



PRESS RELEASE

OCTOBER 2021

1 October 2021

The Friends of Myall Creek Committee has been joined by a broad representation of its supporters and stakeholders to condemn a recent incident of vandalism at the Myall Creek Memorial near Bingara, NSW.

The committee was formed in 1998 to raise awareness of the Myall Creek massacre to better understand the truth of our shared history. Their work to highlight this unique story in our nation's history was recognised by the unveiling of the Memorial in 2000. Throughout this time a broad section of visitors and school groups continue to travel from far and wide to attend the annual solemn Memorial. The NSW and National Heritage listed site honours the violent and unprovoked massacre of at least 28 Wirrayaraay women, children and old men on the evening of June 10 1838.

Vandals have damaged areas connected to the new sections of the Memorial site, damaging and removing several items connected to the amphitheatre, one of three water tanks built to provide essential water to the bush garden. The newly built section was part of a Create NSW grant that was launched in a COVID safe way in February 2021. A plaque situated along the Memorial Walk has also been vandalised, but it remains unknown if this was done by the same perpetrator/s.

A number of these items have already been repaired by our partner Gwydir Shire Council who has acted quickly on this.

Northern Tablelands MP Adam Marshall condemned the senseless act of vandalism.

"More than 20 years of hard work has gone into transforming the Myall Creek Memorial site into a place of cultural healing and reflection," Mr Marshall said. "Unnecessary acts like this do little to support the message of reconciliation the site was established to achieve. I hope those who caused damage take a good hard look at themselves and do the right thing by handing themselves into NSW Police. I am committed to working with the Friends of the Myall Creek Memorial to making the site a safe and welcoming space for all."

Aunty Sue Blacklock a founding member and life member of the Friends of Myall Creek Committee, as well as a direct descendant of the survivors of the massacre said she was disappointed by the news.

"We are just saddened by what was done at the Memorial."

The committee is also upset by the incident and it has particularly effected all of the Aboriginal members.

Founding and current committee member Marilyn Isaacs who is also a direct descendant of the survivors of the massacre has also been saddened by the incident.

"We've had the plaques along the Memorial Walk damaged before. With the new additions to the Memorial only being developed seven months ago, we need more security for the site. This place is about reconciliation. I just feel sorry for these people."

Any fair-minded human being would not defend the actions of those responsible. Over the last 20 years the committee had prided itself on the relationships we have built with Gwydir Shire Council and community organisations in Bingara and Myall Creek who have always supported the annual Memorial gathering along with other businesses in the New England region.

The committee would also like to draw the public's attention to social media posts that has included some inaccuracies concerning the incident.

It is understood that the damage out at the site took place before September 3 2021, we call on members of the public to do the right and honourable thing and report any suspicious activity they may have observed at the site. Should any members of the public have information that may assist Police with their investigation of the matter, please call Crime stoppers on **1800 333 000** or **nsw.crimestoppers.com.au**

For information on the Myall Creek Memorial or Friends of Myall Creek Memorial Committee, please contact:

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If you would like to donate and support the ongoing repairs and maintenance needs of the site please go to **www.myallcreek.org**

