

MEDIA RELEASE

MID MURRAY CELEBRATES NAIDOC WEEK WITH COMMUNITY MARCH, FAMILY FUN DAY AND SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM

NAIDOC Week celebrations will go ahead in the Mid Murray later this month to recognise the district's rich Aboriginal heritage and culture.

A number of events including a community march, all-ages celebration and a tour of the historic and culturally significant Ngaut Ngaut Conservation Park were planned for NAIDOC Week in July, but had to be postponed following a COVID-19 outbreak.

Now Mid Murray Council and the Mannum Aboriginal Community Association Inc (MACAI) plan to host the revised events in coming weeks. The events honour this year's NAIDOC Week theme of Heal Country – calling on participants to work together to protect Australia's land, waters, sacred sites and cultural heritage from exploitation, desecration and destruction.

Mid Murray's events were this year also developed in collaboration with the Murray Bridge NAIDOC Committee and expanded to include Aboriginal-led learning – a key focus of Council's new Strategic Plan.

Celebrations begin with a **NAIDOC Week School Holiday Program on Wednesday, 29 September from 11am-2pm**. Experience a Ngaut Ngaut Tour with MACAI and join Peramangk's David Booth Dance in an interactive workshop sharing stories, dance, along with a didgeridoo explanation and demonstration.

The event will explore Aboriginal customs, culture, history and the local environment through dance, storytelling and a tour of the 5,000-year-old Nganguruku site. Bookings are essential and supervision is required for children aged 10 years and under. Transport is available from Mannum, Morgan, Blanchetown, Swan Reach and Murray Bridge, but seating is limited, and a light lunch is also provided, thanks to Moorundi ACCHS.

Then come **'Together As One'** with a **Family Fun Day on Friday, 1 October at the Mannum Council office from 10.30am** with a whole community event. Beginning with a Welcome to Country, flag raising and traditional smoking ceremony, the community is also invited to join with Elders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to walk together in a show of unity and support to the Mannum Showgrounds on North Terrace.

The festivities continue at the Showgrounds, with free activities for all including wurly making, dot painting and more. The Mannum Lions Club will be assisting with a barbecue lunch, featuring traditional foods to tempt the tastebuds. You can also join in with activities offered by AC Care's Minya Porli, Moorundi, Headspace and Ngarrindjeri Ruwe Empowered Communities.

Mid Murray Mayor Dave Burgess said the events would honour the district's important Aboriginal heritage and culture, and celebrate the contributions of Indigenous people to the Mid Murray community.

"Our Aboriginal culture is a significant part of our Mid Murray heritage and NAIDOC Week provides a great opportunity to come together as a community to celebrate our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander connections," Mayor Burgess says.

“This year our extended program will provide more events especially for families and youth to learn more about our incredible Aboriginal places of significance such as Ngaut Ngaut, as well as Indigenous culture, traditions, dance, music and food.

“Everyone in the community is invited to join us, especially for the ‘*Together As One*’ celebration and march to stand together with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to show our respect for their history and connections to this country.”

Find out more about the School Holiday Program online here <https://fb.me/e/2DGEIWiFH>, and register to attend online at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NAIDOC_Event.

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