

Issue 2 - May 2021

MILIBUD





'Everybody can get involved in reconciliation... in activities, invite your mob. Everybody just get together and be kind to each other'

- Larry Smith

'For Australians to work towards reconciliations, there needs to be an acknowledgement that we are First Nations people and to fully accept that, so we can all get along.'

- Lurlene Button



'Before we used to have the old people, and now some of them left us and we got to do it for our kids.'

- Lorraine Stretch

'When I think of reconciliation, it's the families involved. It's the communities. Together, as one.'

- Donald Butcher



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of the land of Australia and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We particularly acknowledge the Kija and Jaru people, the traditional owners of the Country upon which the Shire of Halls Creek is located.



Reconciliation: For our family, for our kids

Councillor Rosemary Stretch

Reconciliation for me is about getting our family, our children, back to their Country and into their culture because we have a lot of broken homes from the Stolen Generations.

Trying to find our connections on both our Mother and Father's side and coming together as a family together and talking about history.

How can we bring our families back together? It's like Olabud ('All of us'). We may all be Aboriginal people, but we have different lifestyles.

When you think about reconciliation, you've got to go back to the Stolen Generations. A lot of people were moved away from their home, their families, and grew up differently. How can they find their family again?

For all Australians, it's important to work together, in unity, and help each other.

In the future, I'd like to see families reunited together. We're still searching for the answers, so in 50 years down the track, the younger generation would hopefully find those answers and have that information.



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It's Time For Us To Move Forward

Dennis Chungulla, Director and Human Rights Coordinator

I've always had trouble thinking about what reconciliations means.

But when you look at this town, there's been so many changes. It's about community coming together. The town is moving forward. It's a time for us to start doing something to better our people. Reconciliation could be about a person or a community needing help. But most of all, it's "us".

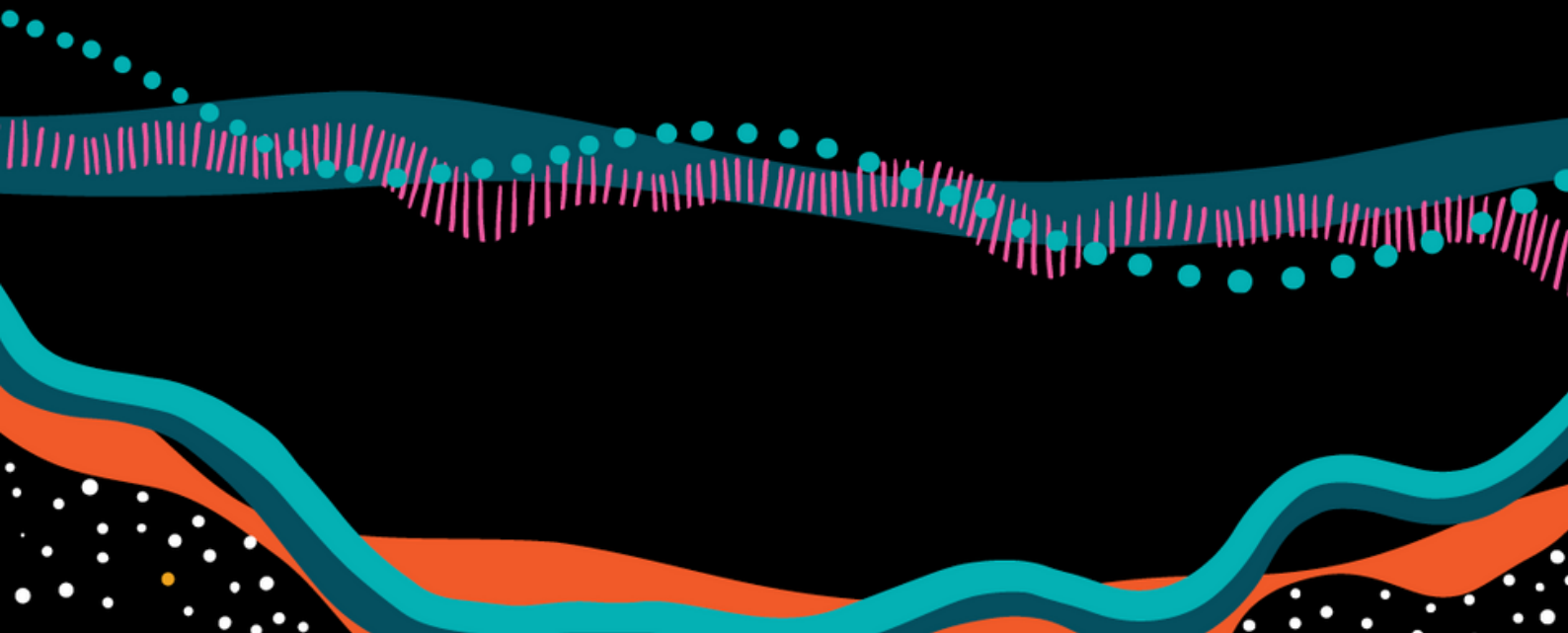
I say, it's time for us to move forward and we can do this together in this world.

You've got one stick, it's easy to break. But when you've got a big mob of sticks, you cannot break it. This is why we need each other to work on this.

Reconciliation is also a celebration. For people who have worked hard over these years, by getting Aboriginal

people back together. You've got people walking around this town who don't know about reconciliation, but it's time we start.

From what I've seen, learnt, and heard over these years, I think it's time for us to do something within this town and our communities because it's the community that we look after. It's the people that live here.





One big mob. One big family.

Dean Mosquito, Executive Officer Culture and Transformation

To come together, you need to respect the other one too. Respect is the biggest thing.

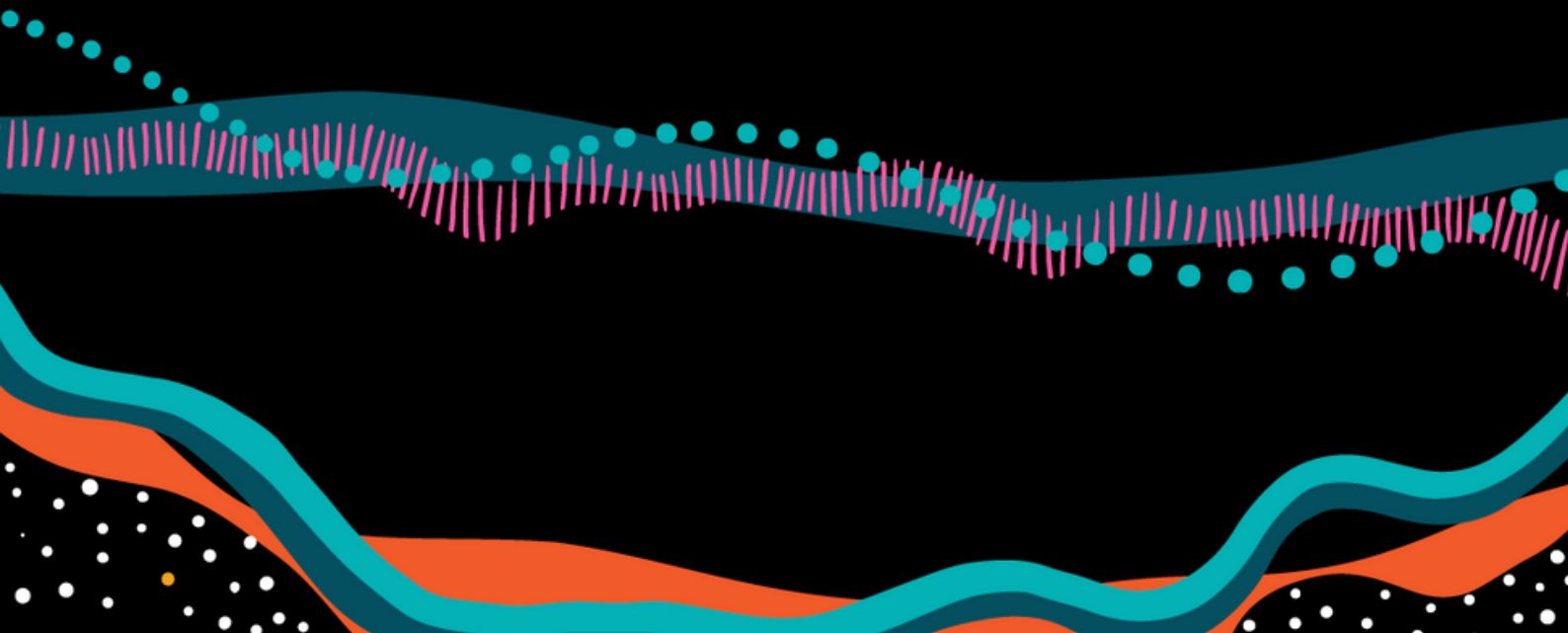
For me, you can only do this through listening. When you listen, you can get a better understanding of both sides. But I also think you need to turn the tables where everybody can listen to First Nations people and hear about our stories, our history, our cultures.

Reconciliation is all about coming together. We should have opportunities where we can take people out bush and share stories.

It's important when you come into a town, like Halls Creek, that you respect the locals - the people who have lived here for a long time. But also if you can engage culturally - men and women - having a yarn with the local people but also getting smoked and just have a

better understanding of the people, places and culture.

Because when I think of a reconciled Australia, I think of one big mob. One big family. Coming together. We should all come together, forget about the past, move on and to think about the future for our children.



A DIGITAL FUTURE FOR HALLS CREEK

Halls Creek will soon be able to take advantage of cheaper, faster and more stable Internet for remote health, education and e-commerce opportunities.



The Shire of Halls Creek have recently signed an agreement with the National Broadband Network (NBN) to provide cheaper, faster and stable access to the Internet for over 400 homes in Halls Creek.

Health

One of the biggest benefits from a faster and stable access to Internet will be the opportunity to provide health and medical advice remotely, commonly known as 'telehealth'.

Remote communities will be able to receive telehealth and medical advice, removing the need to travel long distances. This also improves the ability for Halls Creek to maintain and share medical records, improving the quality of healthcare to patients.

Education

The improved Internet access also allows Olabud Doogethu to deliver educational opportunities remotely.

Olabud Doogethu's nationally-accredited course, Mibala Learning Country, includes a module that focuses on digital devices, an opportunity for young people to engage in the digital world and prepare them for a future in the workforce.

'It's good for the kids to receive information through the Internet. They can be a part of conversations around our town... All these kids are on the Internet, they're really clever, but it's also about using the Internet to get them engaged in school,' said Councillor Rosemary Stretch.

Councillor Rosemary Stretch believes this development can benefit kids: 'They're the next generation. If they want the information, they can get that knowledge and understanding.'

E-Commerce

Promoting the community's rich culture and connection to Country is also another opportunity as the NBN is rolled out across Halls Creek.

'We have a lot of talented artists here so it's a good opportunity for people to see what we're doing and learn from it...' said Councillor Rosemary Stretch.

NBN will be available in public areas in Halls Creek, which is open to the public, with scope for future expansion in the coming years.

DONALD BUTCHER:

ELDER'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Don, a Kija and Jaru man, was born and raised in Halls Creek. As part of the Elder's Advisory Committee, one of the upcoming initiatives he is leading on is establishing a Men's Tribal Area in Halls Creek for fathers and sons, with the hopes of guiding them to a better future.

Don, a Kija and Jaru man, was born and raised in Halls Creek. Growing up in Halls Creek in the 1960s, he recalls: 'it was pretty scrubby... we had plenty of people from different tribes and we got on well when I was young.'

Like many others of his generation, Don finished school and worked in a stockyard and as a station hand. 'I grew up mostly doing work on the stock yard... on the station... In this town, most of the old people, it was the only life we knew when we left school,' said Don.

Looking back on his life, Don said the Halls Creek he grew up in was a lot different to what Halls Creek is today.

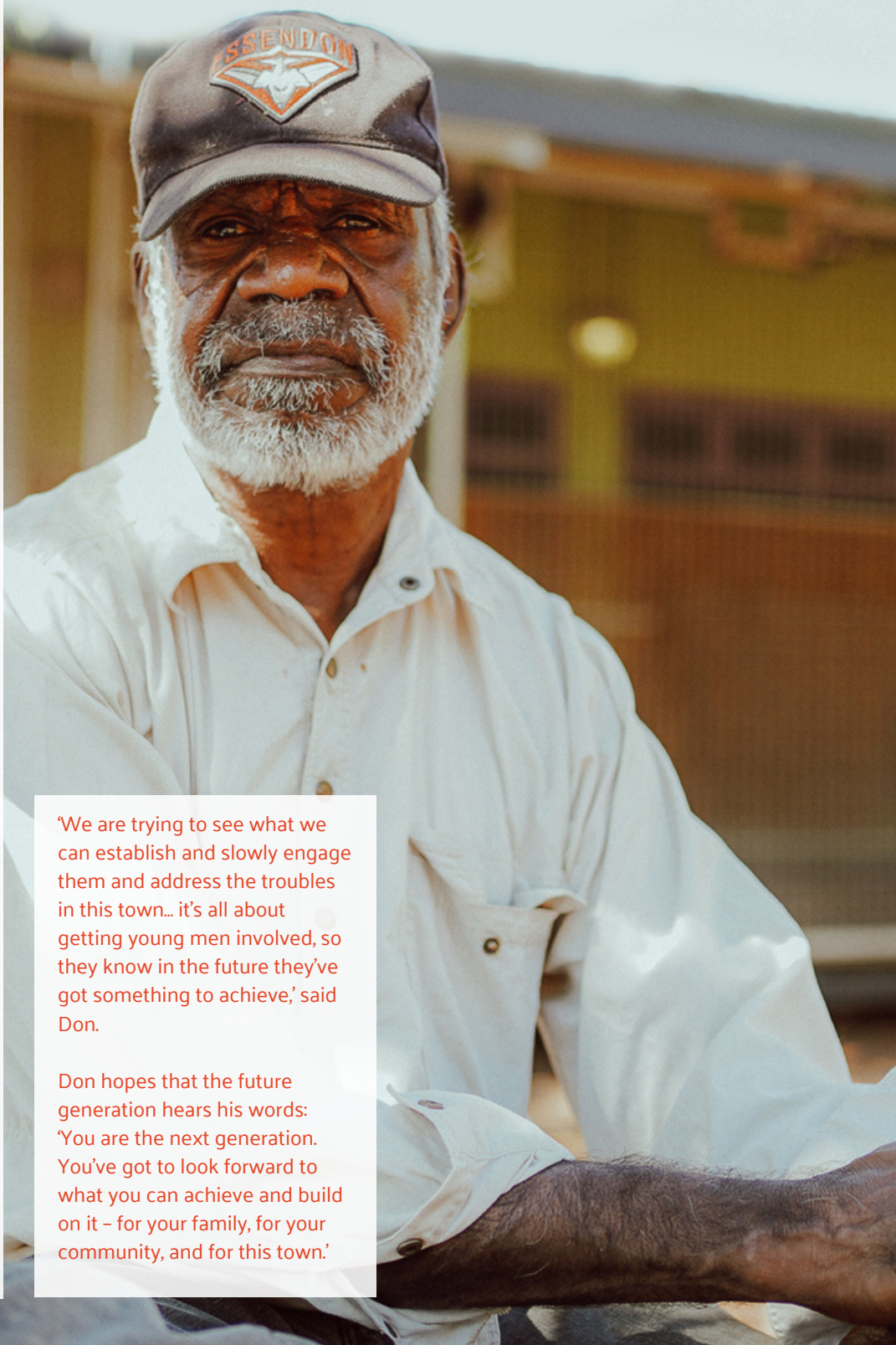
'The kids are different now... they don't have what we had - discipline... and being taught by our family everything that we know,' said Don.

Olabud Doogethu identified the need for a Men's Tribal Area, where men can come together and learn from each other, as well as the local Elders.

'We're starting to set up a Men's Tribal Area, an area for fathers and sons... try to keep them out of trouble and have a better future... They got everything they need - but they need jobs and someone to give them that push,' said Don.

'We are trying to see what we can establish and slowly engage them and address the troubles in this town... it's all about getting young men involved, so they know in the future they've got something to achieve,' said Don.

Don hopes that the future generation hears his words: 'You are the next generation. You've got to look forward to what you can achieve and build on it - for your family, for your community, and for this town.'



TOWARDS A BRIGHTER HALLS CREEK

The Youth Engagement Night Officers have seen improved visibility at night, following the installation of new LED streetlights in Halls Creek.

In May 2021, Olabud Doogethu and the Shire of Halls Creek successfully partnered with Horizon Power to install LED street lights in Halls Creek.

At night time, many of Halls Creeks streets were poorly lit with many street lights no longer working.

Now with the new LED lights, the Youth Engagement Night Officers (YENOs) who walk the street at night have said it's a massive improvement.

Improved visibility

'The new LED streetlights help us [YENOs] see better at night, especially the kids,' said Mitchell Bradshaw, one of the original YENOs who started walking the streets in 2019.

'The kids use the darkness to hide from us, like in the oval. But with the street lights, there's less places for them to hide. They can also see us coming over, so they know when to go home,' said Mitchell.

Mitchell manages one of the teams and has observed that there is a more relaxed atmosphere at night in Halls Creek, compared to when he started: 'There would be 60-70 kids out at night time back when I started in 2019, but now there are only like 20-30 kids.'

Reduction in youth crime

The YENO program is one of Olabud Doogethu's flagship programs, which began with Aboriginal Elders volunteering their time to walk the streets at night in 2019.

In May 2021, the WA Police provided Olabud Doogethu Aboriginal Corporation the latest data showing a massive improvement in youth crime in Halls Creek in recent years.

This has included:

- 63% reduction in burglaries (aged 10-17) in 2017-20;
- 43% reduction in oral cautions (aged 10-14) in 2019-20;
- 69% reduction in arrests made (aged 10-17) in 2017-20;
- 63% reduction in referrals to Juvenile Justice Team (aged 10-17) in 2018-20;
- 64% reduction in the number of Aboriginal persons admitted to police custody (aged 10+) in 2017-20; and
- 59% reduction in motor vehicle theft (aged 10-17) in 2017-20.

This follows recent remarks from the Minister of Indigenous Australians Ken Wyatt in April 2021 for highlighting Olabud Doogethu's work in breaking the cycle of incarceration.



Mitchell Bradshaw is one of the original Youth Engagement Night Officers and has seen the streets of Halls Creek transform over the past two years.



Olabud Doogethu

For more information, please visit
www.olabuddoogethu.org.au