

# THE BLACKWALL BUGLE

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## Australia Day Award for Warren



The Ballina Shire Australia Day Awards celebrate the achievement and contribution of individuals and organisations in our Region. These awards are an opportunity to publicly acknowledge those who have made an extraordinary contribution or are outstanding achievers. On Australia Day this year the ceremony was held at the Lennox Head Cultural and Community Centre. Ballina Shire Mayor, Cr David Wright welcomed Australia's first female Winter Olympic Gold Medallist, Alisa Camplin as Ballina Shire's Australia Day 2017 Special Guest. She gave a very moving and inspiring address. Forty-four nominations had been received across the categories of Sports, Arts Cultural, Young Citizen, Senior Citizen, Community Event and Local Hero. Warren Barnes was nominated by the Wardell & District Progress Association as our Senior Citizen of the Year and he was very well received by the Mayor, guest speaker and the large happy crowd.

### Warren Barnes

Warren worked as a young man at the Newcastle steelworks and was later employed by the Department of Main Roads in Sydney and Gunnedah. He came to Wardell to marry Rhonda Leeson whose father owned the bus run and garage in Richmond Street, Wardell. In 1980 his three sons were playing football so he became involved with the running of the sports side of the Wardell club. He helped to get the junior league started. He helped coach the under eight team with Ray Walsh. They didn't have a club house at that time but just a tin shed and they served the kids pies which they made themselves.

Whilst doing volunteer work painting the roof of the Wardell & District War Memorial Hall, Warren fell to the ground and badly injured his back. There was then no compensation to cover his injuries. Unable to continue his work with the DMR, he bought and managed hotels at Glen Innes, Tenterfield, Urbanville and finally Tatts Hotel in Lismore. But his injured back was giving him trouble and he retired to Wardell. However Warren was not one to sit still. He began doing voluntary work on the sports grounds.

Six years ago he was made Administrator of the Trust that administers the grounds for the NSW Government. Four years ago a new Trust was formed for the Wardell & District Sports Ground and Warren was appointed President of

the Trust and made responsible for the acquisition and maintenance of machinery and for the upkeep of the grounds.

Every day he spends time managing the business affairs of the Sport and Recreation Club. Every morning Warren goes up to the Club. He cleans the bar and gets everything ready for the afternoon. He makes sure there is enough money in the till and organises change through the treasurer or gets it from the Post Office. He drags out the mats and hoses them, he mops the floor. He does the lines checks on the kegs and sees what stock is needed. Then he goes outside and maintains the extensive grounds of the Sports and



The Sports & Recreation Club

Recreation Club and the Wardell Golf Club. In his spare time, Warren maintains the grounds of the Wardell & District War Memorial Hall as a volunteer. He recovered the grounds from weeds and scrub. He also has taken on the voluntary care and maintenance of the Wardell War Memorial. He has recently had a few medical problems but refuses to let them get in the way. He can get off his sick bed and bounce back and be into it as though nothing is more important to him than his community.

Warren has a wife Rhonda, three sons Dion, Scott and Grant, nine grandchildren and three great grandchildren. So his personal life is full and yet he goes out of his way to keep the Wardell community well served. He is to be congratulated on his well deserved recognition and commendation.



The playing fields

# The Wardell Preschool

The Sugartowns Jumbunna Community Pre-School at Wardell is a school for children who are too young for primary school. Their ages range typically between 3 years and 5 years old. The preschool experience teaches children to socialise with peers and gives early exposure to letters, numbers, sounds, shapes, counting, words, cutting, drawing, colours, body parts, world knowledge and different cultures, self-help skills, science, teamwork and other important building blocks for early education.

It helps children to adapt to change as well as giving them the opportunity to play with other kids, celebrate birthdays and other holidays with people outside of their family.

**Sylvia Whitney**

The Wardell Pre-School recently held an open day where the public was welcomed by Director Karen McDermott and Coordinator Sylvia Whitney. Goori artist Danielle Fergusson came in to do some painting with us on our

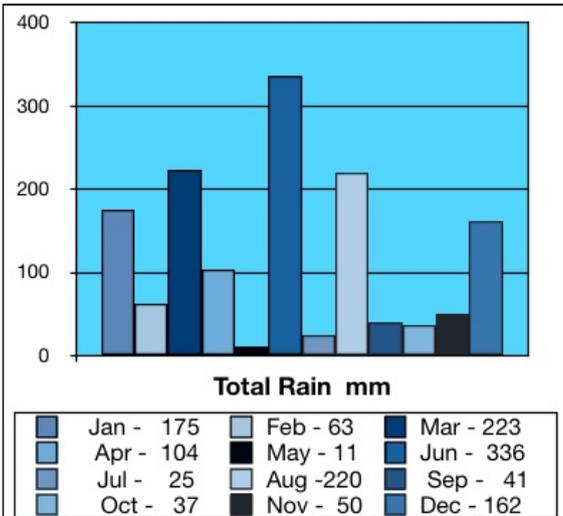


deadly new mural. This was a positive cultural experience where all children and staff got to put their own individual mark on it before Danielle took it home to complete. We unveiled it at our Open Day and are all very proud!

**Lisa Walker**



To enquire about the pre-school, you are invited to telephone 6662 2866  
email: [jumbunna@jumbunna.com.au](mailto:jumbunna@jumbunna.com.au)



**Unofficial Rainfall 2016 -> 1447mm**

## Notice of a General Meeting

A General Meeting of the Wardell & District Progress Association Inc. is to be held at the Wardell & District War Memorial Hall on Wednesday 15 Feb 2017 at 7.00 pm. All members of the Hall Committee and the Blackwall Historical Society should attend. All members of the Progress Association and all visitors are most welcome. The Annual General Meeting is to be held on Wednesday 19 April 2017.

For news of the boardwalk construction, go to: [http://www.ballina.nsw.gov.au/cp\\_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-UZQ-86-71-52](http://www.ballina.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-UZQ-86-71-52)

## Social Tennis

Social tennis is played at the Wardell courts on Monday evenings at 6.30 pm and the Club is seeking more players. Play begins around 6.30pm and finishes at about 8.30 for the small cost of \$5 Juniors, seniors and all those in between are most WELCOME



**Wardell Tennis Club**  
Pat Carney 6683 4360  
Bill Davis 6683 4306

**Trevor Monti**  
remembers  
**Raymond George Gooley**

“Raymond George Gooley used to cut cane in gangs with Pat Martin. I was in the old part of the Wardell pub one evening talking with Reg Frankim. We were near the old swing doors in the corner having a good yarn. Raymond George was as pissed as a parrot. He opened the door of the pub and fell in. Well, Reg Frankim was the worst bloke you could run into if you were looking for trouble because he had been an unarmed combat instructor in the army — he didn’t muck around. Raymond George hit old Reg as he came in “Bang!” So Reg just gave him an almighty shove.

“There were four blokes playing cards at a table in the corner and Raymond George hit the table and took everything out. Everything was lovely. Everybody was happy. There was no commotion of any sort. All of a sudden the door banged open and he burst in and stuffed everything. Reg kept him going in one door and out the other and he took out the table and the four card players on the way.

“But Raymond George, as big a no hoper that he was — as drunk as he was — actually the cane farmers should raise a hat to him because he would have cut thousands of tons of cane for them. He was a little old skinny bloke but he would have been one of the best cane cutters in the district. He was as tough as nails. He could be completely pissed at daylight and then he’d go out to the paddock and flog the arse off it all day. He was magic really — for a bloke who lived the way he did.

“He died not many years ago. I think he had been living in a shack at Boundary Creek. He drank all his money. There was an old copper in Wardell called Rodger Kidd who was a good old bloke. I knew him pretty well because we used to cut block wood for him. Raymond George would be in the pub on a Saturday evening and he would do things to attract attention. When he ran out of money he would take his singlet off and tear it to pieces. Then he would get his wallet, which had no money in it, and rip it apart. In the act of him doing that one day Rodger Kidd the copper came in and drove his boot right up the arse of Raymond George lifting him clean off the ground. Raymond George then took off. He was always putting on acts to attract attention. He was never married or anything. But he was a legend in his time. I’m sure a lot of old blokes around here would know him and would have a yarn to tell about him. But, as a worker, he was magic. He could work all day like a whirlwind and they couldn’t keep up with him.”

**Trevor Monti**



Poinciana trees came to Australia from Madagascar and they add to the beauty of our village in summer. This one grows in the garden of Mayley House. It is understood that it is descended from one of the trees brought here as seed from Tully in Queensland by Rebecca Undery when visiting her family at Undery House, now known as the Pottery, in the 1890s.



## Light up the Hall

When the Christmas lights were turned on at the Wardell and District War Memorial Hall it was a time for celebration. There was music and song and sizzling snags on the barbecue. As a prelude to the event, a fierce electric storm threatened to blow us all away with flashing lightening and the crash of thunder. Then, as though by magic, the sky cleared, the storm swept out to sea and the voices of the Wardell Public School choir entertained the gathering throught with traditional Christmas songs. The children were lively and involved and brought magic to the night.

For the lights, we need to thank organiser Russell Krampe and his team. For the refreshments Sue Wardrobe for her financial contribution – buying cans of drink for all the school children in the concert and to Nigel from the Wardell Café who provided all the loaves of bread at cost price.

It is fitting to thank Pat Carney for all the work done during the year by his team for the Wardell area and John Stead who is the driving force behind the hall. Without volunteers this would be a much poorer place. It was good to see the Mayor, Cnr David Wright, in there with the crowd. We all belong here. This is home!



### A Development Proposal for Empire Vale

A \$41million dollar private play haven has been proposed for Empire Vale and is reported by the Lismore Echo to have been lodged with Ballina Shire Council.

You might wish to have a look at :

<http://m.echonews.com.au/news/go-kart-track-private-helipad-proposed-for-41m-est/3126392/>

## The Lumley's Lane Drainage Union.

Sometimes one person's loss is another's gain! Several Sugar Cane farmers have lost their homes and heritage farms to make way for the new highway that is now under construction. One group of farmers from Lumley's Lane had formed an association named 'The Lumley's Lane Drainage Union' for the purpose of coordinating and controlling the flood waters from their properties. Having lost their properties, they no longer had a reason for continuing as an organisation. So the Directors, Harry Law, Warren Lumley and Ken Threlfo decided to close 'The Lumley's Lane Drainage Union' and to donate their funds to the Wardell Brigade of the Rural Fire Service. The RFS has always had a strong bond with the rural community.

Captain Ray Collyer was pleased to accept the donation which has enabled the Brigade to purchase a set of flood lights and a generator for use at night-time traffic accidents and a portable fridge to keep cool clean drinking water for over-heated crews on the fire-line.

## *Betty Fernance*



### *A Pimlico Lady*

2 Jan 1924 - 21 Nov 2016



## **A Treasure Restored!**

On the night of 3-4 August an East Coast Low passed through the area with winds in excess of 100 kmh. Trees were brought down all over the district and there was considerable property damage. A beautiful one hundred year old stained glass window, at the southern end of heritage listed St. Patrick's Church, was blown in and shattered. Shards of glass spread throughout the church all the way to the altar.

Because of the delicate nature of the materials, and the incalculable historic and aesthetic value of stained glass work, the repair work needed to be done by professionals. The restoration was carried out by Lismore Glass and Steelworks. They used glass of a similar colour and texture to the original and treated the window as part of the world's collective cultural heritage.

A stained glass window is a 'complex object' in that it is made from more than one component material, each with its own inherent risks and conservation needs. In addition to glass, all windows involve some sort of paint or stain as decoration. Metal strips, or 'comes' are used to join the pieces of glass together. Waterproofing materials, and fixing systems or frameworks are used for additional support of the window. The St Patrick's window should now be good for another one hundred years.

Lismore Glass & Steelworks  
- Telephone 02 6625 2899

# Dez McDonald

## He Cares!

Tucked away at the far end of Moylans Lane, Empire Vale, with just a few trees and a paddock of cane between their home and the golden beach of the South Pacific Ocean, live Jenny and Dez McDonald. Their friend and neighbour John Elliot farms their sugar cane while Dez and Jenny prepare for retirement. But retirement won't come easy as they have led such active lives in remote areas of Australia whilst holding positions of great responsibility.

### Mike Rushby interviewed Dez

"I was born in Numurkah - which is north of Shepparton, Victoria in 1942 and have just had my 74th birthday. I was Christened Desmond James and called Des until I became deeply involved in the country music world where everyone knows me as Dez. My parents died long ago but I still have two brothers in Numurka. Jenny, my wife and I met at a country dance when I was seventeen and a half years old. I think she was attracted to me because I had a car and a Queensland driver's licence. We are still together!

"I went to school in Numurkah and like all kids in my era, I wanted to leave school as soon as I was allowed at the age of fourteen. I went home on the dairy farm and after a couple of years it became very plain to me that I needed further education. I went back to school at the age of thirty-two and did my higher school certificate and then took up nursing. In the thirty-two years that I have been nursing I don't think there has ever been a year without me taking some sort of exam. As a nurse you are always learning. I was hospital trained in Shepparton. Then, having been invited back to my Alma Mater, I spent three years working at the Goulburn Valley Base Hospital.

"My Mum and Dad had a dance band when I was a kid and so as kids we would get shuffled around in the back of an old Hudson car. Mum was a pianist and Dad was a drummer and saxophone player who played many instruments including the bagpipes. He was very talented that way and Mum was a brilliant pianist. So when I became a teenager, I learnt to play the cornet in the local brass band. I wanted to play the bagpipes but the pipe band folded whilst I was learning the chanter. When I was playing the cornet pretty well, I went and bought a trumpet. I played with mum until I was sixteen but I then thought it wasn't cool to be playing with my parents and I chucked it in. I still sang at concerts and my brother was a professional muso as well. He played for a number of bands including Slim Dusty for a while.

"I started playing the guitar when my kids were young and then, when I moved up here I bought a really good guitar. I went into the Ballina Country Music Club and asked how I would go about playing with them. They told me just to bring my guitar and walk-up and play. I did that and now play on a regular basis. I go to Mullumbimby, Yamba, various Country Music festivals and last week the four of us, who play together regularly, played at the RSL Club in Ballina with 120 people.

"As a nurse, I was always very interested in three areas, accident and emergency, intensive care or theatre. Theatre



was a very hard nut to crack because they always wanted experienced people. So when the vacancy for theatre arose and I applied, I was told they would give me twelve months. Three years later I was still there.

"We holidayed up this way for many years. We bought a place in 1986 in Nashua and set it up as a small macadamia farm whilst I was working at Lismore Base Hospital in the operating theatre. I was doing anaesthetics with Peter McLaren. He said, "Dez on Saturday morning I am going to Boulder Beach where the helicopter crew are putting on a little show if you would like to come out." So I went out there. The crew said, "Peter we are going to take you up in the helicopter and we want you to come out and rappel down from the helicopter that will be hovering forty feet above ground. "Oh," he said, "I don't think I can do that!" They then asked, "What about your mate?" "Oh yes Dez will do it." He said. So I went up and they told me what to do. I stood out on the skids forty feet above the ground and wondered what on earth I was doing up there. But I repelled to the ground. When I got to the ground, I thought, "This wasn't too bad!" So I did it again.

"Then they flew me up to Boulder Beach and on to the big cliff over the other side and they were doing an exercise with the crewman. They geared me up and I said, "Oh I'm not sure I want to do this!" But once I got down to the bottom I thought I would do it again and I did. When I finished they asked, "How would you like to be a crewman?" I asked them what I would have to do and they said that I would have to repel out of a helicopter and repel down a cliff. Well, I had just done that! I found out that there was of course much more to it. I was a specialist crewman to start with because of my skills at anaesthetics and later I became a full crewman. I was working out of Lismore and based firstly at St Vincent's Hospital but later we moved out to the airport and I moved from Lismore Base Hospital to Ballina. If they needed me they would phone Ballina Hospital and then fly in and pick me up.

“At Ballina Hospital I ran their operating theatre and for a time ran their accident and emergency department. I spent about six years in Ballina Hospital and I was with the Rescue Helicopter for almost five years.

“I have three kids all grown up. My daughter Karen is living in Gladstone with her husband Ken Gill and their two sons Harrison and Brady. My two boys are Cameron and Warren. They did their apprenticeships in various disciplines - Warren as a motor mechanic and Cameron as a builder. But they have gravitated towards medicine as well. Warren flies with the helicopter rescue ambulance out of Melbourne and he is a very gifted Para-medic. I think there are only twelve of them in the State with his qualifications. Cameron is also a practicing Ambulance Officer but also an educator. He goes around the North-Western region keeping the crews up to par with the latest techniques. I am very proud of both of them.

“I thought I had retired and Jenny my wife and I started tripping around Australia. We sold our farm at Nashua. When we got to Halls Creek in Western Australia, the clutch in our car blew up. We had to wait a week for parts and I foolishly went down to the hospital to see what remote area nurses did. I finished up working for three months. They wanted us to stay but we wanted to get on. When we reached Fitzroy Crossing our phone rang. Phone calls were difficult to get in those out-back areas. It was Derby Hospital that had heard we had left Halls Creek and offered us a job relieving at a place called Lombadina, which I had never heard of. They painted a rosy picture and said it was a lovely place right on the beach with three hundred Aborigines. They offered me work so I went there and they were right. It was the most lovely place and I spent three months there and then moved on another thirty kilometres to a place called One Arm Point, which is right out on the peninsular, and the jumping-off point to Sunday Island and the Buccaneer Archipelago. I worked there for three months then, when my term finished there, they asked me to go back to Lombadina and Jen and I stayed there for three and a half years. Lombadina was a lovely place and we had a wonderful time. Jenny got a job as my secretary and eventually they turned Lombadina into a two-nurse post, which made it less stressful.

“I made a lot of friends amongst the local people. Most of them were pure blood. They were very dark and they were very tall. After three and a half years there I knew that the local people had the same hopes and aspirations that you and I have. They could prove that they came from that area and they got tenure of land very early. They were very proud of their blocks and once they got to know me they would invite me to go camping and fishing.

“We were equipped with satellite phones so that if I needed to contact the flying doctor we could. I think I averaged about three fly-outs a month whilst I was there. It would cost about a thousand dollars to bring the flying doctor out from Derby. Sometimes the fly-outs were accident victims but mostly it was for medical problems or a pregnant woman who had experienced problems and we needed to get her out. For anyone living in the outback, there was always the risk that if you got something bad, or had an accident or suffered a shark attack, you could die while waiting for the aeroplane to come. I had a man who had pulmonary oedema. After he arrived in he was very unwell and I had fairly limited equipment. When I rang the flying doctor he said, “Dez, I’ve got one plane in Perth and another plane in Darwin. We figure it is going to be about six hours before he is going to get there.”

“I had another nurse at that stage working with me and together we worked on the patient all that time to keep him alive until the plane came. Then the Doctor intubated him by rendering him unconscious and putting a breathing tube down his throat and took him away. The next day the doctor rang me and said, “He’s alive today because of what you guys did!”

“Jenny was so important to me because she had had some medical training and could handle the phone or get the syringes ready while I was working on a patient.

“One day I went out there and there was this young Aboriginal lady with a baby. She was a visitor to our town so I didn’t recognise her. The baby was burning up with fever and so I did all the things that you do to try and reduce the fever. I gave the child Panadol and was most exacting with the right dose. The child was only about six or seven months old. I couldn’t get the temperature down so I rang the Flying Doctor at Derby and he said, “Give him Panadol, Dez.” So I then told the doctor that I had given the child the maximum Panadol and could not give him any more. He said, “Send him home and when he has settled down, go and have a look at him.” So I did that! The lady wasn’t happy but she took her baby down but he was crying so much I could not get a look at him. When I went back at half past twelve at night, the baby was still asleep in his pusher. She didn’t move him. It was fairly hot and he didn’t have any blankets or covers on. He was still burning up with fever and the Panadol hadn’t made much difference. I reached down to his abdomen and pressed down and he screamed! I thought if I didn’t know any better, I would swear that that was appendicitis or at least peritonitis.

“I had my phone with me and rang the doctor straight away. He said, “Des, I can’t justify sending a bloody plane for a thousand dollars over to Lombardina for a kid who has got a guts ache!” I said, “I think it’s more than that Doc!” And he said, “Well that’s my decision.” So I said, “Well I have a right to a second opinion so could you patch me through to another doctor?” He patched me through to Prince Charles in Perth and I spoke with an Indian Doctor there who was a paediatrician. When he finished listening to me he said, Well we must fly that child out. So he sent the plane and the flying doctor whom I had been speaking with came out on the plane. By this stage it was three o’clock in the morning and they flew the child and the mother away. The Flying Doctor telephoned me later, “Dez that was a great call last night. When the child arrived in Derby, we thought he was too sick so we flew him on to Perth where they did a laparotomy and found he had peritonitis. The child would have died if you had listened to me. So that was a great call!”

“The man, who was sent out to me to be the second nurse, came out because he wanted to do his Masters in public health. He was a young man and very good looking so obviously getting time to study was difficult for him. He decided to come remote and he would have plenty of time to study. He was successful and got his Masters of public health. He decided to go back and do medicine. That young man is now a doctor in accident and emergency in Perth. But when he came out he was still a bit junior when it came to things like accident and emergencies. He lived by the side of me and always knew that if push came to shove he could always get me. One night he came and knocked on my door about half past nine at night and in the dark. He said, “Dez, I have a strange thing happening. There’s a husband who has got himself really drunk and he hit his wife in the femur with a kangaroo jack and he has broken her leg. It is so badly deviated I can’t get her on to a stretcher. We didn’t have

equipment like Thomas splints and things that apply traction so you had to think outside the square. I asked what had happened to the husband and he said that he was still there and as drunk as a skunk.

"So I said to him, "When I go down, I'll deal with the lady's leg. You just watch my back!" Because you never know with people like that. I got him to ring Derby to get permission to give her some morphine. When you were administering opiate drugs you had to get prior permission. When we went down the man came running up saying, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry!" I told him to sit down while I attended to his wife and to my surprise he did. His wife had a very bad angulation of the fractured femur so we injected her with the morphine. Then I got a pillow off the couch. I put it between her legs then put my foot up in there and just leant back and pulled the leg. Of course she screamed! It is a very painful procedure which had to be done otherwise if you moved the leg it could have severed the main artery.

"We got the leg straight and splintered and flew her out. We also flew her husband out and the police picked him up at the other end. She tried to tell the police that she was standing in a ute and fell out of the ute and broke her leg. There were lots of stories like that.

"We had a young man come in one time when I was off duty and another nurse was on. I heard a bang on my door and someone saying, "Dez, could you come over there is a man really sick!" I got out of bed, put some clothes on and ran over. He had 'flat lined' which meant that he was dead. So I instigated all the resuscitation techniques that I could. Jenny got the flying doctor from Derby on the phone and I was talking with him on the speaker while I was still trying to intubate the patient. All his family came in to be with their relative who wasn't well. So I had about twenty people in there and I had no one to move them out of the way because I was too intent upon what I was doing so it was quite difficult at times. And the flying doctor was saying, after twenty-five minutes. "Dez, I think you had better call it mate because he has gone!" It is very hard to stop a resuscitation technique when people standing around are calling out, "Make him live — make him live!"

"Now Jenny and I have retired. We are living happily on our farm at Empire Vale, we take an active part in the local music scene and we travel widely around country Australia. We have met some lovely people here at home and around this wide and beautiful land."

**Dez McDonald**

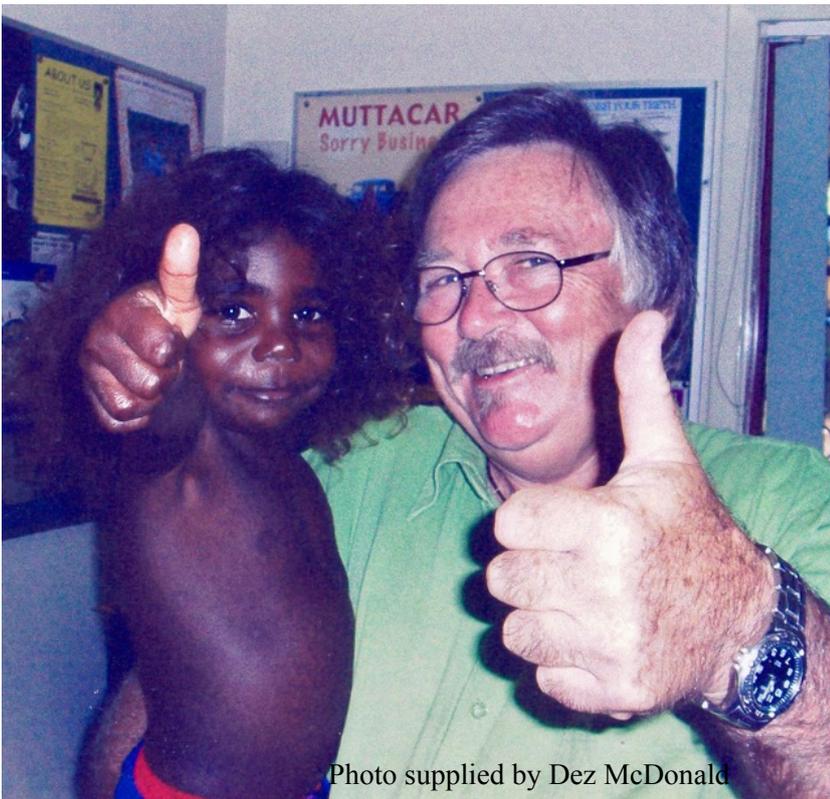


Photo supplied by Dez McDonald

When Joshua, the little boy on the left, returned to the Kimberly from a couple of years in Darwin, he was not well covered with his immunisation. So I went through and checked his history and found he needed three injections. I explained to his Mum what I had to do and I drew it all up and got it ready. There are certain protocols that you do, like you always draw up adrenaline in case the untoward happens and they have an allergic reaction. I then said, "Joshua I have got to give you an injection. Do you know what that is?" He asked, "Is that like a needle? I don't like needles!" I told him it was just like a mosquito bite that soon went away. But I said that I had a surprise for him afterwards. I told him not to look and gave him the three injections. I then went to the fridge and got him a couple of icypoles that I kept there for that reason. His eyes really lit up.

The next Thursday Joshua came bounding in. His mother had come to town to do the shopping. He said, "Hey Dez how are you?" Then he added, "I could do with another one of those needles!" "What do you want another needle for?" "Well, then you might give me another surprise!"

I said, "You don't need another needle but I'll give you another surprise!" With that he held up his thumb and we took the photo.

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