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Empathy

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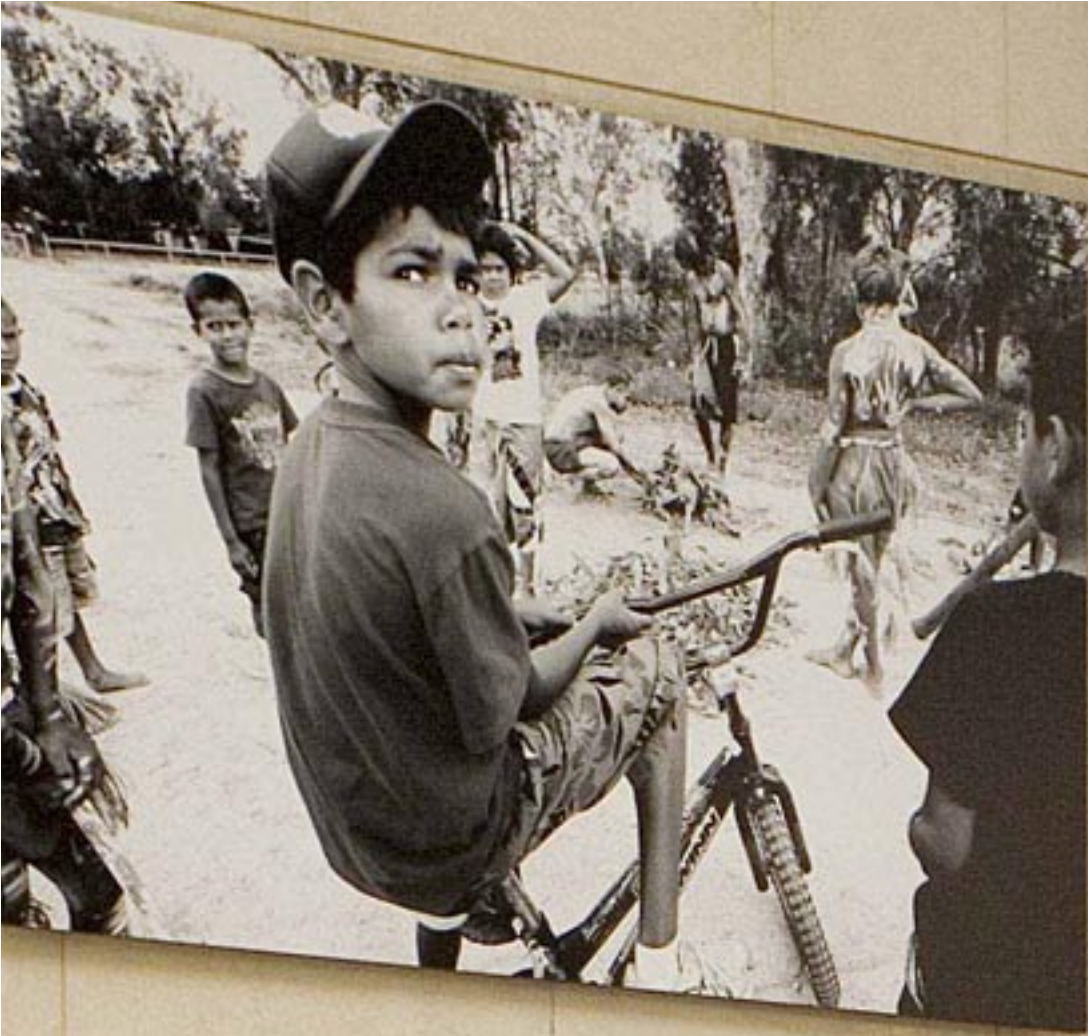
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**JUST.BE**



# BE.FORE

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Kim McConville

**Beyond Empathy is moving in a new direction. A number of years ago, and prior to graduating from the Social Ventures Australia portfolio, many discussions were had around the issue of scaling BE. The thinking was, if it's a good idea and many more communities could benefit from our work, why not expand?**

As we explored the options, we learnt that there were several versions of a scale model, but two seemed most relevant for BE. One was replicating the BE model across many, many sites in Australia. The other was to scale deeper into the communities where BE already has relationships.

In the end, recognising that the financial and human resource requirements needed to effectively deliver the first model were too challenging, and in the long run, unsustainable, the BE Board and team voted for the second version. We have decided to focus on a 'burn brighter model' of scale where we deepen our impact in the communities where BE is already working. This means that BE's work is moving from being a project-driven model to a program-based model.

**BE's new program of delivery will focus on three core areas:**

- 1. Youth Development – issue-driven work with young people that will mostly involve a formal partnership with TAFE or another learning institution, the creation of leadership skills, and connecting young emerging artists to the arts and CCD sector/s through professional artists / mentors.**
- 2. Pathways through Parenting – extending the reach of our antenatal program into early childhood, parenting and a whole family strategy (in all of our communities eventually).**
- 3. Social Enterprise (Bowraville and Boggabilla) – using the arts to lead the development of social enterprise activity.**



### **Bowraville's Better Factory Enterprise (BFE)**

strategy is a classic example of scaling deeper within a community. Twelve months on with funding support from the Federal Government Jobs Fund, catalytic funding from the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation, Caledonia Foundation, Westpac Foundation, Coca Cola Australia Foundation, Arts NSW and a three year commitment through The Australia Council for the Arts, Creative Communities (Community Partnerships) our work in Bowraville has traction and strong indicators of sustainability.

BE's commitment to the Bowraville community is for eight years. Through the BFE strategy, BE will partner with the local community and local Aboriginal, health, education, training and employment organisations to lead the innovative, arts led social enterprise hub called the Better Factory Enterprise, or BFE. The BFE will use our proven arts practice model to engage, connect and support disadvantaged members of the local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community to access support services and participate in education, training and micro-enterprise-based employment opportunities. Local community arts projects, like the regeneration of the local park on the edge of the Mission, or the establishment of a digital media hub in the main street, will be used to engage participants. ►

[beyondempathy.org.au](http://beyondempathy.org.au) 1

**“THE GREATEST THING  
IN THIS WORLD IS  
NOT SO MUCH WHERE  
WE STAND AS IN  
WHAT DIRECTION  
WE ARE MOVING.”**

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

# BE.FORE

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

◀ The local small projects will draw on creative enterprises conducted at key BFE locations across the community. Those enterprises will operate as informal learning centres where participants can build personal, general life management, artistic, vocational and enterprise skills. Through a partnership with TAFE, accredited trainers and skilled volunteers will work alongside participants, helping them to develop skills. They will provide opportunities for participants to access accredited training in a safe, accessible and highly flexible learning environment and to engage in work / micro-enterprise activities.

We recently appointed Moray Ralph to the position of Project Manager. Moray has 30 years experience working in the area of job creation and social enterprise in disadvantaged Aboriginal communities. Moray will work closely with Joshua Thomason, our Creative Producer in Bowraville. These guys are supported by a team of dedicated artists and CCD workers who are leading the way forward, driving both the engagement and enterprise opportunities for the community.

Whilst the enormity of the Bowraville project and sustaining BE's commitment over the long haul is somewhat daunting, early indications and levels of support and participation in Bowraville suggest that the timing is right for the community. There seems to be a steady beat of activity happening and each day more and more community participation and support is apparent. It's clear that if we remain guided by our change mantra, **one on one, one by one and then in partnership**, we will achieve our goals with the community in Bowraville.

And, to help us meet our commitment to scale in this way, we were fortunate to receive anchor funding from the Westpac Foundation for the next two years. This takes us into a five-year relationship with the Foundation and, unlike a project specific grant from the Westpac 1st Tier program, the anchor funding is given specifically to assist BE with delivery and overall sustainability over the next two years.

In the next 6 months you won't see the expansion of new work from BE, but what you will see is a concentration of effort, articulation of outcomes and the production of some new and vibrant artistic work.

I hope you like the revamped look and feel of our newsletter; it's the work of our new communications manager Jane Gifford and designer Annelies Jahn.

**Warm Regards**  
**Kim**

**FOR MORE ON BE'S  
BOWRAVILLE PROJECT  
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**JUST.BE**

**ONE ON ONE,  
ONE BY ONE,  
THEN IN  
PARTNERSHIP**

# BE. PEOPLE

## BOARD MEMBER VIVIENNE SKINNER



“Me (right) with Kim McConville in Broome, November 2009, en route to Hall’s Creek. And no, we did NOT drive in the Moke across the Kimberley!”

BELOW: Still from Utopian Dream DVD, James Taurua, front left.

I have worked as a political adviser to the NSW Government on and off since 1996 and that’s how I first met BE’s executive director, Kim McConville. We got on right from the start and it was clear that Kim’s trick of using the arts as a hook, a lure to connect with people really worked. It was incredibly exciting to watch Kim in action and to visit some of the towns where she was working, meet the young people she worked alongside and watch projects unfold. When NSW Premier Bob Carr resigned in 2005, the first phone call I had was from Kim inviting me to join the board of her new company Beyond Empathy. Without a pause I said yes, because I knew that anything Kim put her heart into would succeed. And now, nearly five years later, I still feel like I’m learning (I am!), I am still in awe of the BE process and I still can’t believe my luck being part of the very special BE team. Last November, I spent a week with Kim in the Kimberley (see photo of us in Broome) where we attended a maternal health gathering in Hall’s Creek. As I helped apply the wet plaster to the swollen belly of a young mum-to-be who was proudly helping us prepare her decorated plaster cast, I thought that this was one of the great experiences of my life. An absolute privilege to be part of an idea that BE began as the Mubali project in Moree, NSW, five years earlier but was now being picked up by Kimberley health workers as their way of connecting with and giving the all important health messages to young mums-to-be.



## BE. LEADER JAMES TAURUA

**In January 2010, Illawarra Leader James Taurua attended the Utopian Dream Dance Workshop and Entertainment Festival 2010 in Coffs Harbour – a six day intensive dance spectacular packed with workshops, performances, competition and some of the best, well known dancers from Australia and overseas. Illawarra project coordinator, Gemma Parsons, asked James to describe his experience of the festival and this is what he had to say...**

“It’s like being in your own little world, your own community of all dancers, of over 500 people just dancing. There were heaps of known dancers there from *So You Think You Can Dance (SYTYCD)* and future 2010 top 20 SYTYCD people. For some of the routines I learnt, I was being taught by people like Twitch (from US SYTYCD), Stephen (AUS SYTYCD), and performing the routines with Tim-o-matic (AUS SYTYCD) on one side of me and Hilton (AUS SYTYCD) on the other. It was awesome! It made me feel like a proper, professional dancer.

There were performances every

night, everything from Breakdance battles to a Tango and Salsa night at one of the clubs. I went to every one of them and even entered the ‘freestyling’ battle on the fifth night, as well as performing in four routines on the last night’s showcase. I took part in almost all of the workshops on offer including Hip-Hop, Salsa, Tango, Traditional Aboriginal Dancing, B-boying and Contemporary. The training was brutal though. After every day, every bone and muscle in my body was aching, but it was all necessary for building my skills, so I guess you just put up with it.

I’ve been able to take the techniques and skills I learnt in that week back with me to Wollongong to help me get more jobs teaching dance. The new skills and techniques have taken me to a higher level of dancing. I found I don’t have to be limited to Hip-Hop either. I can branch out into other types of dance and not be scared to just have a go. It’s also helped me to have a lot more confidence in what I’m doing in my own dance genre, Hip-Hop.”



## DANIEL DE FILIPPO, 19, IS INVOLVED WITH THE ILLAWARRA FILM PROJECT. PROJECT COORDINATOR, GEMMA PARSONS, INTERVIEWED HIM FOR OUR NEWSLETTER

**Daniel became homeless at 18 and, after spending some time on the streets, was directed by a friend to youth crisis service CHAIN. From there he was set up with temporary accommodation through the Department of Housing and eventually moved on to a youth refuge where he lived for five months before being offered a flat, where he now lives.**

Daniel became involved with Beyond Empathy late last year through a course he had undertaken in Film and Media at 313 Studios in Wollongong. The course was an initiative of Centrelink and Southern Youth and Family Services to offer training opportunities to young clients. Daniel expressed interest in the feature film being produced in the Illawarra and, in particular, the technical aspect of production. Daniel has just begun another course at 313 Studios in Live Theatre and Events, and has taken up lighting operation for a local theatre company through his work with BE.

**I know you're into film/media and theatre production – tell me a bit about that.**

I've always liked movies, music – pretty much all media. That's why I got into the course. I got to experience some really interesting things first hand, like behind the scenes work, when I did my Cert III at 313. I got to make a short film and I learnt how editing was done. It gave me some sort of motivation, 'cause at that point, I was only a couple of months into living in a refuge, and I had no motivation. I was really 'in the dumps' – wasn't depressed but getting there. I didn't know I could be a part of something like the film project and that it was very feasible, once I got that certificate. It was in reach, not something so far away, with so many millions of dollars to go and so much expensive equipment to buy.

**What do you enjoy most about doing media and production work?**

Well, I made a blooper reel of the short film I made in the course (313). That was fun. I enjoyed being able to put a lot of effort into the film, all of myself into something, and have something rewarding

come back as the end result – your own movie. It may not be that great, because nobody has that sort of experience, but that's how you get the experience, that's how you make better movies, you learn from your mistakes.

**What do you think is the most challenging aspect of what you do?**

Team work. Working with a whole group of people that you don't know, and who you've never met before. For example, when I was doing lighting at the theatre I didn't really know anyone when I came in. I knew one person, so I only talked to that one person. Then other people came into the conversation and I was a bit like "Ah ... who are these people??" and I had to introduce myself and be put on the spot. It's an obstacle and a challenge, but also an opportunity for me to face my own fears of conversation and socialising. Not that I'm really afraid of being social, just I'm afraid of people I don't know. I guess because I know myself and that I've had this history, and some people that have gone through the sort of stuff I've been through and tons worse, you can't see it on the ►



## daniel's.**STORY**

◀ outside, you can't see what they've been through. So these new people may be the sort of people who don't quite understand that or maybe judge that, so you're hesitant about putting yourself out there. That's just my general obstacle.

### Do you think you've learnt anything about yourself through being involved with Film and Theatre production?

Yep. I've learnt I can overcome that obstacle of socialising and I can relate to a lot of people. I've learnt there is always something new to learn. I learnt that I can never know everything but that I have the ability to learn. Growing up, I had a chronic fear of classrooms, but when you get put into this sort of learning environment with 313 and with BE, it's more open and you just learn more. Through high school, I didn't learn anything but I've learnt so much in the past year that it surpasses high school. So I learnt that I have the ability to learn, if that makes any sense.

### Do you think BE has helped in anyway?

Yeah, for sure. They have presented me with all this field experience. It's one thing to work in a designed learning environment and it's another thing to work with other people in the field and to have a director. It puts you right in the front line. I've had to learn how to cope with conditions like weather, when it's blistering hot and you have to stand there with a boom pole and just put up with the heat – that's hard work! I learnt to deal with meeting new people again.

### Anything else you would like to say?

It's two different ends of the spectrum, I guess. Me, a person who watched TV religiously as a kid and was an absolute film and TV buff, and at one point got Austar and developed an American accent that stayed with me pretty much til now, and now it's changed so that I'm the one in the power zone, in control. It's changed the way I think and the way I watch movies. I see all the best parts in more detail, because now I know how many rolls of film they must have used and how expensive it is and how much

effort it takes and how good the actors and film makers are – the brilliance of it all. And also all the details in theatre, like how many times you have to go through lines and not just lines but interaction, team work and cues, movements, facial expressions, there are just so many things going on at once and in an actor's brain. They have to concentrate on what they need to say and watch everyone around them, be ready for cues and if the cues don't come, be ready to improvise and save the day. It's just a whole other side of the picture. And that's what I have to say about that.

# BE.PROJECTS BERKELEY ART PROJECT MARCH 2010

**Project Coordinator, Gemma Parsons, working alongside artists Jack Wachtel and Jack Lilley from Newcastle, successfully concluded the Berkeley Public Art Project in March 2010. The project worked in intensive blocks, beginning in the latter part of 2009.**

29 participants, predominantly male Berkeley residents aged between eight and twenty-five, and three emerging artists and peer mentors (Josh Harris (Dapto), Steve Rees (Berkeley), and Guy Shareef (Berkeley)) engaged in the project. During workshops, the emerging artists assembled aerosol art portfolios containing evidence of previous works. These will continue to be maintained and built upon. As part of the Project, contracts (including Council's guidelines for public art) were designed for artists wishing to approach business and property owners for permission to paint walls and for artists wishing to approach business owners and organisations for paid employment in aerosol sign writing and mural art. The forms and contracts can also be used by aerosol artists in any region as a toolkit for engaging in legal methods of aerosol art and employment.

Once all the permissions were in place, the artists proceeded to design signage for shops in Berkeley at the request of shop owners (Berkeley Cakes and Pies and Renee's Easy Eats) and painted artworks on ten panels of boarded-up shops along Berkeley's main street, as well as the permission wall at the rear of the Coniston businesses. Young people worked alongside the artists in the implementation of the artworks. The participants were extremely keen and made a great commitment to the work, often staying all day from 10 am until after 6 pm.

Local business owners engaged with young people positively and provided lunch on two days for young people and artists. The



business owners and passing community members expressed appreciation for the artworks and praised the young people directly for their efforts. The young people exhibited great manners, restraint and respect towards shop owners, artists, community members, each other, and their community. For example, they helped clean up at the end of each day and disposed of their rubbish in the bin, used 'please' and 'thank you' when addressing shop owners, artists, and community members, helped each other when painting and made sure everyone had 'a fair go' and apologised when inappropriate language slipped. The young people expressed a sense of ownership over the artworks and are committed to protecting them from vandalism and tagging.

The *Illawarra Mercury* covered the project on Monday 22nd March (you can read the article at <http://www.beyondempathy.org.au/news-media>). The article was very positive and

true to the project's aims. It also prompted an ABC local radio interview on the same morning that discussed the project and pathways to employment through aerosol art. The next day, there were several enquiries from organisations and business owners wishing to find out how they could get their walls painted and deter vandalism. The leader of the Berkeley Anglican Church approached the team during the week and requested a meeting to discuss the painting of a mural inside the church building. Berkeley emerging artists were also approached by the owner of the local baseball field wanting some work done on the grandstand wall of the field.

Steve Rees took on the peer mentoring role very well, which was also noted by the lead artists. He assisted younger participants with painting techniques, pulled them up on their language and talked to them about respecting the artwork they've created and not tagging



◀ the walls around it either. Steve has also expressed that he wishes to purchase paint and apply for permission walls himself in the area with the use of the new guidelines and forms.

Thomas Hetet, a younger participant, was offered a paid job to paint a canvas for the Bakery owner after they observed his skills. Guy Shareef expressed his plan to approach the Berkeley Newsagency regarding the repainting of an old sign. Ivan Buchanan, an older participant, suggested a plan to organise monthly trips for young Berkeley artists to the legal wall at Wollongong Youth Centre so they would have a chance to practice their skills legally.

**BE** thanks the Wollongong City Council, Safer Communities and Youth Services, Berkeley Cakes and Pies, Renee's Easy Eats and Crockers Paint Albion Park for their support and assistance with this project.

# BERKELEY

**PREVIOUS PAGE: Young Berkeley residents assisting BE artists to paint signage for shops on Berkeley main street. TOP: So BIG it can't fit in one photo! ABOVE: Thomas Hetet, Chris West, Daniel West, Ahmed Sultam and Project Coordinator Gemma Parsons, Berkeley.**

# BE.PROJECTS ILLAWARRA FILM PROJECT

Project Co-ordinator Gemma Parsons reports:



**TOP: Chris Simpson, actor and main character, on set for *Rites of Passage* (Dapto Skate Park)**  
**ABOVE, Left to right: Ty Dingle (actor), Brandon Gee (actor), Phillip Crawford (director), Jai Buchanan (Camera/DP) and Daniel De Filippo (sound/Boom Op) – on set for *Rites of Passage*.**

**Beyond Empathy's Illawarra Project has had a great start to the year.** Of the eight young men most involved in our short film in Berkeley and in the BE Leadership Camp, six have returned to school to study for their Year 10 Certificate. One has entered Year 11. We have forged stronger relationships with our partners, notably at the Illawarra Senior College, where we are assisting them with a school film project. We are just about to start our accredited training modules in screen media, which is in partnership with 313 Studios, a local training organisation. And, we have negotiated to work on a project with the Department of Health focusing on tobacco and young people. A couple of these

partnership projects have brought about \$7000 additional income to the project.

We have run 103 hours worth of workshops since January for 57 participants. Two short films are almost completed: "2506", which is a short drama that uses hip hop to tell its story and a short skating doco featuring Stephen Rees.

We have commenced shooting three narrative lines for the feature film, which we are calling *Rites of Passage*, and we are in preplanning for another four narrative lines that will start in the coming three months. We are also really happy to have Jess, one of the BE Leaders, working in a traineeship type role with us. Jess will also undertake study in community services.

# BOWRAVILLE



Beyond Empathy has raised the level of activity in Bowraville since January 2010. Shayne Teece and Kai Tipping have been involved in the holiday program with music, dance and digital media activities. Joshua has overseen the set up of the textiles program with Donna Brown and Margrit Rickenbach. Jo Davidson has started back at Ngarrwa with a cultural and arts program and Steve Killick has been consulting with the community and related families about planning for work in Memorial Park.

BE's Chief Operating Officer Susie Spencer and Creative Producer Josh Thomason report



# BE.PROJECTS BOWRAVILLE

OUR ARTS ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN STEADILY ENGAGING PARTICIPANTS AS WE BUILD GREATER TRUST AND AWARENESS WITHIN THE NAMBUCCA VALLEY.

Earlier in the year, BE signed leases on two shop fronts in Bowraville under the banner of *Gilingaal Junaaygam*, which means modern storytelling in the local Gumbaynggirr language.

One shop is a **gallery space** for exhibiting artworks created in BE workshops. It's also a meeting place for Better Factory Enterprise and Beyond Empathy staff. The Gallery will open on 24 June 2010, but a small exhibition of textile work is currently on display and has generated much interest and possibly, future commissions.

In the shop next door, we have established the Better Factory Enterprise (BFE – see Executive Director Kim McConville's message on page 1 for more info) **Digital Media Hub** ('Digi Hub').

- use multimedia to strengthen community through storytelling and place based identity
- provide support and resources for the creation of a commercial production unit
- Advocate for the distribution and screening of Indigenous short and feature films in collaboration with the Bowraville Theatre/Nambucca
- Create, promote and execute the Gumbanyiirr Outdoor Film Festival

Our partners so far include Murrabay Language Centre, Street TV Australia, Goori Radio, NITV, Gondwana Productions and Bowraville Theatre.



## GILINGAAL JUNAAYGAM

The aims and objectives of this space are to:

- create a digital archive and distribution strategy that supports and advocates for the preservation of Gumbaynggirr culture in the Nambucca Valley
- design and deliver accredited training in multimedia and video production for participants
- provide a youth-focused production facility for music recording and video making
- create strategic partnerships with regional organisations
- lead communications strategy for the Better Factory Enterprise
- curate and produce work for the national and international short film festival circuit
- identify and create career pathways into Indigenous broadcasting and production (AFTRS, NITV, ABC etc.)

FREE PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP  
NO EXPERIENCE OR EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

EVERY TUESDAY 2 - 5 PM  
WITH RUSSELL PELL  
DIGI HUB 43 HIGH ST BOWRA  
ALL WELCOME  
SPONSORED BY BETTER FACTORY ENTERPRISE



## BOWRAVILLE

◀ The Digital Media Hub's first gig was to record the six-day Utopian Dream Dance Festival held in Coffs Harbour in January. Led by Joshua Thomason, BE leader Valerie Quinlin and local boys Loyd Quinlin and Braden Fitzgerald amassed 50 hours of footage and a DVD is in production. (See [Utopian Dream stories on page 3 and 17](#)).

TAFE has now provided us with some laptops, as we transition to delivering accredited TAFE training courses. In the meantime, the hub has been bustling with informal training and multimedia activities that have engaged more than 30 young people. And, our intergenerational approach has facilitated the forming of positive relationships with the elders and wider community.

Recently we worked with Raylene Ballangary on a **documentary film**

about the walk from Bowraville to Bellingen pregnant ladies had to do to get medical assistance up until the '70s. The film was screened at the Bellingen River District Hospital during the Bellingen Heritage Festival in April this year.

A community **Disco** in March provided an opportunity for 100 young people to enjoy themselves and for us to communicate information about the activities planned for the coming months.

The **Music Program** continues to attract high engagement with structured workshops in songwriting, beat-production, recording and performing. Youth Fest 2010 and the Youth Week band competition offered a chance for some participants to put what they learned into practice.

Youth Fest 2010 was held in Nambucca in April this year and

Sam (Slam) Jarret, Tazman (Taktix) Jarret and Zac (Zicko MC) Holland had a paid gig at this event and performed with Will (Wire MC) Jarret. Also at the Festival, Jyles Lulhum filmed and captured the skate competition as well as some of the music performed. Jyles will do an edit for the Nambucca Valley Youth Services Centre with the support of the 'Digi Hub'.

At the Youth Week Band Comp, a Nambucca Valley Shire Council event, Zicko Mc and Slam entered the competition and received great feedback from the judges. This is the first year the Band Comp included Hip-Hop and Wire MC was a special guest. Shayne, Josh, Wire, and Kai have all been doing a great job blending the workshops with real outcomes.



# BOWRAVILLE

## TEXTILE AND FELTING WORKSHOPS

**Master Felter – Magrit Rickenbach, lead artist Donna Brown and emerging artist Francine Edwards** have been working with Valley Elders at the Murrabay Language Centre and recently with an Elders group within Ngambaga Bindarry Girrwa Community Services in Bowraville. To date there have been 34 workshops with an average of fifteen participants each week. The main activity has been felting, initially making wall hangings but also there's been planning for other products as part of the social enterprise activities. Donna Brown has secured an exhibition of the works at the Koori Heritage Trust Gallery in Melbourne for March 2011. This is very exciting. We are looking forward to the two Bowraville textile groups joining forces in the learning and production space where screen printing and clothes production will be added to the participants skills.

# BOWRAVILLE SCULPTURE AND THE PARK

**Stephen Killick has been diligently working on the upgrade of the Memorial Park in Bowraville.**

Several months of consultation with all the stakeholders has been the key to ensuring that he has permission and participation from as many people as possible in community and work started at the site in April. Nambucca Council has contributed greatly to the demolition and earthworks side of the project and a willing group of young men from the Mission have been participating too. Stephen has also been involving TAFE classes (teachers and participants) in wood and metal working and the National Parks donated some large trees for the sculptures. Guy Crosley will be joining Stephen to create some mosaics in the park in conjunction with designing some playground equipment and the barbeque area. This is a very exciting project and it's great to see work underway.



## NGARRWA

**Project Coordinator and Lead Artist Jo Davidson reports:**

**Numbers of mums attending Ngarrwa for first term** (Jan to March) are slightly down from the end of last year, but the good news is that we have seen very few school-age kids and Health and Social Service providers continue to show strong interest. The Drug & Alcohol services counsellor will be bringing a psychologist and a local expert on Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder has also been invited to advise families experiencing D&A related difficulties at home.

We have completed and installed another group mosaic on the building with local artist Guy Crosley, and a number of other improvements have been made to the Resource Centre, including a notice board, a story corner with a small library of books donated from the Nambucca Library, and a bed and private consult space for the midwife and pregnant mums. The building is being cleaned progressively and cleaning training days will happen before the term is finished, allowing us to pay locally-trained workers to do that job at the end of the sessions.

We had another successful

Elders Day recently where mums, kids, aunties, grandmothers and health workers sat around the table making jewellery and talking about bush medicines with Auntie Rose Boston.

Our new logo has been adopted for all publicity material and for screen printing on T shirts.

We are hoping to establish a monthly Friday fun night in the Resource Centre as a reward for those kids who have attended school regularly. It will be a D&A free family event run by local volunteers and BE youth worker Shayne Teece, with help from paid BE peer mentors. Shane will also be running the Homework Centre in the new BE Hub shop in town. We also hope to employ a woman language worker who teaches at the Nambucca preschool. Other activities include, in partnership with Living Carefully, working on another calendar featuring photos and bush/home medicine information, creating paintings and artworks for the calendar and for sale at the shop, and going on a picnic excursion to the island in Nambucca.



# FAR NORTH COAST

# BE. PROJECTS OUT OF THE BLUE: FAR NORTH COAST

Project Co-ordinator Nadine Smith reports:



**From October to December 2009, *Out of the Blue Far North Coast* worked with 80 young participants from the Coraki/Box Ridge and Yamba/Maclean communities. Of these, 90% were of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. All of the young people were identified as being 'at risk' and either facing AOD issues personally or in their home environment. Each community hosted a series of weekly workshops focusing on dance, songwriting and digital storytelling.**

At the culmination of the workshop program, 30 young people attended an arts intensive camp where they continued to work on their creative pieces, participated in Indigenous dance and storytelling, hip hop dance, circus and arts workshops. The group travelled together to perform at Crankfest Battlezone, a youth festival that was held in Casino on December 19th 2009. At the camp participants were also engaged in team building and leadership based activities.

Through the Yamba program, the song 'Making Choices' was written and recorded by the group. This explores the importance of being in control of your choices and looking after yourself, your friends and your family. It demonstrates how the

participants explored issues such as healthy choices around drug and alcohol use.

The Yamba participants were also involved in another art activity where they created masks that on one side, reflected how they think they look to the world around them on the outside, and on the other side of the mask reflected how they feel they look on the inside. This exercise stimulated discussion around issues such as peer pressure, mental health and social inclusion.

The dance piece choreographed and performed with the Coraki group revealed to audiences how the young people have focused on supporting each other, no matter what challenges they are facing at home. The dance circle is a good demonstration of this, where they all show their individual skills, but are part of the group as a whole, with everyone cheering each other on. One of the main successes of this program was overcoming shame and creating a nurturing environment between participants where no-one was put down for having a go.

The majority of participants involved in the program had to step into a leadership role at some point, through leading a section

of choreography, for example.

Facilitators also used a range of games and activities that focused on building the leadership skills of the participants.

Participants from the *Out of the Blue* program performed at Coraki Tea Tree Art Prize Opening (Oct 09); Nimbin Dreaming Festival (Nov 09); ArtStart Regional Showcase (Dec 09); Crankfest Battlezone – Youth Festival (Dec 09); and Survival Day Aussie Battlers (Jan 10).

Audience feedback has demonstrated that the community is amazed at their talent and the confidence they have displayed.

The project was carried out in collaboration with two Local Councils, Richmond Valley and Clarence, and nine local agencies/community organisations. One of the key partners for the program was INTRA Youth Services, who provided support to youth in regards to alcohol and other drug use and mental health issues. Through the program the participants were introduced to this service and the workers available to support them. Many of the organisations involved in *Out of the Blue Far North Coast* had not previously worked together and several are pursuing opportunities for collaboration in the future.

# BE. OUT THERE GULA GAMA-LI EMBRACE



**ABOVE:** William Yang and Noeline Briggs Smith present the performance piece they created for BE's 6x6 project in Moree. **NEXT PAGE TOP:** Opening night at the NG Gallery. **MIDDLE:** Gabrielle Courtenay and Paula Duncan (in collaboration), *Untitled, 2008*, acrylic on canvas. **NEXT PAGE BOTTOM:** Jonathan Throsby and Brent Beale (in collaboration), *The Child which was Taken from the Troopers, 2008*, acrylic on canvas.

**An exciting start to 2010 was the opening of the Gula Gama-Li embrace exhibition at the NG Art Gallery**, a stylish conversion of a 19th-century church once occupied by the Sydney City Mission, in Sydney's Chippendale gallery precinct. A selection of paintings, photographs and belly casts created by the Moree community in three of BE's key art-based programs – *6x6*, *Mubali and Connections* – were on display in the gallery from January 13 to 31. Over a period of five years, the town's young people and families engaged with these dynamic programs as a means of connecting them with local support, health and education services, building their skills and self esteem, and improving their lives. The Hon. Virginia Judge MP, Minister for the Arts, officially opened the Sydney exhibition on January 13 and it was wonderful to have so many BE supporters, artists, community partners and staff there to celebrate, along with many interested Sydneysiders.

William Yang and Auntie Noeline Briggs-Smith's *6x6* collaborative performance work was a highlight of the evening.

Then, on January 20, NG Art Gallery's Nicky Ginsberg and Piera Potter hosted a special **Gula Gama-Li embrace** Feast for the Senses dinner downstairs in the gallery's Mission Restaurant & Bar. Anna Cater and Helen Barrow's documentary film, *Sharing the Canvas*, capturing the entire story of the *6x6* project, was screened before dinner to the 40 or so guests attending the event. This wonderful film revealed that, for all the artists involved in the *6x6* project, the experience was enlightening, life-changing and incredibly fun. After feasting on antipasti and roasted pork belly with chilli, fennel and Florentine beans prepared by chef David Lovett, guests were treated to a conversation between celebrated artists David Larwill and Auntie Paula Duncan and photographer Greg Weight on 'Shared Experiences – New Horizons'.

# BE OUT THERE UTOPIAN DREAM DANCE FESTIVAL

**Utopian Dream is a multicultural dance festival held in Coffs Harbour in January each year with international professional choreographers of dance including Jazz, Hip Hop, Latin, Contemporary, Ballet, Indigenous, Circus and more.**

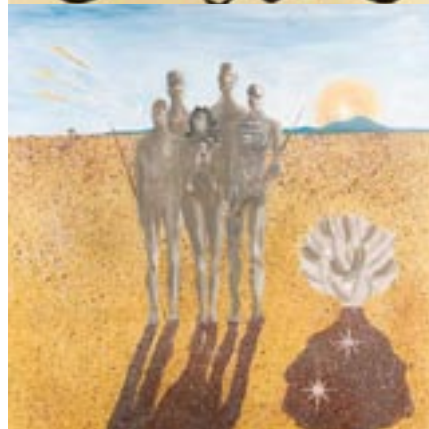
Festival Director, Travers Ross, has worked with Beyond Empathy for over five years and provided the opportunity for 15 Nambucca Valley young people to attend for a day and night.

BE also supported two young emerging dancers from the Illawarra to attend the whole festival. See BE leader, James Taurua's story on page 3.

Four young people from Bowraville and two from Nambucca were given on the job training in video production to help produce a DVD of the Utopian Dream event.



◀ On the night Auntie Paula expressed the impact of the 6x6 experience with the following heart-felt words, "As an artist I have been out of the art world for about 10 to 12 years and to have an opportunity like 6x6 is a dream come true. I've grown up in a country that reflects so much prejudice and I'm from a family that's fought for the rights of Aboriginal peoples here. Since working with the 6x6 program, I've learnt that there are really genuine people here after all. These beautiful gifted people (6x6) don't see you as a black person; they see you for what you are and what you have achieved as a human being, especially how you reflect your whole life through your art and culture. Through my eyes, my art is a sense of belonging, and beautiful people like Uncle Victor and Auntie Kim have made this magical moment happen. And if dreams are all like this most beautiful and wonderful experience please DON'T EVER WAKE ME UP."

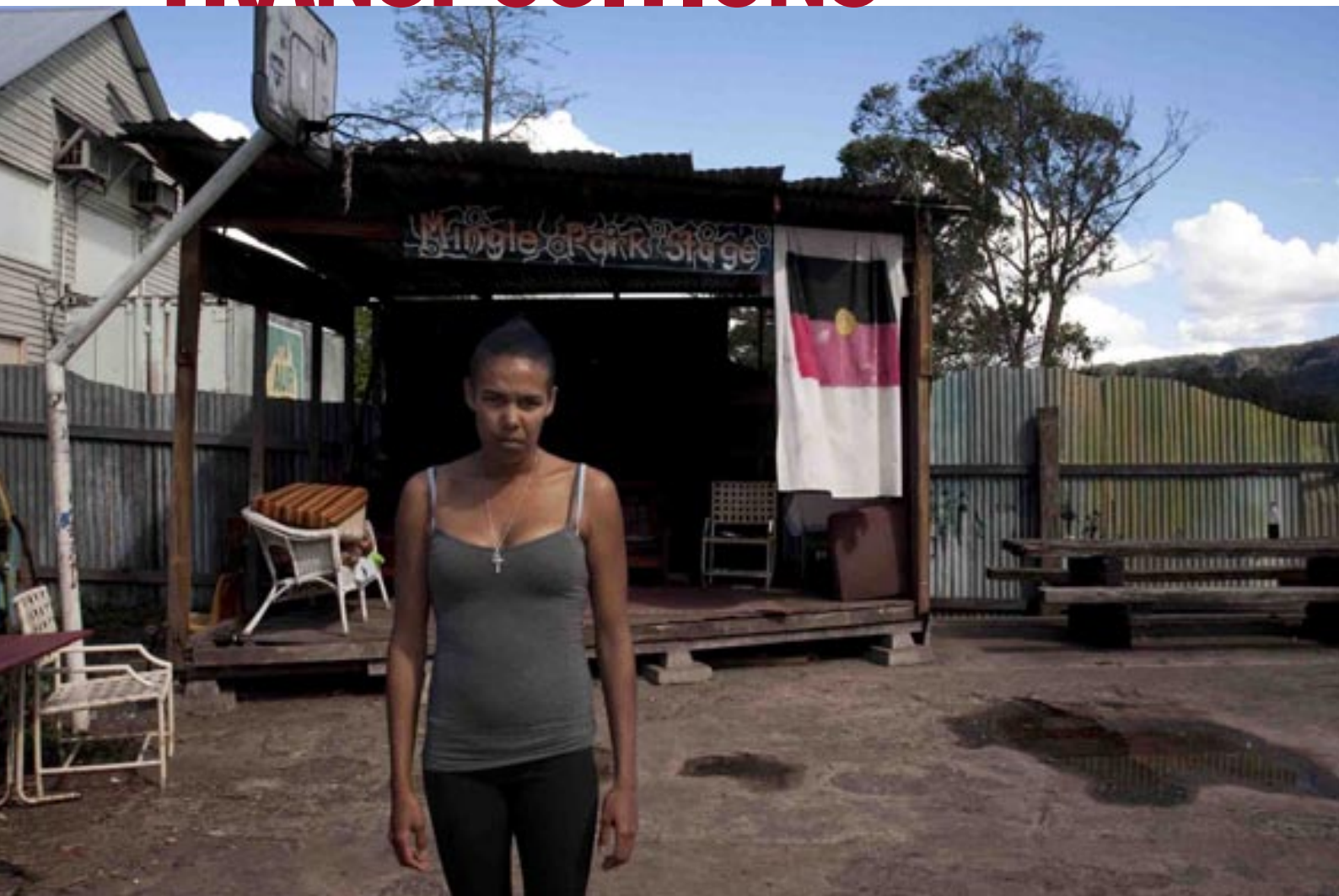


This footage will now be used as training material in video editing.

The finished DVD will be a product for the Bowraville Better Factory Enterprise (BFE) strategy and a show reel for promoting the capacity of the group to tender for future contracts.

Sales and pre-sales of the DVD will provide an instant revenue stream for the *gilinggal junaaygam* Digital Media Hub in Bowraville. Release Date: 31st of March 2010.

# BE OUT THERE TRANSPPOSITIONS



ABOVE: Raphaela Rosella, My Dora doll, photographic print, Moree 2008. NEXT PAGE TOP: Wendy Kimpton, Timeless, photographic print, Moree 2008. NEXT PAGE LEFT: Greg Weight, Colleen, Alf and Children, photographic print, Moree 2008. NET PAGE FAR RIGHT: Greg Weight, Tombstone Terry Hie Hie, photographic print, Moree, 2008.

Another exciting event for 2010 was the opening of BE's **Transpositions** photographic exhibition in the Bent Street Lobby of Chifley Tower in the heart of Sydney's CBD on Tuesday, March 9, 2010. The show ran until March 27 and was curated by Soraya Touma and Wendy Kimpton. BE was honoured to have key BE supporter Simon Mordant deliver the opening speech, which was followed by an outstanding didgeridoo performance by Alf Priestly, whose son was parked in a stroller by his side. It was wonderful to be able to share the opening night event with so many BE supporters.

**Transpositions** looks at the creative transformation of three photographers as they interchange

their ideas and experiences within the context of BE projects. Renowned Australian photographer Greg Weight, emerging photographic artist Raphaela Rosella, and mid-career photographer Wendy Kimpton, approach the project from three different 'places' in their careers, yet through the act of guiding each other, shift the way they see the world and their own work. The artists learn from the unique experiences of each other, hence they 'change places' throughout the process – each artist leading and following.

In photographic terms, transposition is the process of reversing the tonality of an image, (i.e. from negative to positive).

**Transpositions** aimed to highlight



◀ the beauty and truth of rural Australia and in doing so reverse the viewer's perception from negative to positive.

All the images featured individuals and families involved in BE's art-based programs in disadvantaged communities around Australia.

"Whenever I work with Aboriginal communities as a photographer, I leave with much more than the photographs I take. I leave with heartache and respect for a nation of people who have been subjected to unimaginable horrors and cultural denial and still have in their hearts

the capacity to engage in dance, music, stories and art," said Greg Weight, reflecting on his experience working with Beyond Empathy in the community of Moree.

The exhibition also celebrates the creative development of emerging artist Raphaela (Rosie) Rosella. Rosie grew up in Nimbin in an economically disadvantaged family environment. During her long-term involvement with Beyond Empathy programs, she has attended Beyond Empathy Leadership Camps, completed a 6 month Traineeship, gained practical experience photographing many

Beyond Empathy projects and is currently in her second year of a Bachelor of Photography degree at Griffith University. Rosie has worked alongside Greg Weight and Wendy Kimpton on several projects and a strong creative bond has developed between them all.

## GARDENING VS LANDSCAPING – HERE'S A METAPHOR FOR BE'S WORK THAT'S WORTH CONTEMPLATING:

From: [http://www.ssireview.org/opinion/entry/online\\_community\\_building\\_gardening\\_vs\\_landscaping](http://www.ssireview.org/opinion/entry/online_community_building_gardening_vs_landscaping)

Accessed: 26 March 2010

Sample Ward, Amy. Posted 5 August 2009. 'Online Community Building: Gardening vs Landscaping', *Stanford Social Innovation review Opinion Blog* (extract from)

So, what's the secret to successful community building? You guessed it: be a great gardener and avoid the temptation to landscape. Here's what that means:

- A gardener only takes out the weeds; a landscaper takes out everything that isn't part of the design. Think about the number of beautiful plants or trees that have sprung up in parks, your yard, or even out in nature that weren't "intended" to be there but quickly grew to be a valuable part of the ecosystem.
- A gardener isn't afraid to mix things around; a landscaper plans and plots and plants. Sometimes you can't know ahead of time just which plants will respond well or want more sun or shade so you need to be flexible.
- When a storm hits, a gardener can remain open to planting anew and rejuvenating others; a landscaper may just order more of the same. Sometimes it takes a storm to realize which plants just weren't going to make it or which were able to stick it out.

- When in doubt, a gardener will try more plants or kinds of plants and see which take root; a landscaper may default to less. What about the plants you had never used before to know about and how they took root, flowered, and bolted up right before your eyes

Clearly, this is all very metaphorical here with the backyard options. It is, though, meant to paint a picture:

**The Gardener** creates an ecosystem open to change, available to new groups, and full of fresh opportunities to emerge naturally. The approach is focused on organic collaboration and growth for the entire community. The gardener is simply there to help, cultivate, and clear the weeds if/when they poke up.

**The Landscaper** creates an ecosystem that matches a preconceived design or pattern. The approach is focused on executing a preconceived environment, regardless of how natural or organic it may be for the larger area. The landscaper is there to ensure that everything stays just as planned.

## THE SOCIAL INCLUSION CONFERENCE MELBOURNE JANUARY 28-29, 2010 BE COO SUSIE SPENCER REPORTS:

The Social Inclusion Conference in Melbourne at the end of January ran for two days and focused on the current government position on social inclusion. The audience was a mixture of government policy writers, practitioners and researchers. The clear message was that social inclusion is everybody's business, not just the community services sector. But throughout the conference there was no mention of funding to support new initiatives or to support

the expansion of responsibility across more organisations and services.

Professor Sir Michael Marmot BBS, MPH, PhD, FRCP, FFPHM, FMedSci, FBA Professor of Epidemiology and Public Health, University College London and Christine Davies, CBE Director C4EO – Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children's and Young Peoples Services UK were the two key note speakers.

Both speakers are from the

UK and presented research and examples of practice that centred on the coordination of services to support the provision of better outcomes for disadvantaged communities. Beyond Empathy's practice is immersed in this way of thinking and has this written as one of the five main objectives of the organisation.

For reading material related to the conference go to <http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au/Resources/Pages/Resources.aspx>

**NATIONAL JUVENILE JUSTICE SUMMIT  
MELBOURNE FEBRUARY 25-26, 2010  
GEMMA PARSONS, PROJECT  
COORDINATOR, ILLAWARRA REPORTS:**



Myself, Kellie Martusciello (BE Participant Support Coordinator) and BE trainees, Valerie and Jess, attended the National Juvenile Justice Summit at the Rendezvous Hotel in Melbourne in February. The summit ran across two days and offered a line up of expert speakers in the field from almost all states and territories across Australia. Speakers included Peter Muir (Chief Executive, Juvenile Justice, Department of Human Services, NSW), Bernie Geary (OAM, Child and Safety Commissioner, VIC), Jane Sanders (Principal Solicitor, Shopfront Youth Legal Centre, NSW) and Jenny Bargaen (CHD Partners and UTS Law School Sydney) among others. Questions to the speakers were encouraged at the end of each session and an informative panel discussion on Achieving Change in JJ was presented at the end of each day. Although BE did not present at the summit we were an acknowledged supporter and have been asked by Mr Bernie Greary to consider presenting next years. We gained some very useful insight and made a lot of great connections as well as reconnecting with others including Mark Watt, CEO and co-founder of Melbourne's youth organization White Lion.



**BE CALENDAR  
UPCOMING  
EVENTS**

**WEDNESDAY 2 JUNE 2010**  
Premiere screening of "2506" +  
trailer for *Rites of Passage*  
Special guest: award winning  
Australian actor Tony Barry.  
5:30 pm @ the Gala Cinema,  
Cowper St, Warrawong NSW

"2506" is a short film made by  
young people participating in  
a BE program in Berkeley that  
tells the story of young love,  
crime and regret..



*Rites of Passage* is a feature  
length drama film that Beyond  
Empathy is working on with  
young people in the Illawarra  
over the coming two years.

The film screening is free.  
To book a seat, please contact  
Phillip Crawford 0427697173  
or Gemma Parsons on  
0410546767.

**THURSDAY 24 JUNE 2010**  
5 pm @ 43 High St,  
Bowraville, NSW  
Opening of the *gilinggal*  
*junaaygam: modern storytelling*  
gallery/office space and  
Digital Media Hub  
For more info: 02 6772 0101 or  
admin@beyondempathy.org.au

# BE.KEYSUPPORTERS



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- SUZANNE WEIR

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- HUGHENDEN HOTEL
- MALLESONS



JUST.BE is the newsletter of  
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