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the QUARTERLY

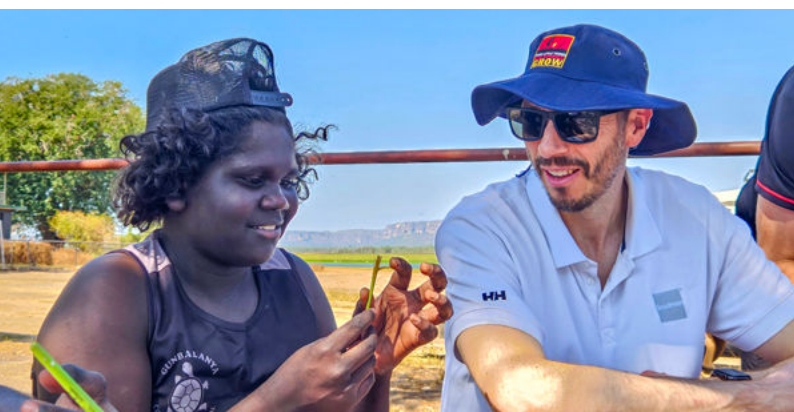
November 2023



clontarf
foundation



The Power of Sport and the Ross Kelly Cup



**Partners and Boys
Explore the Beauty of
West Arnhem Land**

**Academy Members
Race to the Top of
Their Fields**



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About us

The Clontarf Foundation exists to improve the education, discipline, self-esteem, life skills and employment prospects of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and by doing so, equips them to participate more meaningfully in society.

Using the passion that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander boys have for football allows the Foundation to attract the boys to school. But it is not a sporting programme.

Each Clontarf academy, formed in partnership with the local school, is focused on encouraging behavioural change, developing positive attitudes, assisting students to complete school and secure employment.

Fundamental to this, is the development of values, skills and abilities that will help the boys to achieve better life outcomes.

Through a diverse mix of activities, the full-time, local Clontarf staff mentor and counsel students while the school caters for the educational needs of each student.



Gerard addresses guests at the Ross Kelly Cup celebration dinner in Sydney in September.

Message from the CEO

Welcome to the latest Clontarf Quarterly for the year. Term 3 is always a massive quarter for our boys and staff, with plenty of employment forums, worksite visits, carnivals, camps and executive immersions occurring across the country.



The Foundation's largest event, the Ross Kelly Cup, took place in Sydney this term, and while every carnival we host is special, this event was monumental. Since the inaugural Ross Kelly Cup was played with around 100 boys in 2013, the carnival has grown enormously, with over 650 boys participating this year. It was incredible to see this many young men from across NSW come together for common cause - to play footy with their mates, experience the excitement of Sydney and enjoy all the other activities on offer.

These boys were selected to participate because of their commitment to attending school regularly, behaving in the classroom and demonstrating the Clontarf values and attitudes in their communities. Being picked to play was not about being the fastest or the toughest or the most skilled with a Steedon ball. Sure, these are all qualities that might help them succeed in a game of footy. Rather, it was the understanding that, if they work hard and achieve at school, and consistently demonstrate positive values, attitudes and behaviours, good things will come. The Ross Kelly Cup embodies that, and I congratulate each and every young man who participated this year.

I also want to acknowledge the hundreds of supporters and partners who took time out of their busy schedules to attend the celebration dinner or the carnival to cheer on the boys from the sidelines. This kind of support is so vital to the development of our young men.

Keeping on the theme of sport, Northam

Academy (WA) alumnus Ian 'Bobby' Hill was awarded the Norm Smith Medal – the award for best on ground – during Collingwood's win over Brisbane in the AFL Grand Final in Melbourne. Bobby spent most of his high school years at Northam Senior High School and in the Clontarf programme before transitioning to Wesley College for his senior year.

Meanwhile, in Sydney, Ambrose Treacy Academy (QLD) alumnus Ezra Mam scored three tries for Brisbane in their loss to Penrith in the NRL Grand Final. His hat trick of scores nearly propelled his team to the win and but they fell agonisingly short in the final minutes. Despite this, Ezra has launched himself into the national spotlight and is sure to have an outstanding career.

These two men have demonstrated incredible commitment and maturity in reaching the top of their respective sports. They will serve as important role models for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, whether it is via television screens or through their continuing involvement with Clontarf.

Looking at Term 4, we'll open our fourth South Australian academy for the year, taking us to 12 in total across the state. John Pirie Academy, located at John Pirie Secondary School is expected to host 50 boys when it is fully operational next year, and I'm incredibly excited to see how this academy develops. I want to thank Education Minister Hon Blair Boyer and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Kyam Maher for being tremendous supporters of our programme.

- Gerard Neesham OAM, CEO



Christies Beach Hosts SA Aboriginal Affairs Minister Kyam Maher

Christies Beach Academy (Adelaide, SA) welcomed boys from Wirreanda and Murray Bridge Academies for a visit by South Australia Aboriginal Affairs Minister, the Hon Kyam Maher MLC in September.

The academy staff kickstarted the day early, ensuring pickups began at 6:00 am to have everyone assembled at the academy room by 6:45 am.

Geared in their guernseys, the boys were ready to hit the track by 7:15 am, guided through an intense warm up by Regional Manager Graeme Twaddle. The energy soared higher as Dustin Hunter's beloved 'End Zone Grid Iron' game took center stage, even capturing Minister Maher's interest, who actively participated in scoring opportunities.

Amidst a goalkicking game that showcased the boys' skills and celebratory spirits, the session concluded with a heartwarming circle of gratitude, reflecting the camaraderie and mutual appreciation amongst attendees.

Academy members Peter Woodforde and Dion Walker-Murphy took the Minister on a tour, unveiling the purpose behind every facet of the academy's space and activities.

Following the morning activities, the 40 young men eagerly gathered for breakfast, engaging in an insightful session with Justin Belia and Peter Goldsmith interviewing Minister Maher in the popular 'Clonny On The Couch' segment. The Minister fielded diverse questions, delving into his background, career journey and even sharing his ideal superpower.

The Minister's inspiring speech resonated deeply, emphasising his pride in witnessing the dedication of these young men and encouraging them to sustain their commitment, hinting at the potential of seeing

one of them join him in parliament in the future.

The boys from all three academies would like to thank Minister Maher for visiting and look forward to hosting him again in the near future.



Merv Abraham Wins Gold Medal at the WorldSkills National Championships

Ellenbrook Academy (WA) member Merv Abraham won gold at the Worldskills Australia National Championships held in Melbourne in August.

The young man was awarded the gold medal for his efforts in Vocational Education and Training in School (VETiS) for Tiling.

Run by Worldskills Australia, the National Championships is Australia's largest vocation education and excellence competition, with regional competitors from around the country participating in a series of activities against their industry peers.

Merv said it was extremely satisfying to win gold at the national event.

"I was confident I would do well but it was unreal to win gold!" Merv said.

"The awards were presented by former Olympic Gold Medallist Steve Bradbury. When my name wasn't called out for either bronze or silver, I just knew I would win the gold. I felt so proud."

Merv will complete Year 12 this year and plans to strike while the iron is hot by starting a building trade, likely in the tiling industry. Following that, he plans to learn how to run his own business.

Merv has come a long way in the last two years, increasing his school attendance levels from critically low up to 90% and above, and his teachers report that he is a delight to have in the classroom. He credits the support of mentors at his Ellenbrook Academy, in particular Academy Director Wayne 'Youngey' Young.

"I don't think I would be in school without Clontarf's help. They have helped me make good choices and to become a good bloke all the time.

"Youngey kept encouraging me, even when I was ready to give up. Even when things got tough, Clontarf helped out by picking me up every day and assisting

me with anything I needed. They helped me get a learner's permit, driving lessons and so many other good experiences."





The Power of Sport and the Ross Kelly Cup

The captains of each academy were invited on stage with former Clontarf chairman Ross Kelly to display their team's jersey for the Ross Kelly Cup.

"Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand."

Nelson Mandela's famous words in 2000 were timed perfectly with the opening of the inaugural Clontarf Academy in Perth in the same year. Sport was at the heart of original Clontarf programme, where Aussie Rules football was a significant draw card for the 25 young men who laced up their boots and pulled on a 'Clonnie' guernsey. Their participation in the academy resulted in improved confidence and self esteem, which in turn resulted in improved school attendance and Year 12 completion.

Fast forward to 2023, the Ross Kelly Cup rugby league carnival is the biggest annual event on the Clontarf calendar. Over 650 Year 9 and 10 boys from 47 Clontarf academies across NSW gathered in Sydney to participate in the highly anticipated event. While football and sport more broadly may not be the main game of Clontarf these days, it remains an incredibly important part of the programme because it continues to attract boys to our academies and therefore school - just like it did back in 2000 for those original 25 boys.

Quick Stats

- 47** Academies
- 40** Teams
- 650** Boys
- 100** Clontarf staff members
- 94** Games played
- 2,377km** Longest round trip (Broken Hill)

History of the Ross Kelly Cup

The inaugural Ross Kelly Cup carnival was held in 2013, the second year of Clontarf operating in NSW. Around 100 boys participated in this carnival, which might be considered small by today's Clontarf standards, but at the time, this event was the start of things to come.

"It was the first Clontarf carnival in NSW where the boys realised that they were part of something much bigger than their own academies or communities," Deputy CEO Craig Brierty said.

"They had been on a few camps or played in other regional carnivals with their peers from fellow Clontarf academies, but never before had they participated in something of that scale. From there, it became a talking point for boys, all eagerly anticipating the chance to pull on their jersey and represent their academy, school and community in the state's capital."



Celebration Dinner

More than a thousand attendees, comprised of academy members, Clontarf staff, partners and supporters, gathered for a momentous celebration dinner in Sydney on the eve of the carnival. This occasion served as an opportunity to recognise the efforts of the Year 9 and 10 members who had worked hard at school to be selected to play in the carnival. It was also an invaluable opportunity for the young men to connect and engage with the many Clontarf partners and supporters in attendance.

The evening was hosted by Mason Hill, a member of the Wellington Academy, who guided the proceedings seamlessly. Distinguished guest speakers graced the stage, among them, the revered Col Hardy OAM, a Golden Guitar winner and an unwavering supporter of Clontarf. Current academy members, alumni and staff all delivered heartwarming speeches to the attentive audience.





Camps

Many regional academies made the most of the long trip to Sydney by holding a week long camp. The boys got the chance to take in the sights and sounds of the state's capital, including surf lessons at Bondi Beach, shopping on Pitt Street, skiing, bowling, laser tag, arcade games and go karting. They also visited Clontarf partners, the Opera House, Sydney Harbour Bridge, Circular Quay and Allianz Stadium.

Spare a thought for the boys from Broken Hill Academy, who endured a 2377km round trip! The long drive didn't bother the boys during the monster five-day camp, as they had the chance to visit the Sydney Swans at the SCG, Aqua Golf and a visit to Culture Kings.



Carnival

The boys woke up bright and early the day of the carnival to make the trek up to Tuggerah, about an hour north of Sydney.

After a quick briefing, the boys eagerly hit the track, laying hard but fair tackles, throwing laser accurate passes and scoring thrilling tries.

In total, 94 games of rugby league were played across the day. Each and every one of them was played with 'Clontarf spirit'.

In addition to the qualifying games and grand final, a select group of boys played in a Salt Water (Greater Sydney, Newcastle/Hunter, Mid North Coast and South Coast) vs Fresh Water (North West, Riverina and Central Coast) representative game.

Clontarf would like to thank all partners who attended, including the representatives from Woolworths, Coates and Fulton Hogan who cooked the barbecues all day - there were certainly many hungry bellies to fill and the barbies did the trick.



Grand Final

The carnival culminated in a grand final between Endeavour (Caringbah) and Mount Austin (Wagga Wagga).

In what was a very close contest, Endeavour eventually hoisted the coveted trophy after scoring with a golden point try. Congratulations to the Endeavour boys!



About Ross Kelly

The carnival is named in honour of the Foundation's inaugural and long-serving Chairman, Ross Kelly AM. Ross became Chairman in 1999 after he was sought out by Clontarf CEO Gerard Neesham to discuss the idea of a football academy for young Aboriginal men in Perth.

Ross retired as Chairman in May after 24 years in the role but still made an appearance at this year's celebration dinner, addressing the audience and wishing the young men playing in the carnival all the best.

While he may no longer be a formal member of the Board, Ross' contribution to Clontarf will be forever be immortalised in this annual carnival.



The stunning beauty of Kakadu National Park played host to Clontarf academy members, staff and partners during the West Arnhem Clontarf Experience.

Anthony a Natural Leader



North Albany Academy (WA) alumnus Anthony Turner has rocketed up the ranks at Clontarf partner Kmart (Wesfarmers) since graduating from Year 12 in 2018.

He was initially helped by his Clontarf mentors to ready a resume and prepare for this interview. After successfully applying for the job, Anthony's positivity, work ethic and determination at his local store meant he was quickly identified as a young man who would excel in a management position.

"Kmart put me through the Manager in Training Program and within six months, I had completed the program and was appointed to Kmart Broome where I assisted with the opening of the new store," Anthony said.

"While in Broome I completed a Certificate IV in Indigenous Leadership which allowed me to step into my new role as the Indigenous Employment Advisor for the Kmart Group (Kmart and Target) in WA, NT and SA, and a store in NSW.

"Now I have the opportunity to assist more Indigenous people to participate in the leadership journey that I have taken, and also assist with getting young Indigenous people their first jobs."

Anthony said the skills and attitudes he'd picked up while in the academy, such as shaking hands, treating people with care and respect, and camaraderie had gone a long way to developing his customer service and teamwork skills.

Exploring the Beauty of West Arnhem Land

Gunbalanya Academy and Jabiru Academy joined forces this year to host the West Arnhem Clontarf Experience in August.

This year's event was attended by representatives from Clontarf partners including Goodman Foundation, QUBE, Reece Australia, Rio Tinto and Woolworths. Throughout the week, these partners had the invaluable opportunity to immerse themselves in Clontarf's unique programme, both within and outside the school setting.

Joining the group were boys from Nightcliff Academy and Palmerston 7-9 Academy (Darwin). Together, the group embarked on a journey filled with morning training sessions, awe-inspiring excursions to the world-renowned Kakadu National Park, and engaging arts and crafts activities at Gunbalanya's celebrated Injaluk Arts Centre.

One of the most transformative aspects of the experience was the camping adventure that unfolded over several nights within the heart of Kakadu National Park. The young academy members took on leadership roles, guiding and mentoring other guests amidst the enchanting wilderness of Merl campgrounds. Together, they embarked on invigorating hikes, savoured dinners by the tranquil billabong and participated in

cultural activities. The presence of Kakadu Park Rangers, who introduced the group to a three-metre crocodile being surveyed, added a thrilling dimension to the adventure.

Throughout the camp, the boys were entrusted with a unique task: to covertly acquaint themselves with their partners. Armed with this newfound knowledge, they eloquently presented speeches during a final dinner, showcasing their deep understanding of the individuals and their respective businesses.

The warm hospitality of the Traditional Owners from both Jabiru and Gunbalanya left an indelible mark on the hearts of the group. They generously shared their profound knowledge of the land and shared historical perspectives, offering a deeper understanding of the significance of the region.

Additionally, the presence of past Jabiru alumni allowed the partners to connect on a personal level, hearing inspiring stories of transformation and growth.

The Kakadu Experience was one of six executive immersions hosted by Clontarf in 2023.





Harristown Academy (Toowoomba, QLD) Year 12 member Peter Heinemann was surrounded by Clontarf staff, family members, teachers and other supporters at the Darling Downs South West Regional QLD Training Awards Night in July.

'Pistol Pete' Shoots Straight to the Top

Peter 'Pistol Pete' Heinemann is the ultimate Clontarf academy member - a programme participant since Year 8 who, now in his final year at school, has the world at his feet.

Pete recently sat down with his mentors at Harristown Academy in Toowoomba, QLD to chat about his time in the academy and how it helped to reach Year 12 and prepare for life after school.

He reflected back to his time as a junior student where he found the day-in-day-out grind and structure of school completely unappealing. At the time, he could barely comprehend the idea of completing Year 8, let alone sticking around long enough to graduate with a Year 12 certificate.

While he attended school often enough, his focus was entirely on his main passion - trucks and machinery. His father worked in industry and he held ambitions to follow in his footsteps. While the school provided several avenues to pursue mechanics, he had no real understanding of how his education could help him to pursue a career in his passion.

It wasn't until he was in Year 10 in 2019, when his Clontarf mentors helped him to secure a position on a work experience programme with local business, Western Truck Group (WTG), did he truly begin to see a pathway into a sustainable career.

For the next two years, Pete did one day per week at WTG before being offered a school-based traineeship. It was during this period that Peter built his technical knowledge and developed a strong understanding of workplace practices. His academy mentors ensured he got there each day, driving him to WTG when he was unable to get there on his own.

This July, Peter's hard work and determination were acknowledged with nominations for two traineeship awards at the Darling Downs South West Regional QLD Training Awards Night. While he didn't win his categories, it was an incredible achievement to be nominated and a powerful experience for him.

As the sun sets on his secondary schooling, Pete likes to draw on his own experiences to lead the younger boys in the academy.

"Take in what school has to offer and take every opportunity with both hands," he said. "Succeed in school, finish school and move into a good, stable job."

Congratulations, Pete - we'll watch your career with keen interest!



VIC Boys Eye Origin Clash



Following on from the very successful State of Origin rugby league series between NSW and QLD, it was only right for the 'Aussie Rules states' to have their time in the sun.

The Clontarf Australian Rules State of Origin carnival will be held in Melbourne in November this year, and boys from across the country have been training hard to be selected to participate.

Fully aware of the wave of interstate talent bearing down on them, the boys from our Victorian academies have been holding a series of training camps to ensure they're fully prepared to face the imminent challenge.

A recent camp to the picturesque country town of Strath Creek was the perfect setting to get the boys underway, and the boys delved straight into skills work and a session on coachability.

Similar to the selection process for the Ross Kelly Cup, academy staff reinforced the need for strong school attendance, behaviour and engagement to be considered for selection.

The camp also involved a series of morning countryside hikes, intense football training sessions and even a Q&A session with Karl Amon, an Aboriginal player for the Hawthorn Hawks.

Needless to say, the boys are champing at the bit to test their skills against their interstate peers and are counting down the days till the clash.



Clontarf boys from across NSW gained valuable insight into uni life during a visit to The University of Sydney in August.



Boys Welcomed by the University of Sydney

The University of Sydney, a partner of Clontarf, hosted a group of senior Clontarf boys from across NSW on an enlightening tour of their complex in August.

For many of the boys, this was their first visit to a university, and the sheer size and scale of the grounds and buildings was awe-inspiring.

The experience was aimed at informing senior boys about education pathways post school and giving them a taste of uni life.

During the tour, university staff showcased the many study avenues available, including business, engineering, law, health and medicine. The boys also learned about the various scholarships and grants available to them.

NSW Zone Manager Ryan Woolfe said the relationship with The University of Sydney had led to many boys considering university as an option after graduating.

"Since we commenced our partnership we've had hundreds of boys tour the university and learn more about the tertiary pathways available to them," he said.

"Many hadn't considered uni as a potential option prior to the visit, but seeing the lecture theatres, labs, restaurants and support services in the flesh has changed a few minds."

The trip culminated in a live NRL match between the Sydney Roosters and the Manly Sea Eagles at the iconic Sydney Cricket Ground.

Several of the academies turned the Sydney trip into an overnight camp, with boys participating in a range of activities including escape rooms, a treetop climb at St Ives and visits to the beach.

Thank you for your support

Clontarf would like to acknowledge the following organisations for their recent commitment to support the Foundation:

- Alice Springs Town Council
- CCIWA
- Clublinks
- CPB Contractors
- Deutsche Bank AG
- EIG Australia
- Engenco
- Google
- Jaybro
- John Laing Charitable Foundation
- MG Tyres
- Mineral Resources Limited
- Mitsubishi Corporation
- Newmont Tanami Pty Ltd
- Pipeline Technics
- Powerlink Queensland
- Protech
- Sonic Healthcare
- State Street Fund
- SUEZ Australia & New Zealand
- Thomas Foods
- Tronox Pigment Bunbury
- Twin Towns services
- UBS
- UGL Limited
- Westug

Tuqiri Mason Shatters Running Record

Port Macquarie Academy (NSW) Year 10 student Tuqiri Mason etched his name in the history books after breaking a 20 year-old running record at his school.

The youngster recently ran the 100m sprint in 10.92 seconds - barefooted and with no starting blocks or dedicated training - shattering a two-decade record.

"It feels incredible to have broken the record, I'm proud and grateful for this achievement," Mason told the National Indigenous Times.

"I'm only 15 going on 16 and would love to represent my culture and country and would like to see myself in the Olympics."

At the end of Term 3, Tuqiri travelled to Sydney to compete in the NSW All Schools Athletics Championships.

In the academy room, Tuqiri is a calm, respectful leader who always encourages other boys to be

accountable by tidying up after themselves and following the academy's rules to the letter.

In the classroom, Tuqiri mentors younger Clontarf boys so they have a positive attitude like him.



Donations & Workplace Giving

There are a significant number of individuals who support the Clontarf Foundation through donations and workplace giving programmes.

We are very appreciative and thank you for your ongoing support. If you would like to donate directly please [follow this link](#)

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