

Pits inspected

STORM water pits in the Marian and Mirani areas will be inspected as part of a data collection project. Contractor Proterra Group will be collecting data on the storm water network on behalf of council. This will include inspections of the condition of pits and associated pipes, including the taking of photographs, at Marian and Mirani. The data gathered will be used to update council's information on its storm water assets for maintaining service levels for the network. It will also mean storm water models can be updated and the existing conditions of pits and associated pipes will be rated so that maintenance works can be programmed. This work is scheduled to begin towards the end of this month.

You're invited

YOU'RE invited to Artspace's next exhibition opening celebrating three great new exhibitions: Punuku Tjukurpa, Man Cheung: Botanical Cosmos Mackay, and ASSI 150. The opening is at 6pm this Thursday, March 23. For more information on the exhibitions, visit artspacemackay.com.au. RSVP by calling 4961 9722.

Savvy Seniors

TECH SAVVY Seniors training sessions will be held in the Mackay region to help those seniors in need of some technological help. Sessions will be held at Dudley Denny City Library and Gordon White Library. An outreach service is also being offered at Seaforth Beach in the Mobile Library. The training will help seniors learn about email and internet, social media, computers, smartphones and tablets. Bookings are essential. More information at: mackay.qld.gov.au/libraries

Use vouchers

RATEPAYERS have until the end of this month to use their free dump vouchers. The vouchers were issued with August rates notices and expire on March 31. The vouchers are valid for the disposal of self-hauled domestic or green waste, under one tonne, at any of council's waste disposal facilities.

Little bit of Italy is coming to Mackay

Inaugural Mackay Italian Street Party in City Centre to become an annual event and tourism drawcard

NONNA is throwing a street party in Mackay and wants everyone home for it.

said Italians knew how to celebrate and have a good time.

"We believe it can match similar cultural events, such as the extremely successful and long-running Italian Festival in Ingham," Mr Bonanno said.

The inaugural Jayco Mackay Italian Street Party will be held in Wood Street on April 29.

"Italian culture, food, drink, music and fashion is world renowned," Mr Bonanno said.

Organised by the Mackay and District Italian Association, Wood Street between Gordon and Victoria streets will be closed to traffic between 4pm and 9pm and transform into a "Little Italy".

"Mackay is lucky to have a rich and vibrant Italian culture and is the perfect community to host this fantastic cultural extravaganza," he said.

According to census data, more than 3300 residents in the Mackay region claim direct Italian heritage. The Mackay and District Italian Association has more than 200 members.

The association's vice-president Chris Bonanno

Organisers believe the street party will become an annual event and a major tourism drawcard for the region.

The street party will include entertainment, both on a stage and roving performers. Businesses in Wood Street,



Wood Street will be transformed into a "Little Italy" for the inaugural Mackay Italian Street Party in late April, including food stalls and entertainment.

including food outlets, have been invited to take part and there will also be food stalls.

"There will also be a spaghetti eating competition and pizza tossing," he said.

"The public will be invited to come along in Italian-themed costumes on the day and there will be a best-dressed competition," Mr Bonanno said.

"An Italian car and motorcycle display will be held in the council car park next to Birch Carroll and Coyle cinemas."

The street party will be officially

opened by the Italian Consul for Queensland and the Northern Territory, his Excellency Ludovico Carlo Camussi.

For more information on the event search Mackay Italian Street Party on Facebook.

>> This inaugural Street Party is supported by council's Invest Mackay Events Attraction and Community Grants programs, as well as the Mackay City Centre

Heritage efforts honoured

WANTED: Examples of excellence in the conservation of heritage and history in the Mackay region.

Council's Heritage Awards, a biennial event first celebrated in 2004, are on again in 2017.

Character and Heritage Advisory Committee chair Cr Fran Mann said the popular awards had been a successful event in the past and attracted high-quality and worthy applicants.

She said council wished to see the 2017 Heritage Awards extend that tradition by paying tribute to schools, individuals and organisations who worked diligently to maintain the memory of our past, our people and our places.

"The region has wide-ranging heritage values from built form to cultural tradition and is worth celebrating and promoting."

Nominations are now open in four categories, including:



15 Hinton Street, West Mackay, was winner of the 2015 Gold Award in the "Tom Casey" New or Refurbished Heritage Home category.

- > The "Tom Casey" New or Refurbished Heritage Place or Home;
- > The "Berenice Wright" Heritage Champion – Individual or Organisation;
- > Heritage Champion – School; and
- > Heritage Media.

Cr Mann said the awards were seeking nominations for projects undertaken in the past three years — 2014 to date.

There is \$6000 in prize money up for grabs across the four categories, including \$1000

for gold awards and \$500 for silver.

Nominations for the 2017 Heritage Awards will close on Monday, May 8.

A panel of judges with appropriate expertise will undertake judging for the awards.

The award winners and commendations will be presented at the 2017 Greenmount Homestead Heritage Fair on Sunday, May 28, with winners notified one week prior to the ceremony.

Strategy to develop community

THE Mackay region has transformed in the past five years with changes in the economic landscape.

Consequently, communities within our region have also undergone major changes during this timeframe.

With this in mind, council is developing a new Community Development Strategy.

Community Engagement Committee chair Cr Fran Mann said it was an ideal time to look at what could be done to ensure our region remained a connected, thriving, healthy and resilient community. "We want to help our communities in the Mackay region find their voice and we want to listen."

Consultation is currently under way, with public input being sought.

>> Give feedback via: connectingmackay.com.au



A segment is produced on our linemarking crew.

Staff in the spotlight

NEW insights into a range of council services are being provided on TV screens and in social media and the messages are being delivered in the words of our workers.

Council is producing a series of 60-second television infomercials as part of its revamped Council Connect.

They feature council workers on the frontline, talking about what they do, how they do it and how it serves the community.

Community Engagement Committee chair Cr Fran Mann said there had been good feedback on the

television segments which had aired to date.

"Seeing and hearing from our workers is giving the community a better understanding of the many and varied services council delivers for the community," she said.

"The first segment to air was about council's Vector Control team, which plays an important role in keeping mosquito numbers down.

"The most recent segment featured our linemarking crew and our next one, which goes to air tomorrow, will focus on our Trade Waste team."

>> Also stay informed at mackay.qld.gov.au/enewsletters

\$5000 on offer for university students

UNIVERSITY students are renowned for having to be quite frugal to juggle their studies with living costs.

So, imagine the difference \$5000 would make to them, along with some paid summer work experience thrown into the mix.

That is what is on offer through council's annual Academic Bursary Program, with applications for this year's round now open.

Chair of council's Corporate Services Committee, Cr Ayril

Paton, said the bursaries were a great opportunity for university students, providing them much-needed financial assistance and valuable work experience.

He said the 2017 Academic Bursary opportunities had been expanded to cover a greater range of study areas, linked to an increased variety of employment opportunities in the Mackay region.

The program aims to encourage the academic progress of university students studying:

- > Engineering;
- > Information Technology/ Digital Media;
- > Business (Accounting, Marketing, HR, Public Relations or Social Innovation);
- > Planning;
- > Workplace Health and Safety/Emergency Management;
- > Social Work; or
- > Environmental Health/ Science.

Applicants must be in their second-last year of study.

Five bursaries are available,



Bursary recipient Callum Merritt doing some video editing work during council work experience.

with each having a total value of \$5000.

Each bursary is paid in bi-yearly instalments of \$1250 over the final two years of study.

Bursary recipients may also be offered paid vacation work with council.

Applications are open now and close on Friday, April 28, 2017.

Cr Paton said although preferred, students did not have to be studying in Mackay to be considered for a bursary. However, they must be ordinarily residents of the Mackay region.

>> For more details on the 2017 Academic Bursary Program visit mackay.qld.gov.au/academicbursary or contact 1300 622 529 (MACKAY)



Save the date

THERE is always plenty to do in Mackay, with the region's calendar of events jam-packed. Here are just some events coming up in the next three months that are organised by and/or supported by Mackay Regional Council. Be sure to mark any you are interested in attending in your diary.

- > April 16 - Mackay City Centre Easter Carnival, Bluewater Quay (brought to you by MLC Advice Mackay)
- > April 25 - Anzac Day, Mackay Dawn Service and Main Parade, Jubilee Park. Other services and parades also being held throughout the region
- > April 29 - inaugural Mackay Italian Street Party, Wood Street (between Gordon and Victoria street) Mackay City Centre (details in main story this page)
- > May 6 - Mayor's Charity Ball, MECC
- > May 7, inaugural Mackay Volunteer Expo, Senior Citizens Hall, Macalister Street
- > May 13 - Australian South Sea Islander 150th anniversary, Paxton's Warehouse
- > May 28 - Greenmount Homestead Heritage Fair, Greenmount Homestead
- > June 14 - Queensland State of Origin Fan Day: parade on Gordon Street, lunch at MECC and junior clinic at BB Print Stadium Mackay



A tourist bus visits the Field of Dreams at Sarina.

Bus and RV access dream now a reality

A \$500,000 upgrade of Sarina's Field of Dreams parkland is now a reality, with finishing touches being put on the construction project.

Access to the popular tourist spot has been improved in the upgrade, which has included new car parking facilities, a sealed turnaround area for large vehicles and new pathways.

Cr Karen May, who is also chair of the Sarina Field Dreams Advisory Committee, said the upgraded area looked excellent.

"I think it is going to prove to be very beneficial for the

businesses and groups that are located there," Cr May said.

The upgrade would also make it much easier for larger vehicles, including buses, caravans and RVs, to visit, she said.

"The new roundabout will allow people to turn around near the Sarina Sugar Shed before parking.

"There are dedicated parking bays for buses and RVs."

Council received funding of \$250,000 from the Queensland Tourism Infrastructure Fund (QTIF)

to assist with the Field of Dreams project.

QTIF is an initiative under the Australian Government's Tourism Demand-Driven Infrastructure program, administered by the State Government through the Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games.

Council also delivered the project in partnership with Sarina Community Arts and Craft Cooperative Limited, which was successful in an application for a \$250,000 community grant as part of council's Better Community Building Fund.

>> More information on Sarina Sugar Shed online at sarinassugarshed.com.au