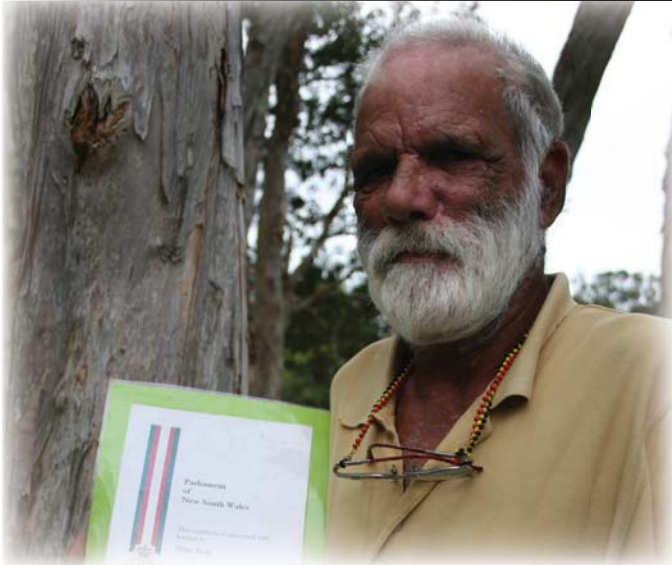




# KEMPSEY KOORI ARTS CENTRE

## Newsletter - Issue 1 - April 2008

### ART AND ARTISTS ON THE RIVER WITH MILTON BUDGE



*Milton holding his prestigious 2007 Parliament of NSW Indigenous Art Prize for his 2 part work, "Ration Day Times"*

"Welcome to our first newsletter, which has been created to let you know that things are really happening with the Kempsey Arts Centre for Koori artists!

Milton Budge is a successful and multi-award winning artist who was born and raised here on the Macleay River. After hearing Milton's story behind his award winning paintings, "Ration Day Times"; it seemed a good way to start our newsletter because the truth behind the story will be useful to remember during our journey of establishing the Arts Centre.

In his explanation of the story behind the paintings, Milton says: "We were put at Burnt Bridge. It was thought we would get into trouble, but as the rations taught us, it didn't pull us down, it pulled us together. I call it the 'Circle of Love'."

Milton believes that this Arts Centre is critically important for his people. "There are Arts Centres up and down the coast, yet Kempsey, with the largest Koori population, has no Arts Centre", he says. He knows through his teaching with TAFE that once the artists get going they "...really take, but Kempsey has been far behind in respect of these opportunities for too many years - and it's time to change that. This River has incredible talent."

Milton firmly believes that "We can give our kids a future by nurturing their talent. Telling stories through the art can foster understanding, bringing people and communities together." It is time to remember Milton's "circle" to ensure that the Arts Centre becomes a reality, and furthermore, an artistic, cultural and commercial success.

We already have artists willing to put their weight behind this project to ensure its success. "This is only the beginning. Once the Arts Centre gets moving, everything will blossom." Says Milton. "I will come to work everyday, I will be there. I will do this for the groups, I will do this for the River." He says.

The project also has great employment potential for painters, administrative staff, management, framers, carvers and weavers. More employment opportunities will be created along with the growth of the project. Milton says that "If we leave the



*Part Two of "Ration Day times"*

door open, they will come. Give the people the tools and the guidance and their pride and ability will flourish."

Talking to Milton about future exhibitions, you can't help but share his vision. He sees an interweaving of diverse styles and mediums combining to make an outstanding contribution of art to the region. When you consider the amount of people who will come to work together to make this Arts Centre a success, you also can't help but envision the positive impact it will have on the future of Kempsey and its people.

*(\* The images of Milton Budge's art in this newsletter have been used with his express permission)*



## ART CENTRE COORDINATOR

Great news - The Federal Government (DEEWR) has provided funding to Durri to recruit an Arts Centre Co-ordinator for the project. It is proposed that the Steering Committee will assist Bernard Goldman, who is working on the Arts Centre project, in recruiting for the position of Co-ordinator, as the artists are well-positioned to advise on many of the skills and characteristics the successful candidate should possess.

Some artists have indicated that they would like to see applicants with experience in both art sales and indigenous art. The job will be advertised shortly.

## A HOME FOR OUR ARTS CENTRE

Bernard has been in negotiation with Kempsey Council for the past six months to secure a space at the Visitor Information Centre (VIC). Well located on the Highway South of Kempsey's town centre, it is also right next to the proposed "Wutuma" site. Current negotiation involves an initial six month arrangement for use of the annexe at the VIC. Approval for use of the annexe will be put before Kempsey Council at its May meeting. Funding has been sought to ensure the art is presented in a professional manner.



## THE INDIGENOUS ARTS COMMITTEE

Bernard has also been meeting with local artists to exchange ideas on establishing a Steering Committee for the Arts Centre. Discussion has included the qualities that would be required of the Committee to ensure its cohesiveness and success. Some of the artist's ideas include that the Committee Members would need to:

- \* Be supportive of the Co-ordinator;
- \* Have enough confidence to ask questions regarding the running of the centre; and
- \* Be able to keep a cool head!

Bernard advised the artists that they will receive training to sit on a Committee so they can effectively run the Centre with the Arts Centre Coordinator. It is expected that the Committee will meet from four to six times per year. The call for more artists to come forward is still open. It is a perfect opportunity to be part of such an exciting project, so don't miss it.

On the subject of Committees, a Business Steering Committee will also be established to provide strategic advice

## THE INDIGENOUS ARTS COMMITTEE CONT...

on the commercial aspect of the Arts Centre. This Committee will be comprised of business people and community leaders. It is time to start thinking about people who will have the time, expertise and passion to act in this capacity, so if you know of someone who would be willing to sit on either the Artists Steering Committee or the Business Steering Committee, please let Bernard know.

## ENCOURAGING WORDS

For many years Kempsey Aboriginal people have wanted and needed a place for culture: a place to preserve and share the stories, artefacts, art and history of the Koori people of the Macleay. The Arts Centre is only the beginning. The Steering Committee has directed Bernard to establish the Arts Centre as the First Phase. Other Phases, including a broadcasting facility and meeting place, will follow if the Arts Centre is a success. That's why Phase One is so critical.

The Mid North Coast Area Consultative Committee has funding to retain Bernard Goldman to work with the community and various funding bodies to make this happen. The overall cultural project is being steered by a Committee of local Koori people and Managers from a number of funding agencies who have faith in the project. Don't miss the next newsletter for more information on how our project is progressing.

***Bernard would appreciate you contacting him if you have any ideas to discuss or problems that need to be solved. His contact details are below.***



**This first newsletter is presented to you by Bernard Goldman as part of his undertaking to keep you informed of the project's progress. If you do not want to receive this newsletter, please contact Bernard on 02 49720446 or 0427 710155 or email: [bernard.goldman@btgpond.com](mailto:bernard.goldman@btgpond.com)**

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