



**THREE RIVERS  
REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

# Aboriginal Men's Yarn up 2021

Was held in Mudgee

On Thursday the 18th and Friday the 19th of March.  
Information and Registration forms were emailed out  
to all TRRA communities via our TRRA Delegates.



## TRRA Aboriginal Men's Yarn Up

*Proudly hosted By Three Rivers Regional Assembly*

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March – Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Location: Cudgegong Waters Park - Windamere Dam

Three Rivers Regional Assembly is committed to providing promotion to our communities on the issues facing Aboriginal Men in today's society. The two days aims to bring men from across TRRA footprint together to discuss important of men's business as well as provide opportunities for connection and empowerment.

Thursday 18/03/2021: Yarn up commences at 10.30 am

Friday 19/03/2021: Yarn up concludes and travel home at 12.00 pm

Accommodation will be provided at Cudgegong Water Park

**Address:**

1858 Cudgegong Road

Cudgegong, New South Wales 2849

Phone: 02 6358 8462

Website: [www.cudgegongwaterspark.com.au](http://www.cudgegongwaterspark.com.au)

The accommodation are cabins that can accommodate up to 4 to 5 people per cabin if you are not comfortable in sharing a room or sleeping on the top bunk please let us know so we can make alternative arrangements. The cabins have air-conditioning, electric lighting and power points.

Facilities available kitchen, dining, lounge room and bathrooms are available in the cabins. There are toilet and shower blocks separate to the rooms also available. All meals and refreshments will be provided if you have any dietary requirements please make sure you answer the dietary question on registration form.

If you have a medical condition we need to know about it please make sure you complete the medical question on the registration form.

### Registration: (Please complete)

The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and helps us take care of you.

#### Participant details

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Shirt Size: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Emergency contact/ Next of Kin

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Medical information

Medicare number: \_\_\_\_\_ Your Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a disability or medical condition? Yes/ No

If yes please provide details: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you taking any medication that we need to be aware of? Yes/ No

If yes please provide details of medication: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any known allergies or asthma? Yes/ No

If yes please provide details: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a diabetic? Yes/ No

If yes are please provide details: \_\_\_\_\_

In case of emergency I give permission for the first aid officer to call for ambulance at my own expense.

Sign: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**THREE RIVERS**  
**REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

## Location

The Yarn up was held over 2 half days on Wiradjuri country out at Windemere Dam.



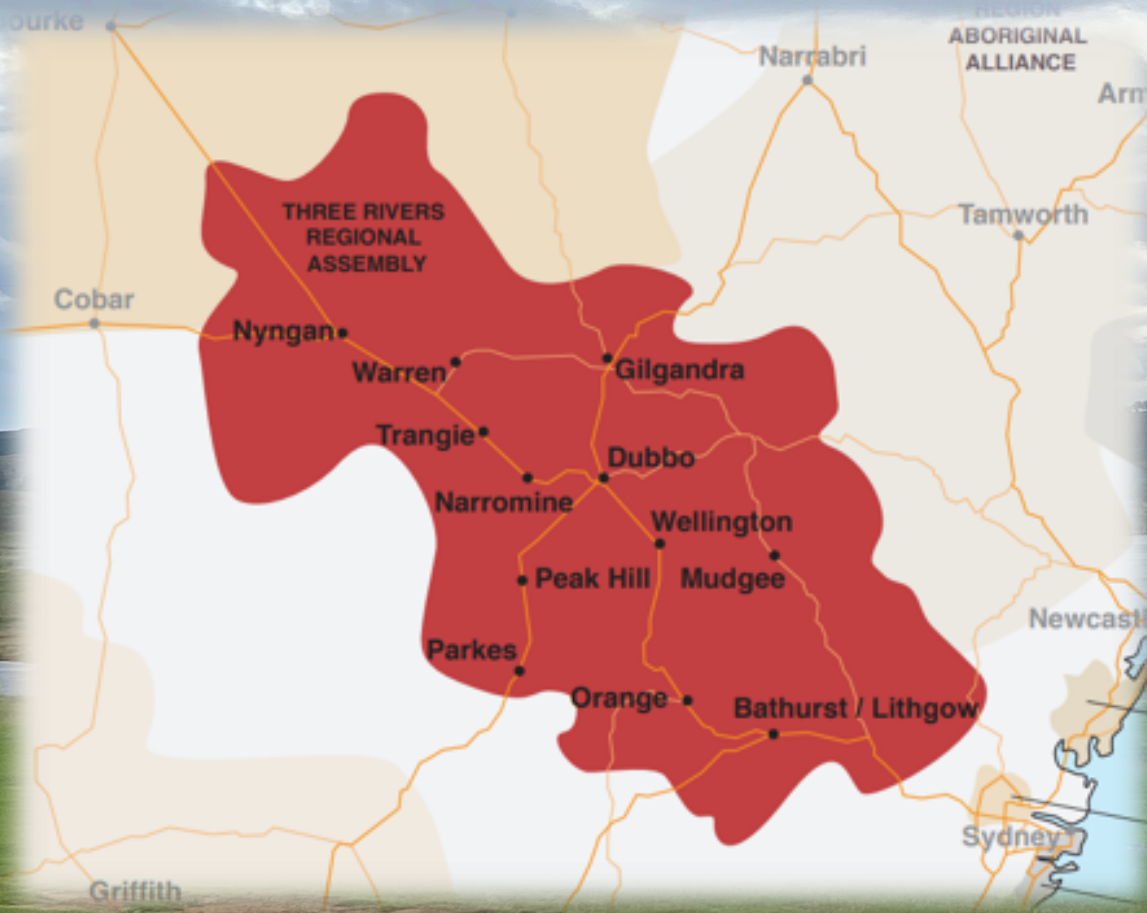


# THREE RIVERS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

## Coming together

Aboriginal Men living within our TRRA footprint came together in unity to establish relationships and partnerships by engaging in discussions regarding our physical and mental health, our empowerment and our leadership values.

Participants in attendance travelled from Mudgee, Dubbo, Forbes, Wellington, Narromine and Orange.





**THREE RIVERS**  
**REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

# Stakeholders engagement and Support

**Thank you**

To the services that provided much needed support, collaboration and advocacy throughout this event including Aboriginal Affairs, Western LHD, WACHS and PHN.



Aboriginal  
Affairs



Health  
Western NSW  
Local Health District

**phn**  
WESTERN NSW

An Australian Government Initiative



**THREE RIVERS  
REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

# Organising the event

**Thank you**

To our TRRA Committee members Tony Lonsdale, Paul Carr and Georgie Clarke who worked collaboratively together with assistance from Tony Fuller and Justin Toomey-White from Aboriginal Affairs to pull this Yarn up together and host such a meaningful and purposeful event.





**THREE RIVERS**  
**REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

## Purpose of the event

TRRA Committee members overall focus was to ensure that as Aboriginal men, we are looking after ourselves to ensure we stay true to ourselves and our culture, and to be strong for our families, mob and community.

**STRONG ABORIGINAL MEN**



**THREE RIVERS**  
**REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**



# Welcome to Country

On behalf of the Traditional Custodians of  
the Land we gathered on, we were  
welcomed by the Mudgee Chairperson  
Mrs. Aleisha Lonsdale.





# THREE RIVERS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

## Yarn up Focus

- Deliver strong messages on building capacity and resilience in Aboriginal men throughout the Three Rivers region
- To be held in a safe, welcoming and inclusive place that provides a strong social connection for personal empowerment.
- Provide our Men with knowledge and opportunities to become more actively involved in strengthening their communities.
- Build stronger relationships and create new friendships and network's across our footprint.







**THREE RIVERS**  
**REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

## Strengthening our Men's Health

Aboriginal men and health statistics prove linkages and shows that Aboriginal men are in the most need of Healing, support and attention in order to improve conditions within their own communities.

Aboriginal males have an average life expectancy which is less than that of white Australian males, and in many areas, Aboriginal health is poorer than their non-Aboriginal counterparts.

### **‘The Master program’**

The Master program was formerly known as the 'Pit Stop', a health awareness-raising program designed to target rural men to conduct health screen tests in a non-medical environment.

It was also noted that men don't always use mainstream Health services, so having alternatives are important. After discussions around this program, it was recommended to run in Forbes, Narromine, Dubbo, Wellington, Orange and Mudgee.



**THREE RIVERS**  
**REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

# Camp Fire Yarn's

**Dinner was cooked over an open fire, where the men shared yarn's and stories to connect**

Chris Ah See from WACHS Quit B Fit team spoke about the 'Tackling Aboriginal Smoking program', as part of the Closing the Gap initiative. The focus is on health promotion, awareness and prevention to provide Aboriginal people with the tools and resources to live healthier lives without smoking cigarettes.

*Note: Quit B Fit Team cover the Central West*



## QUIT B FIT

*Live Smoke Free*

<https://www.wachs.net.au>

0268 455400

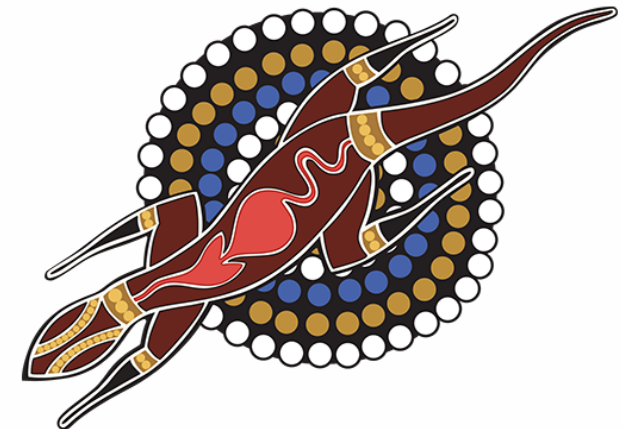
[enquiries@wachs.net.au](mailto:enquiries@wachs.net.au)

[enquiries@wachs.net.au](mailto:enquiries@wachs.net.au)

The Quit B Fit team is funded by the Australian Government to deliver the Tackling Indigenous Smoking program, as part of the Closing the Gap initiative.

The focus is health promotion, awareness and prevention program to provide Indigenous people with tools and resources to live healthier lives without smoking cigarettes.

The Quit B Fit team covers a large area of New South Wales incorporating the Central West, Far West and New England regions.



**QUIT B FIT**

# Yarning Session's



**THREE RIVERS**  
**REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

## Justin Toomey-White

Spoke about his personal battle with bowel cancer importance of getting your yearly health check and how early detection can save your life.

Justin was diagnosed with Stage 3 Bowel cancer in September 2018. He underwent 5 weeks of Chemo and Radiation in Nov/Dec 2018. Then in Jan 2019 he had 14-hour surgery to remove 48cm of his Bowel and Rectum and 18 Lymph nodes Followed by 6 months of intensive Chemotherapy to kill any possible cancer cells.

**Today Justin is in remission and is currently doing yearly coloscopy and quarter**

**bloods test done for check ups**

**DON'T DELAY**  
do a bowel test today



[https://  
www.indigenousbowelscreen.com.au/](https://www.indigenousbowelscreen.com.au/)

# Yarning Session's



**THREE RIVERS  
REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

## Albert (Blue Duck) Ryan

Spoke about his personal journey and life experiences through incarceration and how he came out wanting to be a better person and mentor for his mob and other Aboriginal men.

With statistics stating that at 30 June 2020: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners made up 29% of all prisoners.

Albert talked about supporting one another and understanding that


**"It's ok not to be ok".**

Reaching out for help and sparking those conversations with another Aboriginal person is the best way to heal and get the help we need.

**RUOK?**<sup>TM</sup>

A conversation could change a life.

<https://www.indigenous.gov.au/news-and-media/announcements/r-u-ok-day-2020-theres-more-say-after-r-u-ok>

Let's talk, we're  
stronger together  

**RUOK?**<sup>TM</sup>  
A conversation could change a life.



# Yarning Session's



**THREE RIVERS**  
**REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

## Paul West

Spoke about his battle with cancer and the importance of taking the time and making a date to get checked !

Paul was diagnosed with prostate cancer years ago finding out by having his yearly blood tests done. He underwent treatment and was one of the lucky ones to beat cancer.

Years later he was diagnosed with bowel cancer and is currently in remission. Paul tells his story in hope of instilling the importance of having regular health checks and visits to you local medical centre or GP.



**YOUR HEALTH**  
**YOUR FUTURE**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1nAOZBUy9yY>





**THREE RIVERS  
REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

# Outcome's

**This Aboriginal Men's Yarn up has provided numerous outcomes for us as Aboriginal Men including:**

- Pathways to better health education
- Increased social connection and connectedness
- Increased cultural awareness
- Strengthening of cultural identity through cultural activities and links to community networks
- Establishment of Aboriginal Men's group
- Men's group for Aboriginal men to come together to support each other with their challenges and to learn how to navigate their own challenges in healthy ways and connection to culture along with sharing and learning from one another.
- The opportunity for regular interaction and hands on activity in groups within their communities and have benefits. The improvement in their self-esteem, connecting with other men having their voices heard being able to talk openly in a safe and open environment without being judged.



**THREE RIVERS**  
**REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

## Wrap up

TRRA have hosted an amazing Yarn Up event for Aboriginal men within our footprint.

This event has given our Men the opportunity to meet up and encourage them to have regular interaction and get involved with hands on activities within their own communities.

The improvement within their self-esteem was evident as the event drew closer to an end.

It was important for our men to be able to share their stories, have their voices heard and most importantly, being able to talk openly in a safe environment without being judged.



**THREE RIVERS  
REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

## Forward Planning



**Mudgee representatives  
Tony Lonsdale and  
Uncle John Newton  
handed the Men's  
'Yarn up' message stick  
to George Clarke, who  
will host the next  
TRRA Men's gathering  
in Narromine 2022.**