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New Community-led Economic Initiatives

In April, we launched the Economic Development Community Engagement (Phase 1)—an important first step toward a long-term strategy for job creation, business growth, and sustainability. Funded by the TSRA and delivered with Emver Partners, the initiative invites input from all 15 TSIRC communities through upcoming sessions, and an online survey to shape a 10-year Community-Based Economic Development (CBED) Action Plan.

Mayor Phillemon Mosby said empowerment through community-led economic development is critical to the future of the Torres Strait, “By placing culture and community aspirations at the centre of this strategy, we ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for generations to come.”

Meanwhile, local innovation is already underway through Health and Wellbeing Queensland’s Gather + Grow strategy, which supports sustainable, community-driven solutions across the region. As part of this initiative, two women—Nikki Mackie (Poruma) and Sylvia Harry (Warraber)—attended the Millennia of Ag-Innovation workshop in March, where they completed training

in farming Barron River red claw and freshwater barramundi, alongside growing plants and herbs using floating plant pot systems within the same aquatic environment.

The training, which combines aquaculture and hydroponics techniques in a low-impact, water-efficient setup tailored to remote island conditions, forms part of a broader project led by Ella Kris, TSIRC’s Manager of Health and Wellbeing, to roll out aquaponics systems region-wide—promoting food security, skills development, and sustainable living.

Whether it’s shaping long-term economic policy or building practical skills in sustainable farming, these initiatives reflect a shared commitment to self-determination, resilience, and a thriving future grounded in culture, innovation and local leadership.

complete the
survey and
you could win 1
of 15 \$100 IBIS,
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WHAT'S ON



Mabo Day

Tuesday 3 June

Mabo Day is commemorated on June 3 each year in the Torres Strait Islands and across Australia. It marks the anniversary of the 1992 High Court decision that recognized **Eddie Koiki Mabo's** fight for Indigenous land rights, overturning the legal doctrine of *terra nullius* (the idea that Australia was land belonging to no one before European settlement). Here, in the Torres Strait, where Mabo was born on Mer Island, the day is celebrated with cultural performances, community gatherings, and reflections on land rights and justice. It's a powerful day of **pride, remembrance, and cultural strength.**



Coming of the Light

Tuesday 1 July

Coming of the Light Day is celebrated on July 1 each year in the Torres Strait Islands, marking the arrival of Christianity to the region. The day commemorates the moment in 1871 when London Missionary Society missionaries landed on Erub, bringing the Christian faith with the support of local leaders. This event is seen as a turning point in Torres Strait history, blending spiritual traditions and shaping cultural identity. The day is celebrated with **church services, hymn singing, feasts, traditional dancing, and community gatherings**, honoring both faith and the enduring strength of Torres Strait Islander culture.



Anniversary of first Councillors Conference in Masig

Monday 25 August

The Anniversary of the First Councillors Conference is celebrated in the Torres Strait Islands to mark the historic gathering of community leaders held on Masig in 1937. This was the first formal meeting of elected Torres Strait Islander councillors, where they came together to discuss local governance, laws, and the future of their communities. It was a significant step toward **self-determination and political representation** for Torres Strait Islanders. The anniversary is honored with **ceremonies, cultural events, and reflections on leadership, unity, and the ongoing journey of empowerment for the Torres Strait people.**

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT EVENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR DIVISIONAL MANAGER.

Olandi Pearson's Retirement



Celebrating the Legacy of Olandi Pearson Snr.

In March 2025, we came together to celebrate the retirement of a remarkable man — Mr. Olandi Pearson Snr — whose career spanned an extraordinary 42 years with TSIRC.

Family, friends and colleagues gathered to honour Olandi's lifelong commitment. The evening featured warm speeches, personal reflections and cultural performances that highlighted the strong connection between Olandi and the community he served for so many years.

From the early mornings on the wharf to mentoring colleagues and supporting his team through thick and thin, Olandi's commitment never wavered. Friends and family reflected on his profound impact, highlighting not only his strong work ethic and vast experience, but also the kindness and wisdom he shared with others throughout his career.

We'll always remember the moments when he went the extra mile—whether guiding a colleague, offering

encouragement, or simply bringing laughter during busy days. His leadership and unwavering dedication made a difference in countless lives.

It was a special evening, filled with emotion, heartfelt stories and cultural pride, where traditional dances added more joy to the evening, honouring Olandi in the most meaningful way.

Olandi's contributions over four decades have helped shape our Communities and Council, leaving an impact that will be felt for generations across the Torres Strait Island Regional Council. His legacy of hard work, humility, and community care will continue to inspire all who follow.

We already miss his presence and expertise. As Olandi enters this next chapter, we thank him for everything he has done.

Koeyama Eso, Olandi. Enjoy your well-deserved retirement!

CIAF

The Cairns Indigenous Art Fair

Will from the
11 - 13 July, 2025



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IKCs Across the Torres Strait



Indigenous Knowledge Centers (IKCs) Across the Torres Strait Get Tech Upgrade to Power Culture and Creativity

Our IKCs across our region are getting exciting new equipment through the Digital and You program — bringing powerful tools and opportunities right into our communities.

Each IKC is receiving a different set of materials, tailored to support digital workshops and community needs. Equipment ranges from iPads, laptops, and digital cameras to podcasting kits, sublimation printers, interactive TVs and even Xbox consoles for E-Sports activities.

Some devices will feature creative design software like Procreate (on iPads) and Photoshop (on laptops), giving local artists a way to draw, design, and even print artwork onto t-shirts using the sublimation kits, right in their own communities.

Other IKCs will receive tools to support language preservation and cultural storytelling. Programs like Miromaa —

software created by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people — help communities document, preserve, and teach their own languages. Another software, Keeping Culture, provides a safe and respectful way to store and manage traditional knowledge such as stories, historical sites, songs, people, etc.

Managed by Ella Kris, and with the support of SLQ, the Digital and You workshops offer hands-on training in Digital Storytelling, Pocket Cinema, Podcasting, E-Sports, Digital Arts, Digital Fashion, and more. These workshops are about more than just learning technology — they're about strengthening identity, celebrating culture and connecting generations.

All of this has been made possible thanks to the support of the State Library of Queensland, who are also working hard to secure funding for IKCs in divisions that don't yet have one.

Want to get involved? Download the Digital and You app and sign up for free workshops in your area. Let's connect, create and keep culture strong!

Ilun Tok

with cr. Keith Fell

Division 4 - Mabuiag



Committed to Community Unity and Climate Action.

As a proud Councillor on the Torres Strait Island Regional Council, I'm deeply committed to the future of our islands and our people. Climate change is already affecting our region, and I feel a strong responsibility to advocate for meaningful action to protect our land, sea, and culture.

My family gives me strength, and they remind me why this work matters. I'm passionate about building a Torres Strait where our children and grandchildren can grow up with opportunities, cultural pride, and a healthy environment. A sustainable and prosperous future for our communities is at the heart of everything I do.

Alongside my role as Councillor, I also serve as Director of the Torres Strait Youth and Recreational Sporting Association. Supporting young people is something I care deeply about. Through sport and recreation, we're creating positive pathways, building confidence, and strengthening our community. Sport brings people together—it teaches teamwork, leadership, and resilience.

Outside of work, I enjoy:

Fishing – connecting with the sea and our traditions

Basketball and Volleyball – great for fitness and bringing people together

Music – a creative outlet tied to our culture and community spirit

My vision for the Torres Strait is unity. I want to see our communities working together toward shared goals and common dreams. By listening and supporting one another, we can build a stronger, more connected region where everyone has a voice in shaping our future.

I'm proud to stand with you and for you—and I'll continue working to serve our people and protect the place we call home.



Useful Facts

What is "Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT)"?
DOGIT is the legal name for land granted in trust for the benefit of Aboriginal people or Torres Strait Islanders.

Most of the land in each community is DOGIT, except Badu and Mer.

Up until 1985, the Government was in control of the land in the region. Then in 1985, the DOGITs were created and the Island Councils were put in charge of them. This meant control and decisions for the

communities were made by the Island Councils and not the Government. All of the communities were DOGITs except Mer, which was a reserve until 2012, when it was handed back to Mer Gedkem Le. In 2014, the Badu DOGIT was handed back to Mura Badulgal. In 2008, the Island Councils merged to form TSIRC.

What does this all mean?

TSIRC manages the DOGITs except Badu and Mer. *Mer Gedkem Le manages Mer and Mura Badulgal manages Badu.*

MORE INFORMATION



yumi ilun Business

YUMI ILUN YARN



Preserving Culture Through Craft: The Art of Tobias Corrie

Tobias Corrie is a proud Torres Strait Islander artist whose intricate Dhari designs and bamboo sculptures are deeply rooted in tradition, culture, and storytelling. With ancestral ties to Boigu, Badu, Erub and Arkai, Tobias has spent the past decade creating works that honour his lineage and the teachings of his elders.

Tobias' journey as a cultural artist began in childhood, where crafting was simply a part of everyday life. "Back then, I didn't see it as art – it was just something we did as part of our culture," he reflects. It wasn't until his twenties that he began to fully understand the significance of his cultural knowledge and the power of the stories woven into every piece.

Influenced by internationally renowned Torres Strait artists like Alick Tipoti, Ken Thaiday and Yessie Mosby, Tobias sought deeper guidance from his community's elders. Through ongoing conversations and with their blessing, he embraced the responsibility of preserving traditional craftsmanship with authenticity and respect.

Based in Cairns, Tobias has now been a professional artist for almost 10 years, building a reputation grounded in cultural integrity and creative skill. Initially recognised through his involvement in Mob markets, he has since worked with major organisations such as Youth Justice, the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, Wandiyali ATSI Inc, and Newman Catholic College. His artwork, which serves both traditional dancing and contemporary commissions, is a vibrant vessel of cultural transmission – a living connection to the past.

Now stepping into a new chapter, Tobias will debut his first-ever bamboo sculpture of a Torres Strait warrior at the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF). Handcrafted using traditional materials and techniques passed down by his elders, the piece symbolises the strength, heritage, and the continuation of cultural knowledge.

Driven by a deep respect for his heritage, Tobias is committed to sharing Torres Strait Islander culture on a global stage, using his art to tell the stories that have been passed down for generations.

To view his work or make enquiries, follow him on Instagram:

[@tobiascorrieart](https://www.instagram.com/tobiascorrieart).



If you have a business and would like to announce it on our Strait Talk newsletter, contact us on 07 4034 5700 / info@tsirc.qld.gov.au

Kai Kai CORNER



CASSAVA CAKE RECIPE

by Janet Koek

Ingredients:

- 4 cups of minced cassava
- 2 cups of coconut milk
- 1 cup of evaporated milk
- 1 cup of coconut cream
- 397ml (1 can) sweetened condensed milk (add 1/2 a can if you prefer the cake to be sweeter)
- 2 eggs
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1 tablespoon of vanilla extract
- A tab of butter to grease your baking tray

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. In a small separate bowl add eggs, salt and vanilla extract, and mix them all together.
3. Using a large mixing bowl add cassava, coconut milk, coconut cream and condensed milk. Mix well together.
4. Combine the mixture from the small bowl of eggs, salt and vanilla extract into the large bowl of ingredients. Then mix all together until you reach a nice moist consistency.
5. Use the butter to grease your baking tray and pour your mixture into it.
6. Bake for 30 minutes or until golden brown.

Add fresh cream or fresh coconut cream as topping if you like!



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