



## MEDIA RELEASE

27 June 2018

# Celebrating NAIDOC Week across Bass Coast

Bass Coast is proud to support Reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples through a series of events in support of NAIDOC Week running from 8 -15 July.

The Australia-wide event has a long and proud history dating back to the 1930s and is now a week-long celebration recognising the rich cultural history that makes Australia unique.

Each year, a theme is chosen to reflect on important issues and events. This year's theme '*Because of Her We Can*' celebrates the essential role that women have played - and continue to play - as active and significant role models at the community, local, state and national levels.

The week will kick off with the opening of Bass Coast/South Gippsland Reconciliation Group's *NAIDOC Week Indigenous Art Exhibition* at The Hub in Inverloch on Friday 6 July at 6pm. This much anticipated event will run through until Friday 27 July.

A Community Celebration at Churchill Island is planned for Tuesday 10 July at 11am. Honouring the theme of women, Bunurong Elders and Community members will bring everyone together for a Welcome to Country and flag raising ceremony. A special presentation will then be shared on the life of Ruby Gates - an inspiring pioneer for reconciliation in Bass Coast. Local artists will display their work and run workshops to encourage creativity and conversation.

The week will finish with a special screening of *Gurrumul* hosted by Bass Coast Shire and Bass Coast Fine Film Group at the Wonthaggi Union Community Arts Centre in Wonthaggi.

"Naidoc Week is a great time of the year when we as First Nations people can come together and celebrate our achievements. To share culture, to sing, to dance and to create new partnerships that can better support First Nations peoples in all communities across Australia," said Patrice Mahoney, Community Consultant, Artist and Educator.

"Our culture is rich and diverse and Naidoc Week creates a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the oldest living culture on the planet."

This event program is jointly organised and presented by Bass Coast Shire Council, Westernport Water, Phillip Island Nature Parks, Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, Bass Coast South Gippsland Reconciliation Group and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community members.

To find out about Phillip Island Nature Parks, Westernport Water and Bass Coast Shire's journey to reconciliation, please visit their websites.

**ENDS**

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