

# COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION



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## NAIDOC Week (2 to 9 July 2023)

National NAIDOC (National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee) Week occurs annually in July and celebrates the history, culture, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It is an opportunity for all Australians to learn about First Nations cultures and histories and participate in celebrations of the oldest, continuous living cultures on earth. The theme of this year's celebration is For Our Elders. The focus is celebrating elders as cultural knowledge holders, trailblazers, and survivors. In the words of Indigenous filmmaker Rachel Perkins, elders are the bedrock of who we are, guiding and speaking to us at important crossroads in our life with affection and discipline, grounding us in our purpose.

One of the highlights of NAIDOC Week is the National NAIDOC Week Awards Ceremony which showcases Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander excellence – the outstanding contributions that First Nations people have made to improve the lives of people in their communities and beyond and to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues in the community.

We all recognise that history is all about us and within, to use the words of Indigenous poet Oodgeroo Noonuccal. This sentiment is evident to all members of the Chevalier Family as we prepare to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Jules Chevalier and 150 years of the mission and work of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, which includes a close connection to Indigenous Australians.



Let us keep in our prayers the opportunity that this year's referendum provides all Australians to contribute to improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples: recognising them in the Constitution through establishing a Voice to Parliament.