

## PRESS RELEASE

### ABORIGINAL LEADERSHIP CELEBRATORY MURAL IN BATEMANS BAY

In September 2020 when Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley, Governor of NSW opened two sculptures for inclusion in the Batemans Bay Sculpture Walk. Aunty Loretta Parsley (A Walbunja custodian and local artist) delivered a Welcome to Country and spoke passionately about the importance the sculptures for local self-perception and tourism. Aunty Loretta then spoke about her dream of local public art telling their indigenous story. The Governor of NSW endorsed her comments about the significance of the sculptures and indigenous public art.

Master of Ceremonies and founder of the Sculpture for Clyde event and the Batemans Bay Sculpture Walk, David MacLachlan, enthusiastically responded by saying that many would like to see this eventuate. David MacLachlan is a former president of the Chamber for 3 years and still passionate about improving his town.

A concept of “celebrating generations of indigenous leadership”, was proposed to and then developed with Vikki Parsley and local elders. A local koori process was embarked on to decide and accept the portraits of Walbunja custodian Aunty Loretta Parsley in her possum cloak and her granddaughter Bimi who is a school captain and who’s great great grandmother wrote to the King to ask permission for Batemans Bay indigenous children to attend the local school. The other portrait is of Stan Grant, the nationally recognised indigenous television journalist and author.

The mural captures many messages including the vision of celebrating generations of local indigenous leadership.

Aunty Loretta said when seeing the mural half completed *“I am very emotional, this is the first time I have seen our black history and leadership captured in such an inspiring way for everyone to see, thank you”*.

Internationally recognised artist Matt Adnate is known for his realist style and large scale portraits across Australia. His socially conscious work with indigenous Australians is evident in his Batemans Bay mural.

David MacLachlan and The Batemans Bay Business and Tourism Chamber would like to thank the Village Centre and Bridge Plaza, Geoff Fielding, Raymonds at Malua Bay and Vikki Parsley for permissions and support. While funding was received through various grants and the Business Chamber, thanks also go to all community members who assisted.

The opening depending on completion is planned for mid-June.

