



Park land handed back to traditional owners

After a plea from the Bowraville Local Aboriginal Land Council (BLALC) on behalf of the indigenous community, trusteeship of the iconic 'Bowraville Memorial Park' has been handed over to its traditional owners.

In August this year the BLALC wrote to the Department of Lands requesting that it be appointed reserve trust manager for the park located on the corner of South Arm and Gumbayggirr roads, Bowraville.

As yet the department has not granted consent but at Nambucca Shire Council's last meeting (August 19), it was decided that council would relinquish trusteeship of the park.

Much work has been carried out to improve the park, which is located on crown land by the, for use by the local Aboriginal community.

Improvements to the park, which includes building a new barbecue shelter and playground, are being funded by the Federal Government and administered by not-for-profit organisation Beyond Empathy.

Council has provided in-kind assistance with the works by providing fill for landscaping.

The decision by council to hand management of the park to the BLALC has been warmly welcomed by the local community.

"Council's decision represents a positive move forward," BLALC CEO Barry Ford said.

"The community has been busily engaged in refurbishing the park with the aide of Beyond Empthy.

A function acknowledging the work that has been done would be held early this month.



Helping with the park's refurbishments are Bowraville locals (from left) Kirk Stadhams and Roy Ballangarry.



Ngarrwa Health Families Group (standing, from left) Teleena Wright, Olive Jarrett, Valerie Quinlin, Anne Poliquen (front row, from left) Soraya, Nakita Jarrett, Liz Jarrett, Nash Morgan, Claudett Morgan, Mandawuy, Alex Campbell, Nyoleka West, Tehnaya Jarrett, Robin West and Jo Davidson.

The word Ngarrwa means 'birth' in Gumbaynggirr and was chosen by young mums from the Nambucca Valley to represent the Healthy Families Group who celebrated their 2nd birthday last month.

Ngarrwa parents and children meet together every Friday and work on a creative project; they also share information, give and take advice, talk over problems, tell stories, have fun and enjoy a delicious lunch.

Olive Jarrett, one of the mums who recommends the group to other parents said: "It's great having something interesting to do on a Friday.

"I enjoy meeting with young mums, talking together, creating things and getting to know workers who can help you with whatever you might need or want."

Artist, Jo Davidson from Beyond Empathy

said working on the Ngarrwa project was very rewarding.

"I particularly enjoy parents and children getting involved creatively in activities ranging from belly, hand and face casting, painting, felting, mosaics and jewellery," she said.

Beyond Empathy, North Coast Area Health, Living Carefully Project, TAFE, Mission Australia and other social service organisations proudly support the Ngarrwa Healthy Families Group.

Ngarrwa meets every Friday between 10am and 2.30pm and all parents and young children are welcome to attend.

Beyond Empathy would like to thank all the organisations who continue to support Ngarrwa Healthy Families Group

For more information call Jo Davidson on 0419 634 842 or 6587 7178.