

MEDIA RELEASE

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Indigenous Elder women – ‘caring for country’

Oral history is a significant knowledge sharing and communication tool for Aboriginal people in handing down their culture of ‘caring for country’, which is invaluable to cultural and natural resource management.

Now, Indigenous women from across southern Queensland and northern New South Wales will unite to record these oral histories, to ensure they are preserved in the future, and to share them with others.

Elder women from Roma, St. George, Goondiwindi, Boggabilla, Mungindi and Moree will attend a two-day Oral History workshop in Moree and Boggabilla, next week, to learn more about oral history recording.

The workshop will be a joint initiative of the Regional Aboriginal Elder Women’s Steering Committee and natural resource management groups Border Rivers-Gwydir CMA and the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee (QMDC).

Regional Coordinator for QMDC’s Indigenous Program, Fiona Wellington, said “We are working together to ensure maximum benefits flowing both ways, to Aboriginal community programs, as well as natural resource management programs.”

Representatives from the NSW Parks and Wildlife Service will present techniques of recording, capturing and presenting oral histories and use of audio/visual equipment to the Elders.

“Through participation and involvement in the oral history workshop, our region’s Elder women will be able to successfully plan and deliver their own oral history projects,” said Fiona.

“Elder women will learn different techniques for planning an oral history project, and for conducting recorded interviews.”

Representative Elders from Collarenebri and Boggabilla Indigenous communities will also share their experiences gathered during their recently completed oral history projects at the workshop.

Day two of the workshop will see the Elder women travel to Boobera Lagoon, near Boggabilla, to begin hands on practice and commence recording their own oral history project.

“Boobera Lagoon is a place of high cultural significance for the Goomeri people, and is also a significant meeting place for Aboriginal people visiting from all over the region,” said Fiona.

“At Boobera Lagoon, the women will form ‘yarning circles’, to share, and this time also record, their oral histories. The workshop will also help the Elder women understand how recorded interviews become published stories.”

This is the first of a number of oral history workshops planned across northern NSW and southern QLD. For more information about future workshops, or to register your interest, please contact Fiona Wellington on 0428 180 600.

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Media contact/s

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Caption: Aunty Irene Ryder (Gungarri Elder), caring and monitoring Naipan (bush passionfruit).
Photo: Fiona Wellington, October 2006



Caption: Women Elders at the recent QMDC/Roma Town Council ‘World Rural Women’s Day’ breakfast. Photo: Fiona Wellington, October 2006

For electronic copies of these photos, please contact Fiona Wellington on 0428 180 600, or fionaw@qmdc.org.au