Welcome to the Macleay Valley Youth Matters update with information on the Youth Advisory Council, Kempsey Shire Council and other news of interest for kids and young people.

Meet some of the YAC team

From left local ambassadors and youth activists: Gemma Clarke, Stacey Lee Morris, Dale Chapman, Cheridyn Bennett and Ramona Marsters.

Do you have an idea that would benefit the youth of the Macleay? Would you like to be involved in community and youth events? If so, contact the Macleay Valley Youth Advisory Council and they maybe able to help you out or arrange to come and visit your school. Contact: YAC@kempsey.nsw.gov.au

The YAC team provides the opportunity for young people aged 12 to 25 years of age to talk, share ideas, plan events, showcase their skills and be actively involved their local community.

Voluntary membership offers young people the chance to be heard and voice their opinions in regard to environment, arts and culture, sports and recreation, education, public spaces and social issues, as well as be involved in leadership, project and events, personal development and team work.

Visit Macleay Valley Youth—YAC on Facebook for more info.
young people advisory committee (YPAC)

Gemma Clarke has been nominated from the Kempsey Shire Council’s Youth Advisory Council (YAC) to join the Young People Advisory Committee (YPAC), which is a subcommittee of the NSW Advisory Council to provide advice on the management and operation of 2015 Youth Week activities across the state.

Youth Week is an opportunity for young people to express their ideas and views, act on issues that affect their lives and create and enjoy activities and events. Youth Week is now the largest annual youth participation event in Australia.

Gemma has been involved in an array of community events including Kempsey River Festival, Youth Week 2014, Mid Coast Careers Market, Community Connect Day, Mind Your Mental Health Forum, Celebrating Diversity Day and 2013 Youth Council Conference in Dubbo.

YPAC is involved in the planning of Youth Week 2015 – It Starts with Us! from Friday 10 to Sunday 19 April 2015 incorporating:

- Judging of the Youth Week NSW design competition;
- Development of the marketing strategy and Youth Week launch;
- Advising on strategies to increase the level of participation of young people across the state and in local area;
- Judging of the Local Government Youth Week Awards.

“There are lots of way young people can be involved, whether it’s nominating young volunteers and achievers, being involved in planning local events with the Macleay Valley Youth Advisory Council or submitting a design for Youth Week 2015” stated Gemma Clarke (YAC ambassador).

For more information on Youth Week 2015 or to submit a design visit www.youthweek.nsw.gov.au or to partake in local Youth Week activities in the Macleay contact Vicki Martin on 6566 3200 or email Vicki.Martin@kempsey.nsw.gov.au

t-shirt designs

The YAC team is looking for creative designs for new YAC t-shirts reflective of the spirit and region of the Macleay.

If you have an idea or design that you would like to see on YAC t-shirts email Cherdyn.bennett@kempsey.nsw.gov.au or call 6566 3200.

A movie pack is up for grabs!!
get to know ricky sharp (YAC)

Position: YMCA Logistics Coordinator
Committee Advising: Health

Past experience in Youth and Government (Y&G)? I have been involved in the Youth Parliament (YP) program for two years, representing the electorate of Oxley (Deputy Premier’s electorate) in 2012 and I was a MLC in 2013. I have been in the Committees Investigating Justice, Juvenile Justice and Police and Rural and Regional Affairs. I was also a taskie for the Parliament Primary School Program earlier this year.

Favourite Y&G memory? RARA committee (Rural and Regional Affairs) in 2013! We were so supportive of each and other and we passed our Reduction of Alcohol Related Incidents Bill & Report. It was an issue we were all passionate about and the support towards emotional stories shared and debates in the chamber, really highlights just how incredible Y&G is. I must also give a shout out to Ruby, my committee advisor in my first year of YP, because I was really quiet and I was nervous about the entire program, however she guided me heaps throughout the program and at the end of it, It was the best camp and I walked away with so many amazing memories.

Most looking forward to at Junior Parliament? What isn't there to look forward to? I am keen to see how the participants support each other throughout the program and are welcoming and accepting to everyone for their ideas, and the individuals for who they are.

Words of advice? Be yourself and don’t be nervous! Make the most of camp because it has a lot to offer!

YMCA NSW Junior Parliament from 19-24 September 2014 is a unique opportunity for young people aged 12-15 years to represent their communities at NSW Parliament House. Participants travel from across the state to take place in this youth leadership program that is facilitated by a volunteer taskforce that are young people themselves and have been previously involved in the YMCA Youth & Government programs.

This opportunity enables young people in the community to represent the youth voice on issues that your local community may be facing. For more information on YMCA NSW Junior Parliament or Youth & Government programs, visit http://www.ymcansw.org.au/centres/youth-government To register for the Junior Parliament program, use this link here: http://www.jotformpro.com/YMCANSWYthParl/juniorparl14

The YAC will sponsor one lucky student to attend (participant cost $400). We are currently seeking nominations from young people that are currently in years 7-9, able to attend the full duration of Residential Camp, with a desire to further leadership skills and who are interested in debating and public speaking. To apply contact Vicki Martin at Kempsey Shire Council on 6566 3200 or email Vicki.Martin@kemspey.nsw.org.au
Students – it’s that time of year when many of you are getting serious about assessment tasks and exams. Our libraries are a great space to work – quiet corners, large tables to spread out your work, and free Wi-Fi at all library branches with no log in or password required.

Your library is free so why not drop in this week and check out what’s on offer. For library members, there is a range of HSC and senior level text books and other study material available to borrow. You can also access high quality digital content via the library webpage – newspaper and magazine articles, literary criticism, science videos and research papers, and loads more – all of which can make the difference between you producing a pass level assignment and one which gets high marks.

Digital content is also available from your home, so why not contact us and find out how we can help you ‘aim high’?

Not a member?

Join online at http://mnclibrary.org.au/ - select ‘membership’ from the ‘services’ drop down menu and complete the online application, or call into any branch of Kempsey Shire Libraries with your ID and proof of address.

Mental health month this October is fast approaching. The theme this year is “be YOUnique!”

Kempsey Mental Health Steering Committee will attend the Thursday market day in Clyde Street Mall and support the annual BBQ for people with lived experience, and are seeking community donations to help make the events successful.

Some donation ideas:
+ Food hampers,
+ Store vouchers,
+ Personal care packs,
+ Lucky door prizes.

Main prizes are also sought for Mental Health Month Raffle (1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes) to raise money for the community support group “The Equalizers”, who will be attending the local markets to give out information and self-care packs, and have a Zumba demonstration. For further details of event contact Dale Chapman at dchapman@chessemployment.com.au or call 0448893579.

The NSW Government has released Youth Opportunities funding for projects which seek to empower at risk young people to develop leadership skills, self confidence and participate more fully in their community. For more information visit www.youth.nsw.gov.au or call the Office of Communities on (02) 8762 9838. Application close on Monday 29 September.
young girls’ mission

Mikayla Brett from Smithtown Public School is conducting a campaign to gather community support for a zebra crossing near Smithtown Public School to make the roads safer for fellow students. If you would like to sign the petition, please contact Smithtown Public School on 6567 4529.

what is your little big idea?

If you’re in Grades 3 to 8, chances are you've got some great ideas bouncing around and we want to hear all about them. All you need to do is:

1. Come up with a great idea. It could be a new invention, a smart way to save energy or a clever idea that helps people or makes their lives easier.
2. Describe your idea in 200 words or less and submit a video or drawing to help get your idea across.

indigenous youth leadership program (ILP)

IYLP is a seven week leadership and community engagement program for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people aged 18 - 30 years. Volunteers will take part in a leadership course before flying off to Vanuatu for a six week community project working alongside Ni-Van young people. Please spread the word, and send your applications in through the website. This program runs through the support of the Prime Minister and Cabinet’s Office. For more information see http://voiceaustralia.org.au/program/indigenous-youth-leadership-program-iylp/

further study....?

Are you thinking about further education?
If you are not sure what to do after Year 12, Kempsey Library has just purchased the 'Good Universities Guide 2014' - a comprehensive look at Australian Universities, TAFEs and other course providers. This 580 page book contains up to date information on choosing a course, how to apply, and various rankings and ratings of courses and institutions. It also contains student feedback, advice and information on the quality of teaching, facilities and services. This book is for viewing in the Kempsey Shire Library only, however pages can be photocopied on request.

generation change project

The project is aimed at promoting youth volunteering within schools and local communities. The project encourages youth to share their stories about volunteering and what it means for them. Whether it’s a picture, video or just a story Youth Link Australia wants to hear about it.

Youth are encouraged to upload their stories to social media using the tag #GenerationalChangeProject or the Youth Link Australia website www.yla.org.au.

For further enquiries contact Youth Link Australia info@youthlinkaustralia.org.
youth week 2015 nsw design competition

Do you love art and design? Do you want to have your creative design seen across NSW?
Do you want to win $1,000?
The NSW Youth Week Design Competition provides young people with the opportunity to showcase their talent as a designer and to win $1,000 cash prize. The winning design will be used to brand Youth Week 2015 in NSW materials that are distributed across the state including promotional posters, banners, temporary tattoos, the NSW Youth Week Website and social media platforms!

Youth Week is an opportunity for young people to express their ideas and views, act on issues that affect their lives and create and enjoy activities and events. Youth Week is now the largest annual youth participation event in Australia. In 2014, over one hundred thousand young people participated in hundreds of Youth Week events across NSW.

Young people will need to create a design for Youth Week 2015 that includes:
1 The National Youth Week logo (choose one of the logos available at www.youthweek.nsw.gov.au/downloads),
2 The words ‘Youth Week 2015’,
3 The dates of Youth Week 2015 (10 to 19 April 2015),
4 The Youth Week in NSW website address: www.youthweek.nsw.gov.au

Send your design and your completed Entry Form to either youthweek@youthweek.nsw.gov.au or mail to NSW Youth Week Coordinator, Office of Communities, PO Box K403, Haymarket NSW 1240

sculpture in the gaol

This bi-annual event is now on at Trial Bay Goal in South West Rocks. For further information visit www.sculptureinthe gaol.com.au/index.html or contact The Centre Manager, Neville Nunney at nville.nunney@environment.nsw.gov.au or phone 6566 6419.
**youth projects**

Propeller exists to celebrate and enable youth-led social change initiatives in local communities across Australia. Quality short films tell the stories of ordinarily extraordinary young people leading social change projects and are showcased on the Propeller online platform alongside helpful tips and resources.

The Propeller Fund provides grants for young people to start their own project and they're giving away $500 every week! Propeller projects are youth-led, have a social or environmental focus, demonstrate local impact and have community networks and support.


**2014 nexus australian youth summit**

The Nexus Global Youth Summit is an international movement of young people who are changing the world through philanthropy and social entrepreneurship. The Nexus Australian Youth Summit is hosted by the Foundation for Young Australians.


**unplugged**

Young and upcoming musicians are invited to come along to *unplugged* at Oddfellows Hall, from 7pm on the 4th Saturday of the month. Cost: $5 to perform or $7 to watch. For further information contact Deb Rownes at Macleay Valley Arts Council at [drownes@bigpond.com](mailto:drownes@bigpond.com)

**creative inspiration at home?**

Thanks to the Macleay Valley Arts Council, the Macleay is set to have some inspiring letterboxes jazzing up our streets. The Aussie Bush Mailbox Competition aimed to engage the community to think about public art and the role it can play in enhancing the place we live. Upcoming installations can be viewed at Sculpture in the Gaol and will soon be able to be viewed outside the Kempsey Post Office. Prizes were awarded to Sarah Anderson, ‘The Nutty Mailbox’ (Highly Commended), Grahame Bay, ‘Goanna on Banksia Stump’ (3rd Prize), Danny Roberts ‘Many a Day Behind It’ (2nd Prize) and Steve King ‘Goin’ with the Flow’ (1st prize). For more information visit [www.mvarts.org.au](http://www.mvarts.org.au)

Artwork from left to right by Sarah Anderson, Grahame Bay, Danny Roberts and Steve King.
social networking safety

Some people use social networking sites to threaten, harass or embarrass others. Criminals are also using social networking sites to access personal information and steal identities. Criminals may also attempt to use personal information to facilitate other illegal activities in the real world.

To get the most out of social networking sites you have to submit personal information about yourself. But it is important to remember that social networking sites will often offer you options to control the type of information you share with other users and options to manage the people you want to interact with. It is important to be careful about what personal information you put online and who you accept as your ‘friend’.

Here are some steps to help protect you when using social network sites:

- set your online profile to private and be discerning about who you accept as your ‘friend’,
- protect your accounts with strong passwords,
- have a different password for each social networking site so that if one password is stolen, not all of your accounts will be at risk,
- think before you post – expect that people other than your friends can see the information you post online,
- don’t post information that would make you or your family vulnerable – such as your date of birth, address, information about your daily routine, holiday plans, or your children’s schools,
- don’t post photos of you or your family and friends that may be inappropriate – or that your family and friends haven’t agreed to being posted,
- never click on suspicious links – even if they are from your friends – they may have inadvertently sent them to you,
- be wary of strangers – people are not always who they say they are. It’s a good idea to limit the number of people you accept as friends,
- always type your social networking website address into your browser or use a bookmark.

If you suspect any fraudulent use of your identity you should report it to your social networking service provider and your local police.

If you have been harassed or bullied on a social networking site, go to www.thinkuknow.org.au and www.cybersmart.gov.au for advice and tips.

If you are concerned about online behaviour that involves sexual exploitation or other criminal activity, you should report this to your local police, or phone CrimeStoppers on 1800 333 000.

If you come across content that you think may be prohibited under the Broadcasting Services Act 1992, report it to the ACMA at www.acma.gov.au/hotline

check it out!

Budd:e is an interactive fun education package, which provides information and tips on using social networking sites safely, dealing with cyber bullying, online grooming and how to secure your mobile phone.

The Cybersafety Help Button is an online resource designed to keep children and families safe online that gives easy access to cyber safety information and assistance.
dealing with cyber bullying

Like other forms of bullying such as verbal abuse, social exclusion and physical aggression, cyber bullying may result in the targeted person developing social, psychological and educational issues. While cyber bullying is similar to 'real life' bullying it also differs in some ways:

- it can occur 24/7 and a child can be targeted at home,
- it can involve harmful material being widely and rapidly sent to a large audience, for example, rumours and images can be posted on public forums,
- it can provide the bully with a sense of relative anonymity and distance from the target, so there is a lack of immediate feedback or consequences.

Here are some basic steps to help deal with cyber bullying:

- Ignore it. Don't respond to the bully. If they don't get a response they may get bored and go away.
- Block the person. This will stop you seeing messages or texts from a particular person.
- Tell someone. Tell an adult you can trust. You may want to talk to your mum, dad or a brother or sister. You can contact the Cybersmart Online Helpline service, call Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800, visit the Kids Helpline website or the Headspace centre.
- Keep the evidence. This can be useful in tracking the bully down. Save texts, emails, online conversations or voicemails as evidence.

Report it to:

- your school—they should have policies in place about bullying and cyber bullying.
- your ISP and/or phone provider, or the website administrator— there are actions they can take to help.
- the police—if there is a threat to your safety the police will help. Call Triple Zero (000) or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

For further information about cyber bullying is available at the Cybersmart website.

online help resources

For further information about safety online visit:

http://www.thinkuknow.org.au/
meet the YAC team at the festival

The Youth Advisory Council will be at the River Festival from 12pm to 3pm in the youth space. You are invited to take part in the photo booth—‘What’s Your Face?’ where you can don a mask, dress up or have you face made up. For further enquiries contact Cheridyn.Bennett@kempsey.nsw.gov.au

end poverty

From 28 September to 4 October young people will be riding to end poverty, departing from capital cities to regional and rural areas. Oaktree is looking for young Australians under the age of 26 to become Community Leaders and are calling for applications. To register by 22 August visit www.oaktree.org/roadtrip
To investigate scholarship or bursary opportunities contact Emily Haren on 0433709991 or email e.haren@oaktree.org

get licenced, get legal, get work

The purpose of this FREE Aboriginal Learner Driver Program is to support people who want to get their Learners’ Permit, through preparation for and sitting the Drivers’ Knowledge Test.
The course will run for four hours a week for seven weeks, or three hours a week for 10 weeks, depending on demand and minimum numbers.
If you are interested in the program, please contact the Aboriginal Learning Circle Coordinator Jared Horrigan on 0427 008 019 or email Jaed.horrigan2@tafensw.edu.au

calling science enthusiasts

Interested members from the community are invited to attend the official launch of the Mid North Coast Science Hub on Tuesday 2 September from 5.30 – 7.00pm at Kempsey Shire Council Chambers, 22 Tozer Street, West Kempsey.
As part of a national strategy for engagement in the sciences, the Mid North Coast Science Hub aims to:
• Deliver programs and events that encourage more young people into Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Careers,
• Stimulate broad community interest, communication and engagement with STEM,
• Equip and support educators, by providing programs that align with their curriculum.
Come and hear about the Science Hub’s first event “the MNC Regional Science Festival” to be held in conjunction with the Australian Museum in November 2014.
To RSVP contact Michelle Fisher on 0448 877 953 or email michelle.fisher@midcoastconnect.com.au
celebrating art, culture and stories
music dance visual arts film water activities
market stalls workshops

MACLEAY RIVER FESTIVAL

a FREE community event

Saturday 20 SEPTEMBER
Riverside Park, Kempsey

12 noon to 9pm

For more information contact Olivia Parker on 6566 3200 or olivia.parker@kempsey.nsw.gov.au
www.macleayriverfestival.com.au
We’re on Facebook. Visit: Macleay Valley Youth—YAC

The YAC meets the first Monday of the month from 4pm to 5pm at local cafes or the Youth Access Centre (YAC), 132 River Street, West Kempsey. Come along, meet new people and be involved in making a difference in your local area.

next YAC meetings:
- 1 September, Youth Access Centre (guest Toastmasters).
- 13 October, Youth Access Centre

youth grants, scholarships & awards:
To access opportunities visit:
- Youth Opportunities Grant—www.youth.nsw.gov.au
- UNSW Rural Scholarships—Faculty of Engineering www.engineering.unsw.edu.au/rural-engineering-scholarships

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Next issue deadline: 29 August 2014