Girls powering at Woorabinda

By CHRISTINE HOWES

QLD

SELF-RESILIENCE, confidence, respect and strength are the characteristics that bind a Woorabinda girls' group, originally intended to be a 10-week program but now in its seventh month.

The group has been run and supported by Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet Indigenous engagement officer Desanya Stanley.

"We need to teach them how to make good choices," she said.

"So we decided to put together a bit of a girls' group with a particular focus on leadership."

"They meet every week for about 90 minutes and they do lots of activities around resilience, self-esteem, confidence, healthy lifestyle choices and those sorts of things."

"We culminated 2016 with a trip to the coastal town of Yeppoon, where they spoke with other Indigenous people and role models."

"Ms Wogand said that by far the most successful aspect of the program was a photo shoot."

"The school contributed a $40 gift card to each of the girls to purchase a dress and shoes," she said, "Most of them are still wearing their shoes."

"The group has been run and supported by Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet Indigenous engagement officer Desanya Stanley."

"We just work on a lot of different subjects for the girls to grow and develop, so they can understand what they can achieve and that they can achieve their own dreams," she said.

A book on this topic is available from the Queensland Government's website.

New book examines 'justice'

By JILLIAN MUNDY

IN his recently released book, Treaty and Statehood – Aboriginal Self Determination, Michael Mansell discusses models for a seventh state (or 'First State for the First People'), designated Aboriginal seats in parliament, and a treaty.

The Tasmanian Aboriginal lawyer, activist, former legal director of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre and secretary of the Aboriginal Provisional Government spent three years wading through constitutional law, reading any High Court cases vaguely relevant and connected to the legal principle of designated Aboriginal seats in parliament.

He also researched and has critically examined the legality of treaty, what it would deal with and its effects on the Australian public, sharing of power and autonomous communities.

"I really can't remember what I set out to do other than to write up the political solutions that were available to us," Mr Mansell told the Koori Mail.

"The book is for Aboriginal people who have a gut feeling that we have been denied justice and want to have someone explain what justice will look like."

"And those million white people who want to give support to Aboriginal people but don't know what we want."

"And for uni students and high school students who want to research the competition between Aboriginal rights versus the position of the Australian governments."

"The political goals that are in the book were nothing really new to me, but what I had to do was a lot of research to see if these things were legally possible and ultimately what they would produce."

"It is fair to say these political goals are what Mr Mansell lives and breathes."

He says none of the proposed models in the book are extreme.

"Mr Mansell suggests that a seventh state could be largely made up of lands Aboriginal people have some legal interest in such areas returned under land rights legislation or places with native title rights."

"He says designated seats and a treaty are constitutionally permissible."

"He discusses the meaning of self-determination and its limitations, and also reviews Aboriginal sovereignty and its function in a modern Australia."

"Treaty and Statehood – Aboriginal Self Determination is available from publisher Federation Press for $59.95."

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