#### August 2025 Edition

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#### Yarrabah Literacy for Life Foundation: Changing Lives Through the Power of Words

In Yarrabah, one of Australia's largest Aboriginal communities, a quiet transformation is taking place. Adults who once struggled to read and write are now proudly holding certificates, writing their own names, and helping their children with homework — achievements many thought were out of reach.

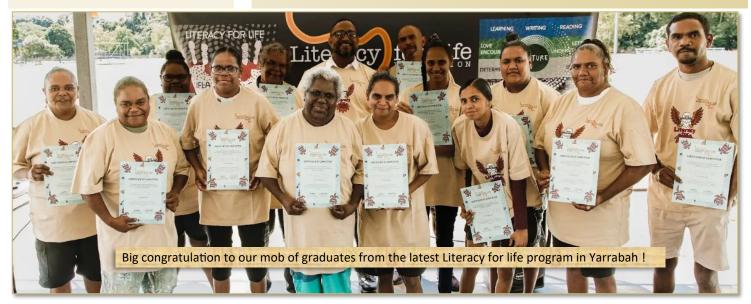
The Literacy for Life Foundation's "Yes, I Can!" program began in Yarrabah in 2021, part of a nationwide push to lift Aboriginal adult literacy rates. Inspired by a Cuban model and led by local facilitators, the program puts the community in charge. Teachers are trained from within Yarrabah, ensuring cultural knowledge and respect guide every lesson.

The impact has been profound. Dozens of

adults have already graduated, with many saying the program gave them confidence to seek jobs, manage everyday tasks, and engage more fully with services. As one participant shared, "I wanted to learn to read so I could write to my kids and understand what comes in the mail. Now I can."

This success has drawn national attention. In July 2025, the federal government announced \$12 million in funding to expand Literacy for Life courses across Far North Queensland, including Yarrabah, Mapoon, Mossman, and Cairns.

Yarrabah's story is just the beginning — turn to page 7 to read more about the program's journey, local voices, and what's next for the community.



Kerryn Smith, Shirley Barlow (class rep), Ethel Wilson, Nerida Costello, Clarine Sands, Beverley King, Leon Moidin (class rep), Zoe-Anne Sands, Alton Sands, Ashleigh Richards, Petrea Costello, Nicole Gordon, Dorothy Dabah, Lex Costello.



Like and follow **Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council—YASC** on Facebook for more up-to-date events and community stories from Yarrabah



# Mayor's <u>Message</u>

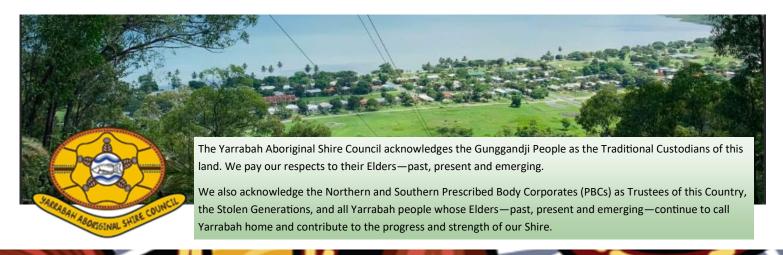
Over the past year, the Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council has embarked on a journey of growth and renewal, marked by significant developments that promise to enhance the lives of our residents.

One of the most visible signs of progress can be seen at Bulguru Park, beside Swamp Road, where new transitional buildings are taking shape. This initiative is part of a broader vision to transform housing within the community. The ongoing construction at Djenji itself will replace the existing fourteen wooden homes with twenty-six modern brick homes, offering safer and more durable living conditions for families.

The Council's commitment extends beyond housing. With steadfast dedication, it continues to advocate on behalf of the community to the Queensland Government, championing projects and visions that align with the aspirations of Yarrabah's people. A key focus has been the pursuit of increased employment opportunities. Through collaboration with various government agencies, the Council strives to create pathways that empower residents economically and socially.

In a significant achievement, the Council has secured funding to upgrade the water supply and pump stations, a vital infrastructure enhancement that will support the community's health and well-being. Additionally, the new State Government has honoured its pre-election commitment by providing funds for a business case supporting the development of a Multi-Purpose Refuge Centre, a facility that will serve as a beacon of support and refuge and to offer shelter during cyclones and Natural Disasters.

Amid these advancements, the Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council takes a moment to express sincere gratitude to Mr. Richard Wright and Ms. Leona Worrell. Their tireless dedication and invaluable contributions have left an indelible mark on the organization. As they embark on new chapters in their lives, the Council wishes them every success in their future endeavours.





## **News from council**

#### **Farewell and Welcome**

This month, we bid a fond farewell to our Chief Executive Officer, Richard Wright, and Executive Assistant to the CEO and Mayor, Leona Worrell.

We thank them both for their dedication, leadership, and valuable contributions to the Yarrabah community during their time with us, and we wish them all the very best in their future endeavours.

We also warmly welcome Mark Kelleher (photo on left), who will be stepping in as our Interim Chief Executive Officer. Mark brings a wealth of experience and a commitment to supporting our community through this transition period.

Please join us in saying goodbye and thank you to our outgoing team members, and in making Mark feel at home here in Yarrabah.



### PJ Day at the Daycare – Fun, Comfort, and Smiles All Around!

Our daycare children and staff swapped their usual clothes for something a little more cozy – their favourite pajamas! PJ Day was filled with laughter, comfort, and excitement as the children proudly showed off their fun sleepwear, from superheroes and princesses to fluffy animals and colourful patterns.

The day was all about creating a relaxed and joyful atmosphere where children could feel comfortable and celebrate together. We enjoyed storytime snuggled up in our PJs, music and movement games, and a special morning tea that made the day even more memorable.

Events like PJ Day not only bring fun and creativity into the centre, but also help children build friendships, share experiences, and feel part of a caring community.

A big thank you to all the families who joined in by dressing their children in PJs – your support made the day extra special!



## AUGUST / SEPTEMBER HAPPENINGS

22 - 31 August -

Cairns Birding Festival, Various Locations.

Saturday 23 August -

Cairns Indian Festival.

29 August - 7 September -

Cairns Festival, Various Locations.

Saturday 30 August -

Yarrabah Music & Cultural Festival

Saturday 30 August -

Cairns Festival Parade & Fireworks, Esplanade

Saturday 23 August -

Freshwater Festival, Tropical Street Fiesta

Saturday 6 September -

Babinda harvest Festival

Saturday 6 September -

AFLW: Hawthorn v St Kilda

Thursday 11 September -

"Are you Okay?" Day

Saturday 13 September -

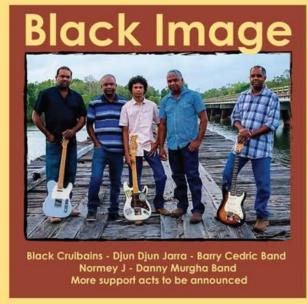
PNG's 50th Independence Anniversary Ball, Pullman Reef Casino

ASK RU**●**K?<sup>™</sup>

It can make a big difference

# VARRABALI WUSIC & CULTURAL FESTIVAL

FREE ENTRY SATURDAY 30TH OF AUGUST 2025 STARTS 12PM



All community members and visitors welcome Bring your family, your culture, and your pride





















**AUGUST EXTERNAL SERVICES 2025** 

WEEK 1

FRIDAY 01 I PODIATRIST

WEEK 2

TUESDAY 05 I DR SUTCLIFFE

WEDNESDAY 06 I EXERCISE PHYSIO, PHYSIO, OT, OPTOMETRIST, PEDIATRIC

WEEK 3

MONDAY 11 I AUSTRALIAN HEARING TUESDAY 12 I PODIATRIST WEDNESDAY 13 I AUSTRALIAN HEARING FRIDAY 15 I AUSTRALIAN HEARING, DIABETES EDUCATOR

WEEK 4

WEDNESDAY 20 I DIETITIAN, EXERCISE PHYSIO, OT, DR BEN REEVES, OPTOMETRIST, PEDIATRIC

THURSDAY 21 I SONOGRAPHER

WEEK 5

TUESDAY 26 I DR SUTCLIFFE , DR BOYD, LIVER CLINIC WEDNESDAY 27 I FROGS CLINIC

# Yarrabah Arts & Gultural Precinct at CIAF 2025: "Pay Attention"

This year, Yarrabah Arts & Cultural Precinct proudly returns to the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF) with a powerful exhibition aligned with the 2025 theme, "Pay Attention." Our artists bring to life a raw and unapologetic response to the call: **"In 2025, our voices still rise."** 

The Voice Referendum may have passed without change, but here in Yarrabah and in many other First Nations communities **the fight continues**. Through painting, textiles, and ceramics, our artists speak truth to power. They shine a light on lived realities: the legacy of overcrowded housing, the persistent sting of racism, and the deep yearning to disconnect from the noise of modern life to reconnect with Country and Culture.

Our artworks tell stories of **getting away from the house, the phone, and the TV, back to hunting and gathering, walking gently with Country, and passing on knowledge through action and presence.** This return to self and place is not a retreat, but a bold act of resistance. In quietness, there is clarity. In stillness, power. In connection, healing.

















## Varrabah Arts & Gultural Preeinct Shines at Country to Couture 2025



On 5 August, the Yarrabah Arts and Cultural Precinct (YACP) took center stage at *Country to Couture 2025* in Darwin, showcasing their breathtaking **Fire in the Sky Collection**. This annual fashion event celebrates the fusion of Indigenous art and high-end design, and Yarrabah's presence lit up the runway with bold creativity and cultural pride.

The Fire in the Sky Collection drew inspiration from Yarrabah's spectacular night skies, where stars, lightning and fire reflect deep ancestral stories. Each garment told a powerful narrative of Country, culture, and community, translating Yar-

rabah's artistry into contemporary fashion that captivated audiences.

Adding to the celebration, admin trainee and emerging talent Zikiah Miller-Murgha proudly represented Yarrabah by walking the runway herself. Stepping out as both model and cultural ambassador, Zikiah embodied the strength, confidence, and future leadership of Yarrabah's next generation. Her involvement was a proud moment for the Precinct, showing how YACP is nurturing pathways for young artists to shine on national stages.

Yarrabah's participation in *Country to Couture* is more than just fashion, it's about visibility, cultural expression, and creating opportunities for community voices to be seen and heard. The Fire in the Sky Collection is a reminder that Yarrabah continues to innovate, inspire, and blaze new trails in the world of Indigenous design.

#### We are so proud of our team and of Zikiah, what a milestone moment for Yarrabah!



Philomena Yeatman (left), Simone Arnol (middle), Michelle Yeatman (right)

#### Learn More About "Fire in the Sky"

Yarrabah Arts & Cultural Precinct's Fire in the Sky collection honors ancestral wisdom and sunset skies as a divine canvas. Artists Philomena Yeatman, Michelle Yeatman, Edna Ambrym, Christopher Harris, and designer Simone Arnol weave cultural stories inspired by Elders and



Picture from left to right: Philomena Yeatman, Stephen Canendo, Zikiah Miller-Murgha, Michelle Yeatman

community. The precinct supports local artists across ceramics, painting, and weaving, gaining national and international recognition. This collection reflects spiritual connection, rich sunset hues, and the enduring legacy of ancestors, inviting wearers to embrace nature's sacred beauty and cultural continuity.

Information courtesy of Country to Couture 2025 https://www.ifp.org.au/country-to-couture-2025-show-1-2/





#### The Literacy For Life Foundation Program

Yarrabah Celebrates a Step Forward in Adult Learning

Yarrabah Literacy for Life Foundation held the graduation of its 8th class of students at Jilara Oval last week. With community members and visitors in attendance, this celebration saw 14 adult learners from Yarrabah graduate from the locally led "Ufla Can" reading and writing program.

Lex Costello and Ashleigh Richards were honoured as the 500th and 501st graduating students of Literacy for Life's nationwide campaigns, with their three children, including new bub, joining them to cut the cake.

"This year the theme for NAIDOC Week is The Next Generation and Lex and Ashleigh returning to education for their young family is such a powerful example to share," says Literacy for Life Foundation Executive Director, Ngemba man, Professor Jack

"Lifting literacy has a ripple effect so it's not just 501 students we're celebrating, it's the benefit for their children, families and our communities. There's clear evidence that increased adult literacy leads to improvements in children's education, health, employment, justice and supports greater self-determination," says Beetson.

Shirley Barlow, who was elected by her fellow students as class representative, spoke on the day grateful for the local "organisations who came from near and far so we could learn about Yarrabah's history, culture, language, health, wellbeing, legal issues, budgeting and saving money". Shirley said, "For me, it's been good right through the course from the start to the end and us students have supported each other, improved our reading and writing

and had a good laugh together."

"I truly have enjoyed the program. I have bluffed my way through life so far with my reading and writing skills or lack there of. This program has final given me the confidence to be able to read to my two children without being embarrassed", shared fellow class representative, Leon Moidin.

Yarrabah Literacy for Life Foundation's next class starts at the end of July. The local team of Nadine Canon, Dwayne Street, Corine Hall and Abigail Murgha look forward to working with

the next group of adult learners



READING AND WRITING COMPUTER SKILLS CONFIDENCE

LUNCH DAILY EARN WORKFORCE POINTS PAY OFF SPER FINES

Nadine Cannon 0402 165 410 nadine.cannon@lflf.org.au 🗹 Abigail Murgha abigail.murgha@lflf.org.au

in Yarrabah to improve their reading and writing, with the ongoing support of local community stakeholders and service providers.

Following NAIDOC Week we'll be coming around the community to yarn with people about joining the course. In the words of graduate Alton Sands, the course helps "to break that shame and barrier in front of you" and says since he started the course he feels more confident and knows how to read and write.

In 2025 Literacy for Life Foundation's North Queensland training activities are supported through the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) First Nations Program. The Skills for Education and Employ-

ment (SEE) First Nations Program is funded by the **Australian Government Department of Employment** and Workplace Relations.

Contact the local team if you're interested in joining the next class

nadine.cannon@lflf.org.au or 0402 165 410; abigail.murgha@lflf.org.au



Scan the QR Code to watch the ABC News in YouTube



Scan the QR Code to Read the Literacy for Life Article

The success of Yarrabah Literacy for Life classes has been the launchpad for new classes starting this year in Cairns, Mossman and Mapoon.

If you have family in these communities, let them know Literacy for Life has started up. For more information call:

Cairns - Georgia 0409 900 821 / Mossman - Jody 0448 661 721

Mapoon - Brad 0491 386 162

Facebook Page (Yarrabah Literacy for Life Foundation) please to like, follow, and share.















#### A Week of Wonderful Transformation Thanks to RACQ Foundation!

Our community is absolutely buzzing with gratitude after a phenomenal week with the RACQ Foundation! A dedicated team of 20 volunteers rolled up their sleeves and brought incredible energy, vision, and hard work to some of our most cherished community spaces. Their efforts have created lasting benefits for us all:

- Nourishing Spaces: They helped establish a beautiful, calming new garden at the Women's Elders Hub, providing a tranquil green oasis for reflection and connection. (Please note, outdoor seating for this wonderful space is yet to be installed, further enhancing its appeal in the near future!)
- Vibrant Public Art & Clean Green Spaces: Our Bishop Malcolm Park now shines brighter! Volunteers tackled cleanup around the majestic trees, while inspiring local talent Nathan Mundraby to create a stunning mural at the park stage, extending to the new Wungu Beach amenities. This captivating art enriches our public spaces and celebrates our local culture, making our community even more inviting.
- Growing Community at the Men's Shed: A major clean-up at the Men's Shed led to the creation of a fantastic market garden with raised beds and a dedicated yarning circle! This initiative isn't just about fresh produce; it's about fostering wellbeing, shared learning, and offering an exciting opportunity for our youth to get involved in sustainable food growing right here in our community.
- Fresh Threads for Our Community: Adding to their incredible impact, the RACQ Foundation also facilitated a fantastic initiative with Thread Together, who generously provided free, brand-new clothes for the community to choose from at the community event held on July 24, 2025. This wonderful contribution directly benefited many families, offering dignity and practical support.

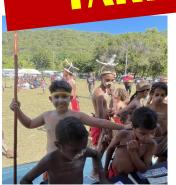
The RACQ Foundation's commitment has truly uplifted our community, making our shared spaces more beautiful, functional, and connected, while also providing tangible support to our residents. We extend our warmest thanks for their invaluable contribution!







# YARRABAH NAIDOC 2025









Families, schools, and community groups proudly joined the NAIDOC March, walking together in celebration of culture, strength, and unity. The day wrapped up with music, laughter, and community spirit—reminding everyone of the importance of this year's NAIDOC theme.











# YARRABAH NAIDOC WEEK PHOTOS

















Yarrabah celebrated **NAIDOC Week 2025** with a community march, cultural performances, and family activities under the theme *"The Next Generation: Strength, Vision & Legacy."* Elders shared wisdom, youth showcased talent, and the community came together in unity to honour culture, pride, and future generations.























ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF GURRINY YEALAMUCKA FACEBOOK, GMYPP FACEBOOK, YARRABAH STATE SCHOOL FACEBOOK

## Let's Keep Yarrabah Peaceful: A Reminder About Noise Pollution

Noise pollution affects everyone in our community. Loud music, revving engines, or late-night gatherings can disturb families, children, and our Elders who need rest. While we all enjoy celebrating and spending time together, it's important to be mindful of the noise we make, especially during the evening and early morning hours.

Being considerate with noise helps keep Yarrabah a safe and peaceful place for all. Please remember: keep music at a respectful level, avoid unnecessary loud noise late at night, and think of your neighbours.

A little courtesy goes a long way — together, we can make sure our community is enjoyable and comfortable for everyone.



9pm - 8am Sunday to Thursday and on Public Holidays

12am - 8am Friday, Saturday or the day before a Public Holiday

## COLD WEATHER TIPS



- · LAYER UP!
- KEEP HANDS, FEET & HEAD WARM.
- STAY DRY.
- EAT HOT MEALS.
- KEEP MOVING.

#### **COMMON COLD CARE**

- REST UP.
- DRINK PLENTY.
- EAT FRESH & HEALTHY.
- BREATHE STEAM.
- GARGLE SALT WATER.



#### Stay Warm and Safe: Cold Weather Tips for Yarrabah

As the cooler months set in, it's important to look after ourselves, our families, and our Elders. Cold weather can affect our health, especially for young children, older people, and anyone with medical conditions. Here are some simple tips to help keep warm and safe:

- Keep warm indoors: Close windows and doors to keep out drafts.
   Use blankets, rugs, and warm clothing.
- **Dress in layers:** Wearing several light layers keeps you warmer than one heavy piece of clothing. Don't forget socks and beanies.
- **Stay active:** Gentle movement, stretching, or walking around the house helps keep your body warm.
- **Eat warm meals and drinks:** Soups, teas, and hot meals help maintain body temperature.
- Check on others: Look out for Elders, neighbours, and anyone who might need extra support during the cold.

Together we can keep our community healthy and comfortable this winter.



#### Protect Yourself and Our Community: Get Your Flu Vaccine



Flu season is here, and the best way to protect yourself, your family, and our Elders is by getting the flu vaccine. The flu can make people very sick, especially young children, older adults, and those with health conditions.

The vaccine is safe, free for many people, and available through local health clinics. It only takes a few minutes but can prevent weeks of illness.

By getting vaccinated, you not only protect yourself but also help keep our whole community healthy.



Speak to Gurriny Yealamucka Health Services today to book your flu shot.

### MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

#### What is mental health?

Mental health is a crucial aspect of overall health that influence how we handle stress, relate to others and make choices. Some illnesses have symptoms that may affect a person's thinking, perception, mood or behaviour. Good mental health allows individuals to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities and contribute positively to their communities.

#### How do I take care of my mental health?

Talk to someone you trust

Look after your physical health

→ Do activities/hobbies you enjoy

Steer away from harmful substances

Consult with a counsellor

If you or someone you know may be experiencing symptoms or showing signs of poor mental health, contact the following helplines for professional confidential help:





Anxiety



Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)



Depression



Substance Abuse



Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)



**Eating Disorders** 

"It's ok not to be ok"

Stand up against the stigma



## Rubbish and Recycling Tips



#### **Rubbish & Recycling Tips**

Let's keep Yarrabah clean and green! Remember to:

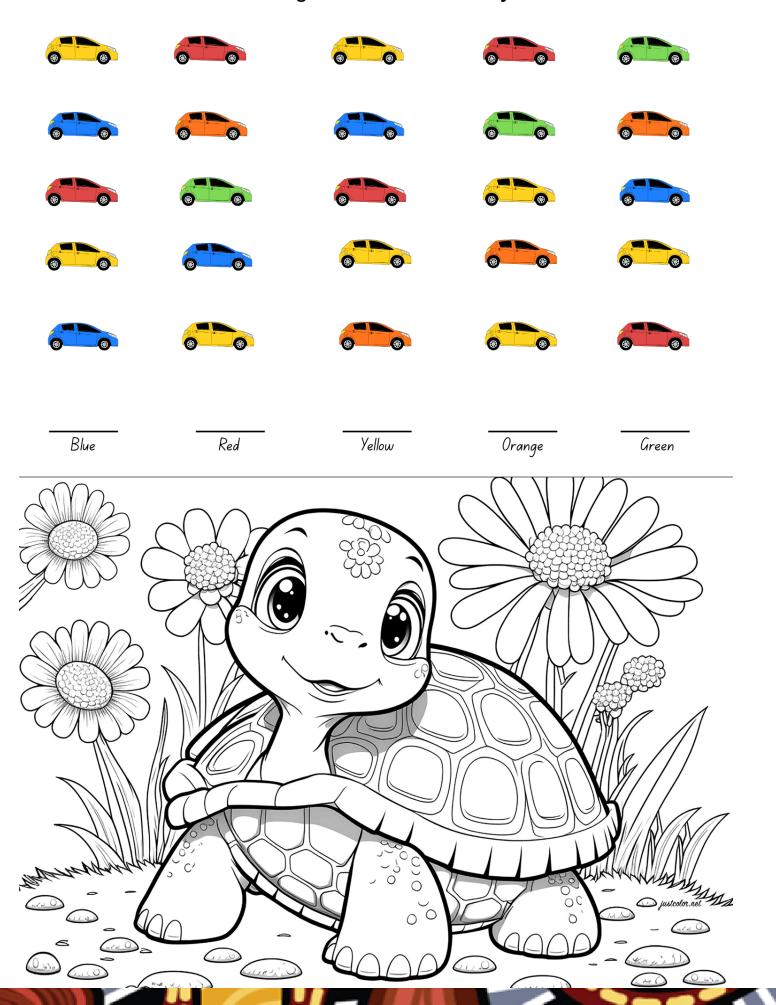
- Put bottles, cans, plastics, and cardboard in the recycling bin.
- Rinse containers before recycling.
- Put food scraps and general waste in the rubbish bin.
- Use reusable bags and bottles to cut down waste.
- Don't dump rubbish take big items to the waste facility.

Small actions make a big difference for our community and environment.



## **Color Cars**

Circle the matching cars and write how many there are







#### Yarrabah Noise Complaint

#### Yarrabah Station QPS

Adress: 644 Back Beach Road, Yarrabah, 4871 Hours: Monday - Friday, 8am -Phone Number (07) 4068 4022



Housing repairs and Maintenance request

Tenants can call Obuild

All Repairs and Maintenance Requests are to be made by the tenant by the use of the blue phone (located outside of the Housing Office at the Training Centre)

#### **Community Service**

SES - 132 500

Police Link EG. Noisy Parties - 131 444

BAS (QBUILD) - 1300 650 910

Emergencies - Fire / Police / Ambulance - 000

PCYC - 4056 9112

Gurriny Health Services - 4226 4100

\*Information regarding contacting SES - any call out for assistance, community members must ring the Control Room. They will then get onto the local crew to attend. DO NOT ring local SES members directly

#### **Queensland Public Holiday for 2025**

New Years - 1 January

Australia Day - 27 January

Good Friday - 18 April

Holy Saturday - 19 April

Easter - 20 April

ANZAC Day - 25 April

Labour Day - 5 May

Kings Official Birthday - 6 October

Christmas Eve - 24 December

Christmas Day - 25 December

Boxing Day - 26 December

#### **Yarrabah Community Public Holidays**

Survival Day - Monday 27 January

Yarrabah Foundation Day - 17 June

Yarrabah NAIDOC - Friday 11 July

Cairns Annual Show - Friday 18 July.

Yarrabah DOGIT Day - Monday 27 October



#### Did you know YASC can help remove abandoned vehicles?

Abandoned vehicles aren't just an eyesore—they can attract pests, spread disease, and become targets for vandalism or fire, putting people and property at risk. They also make our community look neglected.

If you know of an abandoned vehicle, or need one removed, contact the Yarrabah Works Department on (07) 4056 0120.

Together, we can keep our community safe, clean, and hazard-free.







#### **Yarrabah Community Bus Service**

The Yarrabah Community Bus Service runs to and from Edmonton/Mt Sheridan on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. It's a good idea to get to the bus stop a few minutes early and make sure you signal the driver as the bus appro

#### YARRABAH → EDMONTON / MT SHERIDAN Monday, Wednesday, Friday service.

#### YARRABAH → EDMONTON / MT SHERIDAN

#### **EDMONTON / MT SHERIDAN** → YARRABAH

Stop Location	MON, WED, FRI	Stop Location	MON, WED, FRI
Wugu Nyambil Yarrabah (Noble St)	9:00am	Mt Sheridan Plaza (Barnard Dr) Stop A	1:30pm
Cattle St (Old Bruce Hwy)	9:45am	Cattle St (Old Bruce Hwy)	1:35pm
Mt Sheridan Plaza (Barnard Dr) Stop A	9:50am	Wugu Nyambil Yarrabah (Noble St)	2:20pm



K/NET/C This is a 6-month trial service operated by Kinetic. For more information contact Kinetic Customer Service at 07 5552 2700.







The Yarrabah Community Newsletter is produced by Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council on a monthly basis. Input is encouraged from community members. Please email suggested notices and stories for consideration to Con digital copy of this newsletter is available on Council's website and will be promoted through our Facebook page and 4k followers. Advertising is available - please call Council on 4056 9120 to discuss.

## The Yarrabah Community Newsletter

#### Calling All Community Members, Organisations & Local Business!

#### Got something to share?

We're looking for stories, photos, events, achievements, artwork, and more for our next community newsletter and we'd love to feature yours!

Whether you're a local business, community group, or resident, this is your chance to celebrate what makes Yarrabah strong and proud.

#### You can submit:

- Community news or events
- Achievements (staff/students)
- Photos or artwork
- Program or training info
- Cultural stories or local history
- Job ads or public notice



### CommnityServices@yarrabah.qld.gov.au

Need help? Reach out to us!



