we uncovered emerging artists from the region including a collective of Indigenous young people who work under the name Nyungun, which means *Stars for Children of Our Future*.

The group, mentored by Mark Cora and artists Fiona Vlody and Michael Philp came together to express themselves through art and working together to support and develop their unique style.

While the exhibition represents the conclusion of The Bundjalung project we see this as an opportunity to explore next steps and priorities for Aboriginal artists in the Northern Rivers.



INDIGENOUS ARTS PROJECTS

Our Way Stories

Funded through Arts NSW Strategic Projects grant, this project recorded the life stories of 10 Elders from the Bundjalung Nation / Northern Rivers region of New South Wales.

It was inspired by the energy and passion of Dale Simone Roberts - a local Indigenous woman who has worked alongside some of our region's most respected and loved Elders.

The Elders embraced the project (and Dale) understanding that it was a unique opportunity to have their lives recorded and shared with current and future generations of Aboriginal and non Aboriginal Australia.

After consulting further with the Elders it was felt that a project - recorded in English but with Aboriginal language peppered throughout - would produce a legacy that would retain and preserve elements of language while at the same time celebrate the extraordinary lives of Elders in our region.

As part of the project ANR ran a highly successful crowdfunding campaign through Pozible. Our initial target was \$13,500 to cover the design and print production costs for the book - by the end of the campaign we had received over \$29,000 in pledges and sponsorship.

The book was launched on Friday 5 August, 2016 at the Byron Writers Festival to a capacity crowd of over 200 people. Almost all of the Elders were present to share insights into their lives of growing up in the Northern Rivers / Bundjalung region.



Our Way Stories is available on our website and outlets throughout the region.

WORKSHOPS + FORUMS + SKILLS

ANR delivers professional and skills development programs that aim to build capacity and resilience amongst the arts and creative industries of the region.

BEST PRACTICE //

Workshops for Artists that are Serious About Their Practice

ANR presented two workshops by NAVA (National Association for the Visual Arts) and Arts Law designed to develop skills for artists to maintain their practice and help sustain a professional career.

NAVA's Deputy Director Brianna Munting presented a comprehensive set of core skills and knowledge required to manage and propel artists' practice.

The Arts Law workshop walked participants through copyright, as well as creating copyright with other people and what happens if someone uses copyright without permission. The workshop focused on contracts and some of the key issues artists often deal with when negotiating arts contracts.

A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT WORKSHOP

Presented as part of the *If These Halls Could Talk* project, this one-day workshop was developed for project participants to develop skills in community engagement.

Topics covered included; recording oral histories; using hand held devices for recording still and moving images; uncovering stories; and ethics and copyright. The workshop was attended by hall committee members, project artists and ANR staff and Board members.

ARONE RAYMOND MEEKS // Monoprinting Intensive

ANR partnered with ACE College and TAFE Lismore to present a printmaking workshop by renowned printmaker Arone Meeks. A founding member of the Boomalli Aboriginal Artist's Co-operative in Sydney, Meeks began printmaking in 1982 and in 1989 won an Australia Council fellowship to study in Paris and went on to exhibit throughout Europe and North and South America.

The three-day mono-printing intensive was designed for artists to explore different possibilities and styles of mono-printing, using mark making, stencils and found objects.

With hands on guidance Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants explored and experimented with the many styles and varied forms of monoprints, starting with black and white inks and moving onto primary colours. The technique allowed participants to explore a new way of seeing their work.

WORKSHOPS + FORUMS + SKILLS

PUBLIC ART FORUM

Developed for council staff responsible for, or working closely with, public art initiatives in their local government area ANR developed this forum which provided an opportunity to:

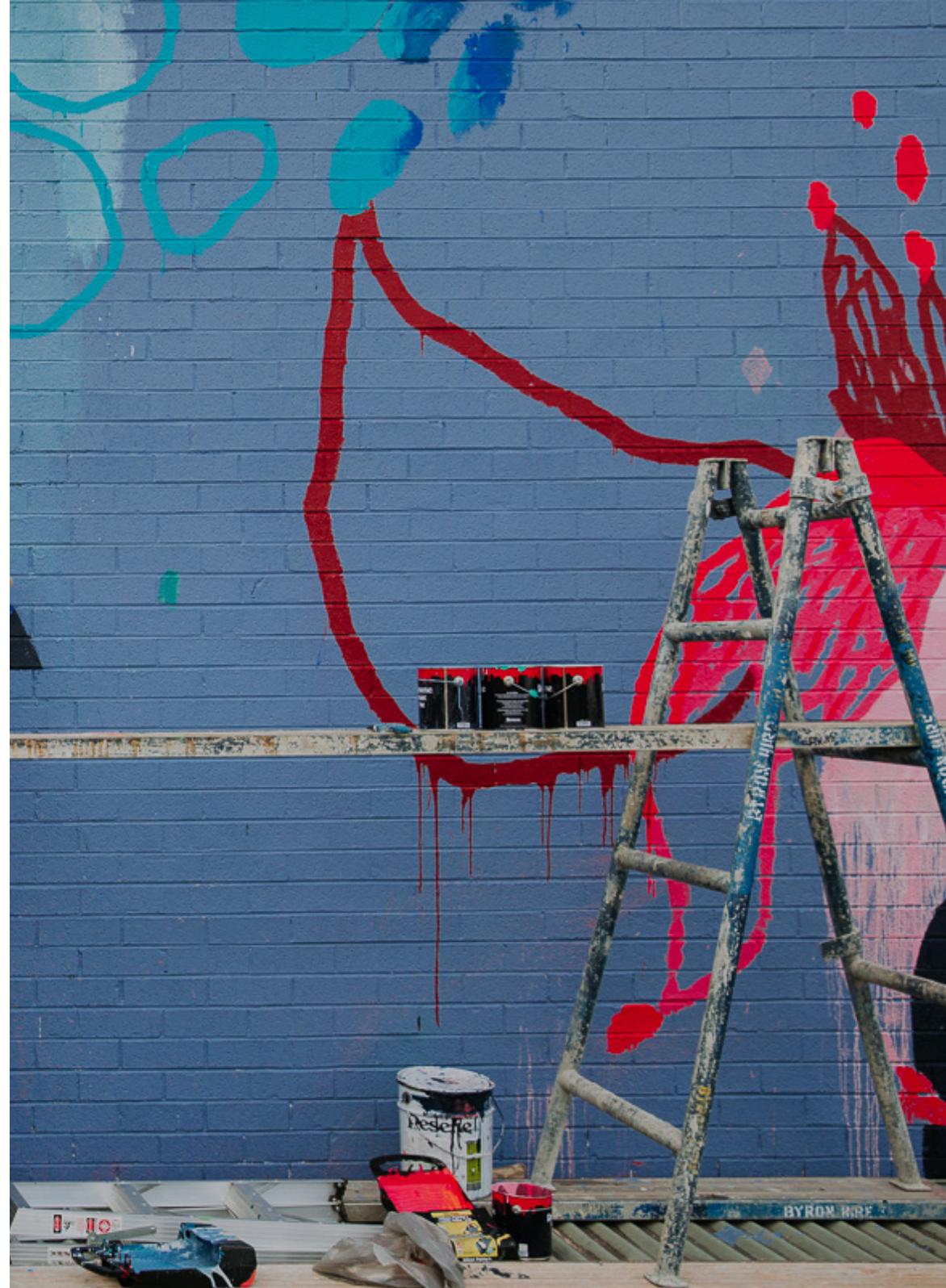
- // Meet and network with peers working in the public art area
- // Create awareness of how neighbouring councils implement public art activity and policies
- // Identify common issues or gaps in the region
- // Explore the possibility of resource sharing
- // Hear from practitioners through best practice case study presentations

Presenters included:

Rebecca Townsend, Director, Creative Road
Content: Place Making

Damian Chapelle, Director, Newton Denny Chapelle
Content: Public Art & Town Planning from a non-local government perspective

Jane Laverty, Manager Economic Development & Tourism Byron Shire Council
Content: Development of a town centre revitalisation approach that integrates both master planning and place making in Byron Bay.



LOCAL COUNCILS

As financial contributors to ANR councils enjoy the full support of our services across the region. From participation on council committees to the delivery of innovative projects that support community-wide participation in arts and cultural activity we deliver services and amplify arts funding for all councils of the Northern Rivers.

Council's ongoing support and contribution to ANR ensures:

- // all artists and cultural organisations in each LGA can seek advice and assistance from ANR
- // our staff can work with council staff to help source funding and deliver dynamic arts and cultural projects
- // access to our expertise in cultural planning, policy development, project development and community consultation
- // the support of creative industry development in each LGA
- // connections to state and nationally-funded cultural programs
- // access to our region-wide projects
- // inclusion in a network that attracts over \$2 million dollars investment from the State Government
- // access to our professional and skills development program

Some examples of 2016 activity with our Councils included:

- // Facilitating a focus group with arts and cultural practitioners for Tweed Shire Council as part of Council's cultural planning activity
- // The Executive Director participated as an assessment panel member for Byron Shire Council's Place-making Seed Funding initiative
- // Participation on the Ballina Shire Council's Public Art Reference Group
- // Provision of curatorial services for Clarence Valley Council's Plunge Festival - Pop Up Hub
- // Contributions to Lismore City Council's regional gallery's re-location committee, as well as Council's Public Art Reference Group
- // Input into the development of Richmond Valley Council's inaugural public art policy
- // Travel subsidy and logistical support for Kyogle Council staff member and local Aboriginal artists to attend the British Museum's *Encounters* Exhibition in Canberra.

ABOUT US

We're a small team who do big things...

As the peak arts body, ANR works with individuals, organisations and government to generate, promote and advocate for the arts and creative industries in the Northern Rivers region of NSW.

ANR is supported by Arts NSW and the seven local Governments in our region who work with us to ensure access to arts and cultural activity for everyone.

STAFF

Executive Director
Indigenous Arts Development Officer
Project Manager
Communications Manager
Administration Coordinator
Finance Manager
Media Intern

Peter Wood
Mark Cora
Natalie Bull
Zoe Robinson-Kennedy
Phoebe Rose Hall
Grant Binns
Rosanna Pimm

BOARD

BYRON SHIRE

Representative
Cr. Paul Spooner (until August)
Cr. Jan Hackett (from September)
Alternate
Cr. Jeannette Martin (from September)

BALLINA SHIRE

Representative
Cr. Keith Williams (until August)
Cr. Phil Meehan (from September)
Alternate
Cr. Sharon Parry (from September)

CLARENCE VALLEY

Representative
Jude McBean (Chair) (until August)
Cr. Deb Novak (from September)
Alternate
Jude McBean (Chair) (from September)

KYOGLE

Representative
Ms Ruth Tsitsimbini
(Deputy Chair)
Alternate
Mr Manfred Body
(from September)

LISMORE

Representative
Cr. Jenny Dowell (until August)
Cr. Elly Bird (from September)

RICHMOND VALLEY

Representative
Cr. Robert Mustow (until August)
Ms Haley Hancock (from September)

TWEED VALLEY

Representative
Cr. Katie Milne (until August)
Cr. Warren Polglase (from September)
Alternate
Ms Robyn Grigg
Cr. Reece Byrne (from September)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Wayne Halcrow (Treasurer)

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Australian Government
Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support

