



## CLARENCE VALLEY CULTURAL PLAN 2007 – 2012

### *UNITY IN DIVERSITY: CONNECTING CLARENCE COMMUNITIES THROUGH CULTURE*



“A collection of diverse, thriving and evolving communities that are embracing their social and cultural potential, united within the Valley by common elements – the River(s) and waters that link them and elements of common heritage and history, incorporating and respecting a living Indigenous culture and the unique environment we inhabit – beaches, forests, rivers, lakes, farmland”. *Online Cultural Survey respondent*

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# Introduction

the patchwork  
almost complete now  
and the river shifting always  
its dreams into the sea <sup>1</sup>

Welcome to the Clarence Valley's first Cultural Plan.

The Clarence Valley is located at the southern end of the Northern Rivers region of NSW stretching from the Pacific Coast west across the valley of the majestic Clarence River, nestled between Coffs Harbour in the south and Ballina/Byron to the north. The Northern Rivers region is acknowledged nationally as a centre for arts and culture renowned for its creative communities such as Byron Bay, Lismore and Nimbin, its diverse lifestyle choices and for its beautiful coastal and rainforest environment.

The Clarence Valley is a region of contrasts – stark natural beauty and extensive National Parks; thriving rural industries and sparkling beaches; a large urban centre (Grafton, the Jacaranda City) and over 40 towns and villages stretching from the highlands to the sea. The area is also rich in arts and culture – the award-winning Grafton Regional Gallery and a network of local art groups, galleries and craft outlets; the largest collection of community museums and historical societies in the Northern Rivers; a calendar of unique events including the historic Jacaranda Festival, Grafton Artsfest, the Maclean Highland Gathering and the colourful Surfing the Coldstream arts fringe festival; and the mighty Clarence River itself with its many tributaries and islands drawing together the diverse elements of this unique Valley as it winds its way to the sea.

Clarence Valley Council was proclaimed in 2004 amalgamating the previous Councils of Copmanhurst, Grafton, Maclean and Pristine Waters and the activities of North Coast Water and Clarence River County Council. As part of the amalgamation a new directorate was created – Community & Cultural Services – demonstrating the new Council's commitment to social, community and cultural development. With this new directorate came the new position of Cultural Development Coordinator, a position dedicated to arts and cultural development within the Local Government Area (LGA). One of the key responsibilities of this position is the development of a Clarence Valley Cultural Plan.

The Cultural Plan is a Council planning document designed to provide a strategic approach to arts and cultural development within the new Clarence Valley Local Government Area. It sets out broad themes and issues relating to arts and culture within the Clarence Valley that have been drawn out of a series of formal and informal community consultations, the Clarence Cultural Survey and the composite knowledge of Council staff involved in arts and cultural programs and development. Reference has also been made to a number of key Council planning documents in order to ensure that cultural planning is integrated into Council's overall strategic framework (see Bibliography for further information).

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<sup>1</sup> © Extract from "The river: north of the colony", Geoff Page, from *Cassandra Paddocks* (1980, Angus & Robertson)

The *Sustainability Initiative* (established by the newly amalgamated Council in 2005) is the organisation's key strategic planning mechanism to which the Cultural Plan and Council's other strategic planning tools are inextricably linked. The *Sustainability Initiative* was specifically referenced during the planning process and the opportunity taken to develop specific 'cultural values' for the Valley to extend initial references in the Initiative.

The Plan sets out a Vision for the cultural development of the Valley over the next 10 years focusing specifically on the period 2007–2012. This Vision represents the future goals for cultural development within the Valley pursuing the key themes and issues identified with a series of strategies and actions. Overall, the plan is a tool to assist Council and the community to build a rich and vibrant cultural experience for all residents of the Clarence Valley – an environment where culture and creativity are valued as a critical aspect of the daily lives of local people and where arts and culture are supported and facilitated by Council and a range of community organisations and businesses to the benefit of all Clarence Valley residents.

The Plan is also intended to provide a focal point for local individuals and organisations, a hub around which those with an interest in or passion for the arts and culture may converge and work collaboratively towards mutual goals and achievements. Council is committed to cultural development and the furtherance of arts and creativity. However, the success of the Cultural Plan hinges upon partnerships between Council and the many individuals and arts and cultural organisations of the Clarence Valley taking ownership of projects and initiatives and sharing the vision for a thriving and evolving Clarence culture.

Each year, the progress of actions, strategies and projects arising from the Plan will be reviewed and reported on under Council's annual Management Plan. It is also anticipated that a major review of the Plan will be conducted at the end of the planning period in 2012, to evaluate the success of the Plan's strategies and actions, examine our progress towards the Plan's Vision and individual goals, and in preparation for the development of the next Cultural Plan.

### *Acknowledgements*

This Plan has been developed with the assistance of consultant Sue Boaden of the Australia Street Company, leading cultural and socio-economic planners and management consultants, in association with Council's inaugural Cultural Development Coordinator, Brendan Smith. We would like to thank Sue for her invaluable guidance, input, facilitation and commitment to this complex project, and for helping to create a Plan which is compelling, distinctive and practical.

Council would like to take this opportunity to thank the many residents who contributed to the development of this Plan, attending public meetings, workshops and consultations; sharing their thoughts, visions and ideas in Cultural Survey responses; or making independent formal or informal submissions outlining their cultural visions and suggestions. While the Cultural Plan cannot hope to reflect everyone's thoughts, suggestions or recommendations, they have all contributed to the development of the Plan and assisted Council to identify the key themes and goals to focus on over the next 5-10 years.

As you read the document, you will notice short extracts of poetry scattered throughout the text. Our sincere thanks go to acclaimed Australian poet Geoff Page for allowing us to use his verse and imagery to add colour and depth to the Cultural Plan. Geoff has a strong and enduring connection to the Clarence Valley and the river that flows through it. His poetry uniquely captures the spirit of the area and we are delighted to have it flowing through the Plan.

It is often difficult to fully capture the colour and vibrancy of an area's arts and cultural life simply in words. The distinctiveness of the Clarence's many festivals and events, its parks, rivers and bushland, the built heritage and public art, and its many other cultural pursuits are best represented visually. As such, we have included a selection of images in an attempt to reflect the depth, breadth and dynamism of 'Clarence culture'. We would like to express our heart felt thanks to the many local photographers who have generously given permission for their images to be used in the Plan, including Debrah Novak and members of the Grafton Camera Club.

We would also like to thank the members of the Cultural Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC) who generously contributed their time, knowledge, energy and thoughts during the Plan's development. We greatly appreciated your valuable contribution and ongoing commitment throughout the process. Finally, our appreciation and thanks to the many Council staff who have made significant contributions to the Plan and the planning process: Jill Napier, Jude McBean, Noelene Grace, Bruce Mercer and the Community Development Team, Tina Bultitude and Lois Randall of Arts Northern Rivers.

The weather of that morning's lost,  
a Clarence autumn blue with smoke,  
a light wind on the river...<sup>2</sup>



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<sup>2</sup> © Extract from "The River", Geoff Page, from *Collected Lives* (1986, Angus & Robertson)



Carnival by night, Jacaranda Festival (image: © Ingrid Taylor), Yamba Lighthouse, Pilot Hill (image: © Judy Howard), Public art: Skinner St South Grafton (image: © Ingrid Taylor) Purple Snow – Jacaranda avenue (image: © Ingrid Taylor), Mist on the Clarence (image: © Ingrid Taylor), Jacaranda Festival, Grafton (image: © Ingrid Taylor),

## Background – Clarence Valley Local Government Area (LGA): Location and Demographics <sup>3</sup>

the Clarence in its evening pools,  
the last light holding till I get there...

the Clarence that I know has flowed  
through every second of my life...

*To be an eddy in the stream  
And yet have seen the river.* <sup>4</sup>

The Clarence Valley Council has a population of approximately 50,000 residents and is located in the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales, approximately 600 kilometres north of Sydney and 300 kilometres south of Brisbane. The LGA is bounded by the Kyogle and Richmond Valley Council areas to the north, the Pacific Ocean to the east, Coffs Harbour City and Bellingen Shire to the south and Glen Innes Severn Council, Guyra Shire and Tenterfield Shire to the west. The Clarence Valley is the second most populous LGA in the Northern Rivers.

The Clarence Valley Council area is predominantly rural, with expanding residential areas. It encompasses approximately a third of the Northern Rivers region with a total land mass of 10,440 square kilometres, of which a significant proportion is National Park, State Forest and nature reserves, including beaches, rainforests, mountains and rivers. Much of the rural area is used for forestry, agriculture and grazing, including sugarcane growing and beef cattle. Fishing is also an important industry. In more recent years tourism has become a major industry, especially along the coast.

Settlement is based around the inland city of Grafton and the coastal townships of Yamba, Maclean and Iluka, with numerous small villages and rural localities along the coast and inland. The mighty Clarence River winds through the LGA and a large percentage of the coastline is preserved in State National Parks. The recent release of the draft Mid North Coast Regional Strategy by the NSW Department of Planning provides for significant growth for the LGA in the future. The Strategy recognises Grafton as the Clarence sub-region's major regional centre with Maclean named as a major town, and recognises that the sub-region must plan for growth and development whilst balancing the need for the protection of sensitive and distinctive environmental and cultural landscapes.

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<sup>3</sup> Draft Clarence Valley Social Plan 2006 - 2009

<sup>4</sup> © Extract from "Final Stretches", Geoff Page, from *Gravel Corners* (1992, Angus & Robertson)

The original inhabitants of the Clarence Valley area are the Bundjalung, Gumbaingirr and Yaegl Aboriginal peoples. Five Indigenous communities are represented within the LGA at Baryulgil, Malabugilmah, Grafton, Maclean and Yamba. A significantly higher percentage of the Valley's population identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait islander compared to the NSW average.

The Valley has a significantly higher proportion of older people (60-84 years) than the State average, particularly focused around Grafton City and surrounds and the Clarence Coast. It also has a relatively high number of children and young people (5-17 years). The Clarence Coast is experiencing the greatest growth in population in the Clarence Valley. Of interest, the Valley has a comparatively low use of computers and the Internet. Within the Northern Rivers region, the Clarence Valley population is also regarded to have a high level of disability.

Clarence Valley is considered to be an area of relatively high disadvantage, with significantly higher general and youth unemployment and lower labour force participation than the NSW average. Comparatively, there are high rates of part-time employment. The population is also considered to be markedly under qualified compared to NSW, the Mid North Coast and the Northern Rivers regions, with low completion of Year 12 schooling and low attainment of non-school qualifications. Household incomes are significantly lower compared to the NSW mean with average weekly household income well below the State average.

There is a significantly smaller percentage of the population born in non-English speaking countries compared to the NSW average. While there has been some change in migrant settlement in the Clarence Valley, with increases for migrants from India and China, numbers are still relatively low.





Festival stilt walker (image: © Lainie Edwards), River reflections (image: © Judy Howard), Cowboys at heart (image: © Doreen Wilkes)  
Kilted marchers, Highland Gathering 2007 (image: © Nicki Holmes), Woolitji House courtyard gallery (image: © Colin Clague ), Philosophy Science & Theology Festival 2005 (image: © Roger Millard)

## Defining culture

Knowing he grows  
towards that day  
    when he will walk  
    a spume-blue stretch of sand  
    lie flat pale belly to the sun  
    cruciform between the curves  
    of earth & sky...<sup>5</sup>

The development of the first Cultural Plan for the Clarence Valley Local Government Area has stimulated considerable discussion and debate in relation to what 'culture' means to Valley residents. This is a critical issue in relation to cultural planning since it is important to define culture in order to establish what is locally distinctive, what contributes to the development of identity and a sense of place, and what should be included in the specific area's strategic cultural planning priorities. This in turn ensures that the Plan is relevant, realistic and focussed on aspects of culture that matter to that community.

The Cultural Planning Guidelines developed by ArtsNSW propose that:

*Culture in its widest sense is about what matters to people and communities. It is about relationships, shared memories and experience. It is about identity, history and a sense of place. It is about different ethnic, social and religious backgrounds found in our communities. It is about the things we consider valuable for passing onto future generations. It is about our way of connecting the present to the past and the future.*<sup>6</sup>

This definition broadly embraces 'culture as a way of life' and is supported by comments made during preliminary interviews and workshops for the Cultural Plan, and the Cultural Survey. These comments from the broader community provide insight into the diversity of interpretations of culture. The following quotes are provided here for information.

"Don't just talk about art. Culture is not just something that happens on Sunday. It is something that is of vital importance to our wellbeing".  
*Cultural Survey online respondent, October 2006.*

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<sup>5</sup> © Extract from "A walk on the beach", Geoff Page, from *Small Town Memorials* (1975, UQP)

<sup>6</sup> Cultural Planning Guidelines for Local Government, 2004. Sydney: NSW Ministry for the Arts and Department of Local Government.

“Everyone is touched by culture; it’s a part of our everyday life”. *Interview, 17 August 2006*

“Culture is what living here is all about”. *Interview, 9 October 2006.*

“Culture is about the experience of living here. It’s our daily habits”. *Interview, 17 August 2006.*

“Culture is about bringing people together: the interactions between people and the cooperation between groups”.  
*Culture Conversation, 10 October 2006.*

“Culture is an evolutionary thing based on people and their interactions”. *Community consultation workshop, 8 November 2006.*

Although these comments are informative and provide a foundation for the cultural needs and interests of the residents of the Clarence Valley, they aren’t specific enough to inform a precise definition of ‘culture’ for the purposes of this Plan. Further refinement and focus is required in order to establish a shared understanding of the scope of the Plan. It also helps to focus the Plan’s priorities as a basis for Council’s strategic decision making.

Consultations and interviews associated with the Plan established a range of opinions and meanings for culture as experienced in the Clarence. Many people commented that *the arts* are a key component of the Valley’s culture, providing opportunities for creative expression and for celebrating local distinctiveness. The term ‘the arts’ is multifaceted and includes traditional visual arts and crafts, performing arts and music, film and screen media, writing in its many forms, design, and public art and sculpture. The following elements were also noted as making a significant contribution to Clarence Valley culture:

- the natural environment including the Clarence and other Rivers, their islands, climate, topography and landscape
- Indigenous heritage and culture, and the Valley’s contemporary Aboriginal communities and lifestyle
- Education and lifelong learning
- Agriculture – cane and dairy farming, beef grazing, commercial fishing, timber
- Recreation and sport
- Patterns of urban and rural settlement
- Heritage and history including the natural rural and built environment
- Festivals, celebrations, markets and events
- Restaurants, cafes, markets and local produce
- Religion and spirituality
- Parks, reserves and open spaces including national parks and beaches.

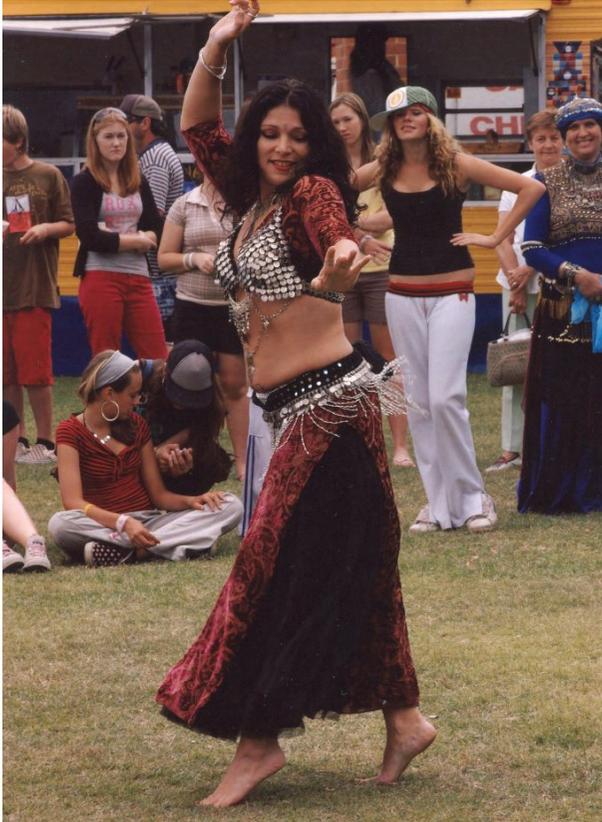
Many of the components of culture listed above are already integrated into Council's programs via specific planning and research strategies. These include for example the Council's *Economic Development Strategic Plan 2006*, the *Draft Social Plan 2006 – 2009*, the *Regional Gallery's Strategic Plan*, the *State of the Environment Report 2004-2005*, the *Clarence Regional Library Review 2006* and the *Lower Clarence Recreation Needs Analysis 2006*. The Cultural Plan therefore provides an opportunity to build on and enhance previous work and strategies within these current plans, and to make strategic links across and between the broad span of Council's operations.

Based on preliminary discussions and feedback, the following working definition of culture for the Clarence Valley is proposed as a basis for establishing a manageable cultural planning framework.

*For the Clarence Valley Local Government Area, 'culture' refers to the shared experiences of living in the area including the diversity of lifestyle choices. In particular culture recognises the role played by cultural vitality in the arts and creative expression, particularly the central role played by artists, which brings people together to celebrate the area's distinctive natural environment. This includes the Clarence River system and its influence on patterns of settlement in a distributed network of towns and villages where each locality has its own distinct identity, character and sense of community.*

*Culture in the Clarence Valley acknowledges the area's diverse history and heritage including its strong Indigenous cultural heritage and the links to the dynamic contemporary Indigenous communities within the LGA. In the Clarence Valley, culture is influenced by the experience and heritage of rural industry such as agriculture, by beach culture and by places and events that support cultural tourism. It also broadly includes leisure activities and aspects of recreation including sport. Clarence Valley culture also incorporates aspects of education, skills development, training and lifelong learning.*





Festival dancer (image: © Lainie Edwards), Rural heritage (image: Doreen Wilkes), Local students and Zaishu seats at Grafton Regional Gallery (image: Cher Breeze), Rural heritage, Brushgrove (image: Sue Boaden), Pipers, Highland Gathering 2007 (image: © Nicki Holmes)

## Cultural Values

he walks as best he can  
a gentle beach  
with images  
considering  
the steady invitation  
of the sand <sup>7</sup>

In 2005, the newly established Clarence Valley Council embarked on an ambitious *Sustainability Initiative* as a foundation for better managing the area's resources and future. The Sustainability project is a critical planning tool for Council and provides a firm foundation for the development of the Cultural Plan. It is therefore discussed in summary below.

The Initiative sought to provide opportunities to:

- Identify complex challenges
- Understand critical planning issues
- Foster community engagement
- Encourage shared ownership
- Develop strategies for maintaining and also restoring local ecological, social, cultural and economic assets and resources.

Council's *Sustainability Framework* was published in July 2005 and presented a blueprint for the Valley's future based on sound sustainability principles.<sup>8</sup> The Framework identifies 3 Lifestyle Themes that will underpin and guide Council's decision-making in relation to sustainability. In summary these themes are:

- Theme 1      Protecting our environment and community values
- Theme 2      Creating prosperity and well-being through healthy economic and social activity
- Theme 3      Developing diverse and creative communities with a broad range of lifestyle opportunities.

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<sup>7</sup> © Extract from "A walk on the beach", Geoff Page, from *Small Town Memorials* (1975, UQP)

<sup>8</sup> Clarence Valley Sustainability Initiative, draft July 2005. Prepared by Sustainable Futures Australia for Clarence Valley Council.

## LINKING CULTURAL VALUES TO SUSTAINABILITY

The development of the first Cultural Plan for the Clarence Valley presents an opportunity to establish and articulate a set of *community cultural values* unique to the Clarence Valley. These values complement the broad community values identified in the *Sustainability Framework* and specifically address community values and desires for the future<sup>9</sup> - as such, they may reflect values or ideals which currently exist, or those to which we should and can aspire. They have been developed based on community input during interviews, workshops, surveys and consultations.

## CULTURAL VALUES

### SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Cultural vitality underpins the Valley's sense of community and is a fundamental community value based on a dynamic balance between the preservation of the old and the evolution of the new<sup>10</sup>. A complex network of resources underpins the Valley's culture and these include not only financial resources and built cultural infrastructure but valued networks of association, skills, knowledge and support. This network needs to be recognised and fostered, and complemented with appropriate resources, infrastructure, and other forms of support.

### CELEBRATION OF AND RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

All residents and visitors have the right and opportunity to feel connected, engaged, supported and included. Community well-being is enhanced by fostering 'a fair and open community' where access to a broad range of cultural experiences and opportunities is actively encouraged.

### RECOGNISE AND VALUE ABORIGINAL HISTORY AND CULTURE

Active consultation with the Indigenous community and support for Indigenous cultural heritage including traditional knowledge and language and its contemporary expression is an acknowledged strength of the Valley's social and cultural fabric. The rich and dynamic Indigenous cultural heritage of the Clarence Valley is acknowledged and respected as an asset and elements of Aboriginal culture and knowledge are woven into the Valley's cultural fabric and community experience.

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<sup>9</sup> Our Sustainability Framework, July 2005. Clarence Valley Council. P. 18.

<sup>10</sup> Clarence Valley Cultural Catchment, Draft Cultural Policy, January 2001.

## NURTURE THE ARTS AND CREATIVITY

Quality of life and the maintenance of a distinctive community spirit will be fostered by new ideas, by improving opportunities to experience and participate in the arts and by encouraging a diversity of creative expression. Arts and creative expression are recognised, fostered and encouraged including nurturing the central role of artists. Creativity is supported with a range of resources and infrastructure.

## CONSERVE AND CELEBRATE LOCAL IDENTITY AND SENSE OF PLACE

The Clarence Valley has a unique environment, topography and climate as well as distinctive patterns of distributed settlement and a richness of natural and built heritage. Local identity and character is protected and its diversity acknowledged as a cultural asset. The distinctive character of each of the Valley's towns and villages is respected and celebrated, especially through art and performance, and local events and festivals. The Valley is linked by its rivers and their tributaries, which connect the different communities and foster a shared set of experiences and values.





Sand castle workshop, Summer Beats program (image: Sarah Ford), Anklung performance, Multicultural Festival 2006 (image: © Andrew Tarrant), Footsteps on the shore (image: © Deb Novak), Local produce – Peninsula Olives (image: © Andrew Tarrant), Children's Readings at Clarence Libraries (image: © Clarence Valley Council)

## Local distinctiveness

Jackadgery now, the burn-off smoke...  
From the lookout it is all blue haze,

the plumes from logs a kind of white,  
The Mann cuts north to join the Clarence...

The valley's stretching out below me

widening with human use  
and easy in the flattened light... <sup>11</sup>

In the Clarence Valley culture is influenced by what is unique and distinctive about the area. During consultations the following aspects of local culture were noted as distinctive:

- The Clarence River and its islands – 'river culture'
- The people and the 'rural' lifestyle, with its different pace and welcoming, friendly attitudes
- Active arts and cultural life
- Aboriginal heritage and culture
- Separate networks or centres of activity, community and geographic divisions
- Local character based on unique and diverse town and village identities
- Events, celebrations and community organisations
- Heritage and history
- A sense of space as opposed to urban consolidation
- National parks, flora and fauna
- Natural and rural landscape
- Beaches and surf culture

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<sup>11</sup> © Extract from "Final Stretches", Geoff Page from *Gravel Corners* (1992, Angus & Robertson)

## Cultural Vision

“ A collection of diverse, thriving and evolving communities that are embracing their social and cultural potential, united within the Valley by common elements – the River(s) and waters that link them and elements of common heritage and history, incorporating and respecting a living Indigenous culture and the unique environment we inhabit – beaches, forests, rivers, lakes farmland”.  
*Online Cultural Survey respondent.*

The development of a future vision for the cultural life of the Clarence Valley establishes a firm direction and focus for the Plan. The Vision presents a compelling picture of a desired future for the Valley in 10 years time. The cultural Vision must be relevant for the community, Council and its staff. The Vision is underpinned by the strategic goals that will be needed to achieve the Vision.

Through community workshops, consultations and the Cultural Survey, a number of comments were received in relation to the Valley's *cultural vision*. The following quotes from the survey are provided as background information:

*“Life in the Clarence Valley should be a celebration of the past and how we arrived here, plus what can be achieved in the future, by the young in harmony with existing current not past or perceived cultural values”.* Survey respondent, 45- 64 years. Woolli.

*“The Vision for Clarence Valley cultural life is one which promotes and nurtures the talented citizens of this Valley through strong mentoring programs”.* Survey respondent, 25 - 44 years.

*“To become a Regional Area for Cultural Excellence”. We already have a wide range of festivals and excellent artistic and musical talent. The Council needs to ensure wide support and to encourage involvement and financial support at State and Federal level”.* Online Cultural Survey respondent.

*“A dynamic, interesting and varied range of cultural activities/ experiences that reflect and enhance the life of the people”.* Survey respondent, 25 - 44 years. Grafton.

*“Cultural industries leveraging off one another; individuals encouraged and facilitated to display their excellence and encouraging one another”.* Survey respondent, 45 – 64 years.

*“The arts, heritage and cultural activities become as much part of the Valley as SPORT”.* Survey respondent, 45 – 64 years

*“To have equal emphasis for cultural activities and sporting events, to have a balance and respect and support from Council and recognition of the amount (level) and scope of artistic and cultural activities”.* Survey respondent, 65 + Grafton.

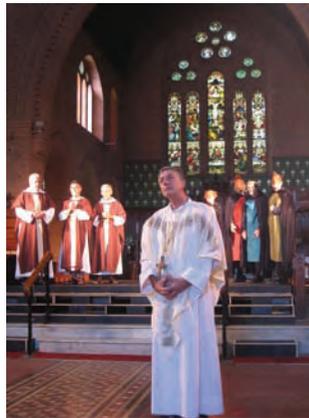
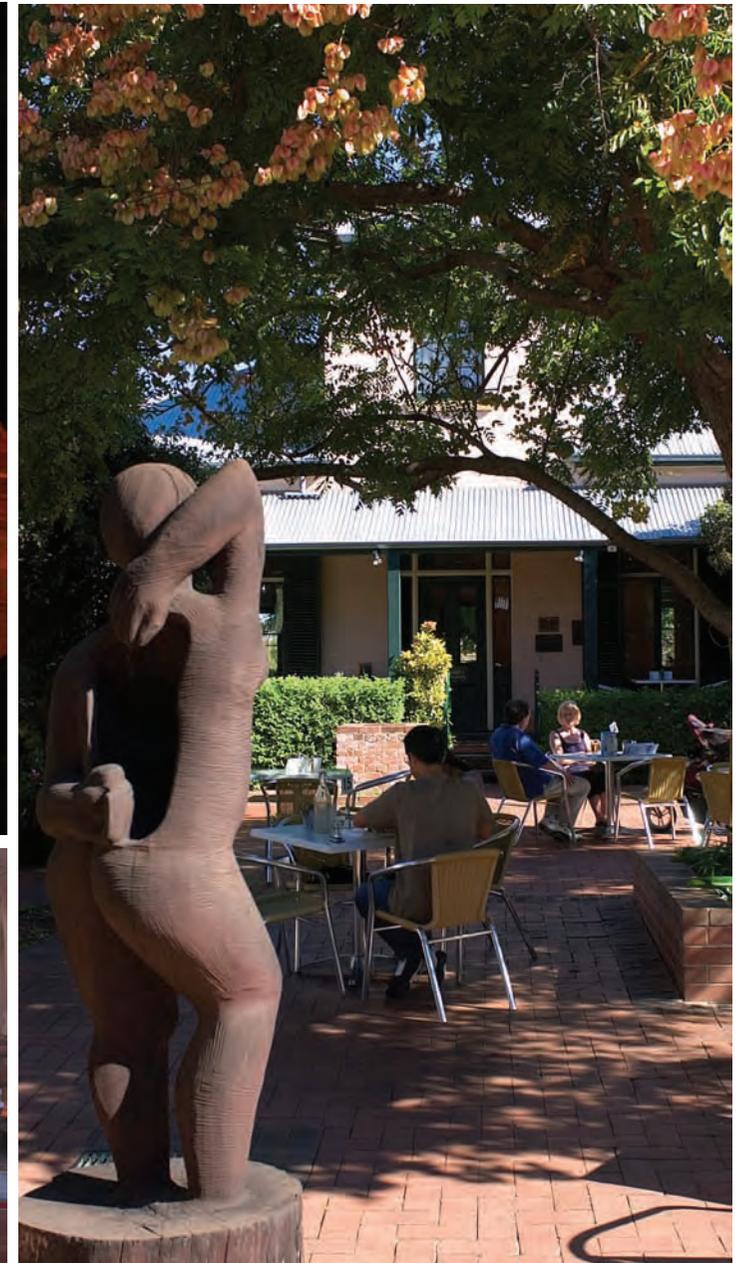
*“The Clarence Valley has a cultural heritage special to its region. The Clarence needs to acknowledge its heritage, the cultural mix, its local talent and visiting talent to show the uniqueness of its position in northern NSW to the rest of the State and to encourage involvement and participation, and also tourism to the region. There is great potential here”.* Online Cultural Survey respondent

## DRAFT CULTURAL VISION

Based on feedback during conversations, interviews and workshops and from the survey, the following draft Cultural Vision for the Clarence Valley 2007-2017 is proposed.

*In 2017, the Clarence Valley is a dynamic place where the area's vibrant culture is valued and resourced as a critical aspect of the daily lives of local people, regardless of their background, circumstances and status. Creativity in the Clarence Valley is widely supported through energetic partnerships and collaborations, a variety of popular cultural venues and facilities offering an dynamic program of activities, a range of education and lifelong learning choices, a respect for diversity and difference and through a widely shared passion for the area's unique and distinctive natural environment focused on and around the Clarence River. In the Clarence Valley heritage and history are actively protected and celebrated, and opportunities to acknowledge, understand, appreciate and foster local Indigenous culture are encouraged.*





Swan Lake, Maclean Civic Hall (image: © Deb Novak), Sculpture and café, Grafton Regional Gallery (image: Clarence Valley Council), Prawn trawlers, Yamba (image: © Ingrid Taylor), Tartan poles, Maclean (image: Clarence Valley Council), Cast of Murder in the Cathedral 2007 (image: © Evelyn Miller)

## Cultural planning issues

### CULTURAL SURVEY PATTERNS AND FEEDBACK

The Clarence Valley Cultural Survey was initiated to gather some general information about the Clarence community's participation in cultural events and activities, and to identify those cultural elements, events and institutions most valued, those felt to be missing, and those which Council could support and assist. The Survey also provided an opportunity for Valley residents to share their 'cultural vision' as a contribution to the development of a cultural vision for the Clarence Valley Cultural Plan. As this is the first Cultural Planning process for the newly amalgamated LGA, it was important to seek some responses from the community about cultural activities and facilities, and to get a sense of those elements that were working or that needed greater resources or development, and to identify perceived gaps in provision.

The Survey could be completed electronically on the Council's website, and was also available for download. Hard copies of the survey were distributed to the Community & Cultural Services mailing list and made available through the Clarence libraries, Grafton Regional Gallery, Grafton and Yamba community centres and Council's customer service centres. In some cases, they were distributed by private businesses and galleries. The survey was publicised in local papers and ran from mid-September 2006 until the end of October 2006. 176 survey responses were received – 48 electronically and 128 hard copy. Some statistics have been included below to give an indication of those facilities, services, organisations or issues that received a significant level of acknowledgment in the Survey responses. However, it is important to note that the figures provided in this section are the percentage of total survey responses received, not a percentage of those who responded to the particular questions posed. In many cases, respondents did not provide responses to specific questions. Therefore, while the percentages provided may not seem to indicate an overwhelming majority, they represent those organisations, institutions events or issues most clearly identified by those who responded to particular survey questions.

The Grafton Regional Gallery (31%) and the Clarence Library service (24%) rated highly as the two landmark cultural facilities for the Valley. Festivals also featured strongly in responses with Surfing the Coldstream (12%) and the Jacaranda (10%) Festivals both considered key cultural events. Artsfest, the Philosophy Science and Theology Festival and the Ulmarra River Festival were also mentioned repeatedly. Organisations such as the Lower Clarence Arts & Crafts Association in Maclean (coordinating the Ferry Park Gallery and their Annual Expo), Pro Musica and the Clarence Valley Conservatorium were identified as important cultural institutions.

Museums and historical societies – such as Schaeffer House in Grafton, the Port of Yamba Historical Society and the Stone Cottage in Maclean – were strongly represented (10%), and heritage generally was identified as a central concern for many respondents. A more surprising focus was film and cinema with the Saraton Theatre and Yamba Cinemas scoring highly (7%) as providing an important cultural experience. However, cinema also featured strongly in the 'what's missing' category with a number of respondents (9%) desiring greater access to arthouse or foreign/alternative films and film festivals and a greater variety of cinema experiences.

By far the most commonly identified 'lack' within the Valley identified in the Survey was a well resourced modern performing arts space somewhere in the Valley (27%). There were some differences of opinion on the desired capacity (anything from 300 to 1,000) and location (there was a strong call for this or some form of cultural facility in the Lower Clarence, especially Yamba). Some respondents were innovative as to how this need should be met – outdoor amphitheatres or portable facilities (such as the unique Spiegel Tent, a 'portable' stage facility) – and what it should incorporate. But this seemed to be the clear leader as to the cultural facility most clearly identified as 'missing' and needed.

Following closely behind was a general 'cultural' space or venue or a number of these (12.5%), incorporating a range of facilities and services including space for workshops and training, meetings, studios or artists' residencies, youth and multicultural services and/or advocacy, and perhaps even facilities such as print making equipment or kilns. This links with the *Economic Development Strategic Plan* and its strategy to explore 'creative industry hubs' within the Clarence. Clearly, such facilities need to be multipurpose to meet a wide range of arts and cultural needs and activities.

Other factors or themes identified as 'missing' or underdeveloped within the Valley included:

- increased facilities, activities and programs for young people (12%) – a key theme throughout all the Cultural Plan consultations, despite a relatively small number of young people participating in the Survey or community workshops;
- a greater acknowledgement and celebration of the Clarence's rich Indigenous culture and heritage (10%), including advocacy and support for Indigenous artists, cultural organisations and projects;
- greater access to live entertainment (8%) – touring theatre, music and concerts, opera, especially in the Lower Clarence;
- celebration and greater use of the Clarence River as a centre piece of the Valley which links the many diverse communities, and an increase in environmental awareness and education programs (7%); and
- improvement and expansion in the services and facilities offered by the Clarence Valley Library service (8%) – increased hours, improved book stock, increased space and resources and recognition of the Library as a key cultural institution.

Respondents suggested a range of innovative projects and ideas to be explored as part of the strategic development of arts and culture in the Clarence. These included the development of a Clarence Arts and Culture website incorporating promotion, advocacy and networking; a Clarence Valley Galleries network; strategies to build on and enhance the regular local markets with performances, events and local entertainment; increased development and promotion of heritage walks and trails throughout the Valley, especially around the river; and the development of a Cultural Centre (exhibition, performance and studio spaces) for the Lower Clarence.

The demographics of those who completed surveys were perhaps not surprising. Overwhelmingly respondents were 45-64 years, with roughly equal numbers of respondents in the 25-44 years and 65+ categories and a relatively low response rate from people aged up to 24 years. There were very few online returns from respondents over 65 years, but there were considerably more hard copy returns in this bracket. The 45-64 year bracket was consistently the highest in both electronic and hard copy returns.



## ASSETS AND RESOURCES MAP \* (see notes below)

CULTURAL RESOURCE CATEGORY	EST. NUMBER @ MAY 2007	DESCRIPTION/COMMENT/SOURCE
1. Cultural workers including artists	CV residents who are cultural industry workers: Total <b>1058</b> 511 males / 549 females.  Grafton residents: 533 Maclean: 158 Angourie/Yamba: 187	ABS data 2001 Census. (Individual artists)  459 in hospitality/clubs 82 in newspaper, book retailing 61 religious organisations 54 sports grounds & facilities 47 newspaper printing and publishing 34 parks and gardens 25 video hire outlets 27 in architecture 27 computer consultancy services 16 creative arts 15 libraries 24 antiques and used goods 13 music and theatre productions 11 radio services 11 commercial art and display 9 advertising services 7 music retailing 4 museums 3 film and video production 0 performing arts venues ** (see notes below) 0 sound recording studios ** (see notes below) 0 photographic studios ** (see notes below)
2. Cultural holdings/collections	10	Holdings in Libraries, archives, art collections, directories, historical societies

3. Art galleries	15	Including non-profit (staffed and volunteer run) OR commercial (private)
4. Museums	9	Staffed and volunteer run
5. Cuisine	150	Food establishments - cafes, restaurants, delis, etc.
6. Non-profit arts organisations	68	Arts and cultural organisations including staffed and volunteer run e.g. theatre, choirs,
7. Non-profit civic orgs with broad cultural pursuits	24	Migrant support, youth services, reconciliation, service groups, Toastmasters, Rotary
8. Cultural businesses	59	Antique shops, cinemas, dance schools, bookshops, music tutors, video stores, internet cafes,
9. Cultural tourism	27	Visitor attractions – beaches, national parks, heritage walks, trails, landmarks, cultural landscapes
10. Film & video, music production businesses	4	film studios, editing, sound studios, etc.
11. Ethnic cultural organisations	1	Eg, multicultural groups and associations
12. Education institutions	44	Includes pre schools through to tertiary.
13. Heritage items	<p><b>Indigenous</b> NP&amp;WS listed Indigenous heritage items/sites: 1065</p> <p><b>European</b> Local items: 233 in 5 LEPs Regional items: 46 + Grafton &amp; Ulmarra <i>Conservation Areas:</i> State sites: 10 Register of the National Estate items Commonwealth heritage list items World Heritage sites: 3</p>	<p>Source: Register of the National Estate; State Heritage Register, CV LEP, State of the Environment Report 05/06. NPWS Register of Indigenous sites.</p> <p>World Heritage sites: Washpool, Iluka Nature Reserve and Gibraltar Range</p>
14. Fairs, festivals, events	45	Weekly, monthly or annual events

15. Community centres and halls	43	Community managed and Council halls/centres
16. Religious organisations	29	Churches, mosques, parish centres, etc
17. Media organisations	8	Newspapers, radio and TV
18. Open air arts venues	7	Council's book able reserves, parks, quarries and ovals for performance, festivals, events.
19. Public art	5	Sculptures, fountains, murals, pavers, memorials.
20. Council Arts/Cultural related policies	3	Source: Policy Register
21. Indigenous arts/culture organisations	12	Arts organisations, Land Councils, community based
22. Performing arts venues	16	Theatres, hireable performance spaces, pubs and clubs.
23. Sporting clubs	26 +	Includes clubs, associations, events, venues
<p>* Explanatory note re table figures given that there is some cross over between the resource categories used in this table, some resources or facilities have been counted twice for the purposes of this exercise (ie, community halls <i>and</i> performing arts venues; gallery <i>and</i> cultural holdings/collection)</p> <p>** Explanatory note re ABS data: the statistics in Category 1 (Cultural workers including artists) are taken directly from an ABS query of cultural industries workers across the LGA (2001 Census data). This may explain apparent discrepancies in the specific statistics (such as Performing Arts Venues listed as 0, when Category 22 lists 16 venues). This simply highlights the distinction between a Performing Arts Venue formally listed as such for ABS purposes, and those facilities known and used locally as venues for performing arts activities.</p>		

## SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The Assets and Resources Map is a preliminary audit documenting the cultural resources, assets and facilities within the Clarence Valley Local Government Area. The Map is a work-in-progress which will continue to be developed and refined over the course of the Plan. However, it has informed the development of the Plan and specific strategies and presents options for future directions.

The snapshot provides ABS 2001 Census data indicating that **1058** people in the Clarence Valley working population (or an estimated **6.9%**) are engaged in the cultural sector as their primary income source. This is consistent with recent research findings for the broader Northern Rivers – the Henkel Report 2006<sup>12</sup> stated that in December 2005, 6.1% of the working population of the Northern Rivers were engaged in the cultural or creative industries (up from 4.1% in 2000). The Clarence Valley data collected for this Plan indicates that nearly half of those 1058 workers (459) are engaged in jobs associated with the hospitality industry. The ABS data has 82 workers engaged in newspaper and book retailing and 61 workers employed in religious organisations. Fifteen (15) Clarence Valley residents work in libraries whilst according to the Census data, no residents work in sound recording studios, performing arts venues or motion picture exhibition as their primary income source (which may now be out-of-date or fail to reflect local circumstances or dynamics). According to the 2001 data, 34 residents work in parks and gardens, four (4) in museums and three (3) in film and video production.

The picture that emerges is uneven and limited and more rigorous and detailed data and analysis are needed to better position the Valley to engage in the emerging cultural industry economy. The Henkel Report (2006) also noted that 259,909 Australians (ABS 2001 Census data) were working in cultural occupations, which was 3.1% of the total Australian labour force. While the Valley specific data referred to above is both basic and preliminary, it indicates above national average employment levels in the creative industries for the Valley, and supports the need for more research to identify gaps and opportunities that are specific to the Clarence Valley economy (explored further under *Understanding the Creative Industries*, below).

Heritage programs and facilities are both a strength and a challenge in the Clarence Valley. Museums, libraries, galleries, historical societies and archives manage diverse collections that are a feature of the LGA, as are listed and protected heritage assets in the built and natural environments. This includes three items with World Heritage status (Washpool, Iluka Nature Reserve and Gibraltar Range). The commitment to documenting and conserving the history and heritage of the area is acknowledged but it brings with it the need to plan for and resource these vulnerable assets for the enjoyment of future generations.

The summary statistics above suggest that access to community centres and halls is well provided for across the Valley, which supports 43 such facilities. Many towns and villages have access to a small meeting space or hall for multipurpose use including a range of equipment and facilities. However research also indicates that many halls require some renovation or upgrading and are in some respects inadequate for contemporary needs (e.g. they lack modern and accessible amenities such as toilets/kitchens, multimedia equipment, sound proofing, stages, etc). The Valley specifically lacks dedicated community cultural spaces providing targeted access to arts and cultural activities such as creative arts and other workshops, performance and rehearsal space.

A similar situation exists for more specialised performing arts venues including theatres for drama, dance and music performance and rehearsal as well as film such as film festivals, short film screenings and non-commercial cinema outside the main population centres. The statistics above indicate that the Valley has **16** non-specialised spaces for the broad performing arts including larger community halls, clubs for live entertainment as well as two community-based theatres located in Grafton.

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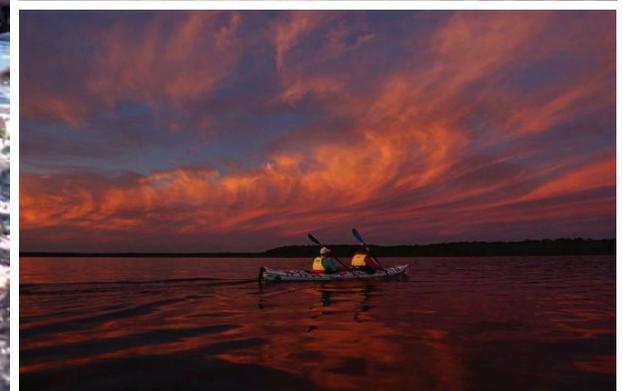
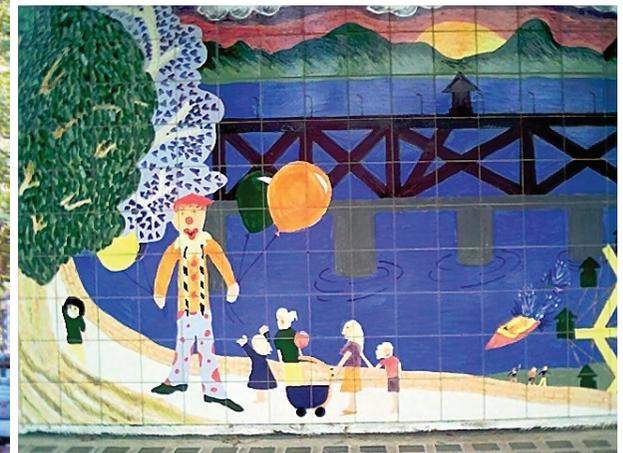
<sup>12</sup> Henkel, Cathy, *Imagining the Future 2: screen and creative industries in the Northern Rivers region of NSW. Development trends and prospects for the next decade*, 2006. Brisbane: QUT.

However, feedback received during the development of this Plan and local knowledge indicates that the community lacks access to a purpose-designed/built space suitable for touring professional shows as well as for local drama, dance and musical productions. This includes spaces fitted out with modern acoustic and technical equipment (lighting, sound, acoustic bats, etc), adequate back stage areas, raked seating, foyer and box office as well as kitchens for catering/bar service. This issue is explored in more detail under Cultural Facilities later in the Plan.

The audit provides a gap analysis of services and programs across the LGA. This Cultural Plan represents the first comprehensive, strategic policy approach to arts and cultural development in the Clarence Valley, either in the pre-amalgamation Councils or post-amalgamation. As such, at this stage the Valley does not have robust policy frameworks to support the development of cultural services such as in the area of public art and design, Indigenous arts and cultural development, youth arts or multicultural arts and culture. The Valley supports 45 local festivals, fairs and events based in different towns and villages. These largely operate independently and with only limited and informal communication between each other. Consultations held during the Plan's development and informal observation suggest that the Valley's festival infrastructure would benefit from a policy and planning framework focusing on integrating business and programming, skills development and greater networking with an eye on building long-term sustainability and viability.

This Assets and Resources Map provides a snapshot of the current scale of arts and cultural activity in the Clarence Valley, and the resources, facilities and organisations that support this. It presents a picture of active community engagement as well as a developing Council commitment to supporting the Valley's cultural life. More work is needed to collect detailed data, to identify gaps as well as opportunities, to inform decision making and to support the strategic directions identified in the Plan.





Local produce, Grafton Farmers' Markets (image: Clarence Valley Council), Curried Away, Multicultural Festival (image: © Andrew Tarrant), Glenreagh Mountain Railway (image: Clarence Valley Council), Heritage cinema the Saratoy Theatre, Grafton (image: © Sue Boaden), Tile mural, Grafton Police Station (image: © Sue Boaden), Lake Wooloweyah, sunset (image: © Deb Novak)

## KEY PLANNING ISSUES/THEMES

### **1. ACKNOWLEDGED STRENGTHS IN DIVERSE COMMUNITIES**

#### PROTECTING LOCAL CHARACTER AND BUILDING A SHARED IDENTITY

A strong and consistent theme arising from the consultations and survey is the unique character of the towns and villages that make up the Clarence Valley, and the need to protect and celebrate this distinctiveness. This is combined with the competing challenge of finding a sense of shared ownership across the newly created LGA and identifying elements that unite the Valley's communities. Arts and culture may prove to be a key element in celebrating diversity *and* developing a shared vision for the Valley. The River was identified as a key element linking the Valley's communities and a central feature in the Valley's development, including the Indigenous communities, local trade and industry and the dispersed settlement strategy.

Heritage protection and the preservation of built and natural heritage is a central element of acknowledging and valuing local village and town distinctiveness. Local museums and historical societies play an important role in recording and protecting community heritage and identity. These organisations need to be adequately supported and fostered. Initiatives such as local oral history and cultural mapping projects for individual communities and commissioning local cultural histories can provide a focus for local communities and sense of pride in their history, identity and local character.

Local government planning controls also provide opportunities to have a positive influence on conserving the local character of a place. This will be especially important given the release of the draft Mid North Coast Regional Strategy by the NSW Department of Planning<sup>13</sup>. In the draft, Grafton is recognised as the Clarence sub-region's major regional centre with Maclean named as a major town. The draft recognises that the sub-region must plan for growth and development whilst balancing the need for the protection of sensitive and distinctive environmental and cultural landscapes. Sustainability will be achieved through the development of robust development planning controls that acknowledge economic and commercial needs whilst celebrating local distinctiveness. The tensions of balancing local interests with visitor needs and tourist demand particularly during peak holiday periods will need to be considered especially in popular coastal holiday destinations such as Iluka, Yamba and Angourie.

There are several examples of public art and sculpture around the Valley (the Skinner Street precinct in South Grafton and Maclean's Tartan poles being distinctive examples). There are also significant opportunities within the Valley for public art and functional design to foster place making and a sense of identity. The development of a Public Art policy for the Valley will help to identify opportunities for public art and place making projects and raise awareness of the benefits such projects can provide to the Valley's communities.

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<sup>13</sup> Draft Mid North Coast Regional Strategy, Jan 2007. Sydney: Department of Planning

## ABORIGINAL HERITAGE AND CULTURE

The Clarence Valley has a rich and diverse Indigenous heritage, with the borders of three traditional Aboriginal nations meeting within the Valley (Bunjulung, Gumbaingirr and Yaegl) and five vibrant Indigenous communities represented within its LGA at Baryulgil, Malabugilmah, Grafton, Maclean and Yamba. The Clarence Valley has a depth of Indigenous heritage and history, *and* an active and distinctive contemporary Indigenous culture. The Clarence Valley has a higher proportion of Indigenous people living in the area (around 4.2%) than the national average (2%) based on Census data. Indigenous people are also moving to the area at a higher rate than non-Indigenous people. There are a number of innovative Indigenous cultural businesses and galleries based in the Valley including Girrwaawa Ceramics in South Grafton and TNN Gallery in Maclean.

There are significant opportunities to acknowledge and celebrate this richness of local Aboriginal culture in the broader community. The preliminary consultations conducted during preparation of the Cultural Plan suggest tensions beneath the surface, a reticence to acknowledge the challenges faced historically by the local Indigenous people, and a portrait of missed opportunities in terms of Indigenous culture and cultural development. While *Welcome to Country* acknowledgements are commonly held as part of opening ceremonies at local events and festivals, attempts to integrate Indigenous heritage and local traditional or contemporary Aboriginal culture more broadly into these events are rare. This approach needs to be supported and encouraged.

In 2002 the Clarence Valley Women – *Discover Our Way* project included an oral history component incorporating Indigenous women's stories. This is an excellent model for future projects and the recordings and transcripts from that project may offer the basis for an innovative cultural initiative in the future, such as the development of an exhibition, publication or performance. The 14<sup>th</sup> annual NSW Women's Gathering, held in Grafton in late 2006, also demonstrated the capacity of the local community to work together to showcase local initiative. The proposed Yaegl Festival of Sharing, being planned in the Lower Clarence for 2008, is an example of an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the Valley's Indigenous communities and culture, and bring Indigenous heritage to the centre of cultural understanding within the Clarence.

There has been limited consultation with the Indigenous communities to this point specifically focusing on arts, culture and heritage preservation. This summary has been constructed from the limited information we have gathered at this stage. One of the first actions proposed under the Plan in relation to Aboriginal Heritage and Culture is for consultations to be conducted with the five Clarence Indigenous communities, following up consultations run as part of the preparation of the draft Social Plan, specifically focusing on arts and cultural issues, challenges, opportunities and potential projects.

The Indigenous Chapter of the Social Plan makes reference to community perceptions of a lack of consultation by Local Government when considering development proposals. Many Government organisations, State and Federal, are now establishing formal protocols with Indigenous communities as part of their planning policies, which could also refer specifically to *cultural policies or protocols* for the Indigenous communities of the Valley. The Cultural Plan includes a number of strategies which aim to encourage greater understanding of and respect for the rich heritage and history of the five Indigenous communities and to celebrate this in a range of ways, and support opportunities to build Indigenous cultural enterprises.

## 2. ECONOMICS OF CULTURE

### RECOGNISING CULTURAL TOURISM

A Clarence mist on lower reaches  
and Jerseys after milking;  
morning shadows crawling back  
beneath the jacarandas...<sup>14</sup>

The historical industries of the Clarence are largely rural with much of the area traditionally used for forestry, agriculture and grazing, including sugarcane and beef cattle. Fishing has also been an important industry especially at port towns such as Maclean and Yamba. However, in more recent times tourism has become a major local industry, especially along the Clarence coast with tourists and 'grey nomads' travelling up the Pacific Highway and exploring Minni Water, Wooli, Brooms Head, Maclean, Yamba and Iluka. There are many opportunities to provide these visitors with arts and cultural experiences unique to the Clarence Valley, which in turn will provide a range of economic, social and community benefits.

The wealth of festivals, events and celebrations that take place within the Clarence provide a strong foundation for an engaging local resident and visitor experience. Recent research indicates that "festival culture is well established and the high numbers of local visitors regularly attending these events suggest that they are important catalysts for community pride, spirit and cultural identity"<sup>15</sup>. The area also supports a large number of galleries as well as regular exhibitions around the region, and a body of established visual artists and crafts people, some of national and international standing. These are complemented by a network of historic houses and community museums, and unique attractions such as the Glenreagh Mountain Railway and the heritage settlement of Ulmarra. All of these offer a unique opportunity to build upon and expand the existing cultural tourism industry.

Cultural tourism encompasses a diversity of views. For this Plan 'cultural tourism' is defined according to definitions adopted by the World Tourism Organisation, and by the Federal agencies of the Bureau of Tourism Research and the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts. It is defined according to visitors' attendance at one or more of the following cultural attractions:

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<sup>14</sup> © Extract from "Grafton, 1946", Geoff Page, from *Agnostic Skies* (2006, Five Islands Press)

<sup>15</sup> Common Ground: Profiles of 18 cultural festivals in NSW's Northern Rivers region, 2006. Report for the Arts Northern Rivers Festivals and Events Network.

- festivals or fairs (music, dance, comedy, visual arts, multi-arts and heritage);
- performing arts or concerts (theatre, opera, ballet, and classical and contemporary music);
- museums or art galleries;
- historic or heritage buildings, sites, monuments;
- art or craft workshops or studios; and
- Aboriginal sites and cultural displays.<sup>16</sup>
- Cultural tourism can also include the screen industries and when combined with the natural environment and hospitality sectors, presents considerable potential for visitors as well as those who live there.

Cultural tourism is a niche market that also has the capacity to contribute to branding opportunities and the building of a shared local identity. There are opportunities presented by local markets showcasing local products including art and craft as well as food, and by embracing the international 'slow food' movement, which seeks to offer an alternative to 'fast food' and to preserve and celebrate local food traditions and sources.

There are several elements within the Clarence Valley Council's *Economic Development Strategic Plan* which incorporate or relate to Cultural Tourism, such as the Creative Industries Development strategy, Image, Identity and Market Positioning, Education and Experience Based Tourism and the Clarence River Way. As with other sections of the Cultural Plan, the aim will be to liaise with Council's Economic Development Unit in relation to these projects, contribute feedback from an arts and cultural perspective where appropriate, and ensure the engagement of relevant stakeholders in these projects. Issues for consideration include broad audience development strategies and the maintenance and or development of quality programs.

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<sup>16</sup> Definition of 'cultural tourism' in Arts and Cultural Tourism Strategy for WA, 2004-2008. Perth: Department of Culture and the Arts.

## UNDERSTANDING THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

The recently adopted *Clarence Valley Economic Development Strategic Plan* identified the development of the Creative Industries in the Clarence Valley as one of its key components. The Northern Rivers is seen nationally as a centre of excellence in creativity and the creative arts, whether it is traditional visual arts and crafts, the film and screen industries, or innovative arts and cultural festivals and events. This has been recognised in recent research, most recently the two Henkel studies and in the work and consultations of Arts Northern Rivers. Acclaimed cultural economist Dr David Throsby is planning to conduct additional research about the region as a creative hub over the next 3 years.

The Creative Industries specifically refers to businesses, individuals or organisations involved in creative activities *primarily as a business interest*, such as practising visual artists, designers, film makers, musicians or actors. This should be distinguished (at least for the purposes of this section of the Plan) from *community cultural development* – creative and cultural activities and organisations that do not have a primarily *business focus*, despite having a significant economic impact or the capacity to generate revenue or contribute to the local economy.

While the Clarence Valley has a strong representation of visual and performing artists, commercial galleries and other creative businesses, there is considerable scope for development in this sector. The LGA has the capacity to “leverage this regional creative capital and position itself as part of the wider Northern Rivers creative industry hub”<sup>17</sup>. The available research, though comprehensive, tends to encompass the whole Northern Rivers being somewhat distorted by the heavy concentration of creative industries and cultural businesses in the upper Northern Rivers, around Byron Bay, Lismore and the Tweed. It would be strategic to have access to specific and robust research on the Creative Industries within the Clarence Valley in order to better understand this sector’s specific needs, expectations and potential. An example of relevant research would be the development of a Creative Industry Audit.

The Cultural Plan will aim to dove-tail with the *Economic Development Strategic Plan* and support the initiatives identified under the Plan, such as the development of a Creative Industries Working Group and the exploration of ‘creative industry hubs’ in the Clarence, providing greater resources and advocacy for this sector. Other strategies to be explored include a mentorship program for new and emerging Cultural Industry practitioners, development of marketing strategies as well as research that informs audience development planning.

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<sup>17</sup> Clarence Valley Three Year Action Plan – Build on Competitive Advantage: Creative Industries Final Report, AEC Group, May 2006

### **3. CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FACILITATION**

#### **CULTURAL FACILITIES**

There are several highly valued cultural facilities in the Clarence Valley, such as the award-winning Grafton Regional Gallery, the historic Saraton Theatre, the Clarence Valley libraries, the Grafton Community & Function Centre, the Yamba Cinema and the Civic Hall in Maclean. Local museums and historical societies at Yamba, Maclean, Grafton and other locations are also recognised for the quality of their interpretations and volunteer programs. The Valley also has an informal network of community and public halls. However, overall the range of facilities is limited and this impacts upon a range of cultural opportunities. There are very few effective public exhibition or performance spaces in the Lower Clarence as well as an acknowledged lack of space for local community exhibitions, hence plans to extend the Gallery in the future to provide this capacity and explore possibilities for greater outreach from the Gallery to the Lower Clarence. There are also no accessible workshop venues, residences or studios to support artists to create or develop their arts practice and/or develop their skills. This lack of professional support and facilities impacts particularly upon low income, Indigenous and emerging artists.

The Valley lacks a modern well resourced arts and performance space (with raked seating, modern technical and backstage facilities, good acoustics and a 300-500 capacity), a need strongly identified in consultations and the Cultural Survey. Partly due to the lack of such a facility and the limitations of other performance venues, there is limited access to professional touring theatre/music productions, despite the existence of several local community theatre companies and a strong local performing arts sector. There is also a shortage of portable stage facilities, and yet the Valley has a large number of outdoor spaces (river side, parks, beaches, quarries and natural amphitheatres) with potential for outdoor performance, cinema screenings, and use by festivals and other events.

The privately owned Saraton Theatre, one of the oldest heritage cinemas of its kind in Australia, is a jewel in the Clarence crown, but one whose potential as a multipurpose commercial and community venue has not been fully realised. Its current usage is limited to cinema due to occupational health and safety factors and the need for specific renovations. It was recently placed on the market and later withdrawn, highlighting both the potential for development and greater community access (with approved DAs for the addition of two smaller cinemas in the precinct), or its loss as a venue altogether. The Yamba Cinema also offers the opportunity to respond to local demand for greater variety and diversity in cinema options, recently hosting for the first time the Australian Film Commission's national travelling film festival *Big Screen*.

The Library network was clearly identified by workshop participants and survey respondents as a key cultural facility but one that is severely limited in the services it can provide. Issues such as restricted hours, age, quality and quantity of book stock, and limited space for cultural and other program development were raised consistently during consultations and in survey responses. The development and improvement of library infrastructure provides the opportunity to provide cultural services to developing resident and visitor populations, and acknowledges the Library as a key cultural facility for the Clarence communities.

This feedback is also confirmed in the 2006 Clarence Regional Library Review<sup>18</sup>. Although the Review was regional in focus, it highlights significant underperformance in facility provision and in collection development in the face of demonstrated community need and steady increase in usage. The Review recommends the preparation of a space needs analysis in relation to the size and location of branches. The Review also responds to the below average collection quality measured by the age of the collection. Thirty nine percent (39%) of the Clarence regional library's collection is 10.5 years or older and the Review recommends an increased budget in order that users have access to more recent and relevant information resources.

*The Clarence Edge*, Council's Economic Development Strategic Plan refers to a vision for the Clarence Valley as having a "network of readily accessible physical spaces where local artists can gain greater market and audience exposure and resources to support their work". It also makes reference to a potential 'River Stage' which could be moved from town to town along the Clarence to provide an innovative and flexible space for a range of events. As such, the Cultural Plan aims to work collaboratively towards this vision, reviewing the existing and potential venues, and aiming for a staged capital development and improvement plan over the next ten years.

Facility planning and development presents many challenges for local councils including access to robust research associated with community needs, identification of optimum location of facilities, ensuring efficient and relevant facility design, raising funds to cover capital building costs as well as planning for recurrent operational budgets. The levying of contributions for capital costs associated with the provision of public amenities required as a consequence of development is one opportunity available to councils. Under Section 94 of the *Environment Planning and Assessment Act*, local councils have the power to levy contributions from developers as long as there is a clear link or nexus between the development being levied and the need for the public amenity for which the levy is required. Many councils levy for broad community services including for cultural services and facilities, public art and the capital costs associated with library services including buildings as well as collections and technology infrastructure.

To date Clarence Valley Council has not developed or adopted s94 policies and plans that enable levies to be set to support acknowledged needs in general community or specific cultural services across the LGA. Despite the tightening up of this legislation in recent years, s94 contributions present critical opportunities for Council to raise funds for facilities enjoyed in other places and reasonably expected to be provided by councils as a component of local quality of life.

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<sup>18</sup> Clarence Regional Library Review, 2006. Prepared by the State Library of NSW.

## COMMUNITY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

*" I believe that due to several...factors including uneven distribution of resources, unresolved racial tensions...youth and senior polarities...there are some deep rifts in the Valley that keep many people from engaging and mingling feely. These are largely generational issues and I hope with adequate education and opportunities to collaborate in spaces and situations that foster a sense of shared ownership, with time these social hurdles can be healed and we can move on. This work is in my view, top of the cultural agenda for the Clarence Valley".* Online Cultural Survey respondent

The Clarence Valley's new Social Plan 2006-2009 has identified the Clarence Valley as an area of significant socio-economic disadvantage with health and community support services, transport and housing, education and training, aging and disability, and the needs of children and marginal groups identified as key factors to be addressed. The area has also seen a substantial increase in the number of 'sea and tree changers' moving to and settling in the Valley (especially in the coastal areas), leading to a 'gentrification' of the coastal villages and increased development.

There are also perceptions of division and even tension between old settler and traditional families and these new arrivals, and the sometimes inconsistent expectations of these two groups in terms of development, services and facilities, and community and cultural experiences. The needs of youth and young people in the Valley was a strong and consistent theme throughout the consultations and survey, referring to the need for increased opportunities and programs for young people, especially youth arts. The recent completion of the long awaiting Yamba Skate Park and the festivities organised for its official opening (live bands, local hip hop performances) were an excellent example of such opportunities, with significant input from young people in the planning and coordination.

While the Valley has a significantly lower percentage of people from a multicultural or non-English speaking background than the state average, there are significant opportunities to engage these communities and for the Valley as a whole to benefit from the rich diversity and cultural heritage they bring to the region. The Clarence Valley Social Plan 2007 to 2012 identifies opportunities to strengthen community understanding and respect for cultural difference through cultural activities and projects, and to develop systems that promote services in general (including arts and cultural programs) to the culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The overwhelming success and popularity of the inaugural Multicultural Festival of the Five Senses in 2006 demonstrated the strong community interest in and commitment to the Valley's diverse multicultural communities.

Imaginative community cultural development (CCD) projects which engage with creative artists working with the community have the capacity to engage these various groups within the Valley's communities and to address some of the identified issues and disadvantages in innovative ways. They also represent opportunities to attract external funding and to involve a range of partners, creating sustainable networks within the Valley's communities. CCD projects create possibilities to engage new and old members of the community, or to involve both older and younger people in inter-generational cultural initiatives. By embracing the diversity of interests and approaching community identified needs through arts and culture, there is the opportunity to celebrate local character and contribute to the development of a shared identity.

The Clarence Valley has a rich tradition of festivals both old and new such as the Jacaranda Festival, the Maclean Highland Gathering, Grafton Artsfest, Ulmarra River Festival, Surfing the Coldstream and the Australian Goanna Pulling Championships at Wooli. The 'Valley of Festivals' offers opportunities to engage all sections of the community at different times with various events. The Council can continue to support this development through passive infrastructure such as open spaces and through financial and in-kind support of CCD projects run in association with existing festivals and other events such as markets.

## FACILITATING AND SUPPORTING ARTS AND CULTURE

The Clarence Valley has a rich cultural landscape with a large number of regular cultural festivals, events and performances, various arts organisations and cultural groups, many galleries and exhibitions, and a strong performing arts culture with several community theatre groups. Informal networks of association exist which have effectively served those traditional and well established local events, organisations and practitioners and the tradition of volunteering is strong and appreciated by Council. The Valley's cultural life is also influenced by the impact of religious organisations representing diverse faiths which provide community space in church buildings, celebrations such as Carols by Candlelight and other music focused activities (such as choirs). However, there is a lack of formal networking mechanisms which would support the continuing development of both new and established festivals, encourage arts and cultural practitioners to interact, collaborate and share skills and resources to mutual benefit, and contribute to longer term sustainability.

As an example, there is the capacity to improve the coordination, resourcing and collaboration of performing arts organisations and providers in the Valley by facilitating greater interaction and regular opportunities for liaison and discussion. During consultations many participants reported experiences of volunteer burn-out and organisational collapse and that new models are needed that better respond to contemporary life-style pressures or that can tap into growing sea/tree change and semi-retiree populations in the area. It was also noted that small grants schemes with simple application procedures provide real support for volunteer groups and that establishing an annual small cultural grants program might be considered during the life of the Plan.

Clarence Valley Council is well placed to play a role as a facilitator and provider in relation to arts and cultural development. Council can support and encourage community initiative and ownership in addition taking a leadership role in local communities as an advocate for arts and culture. The newly formed Council clearly acknowledged its commitment to this role as a cultural facilitator with the creation of the position of Cultural Development Coordinator, and its ongoing support for facilities like the Regional Gallery and the Library service. In addition, the Valley would benefit from the existence of an independent body – an Arts and Cultural Council, Alliance and/or Broker – focused specifically on arts and cultural development and with the capacity to encourage and support active networking, partnerships, integration and collaboration as well as fundraising and marketing in arts and cultural practice.

With the creation of a new amalgamated, Valley-wide Council in 2004, the opportunity has also been established to create effective liaison and communication between the different areas of Council with some involvement in or responsibility for arts or cultural activities (eg, festivals and events, public art, sculpture and design, parks and open spaces, heritage preservation, and cultural/community facilities planning).

In 2003, the four pre-amalgamation Councils (along with other Northern Rivers councils) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the newly formed regional arts board Arts Northern Rivers, in recognition of a commitment to a collaborative local government approach to arts and cultural development in the region. Clarence Valley Council has enthusiastically maintained its commitment to this dynamic partnership with Arts Northern Rivers and continues to value the services, initiatives, advocacy and support they provide, and their regional knowledge, focus and perspective that complement our local programs and experience. This ongoing partnership will be an important factor in the implementation and success of the Cultural Plan.

## ROLE OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

There are a range of educational assets and resources within the Clarence Valley Local Government Area (LGA) – a large number of primary and secondary schools, several TAFE campuses including an impressive new contemporary music and film facility at Grafton, a number of adult and community education colleges as well as the University of the Third Age (U3A) and the Clarence Valley Conservatorium. This is complemented by a large number of private arts training providers (such as dance studios and music tutors) and Grafton Artsfest that offers a suite of arts and cultural courses twice a year.

Recent changes to community college provision in the Lower Clarence have the potential to deliver improvements to both services and facilities as well as economies of scale. Lower Clarence Community College has replaced Lower Clarence ACE in a joint initiative with Alstonville-Ballina Community College. The new entity remains committed to meeting the training needs of people in Lower Clarence as cost effectively as possible with a wider range of accredited and vocational training, a larger general training room in their new premises and brand new computer training facilities and software.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the capacity for local high schools/ secondary colleges to deliver a comprehensive curriculum based program in the arts has declined. Specialist teachers are not available and many students are effectively missing out on opportunities to experience and/or appreciate the arts. For example, few high schools have a regular program of travel/excursions with an arts focus. In addition, there are no university campuses in the Clarence Valley, facilities which so often bring many direct and indirect cultural benefits and educational opportunities to the communities in which they are based.

There are also limitations to the training facilities currently available, with the Maclean TAFE campus currently fighting to maintain Certificate level visual arts courses as part of its curricula. Despite a large and well established body of visual artists and crafts people based in the Valley, there is a recognised lack of access to tertiary arts training courses for professional development, especially significant for those aiming to pursue business opportunities in the creative industries.

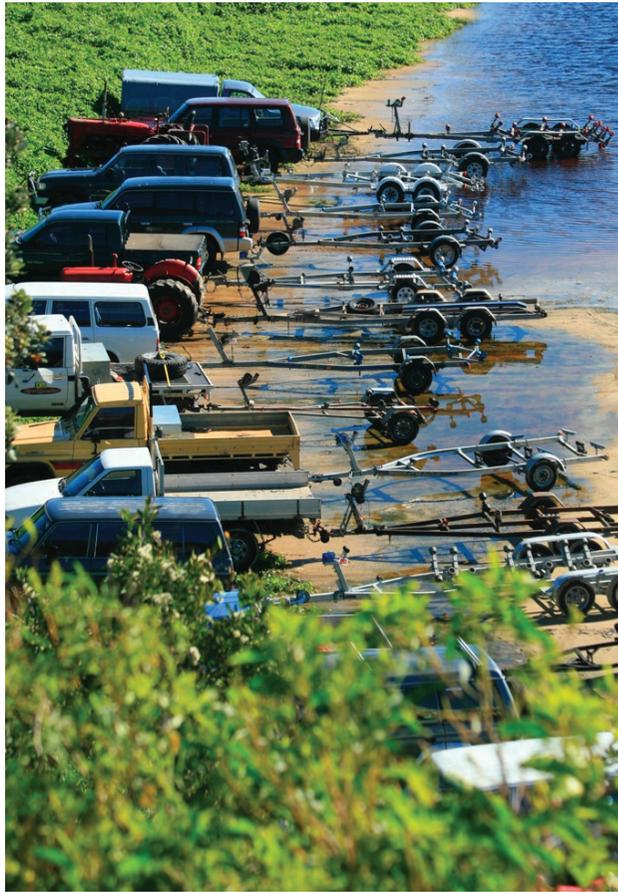
There is a risk that education and training opportunities will be reduced or lost with training providers based in Coffs Harbour and Lismore (with larger populations and TAFE campuses and access to Southern Cross University) expecting prospective students to travel to these larger regional centres, an expectation that is neither fair or realistic for many.

There is a role for Council to advocate for the effective provision of a range of post secondary arts and cultural training courses across the LGA, and to support partnerships between a range of existing education and training providers and new partners, such as Southern Cross University.

There is also the capacity for the Library in Grafton to be better resourced and expanded to build on the education and learning roles it already plays in the community. A relocation and expansion of the Grafton Library also has the potential for other cultural facilities to be co-located in the new premises such as studio, workshop or performance spaces, and the creation of a storage and study area for the local historical studies archives. An expanded and strengthened role for the Library Service is one of the key recommendations of the Clarence Regional Library Review 2006. This includes improved IT systems and online access, services to youth/students including group study areas, etc. The report notes that the Library Service needs to review and upgrade its IT services in order to more effectively provide access to technology as a support for community-based learning and information.

There is a specific stream within the Council's *Economic Development Strategic Plan* which complements this key cultural theme: Learning Community and Innovation. Community and Cultural Services will liaise closely with the Economic Development Unit and support developments under this stream, and ensure engagement of cultural stakeholders in this development important process.





River bend, Maclean (image: Clarence Valley Council), Clarence heritage: Schaeffer House, Grafton (image: © Ingrid Taylor)  
Yamba Community Pool mosaic (image: Clarence Valley Council) Gone fishin' (image: © Judy Howard), Swan Lake, Maclean Civic Hall (image: © Deb Novak)  
Grafton Regional Gallery (image: Clarence Valley Council)

# Draft Cultural Plan

The Plan has been developed by linking the key planning issues identified above to goals, strategies and actions for implementation over the next 5 years.

## 1. STRENGTHS & DIVERSITY

*Issue: Protecting local character and building a shared identity*

Goal	Strategies and actions	Performance indicator	Time frame	Key Group(s)/ partners
Clarence Valley is widely recognised for its local distinctiveness yet shared sense of Local Government Area (LGA) wide identity.	<p><i>Strategy</i> To celebrate and promote the unique character of each town and village within the Clarence Valley with a range of projects which also inform land-use planning policies.</p> <p><i>Actions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work with the Council's Planning Department to develop an integrated LGA-wide mapping project including the documentation of stories, images, maps, assets and resources that will inform Council's development control plans for specific localities across the LGA. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek funding and implement a pilot mapping project for 2 CV towns/villages (2008) engaging Council's planning staff.</li> <li>• Continue Valley wide cultural mapping project adding one towns/villages each year.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Research and publish significant and authoritative cultural histories such as the Jacaranda Art Society, Lower Clarence Arts &amp; Crafts Association (LCACA) and twentieth anniversary of the Grafton Regional Gallery.</li> <li>3. Establish an active Local Stories program of digital Oral history collection across the Valley coordinated by the Library Service working with Museums and trained local volunteers (<i>My Story Our Stories</i>).</li> </ol>	<p>Discussion initiated with Planning Project funds received. Pilot programs underway. CV identity and lifestyle are widely recognised and valued as cultural assets</p> <p>One village each year</p> <p>Funding received Historian/author appointed Histories published/ distributed</p> <p>Working party formed Oral histories collected Commencing in 2007 (Grafton) for 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary (2009)</p>	<p>2007-2008</p> <p>2007-2008 2007-2008 2008-</p> <p>2009-2012</p> <p>2007/2008 2008/2009</p> <p>2007-2008 2008 –</p>	<p>CVC Planning staff Heritage Advisor Dept of Planning NSW Local museums Library service; Manager, Library &amp; Historical Services Progress Associations Local community stakeholders</p> <p>Grafton Reg Gallery Friends of the Gallery LCACA Local historical societies</p> <p>Clarence Library service Local Museums/Hist societies Oral History Assoc of Aust Local schools U3A Grafton</p>

4.	Apply for a Museums & Galleries (MGNSW) grant for a Museums Collections Curator to work with the seven local museums on collection management and interpretation.	Application successful Curator appointed Coordinated Valley-wide exhibition based on collections	2008-2009 2008-2009 2011-2012	Museum & Galleries NSW Local museums/historical societies Regional Museums Advisor
5.	Develop a Public Art Policy and Strategy in association with Arts Northern Rivers, including identifying priority sites and the development of an Artists' Register.	Develop Public Art Policy Priority sites identified Seek funding for initial public art projects	2007-2008 2008 2008-2009	Arts Northern Rivers Arts NSW (Alex Bowen) Grafton R Gallery Local artists/arts workers CVC Open Spaces
6.	Investigate and establish a Living Libraries program (based on Lismore model).	Pilot program held	2009-2010	Clarence Regional Library Community Dev workers

## 1. STRENGTHS & DIVERSITY

### Issue: Aboriginal Heritage and Culture

Goal	Strategies and actions	Performance indicator	Time frame	Key Group(s)/ partners
<p>The rich heritage and culture of the local Indigenous communities is widely understood and respected and opportunities to build Indigenous cultural enterprises are supported and encouraged.</p>	<p><b>Strategy</b> To cultivate opportunities and develop pilot projects that integrate Indigenous arts and culture into current CV festivals and events to add new dimensions to existing festivals, foster skills and build greater understanding and respect for Indigenous culture.</p> <p><b>Actions</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct specific consultations with 5 Clarence Indigenous communities focusing specifically on arts and cultural issues, projects, challenges and opportunities.</li> <li>2. Develop an annual youth arts initiative (eg, a Touch Football event) that integrates arts and sport, culture and heritage building on existing events.</li> <li>3. Develop and support an ongoing program of Cross Cultural Awareness Training to non-Indigenous service providers working with Aboriginal people or communities (Ref: <i>Indigenous chapter of Social Plan</i>).</li> <li>4. Establish a Working Party to develop/facilitate 'Welcome to Country' (five at least) gateway signage across the Clarence Valley as part of the Public Art Strategy and CV branding project.</li> </ol>	<p>Consultations conducted Report prepared and presented to Council</p> <p>Launch of initial event Annual sports/arts event</p> <p>Training program developed 80% service providers trained by end 2008</p> <p>Working party established Consultations with communities Gateway signs in place</p>	<p>2007/2008 Early 2008</p> <p>2007/2008 2008 –</p> <p>2007-2008 2008</p> <p>2008-2009 2008-2009 2009 -</p>	<p>Community Elders groups, Community Working parties, Aboriginal Lands Councils, CVAC, CVC Comm Dev</p> <p>CVAC Youth Advisory committees Local schools Youth Dev Officer Local sports associations</p> <p>Community Elders groups, Community Working parties, Aboriginal Lands Councils, CVAC, CVC Service organisations</p> <p>Indigenous artists Aboriginal Lands Councils CV Econ Development Local community groups Historical societies</p>

5. Carry out the Lindt Research Project to identify the descendants of the Aboriginal people featured in the photographs of John William Lindt.			Grafton Regional Gallery Indigenous communities Local historical societies
6. Seek funding for project to record/gather local Goorie stories and facilitate opportunities for Goorie story telling as part of existing cultural activities.	Pilot program launch Local stories recorded Exhibition/event based on stories	2008-2009 2008 – 2010-2011	Community Elders groups, Community Working parties, Aboriginal Lands Councils Clarence Library service Local Museums/Hist societies Oral History Assoc of Aust Local schools Clarence Regional Library Community Dev worker
7. Commission a feasibility study into the development of an Aboriginal Cultural Centre in the Clarence Valley ( <i>Indigenous Chapter of Social Plan</i> ).	Funding secured Study conducted/report	2008/2009 2009/2010	Community Elders groups, Community Working parties, Aboriginal Lands Councils, CVAC, CVC Local Goorie artists

## 2. ECONOMICS OF CULTURE

### Issue: Recognising cultural tourism

Goal	Strategies and actions	Performance indicator	Time frame	Key Group(s)/ partners
Cultural tourism is recognised and developed as a strategic activity providing benefits to both locals and visitors	<p><b>Strategy</b> To seek funding to develop a Clarence Valley Cultural Tourism Strategy that celebrates the cultural assets, heritage and resources of the Valley branded as a cultural experience destination.</p> <p><b>Actions</b></p>			
	1. Work with Clarence River Tourism, Grafton Reg Gallery, CVC Economic Development Unit, local Museums and Heritage Advisor to develop a pilot program of artists and heritage trails across the LGA to commemorate significant historical and cultural features (both Indigenous and European) with plaques and storyboards (eg, The Pinnacles, Maclean; Lighthouse Hill, Yamba), including a Public Art Trail.	Working party established Identify priority destinations/ items Artists engaged to design story boards Launch first trail	2007-2008 2007-2008  2008-2009	Clarence River Tourism Economic Development Unit Grafton Regional Gallery Local Museums Indigenous communities
	2. Seek funding to appoint a Creative Producer to work across the Valley on cultural events and festivals using 1-2 festivals as a pilot.	Funding secured (pilot) Producer appointed Pilot project with 1 <sup>st</sup> festival	2007-2008 2007-2008 2008-2009	Arts NSW; CVC EDU Local festivals Arts Northern Rivers
	3. Liaise/work with EDU on development of an Events and Festival Development workshop and Support program.	Workshop Prog developed Workshops delivered annually	2007-2008  2008 –	CVC EDU; CR Tourism Local festivals and events Local event coordinators
	4. Engage local artists to contribute to the branding of the CV as a Cultural Tourism experience/destination.	EOIs sought from local artists Signage/branding launched	2008-2009 2009-2010	Local artists CVC EDU CR Tourism
	5. In conjunction with the Local Stories Oral histories project (Goal 1, Action 5), identify significant Valley stories and develop a community exhibition/project around them, incorporated into the Cultural Trails.	Exhibition planning underway Exhibition launched/held	2008-2009 2009-2010	Local Museums. Historical Societies and Historic Houses
	6. Work with Arts Northern Rivers on Clarence components of a regional museum development project and trail.	Project team established Project underway Trail launched	2009-2010 2009-2010 2011-2012	Arts Northern Rivers Regional Museums Advisor; Museums Australia (local chapter)

## 2. ECONOMICS OF CULTURE

### Issue: Understanding the Creative Industries

Goal	Strategies and actions	Performance indicator	Time frame	Key Group(s)/ partners
<p>The Clarence Valley is acknowledged for its commitment to developing a thriving Creative Industries economy.</p>	<p><b>Strategy</b> To ensure that cultural stakeholders are actively engaged in implementing the Economic Development Strategic Plan Creative Industries Development Strategy.</p> <p><b>Actions</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Commission a CV Cultural Industries Audit to supplement recent Cultural Industries analysis (refer to Henkel reports) – explore funding through Department of State and Regional Development.</li> <li>2. Develop a calendar of artists/cultural groups business and marketing skills development workshops for the local creative industries sector in conjunction with EDU and local Chambers of Commerce/Clarence Business Centre.</li> <li>3. Seek funding and establish a Cultural Industry mentorship program for new, emerging local artists.</li> <li>4. Develop a youth and broadcasting accelerator program (community radio/television) to develop skills and to reach local youth audiences.</li> <li>5. In conjunction with CVC EDU, research the feasibility of regular Twilight Noodle Markets fostering local entertainment (performance and music, film) and local art/craft practitioners.</li> </ol>	<p>Funding secured Study commissioned Report delivered</p> <p>Annual program workshops for Creative Industry practitioners.</p> <p>Funding secured Program launched No. of mentors each year</p> <p>Launch pilot radio program Develop community TV program</p> <p>Research commissioned Recommendations considered Launch of first market</p>	<p>2007-2008</p> <p>2007-2008</p> <p>2008-2009 2009-2010</p> <p>2008-2009 2010-2011</p> <p>2008-2009 2008-2009 2010</p>	<p>Northern Rivers creative industries peak bodies Local practitioners Arts NSW; CVC EDU</p> <p>CVC EDU Arts Northern Rivers Chambers of Commerce Local business support agencies Cultural tourism agencies Southern Cross Uni?</p> <p>TAFE University Local students Potential mentors Local/regional businesses</p> <p>Community Radio stations TAFE Youth Advisory Councils CVC Youth Dev Officer</p> <p>CVC EDU Creative Industries practitioners and artists Chambers of Commerce Local performers Market coordinators</p>

### 3. CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT & FACILITATION

#### Issues: Cultural facilities

Goal	Strategies and actions	Performance indicator	Time frame	Key Group(s)/ partners
<p>A network of well resourced, popular cultural facilities is available and accessible across the LGA.</p>	<p><b>Strategy</b> To review existing facilities and venues, document community needs, integrate access issues and establish a staged capital improvement plan 2007 – 2012.</p> <p><b>Actions</b></p> <p>1. Seek funds for a Feasibility Study into needs and options for cultural facilities including: investigating the development of a multipurpose cultural and performance space in the Valley; consideration of potential adaptive reuse of the Maclean Civic Hall complex and/or the Saraton Cinema; and development of a new Library building in Grafton co-located with other cultural facilities. (\$15,000-20,000)</p> <p>(a) Ensure that all future community facilities or renovations consider integration of meeting rooms as well as exhibition areas, hanging systems, wet/dry workshop spaces, multimedia/technology capacity and kitchens to support multipurpose use for arts and cultural activities.</p> <p>(b) Review and potentially adapt existing cultural and community facilities (eg, Treelands Drive and Grafton Community Centres, New School of Arts, public halls) to improve access and capacity for youth programs and workshops eg, soundproofing, acoustics for performance, technology access, etc (link to Rec Strategy).</p> <p>(c) Undertake research into the development of a S94 Plan for cultural services/facilities across the LGA including levying for capital works, public art and library facilities and collections.</p> <p>4. Participate in ongoing review of Council's fees and charges for community facilities to ensure accessibility and affordability for community arts/cultural groups.</p>	<p>Feasibility Study complete Priority projects identified Priorities funded in 08/09 budget</p> <p>Steady increase in the number of modern resourced cultural venues developed across the Valley.</p> <p>No. of annual touring theatre, dance and other productions in Valley (starting in 2007). Increased audience numbers at arts events.</p> <p>Plan developed and adopted. Collection of contributions underway.</p> <p>Community/cultural facilities are affordable and accessible to arts/cultural groups</p>	<p>2007-2008 2008 2008-2009</p> <p>2007 -</p> <p>2008 -</p> <p>2008 - 2009</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Regional Partnerships/AAS Community theatres Performing arts groups CV Conservatorium Local dance studios Community venue users</p> <p>CVC Planning &amp; Dev Community Centres CVC EDU</p> <p>CVC Comm Dev team Community Centres New School of Arts Public Hall committees</p> <p>CVC Planning CVC Comm Dev Team</p> <p>CVC Comm Dev team Community Centres Local arts/cultural groups</p>

<p>5. Research/identify a range of 'passive' outdoor sites suitable for cultural events (e.g. screenings, festivals, performance, sculpture trails) and ensure they have appropriate facilities/capacity (eg, 3 phase power, toilets, access, shade/cover etc).</p>	<p>Research potential outdoor sites Register of sites complete Launch register with event</p>	<p>2007-2008 2008-2009 2010</p>	<p>CVC Open Spaces CVC Planning Local communities</p>
<p>Work with Arts NSW and other LGAs in researching models for portable arts venues – stages, tents etc.</p>	<p>Seek funding for research Research findings delivered Portable stage launched</p>	<p>2007-2008 2008-2009 2009</p>	<p>Arts NSW and South East Arts Equipment suppliers Local festival coordinators</p>
<p>7. Progress expansion/renovation of Grafton Regional Gallery: (a) create plans for extension/redevelopment (\$10,000). (b) seek funds for construction/redevelopment (State/Federal).</p>	<p>Extension plans drawn up Funds received for extension Gallery extensions complete</p>	<p>2007-2008 2008-2009 2009-2010</p>	<p>Grafton Reg Gallery CVC Planning &amp; Dev Architects Arts NSW/funding sources</p>

### 3. CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT & FACILITATION

#### Issue: Community Cultural Development (CCD)

Goal	Strategies and actions	Performance indicator	Time frame	Key Group(s)/ partners
<p>Community cultural development (CCD) programs and arts practice are resourced to make a positive difference to the lives of all Clarence Valley residents.</p>	<p><b>Strategy</b> To focus on the needs of specific community sectors, such as youth, older people, multicultural communities, etc to identify and resource innovative artist-led CCD projects that will have a positive impact on people's lives.</p> <p><b>Actions</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work with Music NSW to access <i>Indent</i> program (youth music workshops and events) to provide greater access to live music for young people.</li> <li>2. Develop an LGA-wide program of youth arts workshops for local young people to foster skills (hip hop, physical theatre, drumming and skating), create opportunities and build confidence.</li> <li>3. Work with the Community Development Team to develop an inter-generational writing project across the Valley, launched and developed as part of Youth and Seniors Weeks.</li> <li>4. Work with CV Conservatorium, local conductors/music teachers to establish a network of community choirs across the Valley and develop a program of performance in markets/public spaces.</li> <li>5. Council to auspice/manage community cultural projects (CCD) each year.</li> <li>6. Work with Arts Northern Rivers (ANR) to ensure that regional programs service the Clarence communities and facilitate participation of Clarence communities and arts workers in regional initiatives and opportunities.</li> <li>7. Encourage cooperative partners (Festival of 5 Senses, Harmony Day, CV Library, Community Colleges, Maclean Scottish community, etc) to integrate planning for programs that foster community harmony and celebrates diversity.</li> <li>8. As part of the Public Art Strategy, investigate and establish an aerosol 'skate art' wall linked to skills development and artwork opportunities for local artists.</li> </ol>	<p>Liaise with Indent NSW Funding successful Annual live music events</p> <p>Program developed 2-3 workshops delivered annually</p> <p>Working party formed Project launched Event(s) based on project</p> <p>Network formed Program of performances Official launch of program</p> <p>1-2 CCD projects each year</p> <p>Up to 3 formal partnership meetings per year between CVC and ANR.</p> <p>Host planning meeting Host one LGA wide project that celebrates diversity</p> <p>Options for location, guidelines for use/projects complete Aerosol wall launched</p>	<p>2007-2008 2008 - 2008-2009</p> <p>2007-2008 2007 -</p> <p>2007-2008 2007 2008</p> <p>2007-2008 2007-2008 2008</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>2007 - 2008</p> <p>2007 2008 and ongoing</p> <p>2008-2009  2009</p>	<p>Youth Development Officer Youth Advisory Committees CV Conservatorium Event venues</p> <p>Youth Development Officer Youth Advisory Committee CV Conservatorium; Event venues Local artists/arts workers</p> <p>Community Dev Team Writers Network</p> <p>CV Conservatorium Church + community choirs Music tutors + singers</p> <p>Community groups Local artists/arts workers</p> <p>Arts Northern Rivers Local galleries, theatres, arts groups, artists, performers</p> <p>Multicultural groups/committees Community Colleges, Highland Gathering Committee, Libraries</p> <p>CVC Planning and Engineering Youth Advisory Committee Local communities Skate park users</p>

### 3. CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT & FACILITATION

*Issue: Facilitating and supporting arts and culture*

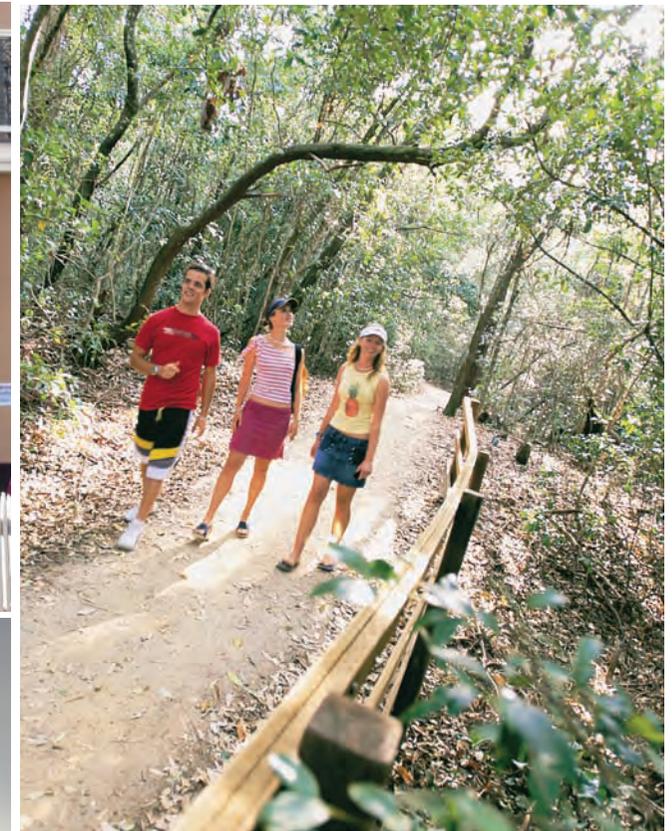
Goal	Strategies and actions	Performance indicator	Time frame	Key Group(s)/ partners
<p>Arts and cultural activity across the Valley is centrally coordinated and developed.</p>	<p><b>Strategy</b> To investigate, establish and consolidate a range of structures, positions, resources and partnerships to support and enhance Clarence Valley arts and cultural development, to build capacity and enhance sustainability for arts organisations, festivals and projects including a commitment to collaborative regional activities.</p> <p><b>Actions</b></p> <p>1(a). Investigate the formation/feasibility of an independent community organisation to facilitate and support CV arts and culture (part arts council, part cultural committee, part non-profit organisation).</p> <p>1(b). Work with Area Assistance Scheme to develop proposal for a 3 year CV Cultural Development Project Broker to work with partners including Council to build capacity through innovative arts and cultural projects and to establish a virtual arts and cultural hub that fosters coordinated information exchange and contributes to audience development.</p> <p>2. Foster and support the formation of Upper and Lower Clarence Performing Arts Network with at least 2 coordination meetings a year.</p> <p>3. In liaison with Regional Arts NSW, research best practice public liability insurance models for arts/cultural groups (link to Social Plan 2006).</p> <p>4. In association with EDU/Governance, review Donations program guidelines to ensure that any arts/cultural funding is consistent with Cultural Plan priorities; negotiate CDC's involvement in assessment of Events and Festivals Donations to arts/cultural organisations.</p>	<p>Structures researched Report on preferred model Organisations established</p> <p>Discussions with AAS Proposal completed + funded Position advertised Cultural Broker appointed</p> <p>Networks established Min 2 network meetings a year</p> <p>Liaise with Reg Arts NSW Potential models researched Program established</p> <p>Review of Donations guidelines CDC involved in Events/ Festivals Donations assessment</p>	<p>2007-2008 2007-2008 2008-2009</p> <p>2007-2008 2008-2009 2008-2009 2009</p> <p>2007-2008 2007 -</p> <p>2007-2008 2007-2008 2008-2009</p> <p>2007-2008 2008-2009</p>	<p>Arts Northern Rivers Arts NSW Local arts organisations</p> <p>Area Assistance Scheme CVC EDU Local businesses Local arts organisations</p> <p>Local theatres/performing arts groups and local schools CV Conservatorium Dance/voice/drama studios</p> <p>Regional Arts NSW Arts Northern Rivers Local insurers</p> <p>CVC EDU CVC Governance</p>

<p>5. Coordinate an annual Cultural Forum in the Valley as a means to maintain inspiration, enthusiasm and innovation, and to provide an opportunity for ideas exchange, information sharing, networking (similar to <i>Windows onto Culture</i>).</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> forum: launch Cultural Plan One forum per annum</p>	<p>2007-2008 2008 -</p>	<p>Arts and cultural groups Arts Northern Rivers Regional cultural groups</p>
<p>6. Negotiate a regular local newspaper column and local radio segment focusing on arts and culture as a marketing, audience development and awareness raising device.</p>	<p>Negotiations with local papers Weekly/Monthly column Weekly cultural spot on 2GF</p>	<p>2007-2008 2007-2008 2007-2008</p>	<p>Daily Examiner Clarence Review 2GF Radio</p>
<p>7. Work with Valley Volunteers (VV) to promote and establish an active program of volunteer training linked to an <i>arts/cultural volunteers data base (Social Plan 2006)</i>.</p>	<p>Establish working party (VV) Training program finalised Training delivered Database established</p>	<p>2008-2009 2008-2009 2008-2009 2008-2009</p>	<p>Valley Volunteers Grafton Reg Gallery Local arts/cultural volunteers Friends of the Gallery</p>
<p>8. Investigate commercial sponsorship for an annual program of school bus subsidy to improve students' access to arts/cultural programs across the Valley, with possibility of subsequent extension of program to older, disabled or isolated residents.</p>	<p>Negotiations with potential local/regional sponsors Sponsorship finalised No. of events incorporated</p>	<p>2008-2009  2008-2009 2009 -</p>	<p>Local/regional businesses Grafton Reg Gallery ABAF</p>

### 3. CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT & FACILITATION

#### Issues: Role of Education and Lifelong learning

Goal	Strategies and actions	Performance indicator	Time frame	Key Group(s)/ partners
<p>The Clarence Valley is widely recognised for its range of high quality education and learning programs and facilities in the arts and cultural sector.</p>	<p><b>Strategy</b> Build on and support the available education and training opportunities in the Valley, especially those related to arts, culture and the creative industries; expand the resources and capacity of the Clarence Library Service as a key cultural and educational facility including all branches.</p>			<p>Grafton and Lower Clarence community colleges, and U3As</p> <p>Southern Cross Uni</p>
	<p><b>Actions</b> 1. Commission a study into the development of a new library in Grafton including potential co-location with other cultural activities/facilities (eg, workshops, studios, performance space) and extensions to existing libraries in Maclean and Yamba.</p>	<p>New Grafton Library building In 07/08 budgets/Mgmt Plan</p>	<p>2007-2008</p>	<p>State Library NSW (building consultant) CVC Manager, L&amp;HS Clarence Regional Library</p>
	<p>(a) Review library hours and staffing levels to improve access to learning resources for the local community.</p>	<p>Review conducted Hours/staffing levels increased</p>	<p>2007-2008 2008-2009</p>	<p>Local community and library clients</p>
	<p>(b) Lobby for increased resources to provide appropriate library resources (age and quality of book stock, budget allocations, etc) based on data in Library Review 2006.</p>	<p>CRL budget increased to meet sector standards: new items acquisition rate increased to 12,100 p.a; per capita loans increase to 6.7 minimum; 49% of stock less than 5 years old; staffing levels increased to 28.77 FTE.</p>	<p>2008-2009</p>	<p>State Library NSW CVC Manager, L&amp;HS Clarence Regional Library</p>
	<p>2. Council to take a lead role in advocating for provision of a range of tertiary arts/cultural training and education courses across the LGA.</p>	<p>Review available arts/cultural courses available Letters to TAFE/DET</p>	<p>2007-2008 Ongoing</p>	<p>TAFE (Grafton and Maclean) Community Colleges + U3A</p>
<p>3. Seek funding from Department of State and Regional Development (DSRD) and TAFE to undertake a Cultural Industry Skills Audit to identify strengths/gaps and opportunities, to be used as an advocacy tool in establishing new courses/facilities across the Valley.</p>	<p>Negotiations initiated Funding secured Audit complete</p>	<p>2007-2008 2008-2009 2010</p>	<p>CVC EDU DSRD TAFE Local creative industry practitioners</p>	
<p>4. Prepare a Business Plan for the development of small travelling arts/cultural programs across the Valley to schools, halls, shops, libraries, etc. Pilot programs with Grafton Regional Gallery and Grafton TAFE Music/Multi-media Department.</p>	<p>Working party established Business Plan complete Pilot Program launched</p>	<p>2008-2009 2008-2009 2009</p>	<p>Grafton Reg Gallery, Clarence Libraries, Clarence Regional Libraries, TAFE</p>	



Filipio drummers, Multicultural Festival,(image: © Andrew Tarrant) Flags at the Gallery, Woolitji House, Maclean (image: © Colin Clague), Natural heritage: national parks and reserves (image: Clarence Valley Council), Visual art and sculpture at Grafton Regional Gallery (image: Clarence Valley Council), The Clocktower and Weiley's Hotel, Prince St, Grafton (image: Clarence Valley Council)

## Glossary of terms

### COMMUNITY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Community cultural development (CCD) is a community-based arts practice and can engage any artform. There are many variations of a community-based process, and as such, there is no one correct model. The process is primarily the collaboration of professional artists and communities to create art. During the CCD process artists and communities work together towards a shared goal and the process can be empowering for communities by solving problems and addressing issues through arts practice<sup>19</sup>.

### CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Activities that have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have the potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property<sup>20</sup>.

The creative industries are a broad alliance of activities with creativity at their heart and where they have a critical role in the development of an integrated approach to economic policy and planning. This definition encompasses 13 industry sectors: advertising, architecture, arts and antique markets, crafts, design, designer fashion, film, interactive leisure software, music, television and radio, performing arts, publishing and software<sup>21</sup>.

### CULTURAL TOURISM

Cultural tourism encompasses a diversity of views. For this Plan 'cultural tourism' is defined according to definitions adopted by the World Tourism Organisation, and by the Federal agencies of the Bureau of Tourism Research and the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts. It is defined according to visitors' attendance at one or more of the following cultural attractions:

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<sup>19</sup> Australia Council, <http://www.ozco.gov.au>

<sup>20</sup> Department for Culture, Media and Sport, UK, [www.culture.gov.uk](http://www.culture.gov.uk)

<sup>21</sup> Stuart Cunningham, 'What price a creative economy?', Sydney: Platform Papers, Currency Press, 2006

- festivals or fairs (music, dance, comedy, visual arts, multi-arts and heritage);
- performing arts or concerts (theatre, opera, ballet, and classical and contemporary music);
- museums or art galleries;
- historic or heritage buildings, sites, monuments;
- art or craft workshops or studios; and
- Aboriginal sites and cultural displays.<sup>22</sup>

Note: cultural tourism can also include the screen industry and when combined with the natural environment and hospitality sectors, presents considerable potential for visitors and for those who live in a place.

## PUBLIC ART AND FUNCTIONAL DESIGN

Public art refers to art practice that integrates art and design into the public domain. It encompasses a wide range of artforms and creative practices. These include sculpture, environmental art, architectural design elements, installations, lighting effects, outdoor performance, memorials, artist designed street furniture, decorative paving and mural works.

Public art can be the result of artists' commissions, artists working as part of architectural or design teams, community arts and community cultural development processes, competitions, temporary exhibitions, events or installations. Public art can also include the donation or purchase of existing works to be permanently located in public spaces.

Projects may include permanent or temporary artworks, functional design, large and small-scale initiatives, and may involve high profile as well as low-key approaches<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> Definition of 'cultural tourism' in Arts and Cultural Tourism Strategy for WA, 2004-2008. Perth: Department of Culture and the Arts.

<sup>23</sup> Australia Street Company, 2006

## DEFINITION OF CULTURE <sup>24</sup>

The Local Government & Shires Association (LGSA) Regional Distinctiveness Project (LGSA 1996) found that most councils in NSW proposed that culture is principally a 'way of life'. These Guidelines have adopted the following definition which is consistent with local governments' approach. Culture has a values dimension:

- relationships;
- shared memories, experiences and identity;
- diverse cultural, religious and historic backgrounds;
- values and aspirations; and
- what we consider valuable to pass on to future generations.

In this dimension culture is about a way of life and connections between people and between places and people. Along with the experiences of its inhabitants, the culture of an area is strongly shaped by its history, its geography, its character (land use, settlement patterns, demographics, and the built environment). Our culture encompasses the ways in which we belong in and to a place. Local cultural planning helps us to understand the unique character of our communities and to assist communities to express pride in their place. Cultural places are those with importance or symbolic significance to people, often with an important role in collective memory, identity and spirituality. These places can include landmark buildings and sites such as lookouts, meeting places – both traditional and contemporary like the town hall steps significant streetscapes, monuments and public art.

Culture has a material dimension:

- the performing and visual arts including digital and website art, craft, design and fashion;
- media, film, television, radio, video and language;
- museums, art galleries, artefacts, local historical societies, archives and keeping places;
- libraries, literature, writing and publishing;
- the built environment, heritage, architecture, landscape and archaeology;
- sports events, facilities and development;
- parks, open spaces, wildlife habitats, water, environment and countryside recreation;
- children's play, playgrounds and play activities;

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<sup>24</sup> Cultural Planning Guidelines for Local Government, Arts NSW and Local Governments and Shires Association, 2002)

- tourism, festivals and attractions; and
- informal leisure pursuits.

In this dimension, culture includes the creative products produced by artists and designers as well as the creative products of communities. Cultural assets and cultural resources are also included in this material way of looking at culture and refer to those places, buildings, facilities, knowledge, skills and works of art which provide a foundation on which people can draw for a community's cultural development, for example art galleries, museums, local historians, artists.

While their role as managers of cultural and heritage assets on behalf of the community underpins their work, libraries, museums and galleries should be regarded as central to wide-ranging cultural activity and not merely storehouses of collections. They can have an important role in developing audiences, providing educational programs and information material, fostering the development of local artists, facilitating a sense of community identity, enhancing knowledge exchange for tourists, visitors and local community groups and providing a venue or site for community activity of all kinds.

Cultural infrastructure is also part of the material way of looking at culture and includes networks of voluntary socio-cultural associations, art gallery and museum volunteers; directories and data bases; large commercially driven cultural industries for example publishers, recording companies and movie theatres; and small scale cultural enterprises representing the trading arm of individual artists or artists' collectives; clubs, cafes and pubs.

Culture has a process dimension:

While we may produce material culture which is infused with our cultural values that cultural production itself does not necessarily facilitate the re/evaluation and development of what we believe and how we choose to act. Material culture is just recording what we believe at that time. We need opportunities to exchange, continually re-evaluate and express our cultural values if we are to create a culture which is vibrant and vital. It is the interaction with other people and our engagement with and participation in intellectual and artistic production, that exposes us to new information and ideas which enable our values to be challenged and reconsidered, leading to personal growth, lifelong learning and (potentially) cultural change.

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## LIST OF COMMONLY USED ABBREVIATIONS

AAS	Area Assistance Scheme
ANR	Arts Northern Rivers
CCD	Community cultural development
CDC	Cultural Development Coordinator
CV	Clarence Valley
CVC	Clarence Valley Council
CVAAC	Clarence Valley Aboriginal Advisory Committee
DSRD	Department of State and Regional Development
EDU	Economic Development Unit
GRG	Grafton Regional Gallery
LCACA	Lower Clarence Arts & Craft Association
LGA	Local Government Area
LGSA	Local Government and Shires Association
MGNSW	Museums & Galleries NSW
NORPA	Northern Rivers Performing Arts Inc
RA NSW	Regional Arts NSW
U3A	University of the Third Age

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## Appendix 1 General Community Workshops

Workshop 1 Monday 6 November 2006 Maclean

Task 1 What is distinctive about the Clarence Valley LGA? What are the area's key assets and resources?

- Village identity
- Events and celebrations
- The River – links to the islands
- Heritage and history
- Lifestyle
- Underdevelopment as opposed to over development
- National parks
- Variety/ diversity of character
- Landscape
- Surf culture and Beaches e.g. Angourie
- Native fauna
- Community organisations
- Aboriginal culture
- Aboriginal sites

Task 2 Thinking about the cultural life of the Valley and how you experience it. List the cultural services/ facilities/ programs that you like and are accessing. What's missing and what don't you like? What works and what doesn't work?

Group 1

<b>Resources that you use and the area's cultural strengths</b>	<b>Identify what is missing and or what you don't like.</b>
Goorie history telling Talking to members of the community Library Museum Woolitji House has Goorie history Yaegl Drive – Aboriginal communities Cane Harvest Festival with Aboriginal involvement The Pinnacles have Goorie history	No Goorie Telegraph pole landmark Library hours – limited No central/hub for the arts Not enough accessible Goorie history collections Youth development programs (missing) Galleries aren't accessible TAFE arts courses have gone. Need more support for visual artists Graffiti art on the levy bank (mural) Yaegl Drive is not advertised properly and significant signs are not in their proper sites.

	<p>Scottish Festival very overpowering with no Aboriginal input in it. All whitefaces participants eg. in the bands.</p> <p>The Pinnacle is overgrown, nobody is maintaining it and it's a significant landmark.</p>
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Group 2

<b>Resources that you use and the area's cultural strengths</b>	<b>Identify what is missing and or what you don't like.</b>
<p>Civic Hall and other halls            Club auditoriums            Yamba Cinema            Angourie Rainforest Resort            Art galleries - arts and crafts            Dancers – ballet and highland</p> <p>Council arts newsletter – events/festivals – The Coldstream            Festival and Highland Gathering            Skills development at Surfing the Coldstream            High school performances and local talent            Belly dancers            U3A classes            Croc Festival            Showground and the Agricultural Show            Tartan Power Poles            Museums            Libraries            Local monthly markets</p>	<p>Missing            large performing arts venue            Classical music            Serious drama and touring drama            Digital media            Digital arts            Community radio 2 TLCFM            Alternative art            Youth involvement in culture/ post secondary            Art courses at TAFE.</p>

Group 3

Resources that you use and the area's cultural strengths	Identify what is missing and or what you don't like.
Education facilities National parks Beaches Aboriginal heritage sites Local heritage – Scottish influence River – development Many artists in the area  Arts/ crafts expo	Missing Aboriginal co op for selling art works and supplying work space for youth Losing arts Programs from TAFE Support and development for youth River – its being destroyed by over development lifestyle events so many areas and buildings are under - utilised. venues for the Eisteddfod

Task 3 What could be done to improve cultural life? What are the actions that will build on what's good and will address gaps? Who can help Council or who are the partners?

- Crocfest and the PCYC
- Building creative programming into existing events e.g. markets
- Council support for liability. To investigate new insurance models
- NAIDOC Week - needs better integrated planning across the Valley
- Yaegl Festival – celebrating 40 years in 2007
- Council to take the lead in advocating against the loss of TAFE courses
- Assess current and future local needs for a performing arts venue linked to education and learning for all ages.
- Assess multi-purpose cultural venue
- Provision of transport to cultural events including out of the area
- Jazz in the Park and in the Rainforest including venues for outside arts and performance
- Mobile stage needed
- Need LGA wide Museums Adviser with a collections focus
- Refurbish/ upgrade the landscaping around the Pinnacle Rocks
- Heritage streetscapes should be valued. They should be monitored to ensure conservation.

Task 4 Thinking about cultural values. Brainstorm what the community values might be.

- Respecting the old and the new
- Conserving community spirit
- Sharing
- Intergenerational respect
- Respecting difference. Tolerance
- Old fashioned values – small is beautiful.
- Valuing local character.

- Celebrating local difference
- Balancing the old and the new.

## Workshop 2 Wednesday 8 November 2006 Grafton

General discussion about culture.

“Culture is like yoghurt. It’s living and growing and responds to other influences”.

” Culture is about identity”

” Culture is an evolutionary thing. It’s about putting people together”.

” Communities can realise their potential through culture”.

Task 1 What is distinctive about the Clarence Valley LGA? What are the area’s key assets and resources?

- The people
- Country/regional town lifestyles
- Slower pace of life
- Welcoming and friendly
- Active arts and cultural activities
- Silos of activity
- Local character with unique precincts and identity – it distinguishes locality yet divides.

Task 2 Strategies to make a difference.

- Making formal connections between groups. Fostering networking
- Improve access to cultural information e.g. Cultural Development Coordinator’s community development e-bulletin but much more
- Review the role of halls/ school of arts for cultural uses – develop them into sustainable and accessible venues for broad community activity under community ownership.
- Places to go for young people, eg. PCYC, youth culture spaces
- Undertake a Cultural Industry skills audit to identify opportunities and skills needed
- Foster active links between artists/schools/education sector. Develop programs of support e.g. subsidised bus transport for schools to visit cultural events/ exhibitions etc.
- Develop a culture of supporting volunteering – a sustainable and intergenerational program for the cultural sector
- Provide opportunities to broaden cultural experiences for all residents – youth, unemployed, marginalised etc.
- Establish a School of Excellence at the tertiary level in performance .e.g. dance and physical movement. Link to the Conservatorium. Develop studios.
- Explore the development of the appointment of a Cultural Broker to act as a resource person across the LGA.
- Research the development of a CV cultural/arts development organisation/ group/ including an artist’s agency service.
- Commission a feasibility study for the development of a performing arts venue
- Council to take the lead on the Saraton Cinemas’ future.
- Provide workshops for artists business skills development
- Develop a pilot mentoring program for new, local talent in the arts and cultural industries.

## Appendix 2 Youth workshops

### Workshop 1 15 November 2006 Lower Clarence Youth Advisory Committee

#### Task 1 What is Clarence 'Culture'?

General discussion about the term 'culture' – several people felt it wasn't clear what this was, and that it wasn't a term young people related to. "If you say the word 'culture', most young people would run a mile". Not clear what the alternative was, and accepted that the word 'culture' might not be appropriate when promoting or running youth projects.

- Beach and beach culture (especially summer)
- Surf and skate – some reference to clashes or distinctions between surf/skate and BMX culture
- Movies and film
- Skate park in Maclean: identified as a key issue and reference point for local young people, even those who may not skate. Some concerns about safety of young people around skate park, and discussion of the public perceptions of this as opposed to reality. Reference to recent incident: young skater killed in car accident; local skaters wanted to commemorate him and graffitied the skate park with his tag/symbol. Council very upset about this and chastised young people involved for vandalism. Seen as a misunderstanding and perhaps an opportunity for a collaborative project next time.
- **Public transport** (or lack thereof): seen as a KEY issue for young people. Local public transport is very poor and too expensive - \$10-20 to get to Grafton or other places. Mostly relying on family for lifts and transport. Severely limits involvement in activities or attendance at concerts and events.
- **Lack of opportunities**: sense of a lack of employment and other opportunities for young people – very few good jobs for young people, a lack of industry and trades in the area. Young people leave the area for jobs or education, and most don't return, or return after some time to have families or settle down. Limited opportunities in terms of: shops, movies, concerts/live music, DJs, etc.
- **Youth centre**: some discussion of the lack of a 'youth centre' in Yamba or Maclean – not seen as a big issue by these young people. Not really sure what a youth centre would provide, and when it would be open/available. Possibly could provide some of the things referred to above: venue for live music, workshops/ training, movies, etc.

#### Cultural Issues for Young People

- *Alcohol/drugs*: too easy to access for young people in Maclean/Yamba; a lack of access to 'real' knowledge or education about drugs. Emphasis on need to educate parents *and* kids about drugs – involve both in education and raising awareness. *Suggestion of a seminar for parents AND young people with 'real' information about drugs, their effects and availability.*
- Yamba/Maclean: perceived difference between two communities in terms of young people. Yamba – very much 'surf' culture; Maclean – skate and BMX culture.
- *Indigenous culture*: reference to a need to better educate the general community about Indigenous culture and history. Difficult perceptions and assumptions about Indigenous community. Reference to "Open Culture Day" or 'Touch' days with local Indigenous community (touch football with Indigenous and non-Indigenous people). Suggestion of a festival or event with bush tucker, story telling, performances and incorporating sport. *Best reference yet to the use of sport for cultural outcomes – use of touch football to engage and bring together.*
- Reference to importance of MENTORING for young people: great way to improve skills and gain confidence. Could be hip hop, dance, skating, etc. Not necessarily formal arrangements – just turn up to skate park and learn new moves/tricks from other people. Exchange of ideas and knowledge.
- Perception of the Clarence Valley having **potential** to be good but not realised. Some feelings that Maclean/Yamba used to be 'fun' but they've gotten boring.

- Mention of Community Radio: some reference to young people receiving training in radio and presenting a program; other references to young people not being allowed to be involved (not explained).
- Reference to main venues for events: Wooli St Hall, Yamba (not available during school holidays); Civic Hall, Maclean (dances, concerts).

### **Ideas to improve Clarence Valley for local Young People**

1. TOP PRIORITY - Greater access to **live music**: hard core/punk, dance, Hot House parties (possible issue with name and public perceptions), DJs and dance shows. Greater access to events generally. Reference to recent hard core/heavy metal show at Wooli St hall – successful, well attended, and organised by young people, no adverse incidents, public liability organised through local insurer). *Linked to...*
2. **Better and more affordable** (subsidised) **public transport to/from events/communities**.
3. More **workshops** for young people: hip hop, dance, drumming, skating and skate/hip hop art
4. Ongoing *spray paint*/graffiti area near skate park (Maclean/Yamba) – wall dedicated to graffiti and skate art, maybe 'redecorated' every 2 months. Not precious about it, not a 'mural' as such that remains there unchanging.

#### *Specific Projects for significant issues*

- Graffiti at Maclean Skate Park (see reference to 'graffiti' incident above – Danny, killed in car accident). Potential for that to be a great collaborative project between young people and Council, commemorating a significant person in a positive and important way.
- 'Open Days' at Pippi Beach stadium/hall (Indigenous community) – story telling, bush tucker, performances/dance, touch football (various activities.) Possibility for real cultural exchange and learning.

## Appendix 3 Arts community workshop

Task 1 Outline what we mean by 'Culture' in the Clarence Valley?

Aboriginal art and culture

The environment including climate

The arts and artists including film and cinema

Religion and spirituality

Sport

Urban architecture and design

Routines

Club culture

Surf and beach culture

Cuisine and food

Local product and markets

Connections to society that are experienced through creative expression and participation. Volunteering

Passion and ideas

Festivals

Education and lifelong learning

History and heritage

### **CULTURAL PLANNING ISSUES**

The Clarence Valley has telecommunications black spots that impact on accessing information, networking, and marketing for artists.

Local distinctiveness could be impacted by the development of shopping malls

Artists need access to coordinated information. The e-news is great but Council's website is not good enough as a cultural web site and needs to be redeveloped.

What to do about the Saraton Cinema? It's a key cultural asset.

- Task 2 What could be done to improve cultural life in the Valley? What are the actions that will build on what's good and will address gaps?

PRIORITIES	IDEAS
✓	<p>A Practical Cultural Vision</p> <p>Develop the 5 Year cultural plan including strategies and an evaluation timeframe</p> <p>Establish a Clarence Valley Arts Week that engages with artists and the community. Include arts awards that recognise contributions to CV cultural life. Establish mentors to work with emerging artists.</p> <p>Establish a community-based arts organisation as a central focus/ resource across the Valley.</p> <p>Strategies could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Coordination and dissemination of information.</li> <li>▪ Develop a cultural web site</li> <li>▪ Establish an artists' register.</li> <li>▪ Network and partner across the Valley's arts/cultural organisations. Build connections.</li> <li>▪ Hold workshops that develop artists skills</li> <li>▪ Council to have a small cultural grants program</li> </ul>
	<p>Twilight markets – to avoid the heat and at the end of the week.</p> <p>Evening festivals</p> <p>Integrating creative arts programs into current events</p>
✓	Awards for Clarence Valley Treasures (people) and an exhibition of Clarence Valley Treasures (objects)
	Outdoor film screenings
	Retain town centres and don't encourage out of town shopping malls
	<p>Council policy to pay artists who participate in Council run projects/events.</p> <p>Promote and support the business of arts by supporting artists to market/exhibit.</p> <p>Recognise artists' overheads and provide small business workshops eg, taxation, grants, networking</p> <p>Develop studio hubs for artists</p>
✓	Develop multi-purpose arts/cultural centres with studios/ workshops, galleries, rehearsal and small performance space.
✓	Develop a national sculpture award with an Indigenous focus
✓	Develop more public art strategies e.g. in shopping centres
✓	Develop creative opportunities for young people including through music
	<p>Foster the performance of Australian traditional music including bush music</p> <p>Foster skills in Australian traditional music via the Regional conservatorium</p> <p>Develop a bush music festival</p>
	Encourage the development of music education opportunities

## Appendix 4 Performing arts community conversations

### Conversation 1 held 10 October in Grafton

Task 1 What is culture in the Clarence Valley?

- Arts
- Sport
- Heritage
- Environment
- Daily habits
- Recreation
- Interactions between people and between groups
- Special celebrations represented in the calendar of events, festivals and celebrations

Task 2 What are the key cultural planning issues?

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Good community support for the performing arts Council's donations fund is useful. Newspaper support for marketing and promotion including a column advertisement. Cultural Dev Coordinator's e-newsletter is great. Grafton has a strong writing group – story writing, U3A, scriptwriting, play readings. There is high level of commitment to the performing arts Strong networking General cohesion and cooperation Strong commitment to theatre. Youth arts is strong with opportunities for performance and production e.g. Conservatorium, Criterion Theatre, Grafton Theatre Company workshops. Grafton TAFE – excellent music facilities.</p>	<p>Limited venues for the performing arts e.g. Criterion seats 160; Grafton/ Pelican Theatre seats 120 raked seats; Conservatorium seats 100 and has a piano; Saraton seats 1000 incl. mezzanine; South Grafton Community Centre – multipurpose; Schools - multipurpose; Macauley College – new drama centre; seats 100. Full local calendar and there is too much on. Limited communication between groups. Audiences have limited financial flexibility, pensioners. Limited suitable venues impacts on access to touring productions. Small pool of people impacts on audience development opportunities. Families support music tuition but not drama and dance. Limited support for fee paying dance workshops. Problems with “the arts”. Jacaranda doesn't have much arts programming. Library has a limited education focus. Competing venues are available at Ballina, Lismore and Coffs Harbour. Transport and distance is a big problem. Eg, access to Northern Rivers Performing Arts' (NORPA) training/ workshops</p>

Task 3 Ideas and strategies

- Establish an 'Arts' column in the local newspaper
- Establish a regular radio session on Radio 2 GF

- Develop a 200 to 300 seat, managed performing arts venue
- Coordinate programming across the year and encourage cross promotion of programs
- Target teachers and promote productions after hours as well as during school hours
- Undertake audience development research and target tastes, eg, what do people want to see, where, how often, what stops them?
- Foster creativity – schedule from the ground up skills workshops. Start with stories, writing, music and residential opportunities,
- Hold community cultural development workshops.
- Establish a community choir
- Establish a Performing Arts Network – hold 2 meetings a year, establish a formal structure but support community-based ownership.

## Conversation 2 held 6 November Maclean

Task 1            What is culture in the Clarence Valley?

- Arts and crafts; the performing arts including choirs and dance
- Indigenous arts and heritage
- Balls – celebrations and rituals
- Local identity
- Diverse backgrounds and expressions
- Beliefs/customs and habits that are here in this place.
- History and heritage
- Festivals
- Networks of towns and villages – each with personalities and identities
- Agriculture and fishing
- The River and the landscape including trees
- Cultural tourism

Task 2 Cultural planning issues

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Surfing the Coldstream Festival                      Local and regional identity                      Maclean is strong in the performing arts e.g. bands, choirs, drama, dance, orchestras, youth ballet                      Audiences can be 600 + and 1000 + for musicals.                      Eisteddfod attracts big numbers including audiences                      The Civic Hall, Maclean is a good location and it is accessible with a good kitchen.                      The Jim Thomson Pavilion at the Maclean Showground is a good venue.                      Could build on the Youth Performing Arts group based in Maclean.                      Maclean has an audience for the performing arts and resident expectations are high.</p>	<p>Loss of the Cane Harvest Festival                      Lack of a performing arts venue for rehearsal and performance and would it serve regional LGA wide needs or local?                      Lack of venue means that the area is missing out on touring programs.                      Civic Hall has a bad back stage, flat floor seating, small stage, poor acoustics, no parking, no box office and no loading dock.                      Question of venue viability including manager/ coordinator/ programmer.                      Need a multi-function performance space.                      Limited formal networking between performing arts groups for programming/ planning/ coordination.                      TAFE art courses in Maclean have been axed. There is a post-secondary school training gap in the area.                      Area needs arts workshop spaces for skills development and networking.</p>

Task 3 Ideas and strategies

- Develop cultural trails
- Commission a feasibility study into options and locations for a performing arts venue to support local and touring programs. The study should use specialist architects/designers and consider the design needs of performance as well as exhibitions etc.
- Create a group to assist in coordinating performing arts activities with a formal structure and to take a role in
  - marketing/promotion
  - programming
  - planning
- Continue and expand the cultural e. bulletin
- Program workshops on PR and marketing skills for small cultural groups.

## Appendix 5 Business of Culture Workshop

Task 1 What makes up the Clarence Valley cultural economy and what are the key cultural business sectors? Are they clustered? What are the trends? What's missing?

Group 1

Key cultural business sectors. Examples	Locations/ clusters	Cultural business trends
Digital print media	Yamba	Potential home-based industry with scope to move into new technologies such as design and digital design
Commercial galleries	Across the Valley	Growth in tourism. Artists building business awareness.
Architects	Across the Valley	Heritage conservation.
Girwaawa Designs (ceramics)		
Traditional printmaking		
Dance and theatre	Across the Valley	
Music and Festival/ Events	Mainly Grafton	Development of coast festivals and one day events
TAFE support	Grafton and fine arts in Maclean	Infrastructure to support students
Restaurants and cuisine	Across the Valley	
Dance education academies	Across the Valley	
Sport – racing	Grafton	

Group 2

Key cultural business sectors. Examples	Locations/ clusters	Cultural business trends
		Issue is transport: People will travel at weekends but not at night; distances limit audiences; drink and driving limits attendance; young people will travel to a music venue but need under 18 and over 18 venues in Grafton, Yamba and Maclean.
Grafton Regional Gallery	Grafton	Residencies not reaching audiences in Lower Clarence workshop space
Clarence Valley Conservatorium	Grafton	Not reaching whole community
Arts and music clubs	Woody Head Folk Club Grafton/Maclean/Yamba: dance/ music	

Key cultural business sectors. Examples	Locations/ clusters	Cultural business trends
Eisteddfod	South Grafton	
Dance schools	Maclean/Yamba/Grafton	
Festivals	Jacaranda Grafton Show Races Artfest Coldstream	
Services and crafts such as framers, art transport, music repairers, builders or makers, teachers		

## Task 2 Identify possible strategies

- Organised cultural trails across the Valley including organised tours to artist's studios, galleries, music events. Focus on **local** needs and interests.
- Foster youth arts – venues, programs for the Under 18s.
- Develop a performing arts festival for all ages
- Plan an Arts Festival/Arts Week with arts awards that recognise and celebrate creativity.
- Develop, coordinate and market the Clarence Valley Cultural Brand through festivals etc.
- Engage business to get behind the arts/ culture through collaboration and partnerships
- Council to take the lead in advocating/ coordinating with arts and cultural partners
- Build on what's here already – extend traditional programs through development and collaboration
- Develop cultural tourism as a niche market
- Improve communication and information exchange through sharing skills. Establish a CV cultural information resource hub with in an improved partnership with CV Tourism. Collaborate with the Advertiser.
- Value and support volunteers to be effective and strategic including a focus on increasing volunteer numbers as an LGA-wide focus.
- Develop regular business skills workshops for the cultural industry sector across the Valley including for events, festivals, galleries, etc. and linked to Chambers of Commerce/Progress Associations and Clarence Business Centre.
- Research feasibility of developing local travelling cultural programs across Valley to towns, villages, schools etc. Pilot program Gallery program to Iluka.
- Develop an artists register and a Public Art Policy
- Develop a Clarence Valley arts/cultural web site
- Establish a CV Cultural Industry Broker/resource person to coordinate a virtual arts hub.
- Develop a Clarence Valley Cultural Tourism strategy
- Build local arts/cultural capacity through support/coordination/partnerships/grant programs etc.

# Appendix 6 Clarence Valley Cultural Survey



## CLARENCE VALLEY CULTURAL SURVEY

Clarence Valley Council is currently preparing a Cultural Plan. We invite your input and assistance by completing this short questionnaire on aspects of the Valley's cultural life and facilities. Public workshops and forums will also be held as part of the consultation process.

**PLEASE USE A BLACK PEN**

**1. Please tick [✓] the cultural activities in which you participate, according to your type of involvement.**

ACTIVITY	Professional artist	Amateur	Audience	Student	Volunteer	Cultural business	Other (Specify)
Visual arts							
Crafts							
Literary arts							
Cultural events							
Heritage/ history/ museums							
Gardens/gardening							
Environment							
Festivals/markets							
Dance							
Music							
Theatre							
Library							
Film							
Broadcasting							
Sports							
Other (specify)							

**2. Which 3 cultural activities, places, events or special aspects in the Clarence Valley area are most important to you?**

- .....
- .....
- .....

**3. What cultural services, cultural activities or cultural infrastructure do you feel are missing from the Clarence Valley?**

- .....
- .....
- .....

4. Do you have a VISION for cultural life the Clarence Valley? If so, how would you describe this?  
Please attach additional sheets if required.

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5. Which are the 4 cultural activities which you would *most* like Council to support? Please rank your choices from 1 to 4.

Activity	Rank the most important activity as 1, the next most important as 2 and so on up to 4
Supporting Public Libraries	
Protecting historical and heritage assets	
Providing and/or supporting events and festivals	
Supporting and showcasing emerging talent	
Supporting the development of skills e.g. music, theatre, writing, painting, craft, etc.	
Commissioning artists to work on place making & public art projects	
Marketing and promoting the value of arts and culture to community life	
Fostering partnerships with arts/cultural groups, the private sector, other levels of Government, other councils to enhance support for arts/cultural projects.	
Providing cultural facilities and meeting places	
Facilitating the distribution of cultural information	
Fostering community writing and local history publishing	
Fostering cultural industries	
Other (specify)	

6. What is your age group? (please indicate with a ✓)

Under 24 \_\_\_      25-44 years \_\_\_      45-64 years \_\_\_      Aged 65+ \_\_\_

If you would like to be invited to a future workshop please write your name and postal/email address here:

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Please return this questionnaire to Brendan Smith, Cultural Development Coordinator,  
Locked Bag 23 GRAFTON NSW 2460 by:

Monday 30 October 2006

You can also drop your completed survey in at any of the following locations:

- Any Clarence Valley Library branch
- Any Council Office
- Grafton or Treelands Drive Community Centres
- Grafton Regional Gallery

For more information about this survey or preparation of the Clarence Valley Cultural Plan, contact Brendan Smith on  
Ph: 6641 7222 or [brendan.smith@clarence.nsw.gov.au](mailto:brendan.smith@clarence.nsw.gov.au)

## Appendix 7 Cultural Plan Advisory Committee

Shirley Adams, OAM – Chairperson and Council representative, Deputy Mayor (CVC)

Jill Napier – former Director, Community and Cultural Services (CVC)

Jude McBean – Director, Grafton Regional Gallery (CVC)

Kerren Law – Manager, Industry Development (Economic Development Unit) (CVC)

Sarah Ford – Community Development Officer, Youth (CVC)

Brendan Smith – Secretary and Cultural Development Coordinator (CVC)

Santiago Acera – chairperson of 2006 Multicultural Festival of the Five Senses, an actor and drama tutor;

Dom Ferry – experienced street performer, Director, Surfing the Coldstream Festival

Ted de Roos – choir director, retired Librarian and previous Board member of Community Programs and the Disability and Aged Information Service

Bruce Vickery Head Teacher, Arts Media & Music, TAFE Nth Coast (Grafton)

Janelle Brown – JKB Consulting, Board Member of Clarence Valley Women Inc and the Clarence Valley Aboriginal Interagency Committee

Liza Bloomer – local web/IT specialist, Friend of the Gallery and member of the Community Economic Development committee

Rosie Catt Diocesan Environment Commission and Philosophy Science Theology Festival

Lois Randall - CEO and Regional Arts Development Officer, Arts Northern Rivers