
**GRIFFITH PIONEER PARK MUSEUM COMMITTEE
TO BE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
WEDNESDAY, 5 AUGUST 2026 AT 3:30 PM**

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Confirmation of Minutes
- 3 Business Arising
- 4 Declarations of Interest
- 5 Items of Business
 - CL01 p7 Resignation of Committee Member
 - CL02 p9 Committee Member Application - Rina Mercuri
 - CL03 p10 Qtr 2 Review - Free Local Entry Trial
 - CL04 p13 Q4, Visitation Statistics - Apr - Jun 2026 (Excluding Cultural & Community Use)
 - CL05 p15 Q4, Community and Culture Visitation Statistics - Apr - Jun 2026
 - CL06 p17 2025/26 End of Year Marketing Report & 2026/27 Marketing Outlook - Administration Coordinator
 - CL07 p19 Strategic Master Plan Progress Update
 - CL08 p21 Public Program - Teddy Bear's Picnic - July 2026
 - CL09 p23 Oral History Project Scope
 - CL10 p26 Historical Opinion - Thomas Michael MacNamara and 'Clancy of the Overflow'
 - CL11 p46 Free Local Entry Trial Survey Results - Presentation
- 6 p47 Outstanding Action Report
- 7 General Business
- 8 Next Meeting

DISTRIBUTION LIST

Councillor Shari Blumer (Chair), Councillor Laurie Testoni, Councillor Jenny Ellis, Denis Couch (Community Representative), Desma Newman (Community Representative), Dolf Murwood (Community Representative), Jenna Thomas (Community Representative), John Nikolic (Community Representative), Michael Rohan (Community Representative), Neil Dal Nevo (Community Representative), Peter Taylor (Community Representative), Robyn Turner (Community Representative), Virginia Tropeano (Community Representative)

Director Business, Cultural and Financial Services, Matthew Hansen; Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Manager, Jenny O'Donnell; Curator, Fox Darcy Administration Officer, Tabbitha Williams and Minute Taker, Leanne Austin

Quorum = 3

If you are unable to attend this meeting please notify the Minute Secretary prior to commencement of the meeting by email or by telephoning Council on 1300 176 077.

This Committee meeting may be attended remotely and recorded by audio or audio-visual means for administrative purposes. No other recording is permitted.

Acknowledgement of Country

Griffith City Council acknowledges the Wiradjuri people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land and waters, and their deep knowledge embedded within the Aboriginal community.

Council further pays respect to the local Wiradjuri Elders, past, present and those emerging, for whom we acknowledge have responsibilities for the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of the local Wiradjuri people.

**GRIFFITH PIONEER PARK MUSEUM COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
WEDNESDAY, 20 MAY 2026 COMMENCING AT 4:00 PM**

PRESENT

Councillor Shari Blumer (Chair), Councillor Laurie Testoni, Denis Couch (Community Representative), Jenna Thomas (Community Representative) (via zoom), Michael Rohan (Community Representative), Robyn Turner (Community Representative) (via zoom), Virginia Tropeano (Community Representative)

Quorum = 3

STAFF

Director Business, Cultural & Financial Services, Matthew Hansen, Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Manager, Jenny O'Donnell, Curator, Fox Darcy, Administration Officer, Tabbitha Williams and Minute Secretary, Antoinette Galluzzo

Absent: Desma Newman (Community Representative), Neil Dal Nevo (Community Representative), Peter Taylor (Community Representative)

1 APOLOGIES

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Councillor Laurie Testoni and Virginia Tropeano that apologies be received from Councillor Jenny Ellis, Dolf Murwood (Community Representative), John Nikolic (Community Representative).

2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Denis Couch and Councillor Laurie Testoni that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 February 2026, having first been circulated amongst all members, be confirmed.

3 BUSINESS ARISING

Nil.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Pecuniary Interests

Members making a pecuniary interest declaration are required to leave the meeting during consideration of the matter and not return until the matter is resolved.

There were no pecuniary interests declared.

Significant Non-Pecuniary Interests

Members making a significant non-pecuniary interest declaration are required to leave the meeting during consideration of the matter and not return until the matter is resolved.

There were no significant non-pecuniary interests declared.

Less Than Significant Non-Pecuniary Interests

Members making a less than significant non-pecuniary interest declaration may stay in the meeting and participate in the debate and vote on the matter.

There were no less than significant non-pecuniary interests declared.

5 ITEMS OF BUSINESS

CL01 GRIFFITH PIONEER PARK MUSEUM ACTION DAY - 3 APRIL 2026

The Committee noted that Action Day 2026 was a successful event and continues to have a positive reputation within the community.

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Virginia Tropeano and Jenna Thomas that the Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Committee thank the volunteers and staff for their ongoing contribution to Action Day, and a letter of thanks be prepared.

CL02 QTR 1 REVIEW - FREE LOCAL ENTRY TRIAL

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Councillor Laurie Testoni and Robyn Turner that the Committee note the report.

CL03 QUARTER 3, VISITATION STATISTICS JAN - MAR 2026 (EXCLUDING CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY USE)

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Councillor Laurie Testoni and Robyn Turner that the Committee note the report.

CL04 QUARTER 3, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE STATISTICS - JAN - MAR 2026

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Councillor Laurie Testoni and Robyn Turner that the Committee note the report.

CL05 COMMITTEE MEMBER AGENDA ITEM - DENIS COUCH

Mr Couch raised concerns regarding the advertising of the “locals free entry” initiative at Pioneer Park and many local residents are still unaware they can access the park for free. Ms Turner suggested that staff could attend Council Cafe to engage with local residents to help raise awareness. Staff responded that they are planning to attend future Council Cafes to support community engagement and promotion of the initiative.

Councillor Blumer highlighted within previous reports, it has indicated a slow but positive growth. Councillor Testoni also mentioned he has put in a Councillor Budget Bid for Pioneer Park advertisement.

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Denis Couch and Virginia Tropeano that the discussion be noted.

CL06 OPERATIONAL UPDATE - PRICKLY PEAR AND KANGAROO MANAGEMENT

Ms O'Donnell provided an update to the Committee regarding the Prickly Pear issue highlighting they have received guidance on chemical treatment and best-practice management techniques. The prickly pear treatment program is expected to commence within the coming months and will be an ongoing process over approximately 12 months.

An update was provided on kangaroo management at the Museum site. It was acknowledged that kangaroo management will remain an ongoing challenge.

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Councillor Laurie Testoni and Jenna Thomas that the information be received.

CL07 PRESENTATION - REVIEW OF GRIFFITH PIONEER PARK STRATEGIC PLAN

Ms O'Donnell presented to the Committee, outlining each component of the Griffith Pioneer Park Strategic Master Plan and providing an update on the progress achieved across each area (please find attached presentation for more information).

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Virginia Tropeano and Jenna Thomas that Council consider the needs of disabled patrons, visitors, volunteers and staff at Griffith Pioneer Park Museum as part of the Disability, Inclusion and Access Plan.

SMT Comment

Accessibility to Pioneer Park has been considered in the newest version of the DIAP (due to be adopted 16 June 2026.)

Councillor Blumer and Mr Hansen informed the Committee that a grant application has been submitted for machinery shelters at the Pioneer Park Museum.

Ms Tropeano suggested while Italian migrant histories are relatively well documented, British, Irish, German, and other migrant experiences have not been captured as thoroughly. The Committee discussed how modern technology makes it easier to record and store interviews and information digitally so they can later be used in exhibitions or community projects.

Action: At the next Committee meeting staff present a report highlighting how they will further engage and give opportunities to other members of the community as part of the oral history project.

6 OUTSTANDING ACTION REPORT

The report was noted.

7 GENERAL BUSINESS

Nil.

8 ATTACHMENTS

- (a) Griffith Pioneer Park - Strategic Master Plan Update

8 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Committee is to be held on Wednesday, 19 August 2026 at 4:00 pm.

There being no further business the meeting terminated at 5:30 pm.

CLAUSE **CL01**

TITLE **Resignation of Committee Member**

FROM **Antoinette Galluzzo, Governance Officer**

TRIM REF **26/63724**

SUMMARY

On 28th May 2026 an email was received from Committee member, Peter Taylor tendering his resignation from the Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee accept Peter Taylor's resignation and the Terms of Reference be updated.

REPORT

Nil.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This report has no relevance to the Council's Strategic Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

(a) Email - Peter Taylor - Resignation - 28 May 2026  

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Antoinette Galluzzo

From: Peter Taylor [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 28 May 2026 2:38 PM
To: Antoinette Galluzzo
Subject: Pioneer Park Committee

Hi Antoinette,

I wish to advise that i wish to resign from the GPPM Committee from this date as I have been unable to attend meetings and cannot see this changing in the future

Thanking you
Peter Taylor

CLAUSE **CL02**

TITLE **Committee Member Application - Rina Mercuri**

FROM **Antoinette Galluzzo, Governance Officer**

TRIM REF **26/87776**

SUMMARY

A Committee application has been received for the Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Committee from Rina Mercuri.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee accept Rina Mercuri as a member of the Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Committee, and the Terms of Reference be updated.

REPORT

Nil

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This report has no relevance to the Council's Strategic Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

CLAUSE CL03**TITLE** Qtr 2 Review - Free Local Entry Trial**FROM** Jenny O'Donnell, Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Manager**TRIM REF** 26/91507

SUMMARY

This report updates the Committee on the second reporting period of the Free Local Entry Trial for residents of postcodes 2680 and 2681, covering April to June 2026. A total of 248 local residents visited under the trial, an increase of 57 visitors (29.8%) from January to March.

The report outlines visitation, promotion, the value of free admission provided and direct administrative costs. Results will continue to be monitored over the full trial.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee note the report.

REPORT

From April to June 2026, 248 local residents visited Griffith Pioneer Park Museum under the Free Local Entry Trial - 57 more than in the previous three-month period.

Local visitation remained predominantly adult-based. The April school holidays contributed to attendance during the quarter.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Local Visitors</u>
2025	Apr-Jun	203
2026	Apr-Jun (trial)	248

Trial Growth Comparison

Local visitation increased from 191 visitors in January to March 2026 to 248 visitors in April to June 2026. This represents an increase of 57 visitors, or 29.8%, over the previous three-month period.

The 29.8% increase is a positive early result. As attendance varies with school holidays, events and seasonal programming, the full 12-month trial will provide a better basis for assessing longer-term participation.

Visitation by locals has increased from the same three-month period last year by 45, equating to a 22% increase.



Estimated Admission Value Provided

Using an average admission value of \$12 per person, the free entry provided to local residents during the quarter had an estimated value of:

- **248 local visitors x \$12 = \$2,976 in admission value provided.**

Financial Information

The following figures separate the estimated value of admission provided to local residents from the direct costs recorded in delivering and administering the trial:

Item	Estimated Impact
Estimated admission value provided	\$2,976.00
Secondary revenue impact	\$0.00
Staff/admin/advert/printing costs*	\$660.57
Total direct costs	\$660.57

*Council Cafe staffing costs are excluded because they relate to normal business development, not the trial.

The admission value is not confirmed lost revenue, as not every local visitor would otherwise have paid admission, and is therefore excluded from direct costs. Benchmark survey staff time will be reported next quarter.

Marketing Undertaken

Marketing activities during the April to June 2026 period focused on promoting seasonal events and increasing community awareness of the Free Local Entry Trial. Activities included:

- Promotion through Griffith City Council communication channels, including the Weekly Council Catch-Up.
- Distribution of promotional flyers advertising the Free Local Entry Trial.
- Public announcements during Action Day (Good Friday) encouraging visitors to return and utilise the Free Local Entry Trial.
- Promotion of Heart Week activities and other community engagement initiatives.
- Ongoing word-of-mouth promotion through volunteers, visitors, school groups, venue hirers and community organisations.
- Six Museum Facebook posts promoting the Museum and the Free Local Entry Trial reached approximately 6,799 people during the reporting period, excluding additional posts through Council channels.

Word-of-mouth remained the most commonly reported source of awareness. The promotional reach and increased local attendance indicate growing community awareness of the trial.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This item links to Council's Strategic Plan item 3.2 Ensure Council's financial sustainability through effective financial management that is transparent and accountable.

This report has no relevance to the Council's Strategic Plan.

LINK TO GRIFFITH PIONEER PARK MUSEUM STRATEGIC PLAN

3.1 - Engage with locals, visitors, school students and community groups.

3.1.3 – Reduce general entry fees for residents of Griffith LGA

3.1.6 - Develop experiences or activities that respond to youth audiences.

4.2 - Establish and build meaningful relationships with Griffith's migrant communities.

4.2.1 — Undertake regular engagement with key multicultural communities.

5.1 - Ensure the ongoing sustainability of the organisation.

5.1.1 — Diversify and increase revenue from retail, programs, workshops, commercial hires and tourist admission fees.

5.1.2 — Undertake a policy review to identify gaps and needed updates.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

CLAUSE CL04**TITLE Q4, Visitation Statistics - Apr - Jun 2026 (Excluding Cultural & Community Use)****FROM Jenny O'Donnell, Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Manager****TRIM REF 26/91549**

SUMMARY

The fourth quarter of the 2025/2026 financial year recorded 1,310 general visitors to Griffith Pioneer Park Museum between April and June 2026. Visitor numbers were strongest in April, supported by increased tourism activity during the Easter and school holiday period, before returning to more typical seasonal levels in May and June.

These figures represent general Museum visitation only—visitors entering specifically to view exhibits and displays. They do not include attendance associated with cultural and community use, such as events, regular programs, venue hire, educational activities, and other non-exhibition functions, which are reported separately.

RECOMMENDATION

The report be noted.

REPORT**1. Monthly Attendance Summary**

Month	Visitors
April	601
May	385
June	324

- Total visitation: 1,310 visitors
- Average monthly visitation: 437 visitors
- Busiest month: April

Visitor numbers were strongest in April, reflecting increased tourism associated with the Easter and school holiday period. Attendance moderated through May and June but remained consistent with seasonal visitation patterns, demonstrating continued interest from both residents and visitors to the region.

2. Key Insights

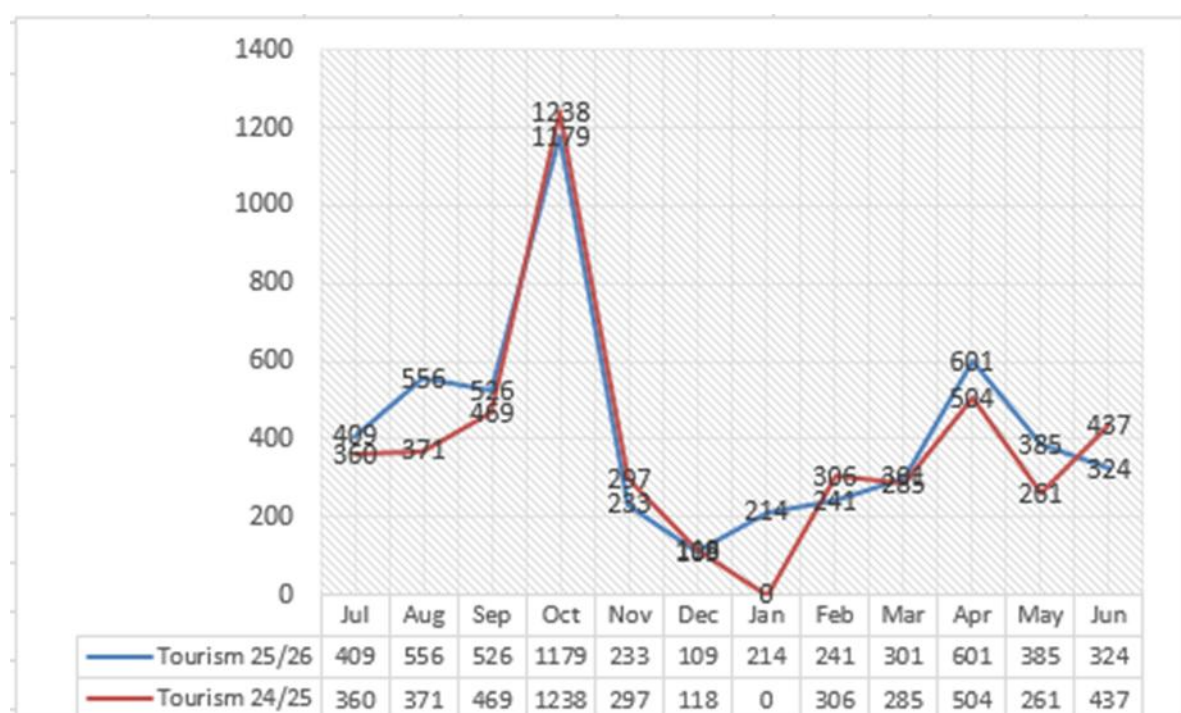
- A total of 1,310 general visitors attended the Museum during the quarter.
- April recorded the highest monthly visitation, benefiting from Easter, school holidays and increased regional tourism activity.
- Visitor numbers eased in May and June, consistent with seasonal trends following the peak holiday period.

- General visitation remained steady throughout the quarter, demonstrating the Museum's ongoing appeal as a cultural and tourism destination.

3. Recommendations

- Marketing Focus:** Continue leveraging regional visitor centres, tourism networks and digital marketing to maintain visitation outside peak holiday periods.
- Seasonal Programming:** Develop targeted exhibitions and events during traditionally quieter months to encourage repeat visitation and increase local engagement.
- Visitor Insights:** Continue monitoring visitor trends to inform future marketing campaigns and programming opportunities.

4. Tourism Comparison Statistics (24/25 vs 25/26)



LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This item links to Council's Strategic Plan item 5.6 Promote Griffith as a desirable visitor destination.

LINK TO GPPM STRATEGIC PLAN

This item links to GPPM Strategic Plan items:

3. Deeper engagement with museum audiences

4. Tell the stories of Griffith and district residents, past and present.

5.1.1 Diversify and increase revenue from retail, programs, workshops, commercial hires and tourist admission fees.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

CLAUSE **CL05****TITLE** **Q4, Community and Culture Visitation Statistics - Apr - Jun 2026****FROM** **Jenny O'Donnell, Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Manager****TRIM REF** **26/91550**

SUMMARY

The fourth quarter of the 2025/2026 reporting year (1 April – 30 June 2026) recorded a significant increase in participation across venue hire, community programs, tours, school activities, regular community groups and major events, with a total of 5,763 participants recorded during the quarter.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee note the increased utilisation of Shearers Quarters Hall and be aware that the venue remains available for community hire should opportunities arise within their community networks.

REPORT**Community & Culture Participation**

Monthly participation figures for the quarter were as follows:

Month	Participants
April 2026	3221
May 2026	1318
June 2026	1224

Participation during the quarter was exceptionally strong, with April recording the highest attendance, driven primarily by the Museum's flagship Action Day event, together with a continued schedule of venue hire, school excursions and coach tours.

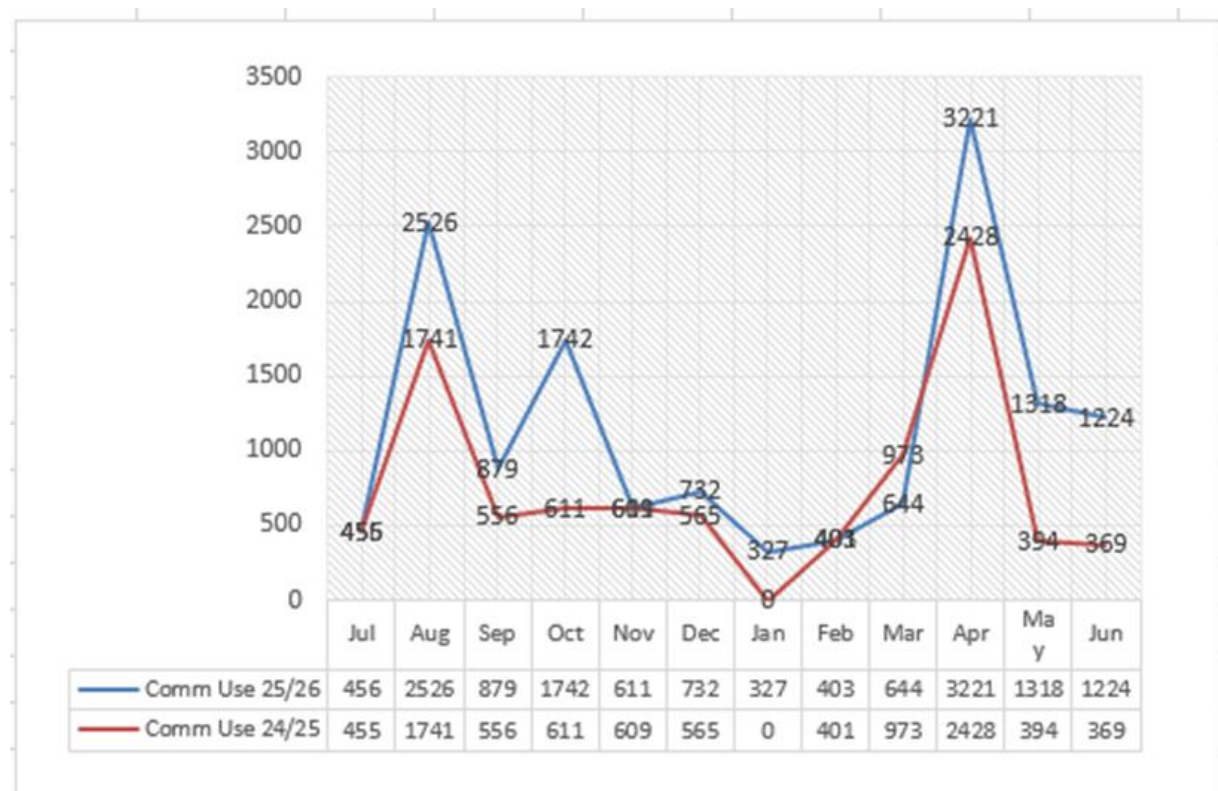
The quarter demonstrated strong demand for the Museum as a venue for community gatherings, private functions and organised tours. The regular bookings from April significantly increased ongoing visitation and provided a strong foundation of consistent attendance throughout the quarter. Combined with major events, school excursions and group bookings, these recurring users strengthened the Museum's engagement with both residents and visitors to the region while increasing utilisation of Museum facilities.

The quarter also marked a significant milestone in the utilisation of the Museum's flagship community venue, Shearers Quarters Hall. Following the introduction of new regular user groups from April, the hall is now in community use five days per week, averaging six bookings each week.

At the beginning of the 2025/2026 financial year, the hall was typically utilised three days per week, averaging three bookings each week.

This represents a 100% increase in weekly bookings and a substantial improvement in the activation of the facility, demonstrating growing community demand for the Museum as a venue for meetings, programs, social activities and private functions.

Community & Cultural Comparison (24/25 vs 25/26)



[LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN](#)

This item links to Council's Strategic Plan item 4.4 Provide a range of cultural facilities, programs and events.

[LINK TO MUSEUM'S STRATEGIC PLAN](#)

These items link to Griffith Pioneer Park Museum's Plan.

3.1 Engage with locals, visitors, school students, and community groups.

6.4 Provide hospitality facilities that enhance the visitor experience to the Museum.

[ATTACHMENTS](#)

Nil

CLAUSE **CL06****TITLE** **2025/26 End of Year Marketing Report & 2026/27 Marketing Outlook - Administration Coordinator****FROM** **Jenny O'Donnell, Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Manager****TRIM REF** **26/91546**

SUMMARY

This report provides a baseline summary of the Museum's marketing activity and results during the 2025/26 financial year. Marketing was undertaken with a limited advertising budget and focused largely on social media, supported by selected traditional advertising. Despite the limited budget, the Museum's Facebook content achieved 433,237 views and 3,687 content interactions, with interactions increasing by 75.8% compared to the previous financial year. Council has increased the Museum's advertising budget for 2026/27, allowing for a more planned and consistent approach across digital and traditional media. This has enabled a new advertising partnership with Australian Community Media (ACM), which commenced with the promotion of the Free Local Entry initiative and will continue with an integrated campaign for A Taste of Italy. The 2025/26 results will provide a baseline against which the reach, engagement and effectiveness of the increased investment can be measured.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee note the Museum's 2025/26 marketing results and the expanded marketing activity planned for 2026/27.

REPORT

Facebook Audience Demographics:

The Museum's Facebook audience has a strong local base, with additional reach into regional centres and capital cities.

Key demographic insights include:

- 76.1% of followers are women and 23.9% are men.
- The largest age group is 35–44 years, followed by 45–54 years.
- Younger audiences (18–24 years) remain underrepresented, presenting an opportunity for targeted campaigns.

Geographically, the Museum's audience is highly local:

- 40.8% of followers are based in Griffith.
- Other key audiences include Sydney (6.2%), Leeton (4.1%), Canberra (2.4%), Melbourne (2.3%), Yenda (2.3%) and Wagga Wagga (2.1%).
- 97.7% of followers are located within Australia.

These demographics support the Museum's focus on engaging local residents while maintaining broader visibility across New South Wales and interstate.

Social media platforms distribute content according to users' interests and previous engagement. Campaign performance is therefore assessed through measurable results such as reach, views, interactions and link clicks.

Social Media Performance

During the 2025/26 financial year, the Museum's Facebook content generated 433,237 views and 3,687 content interactions, representing a 75.8% increase in content interactions compared with the previous financial year.

The highest-performing campaign was the Halloween teaser, achieving:

- 37,827 views
- 302 content interactions
- 30 new followers

These results demonstrate increased online visibility and engagement and provide a strong platform for promoting Museum programs, events and visitation.

Traditional Media

Traditional media, including print and television, were used selectively during 2025/26 for major events and announcements. Digital channels remained the primary focus because they allow targeted delivery and measurable results.

Traditional media will continue to be used where it provides strategic value and supports broad community awareness.

2026/27 Marketing Activity

Council has increased the Museum's advertising budget for 2026/27, allowing for a more planned and consistent approach across digital and traditional media. A new advertising partnership with ACM commenced with promotion of the Free Local Entry initiative and will continue with an integrated campaign for the Museum's A Taste of Italy events throughout August.

The 2025/26 results will provide a baseline against which the reach, engagement and effectiveness of the increased investment can be measured. Future reporting will compare campaign results with this baseline and include visitation or booking outcomes where these can be directly attributed to marketing activity.

[LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN](#)

This item links to Council's Strategic Plan item 4.4 Provide a range of cultural facilities, programs and events.

[LINK TO GPPM STRATEGIC PLAN](#)

3.1. Engage with locals, visitors, school students and community groups

6.3.5 Develop a digital marketing strategy that includes social media, digital advertising and website.

[ATTACHMENTS](#)

Nil

CLAUSE **CL07**

TITLE **Strategic Master Plan Progress Update**

FROM **Jenny O'Donnell, Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Manager**

TRIM REF **26/91460**

SUMMARY

Following its review of the Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Strategic Plan 2023, the Committee requested quarterly progress updates. This report outlines progress made during the April–June 2026 quarter.

1. Engage With & Include Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples In All That We Do

No significant changes this quarter. A meeting has taken place with Waddi Land Council on recommendation from the Wiradjuri Advisory Group regarding the scarred trees. The trees come from Waddi Country, and therefore, it is culturally appropriate to follow their recommendations. Planning for future First Nations initiatives at the Museum remains linked to future capital works identified within the Master Plan. Oral history conversations are continuing with the Curator coordinating the project.

2. Manage the Collection Sustainably

Work continues with strengthening operational practices that support long-term collection management. Staff and volunteers are currently working together on updating, preservation and exhibiting objects. Planning for future collection storage and conservation priorities remains ongoing and is dependent on future capital works/infrastructure to achieve.

3. Deeper Engagement With Museum Audiences

Significant progress was made towards increasing community engagement and enhancing visitor experiences during the quarter. The Museum Free Local General Admission Trial, delivered Action Day and the planning of Teddy Bear Picnic, further expanding opportunities for local families and the wider community to engage with the Museum. Planning also commenced for a new front entrance signage project to improve visitor wayfinding and arrival experience. In addition, a draft Museum Disability Inclusion Action Plan was prepared to align with Griffith City Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan, supporting future improvements in accessibility and inclusion across Museum programs, facilities and visitor services.

4. Tell the Stories of Griffith & District Residents, Past & Present

Planning continued for the 2026 A Taste of Italy program, supporting the Strategic Master Plan's objective of strengthening the interpretation and celebration of Griffith's multicultural heritage through events and community partnerships. The Area News refurbishment and updated exhibition is progressing well. The collection audit is continuing and is expected to uncover the previous local history research and objects that complement this theme.

5. Corporate Governance

Work continued on strengthening governance through the development of operational procedures, strategic reporting and performance monitoring. Planning also commenced for future funding opportunities and priority capital projects identified within the Master Plan.

6. The Museum is a Premier 'Must See' Destination for Locals & Visitors Alike

Progress continued in strengthening the Museum's profile and visitor reach through a Digital Marketing Strategy. A new advertising partnership with ACM has been established for the 2026/27 financial year, increasing promotional capacity across digital and traditional media. Marketing activity commenced with the Free Local Entry campaign and will continue with promotion of the Museum's A Taste of Italy program throughout August. Planning also progressed on projects to improve the Museum's entrance presentation and visitor arrival experience.

Summary

Progress during the quarter has primarily focused on increasing audience engagement, strengthening the Museum's public profile and advancing initiatives that improve visitor experience. These activities continue to support the Strategic Master Plan's vision of developing Griffith Pioneer Park Museum as a leading cultural, tourism and community destination for the region.

RECOMMENDATION

That the information be received.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

CLAUSE	CL08
TITLE	Public Program - Teddy Bear's Picnic - July 2026
FROM	Jenny O'Donnell, Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Manager
TRIM REF	26/91286

SUMMARY

In the absence of a public programmer/events personnel, the Administration Coordinator developed a small program to encourage local families to utilise the Museum's free general admission trial. The Teddy Bear Picnic was instigated and coordinated to promote the Museum and provide an additional school holiday activity for the community.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee:

- (a) Note the outcomes of the 2026 Teddy Bear Picnic evaluation.**
- (b) Provide advisory feedback on the future development of the Teddy Bear Picnic as an annual winter school holiday program, including opportunities for expansion, partnerships, sponsorship and other improvements for consideration by Museum staff.**

REPORT

The Teddy Bear Picnic was developed to encourage local families to utilise the Museum's free general admission trial while providing an additional school holiday activity for the community.

The program attracted nearly 200 visitors to Griffith Pioneer Park Museum, including 162 local visitors. This is a strong result for the Museum and demonstrates community interest in family-friendly public programs. The attendance is particularly positive when compared with Bathurst's Abercrombie House Annual Teddy Bears Picnic Day, which has reportedly attracted more than 250 people.

The result was also notable given the winter weather conditions, with a forecast maximum of approximately 17 degrees and rain predicted from 1.00 pm.

The Teddy Bear Picnic was built on the Museum's existing self-guided information trail by adapting it into a Teddy Bear Hunt. This simple approach encouraged repeat local visitation and provided families with a different way to explore and engage with the Museum. The program also attracted regional visitors, with a group from Lake Cargelligo travelling specifically to Griffith to participate.

The Griffith Trauma Teddies Knitters Club participated in a sit-and-knit activity, providing an opportunity to further develop this partnership in future years.

The direct cost of the program was \$171.89, comprising \$87.00 for teddy bears, \$35.00 for printing and \$49.89 for advertising. Although the program cost was minimal, it does exclude staff time associated with planning, marketing, customer enquiries, set-up, delivery and pack-down.

The program also allowed staff to encourage visitors to do the survey whilst visiting and therefore generated 18 responses to the six-month Free Local General Admission Trial Survey.

Respondents on the day rated the Museum an average of 4.72 out of 5, with 83% wanting more family-friendly activities. In addition, 33.33% indicated a willingness to financially support the Museum through paid entry or becoming a Museum Supporter, while 61.1% indicated they would support the Museum by attending paid activities and programs.

Visitor feedback identified opportunities to expand the Teddy Bear Picnic through food and music. Internally, a “stuff your own bear” activity was also investigated; however, the minimum order cost of \$514.91 represented approximately 24% of the Museum's \$2,141 annual program budget, before additional casual staffing costs. The upfront financial risk was therefore not considered viable for the 2026 program.

The Teddy Bear Picnic was a successful, low-cost public program that supported the free general admission trial and contributed to four objectives within the Museum's Strategic Plan. It is recommended that the Teddy Bear Picnic be considered as an annual winter school holiday program, with future expansion subject to available funding, sponsorship or alternative delivery models.

[LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN](#)

This item links to Council's Strategic Plan item 4.4 Provide a range of cultural facilities, programs and events.

[LINK TO GRIFFITH PIONEER PARK MUSEUM STRATEGIC PLAN](#)

3.1. Engage with locals, visitors, school students and community groups

3.1.2 Develop public programs that respond to the community

6.3.5 Develop a digital marketing strategy that includes social media, digital advertising and website.

[ATTACHMENTS](#)

Nil

CLAUSE	CL09
TITLE	Oral History Project Scope
FROM	Jenny O'Donnell, Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Manager
TRIM REF	26/88909

SUMMARY

At the previous meeting, the Committee requested a report outlining how staff would further engage with and provide opportunities for other members of the community to participate in the Museum's Oral History Project.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee note the report.

REPORT

The Museum already holds an extensive collection of recorded oral histories, many of which document Griffith's early Anglo-European settlers, pioneering families and the development of the irrigation area. These recordings remain an important part of the collection, and the Curator is progressively transcribing and digitising them as operational priorities permit, with the longer-term aim of making them more accessible to the public.

As outlined in the attached Curator's report, the current focus on engaging with the Wiradjuri community addresses a significant gap in the Museum's historical representation and supports the Museum's Strategic Plan commitment to reflecting the resilience, culture and diversity of the Griffith community.

This focus is not intended to exclude other histories or participants. The Curator remains open to engaging with any knowledge holder who can contribute to the story of Griffith's growth and development, including long-term residents, families, workers, cultural groups and community organisations. Further participation will be encouraged through engagement with local community groups, partnerships with organisations such as Western Riverina Arts, and broader promotion of opportunities to contribute to the project.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This item links to Council's Strategic Plan item 4.4 Provide a range of cultural facilities, programs and events.

Link to Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Strategic Plan 3.1: Engage with locals, visitors, school students and community groups.

ATTACHMENTS

- (a) GPPM - Curator Report - Update on Oral History Project [!\[\]\(9da458a1342ddd2d17cdea2d16a59b4a_img.jpg\) !\[\]\(e3e23387d30c1e83ddc3ec284ab24e24_img.jpg\)](#)

24

Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Advisory Committee

Agenda Item: **CL07** **Presentation - Review of Griffith Pioneer Park Strategic Plan**

Report prepared by Fox Darcy, Curator

Summary

The advisory committee have requested that the curator broaden the scope of the oral history project to “further engage and give opportunities to other members of the community”.

The curator would like to assure the committee that any member of the community is welcome to participate in the oral history project and is working on several approaches designed to engage with the local community.

Current Strategic Plan Mission Statement and Vision

‘A place that reflects our community’s identity through built heritage, objects and experiences.’

‘A welcoming and accessible environment to share the stories of Griffith’s region and its people’s resilience, culture and diversity.’

In accordance with the current strategic plan, the four primary collection and interpretation themes are First Australians, Pioneers, Italian History [Immigration and Australo-Italian experiences] and Modern Griffith.

We are currently working towards incorporating Wiradjuri stories into the broader museum narrative. Previously accessioned artefacts have been repatriated to the local community as per best practice. The museum must now consider ways to incorporate Wiradjuri representation without leaning on artefacts, and the curator is reaching out and connecting with the community for consultation on what they would like to see in the museum. Feedback so far includes photographs, multimedia displays, artworks, and oral history recordings.

The Italian Biography kiosk develops significant oral history recordings taken from local Italo-Australian immigrants and their descendants and makes the memories, songs, and cultural connections they describe accessible to the Griffith community.

As the first stage of the audit draws to a close, the next two stages include creating condition reports for each object, but also simultaneous digitisation, which will naturally lead to previously recorded interviews with pioneers of Griffith on the subject of Bagtown being made available through the Argus website portal.

Additionally, the curator has approached one of the local rotary groups towards meeting with members to record oral histories, and Western Riverina Arts have agreed to utilize their outreach program to assist the curator to open oral history interviews to the broader community with assistance in interviewing and promotion of the project.

The curator has also been working with the relevant departments to develop the website to host the recorded interviews and transcripts in a way that viewers will find engaging and attractive.

Conclusion

The Oral History Project, while focusing on the Wiradjuri Community initially in the aim to facilitate Indigenous representation in the museum and build trust and goodwill with the local Indigenous community, is open to any person with a connection to the development of Griffith.

The curator has begun approaching Griffith social groups and has secured the support of a partner organisation. The project is long-term, there is no concern of anyone missing out, and is designed to incorporate participants' interviews as they are obtained.

As the project proceeds, interview recordings and transcripts will be made available to the public in a way that is engaging, interactive and accessible to people living with disabilities.

CLAUSE	CL10
TITLE	Historical Opinion - Thomas Michael MacNamara and 'Clancy of the Overflow'
FROM	Jenny O'Donnell, Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Manager
TRIM REF	26/85526

SUMMARY

The Griffith Business Chamber has requested that Council consider commissioning a qualified historian to investigate whether Thomas Michael MacNamara, who is buried in Griffith City Cemetery, was the individual who inspired Banjo Paterson's character 'Clancy of the Overflow'. In response, the Museum Curator undertook an initial investigation, followed by a broader assessment comparing the evidence supporting MacNamara's claim with that of another prominent claimant, Thomas Gerald Clancy. The original request and both reports are attached for the Committee's consideration.

The intention behind the request and the cultural and tourism possibilities it proposes are acknowledged as an exciting prospect for Griffith. However, the research undertaken has not been able to substantiate MacNamara as the definitive inspiration for the character. The available evidence instead supports the view that Clancy was a fictional or composite literary character shaped by several stockmen, incidents and aspects of bush life known to Paterson.

Griffith's connection to MacNamara is limited to being his final place of residence and burial; the pastoral properties, events and landscapes described in the various accounts have no established connection to Griffith. As the question has already been researched extensively over many years without a definitive conclusion, and Banjo Paterson's own memorial and resting place does not appear to generate notable tourism visitation, further investigation is unlikely to produce an outcome that would generate meaningful tourism or justify Council expenditure.

RECOMMENDATION

The information be received.

ATTACHMENTS

- | | | |
|-----|---|----|
| (a) | GPPM - 1. Email request and info provided by the Griffith Business Chamber
  | 27 |
| (b) | GPPM - 2. Curator Report - Thomas MacNamara   | 33 |
| (c) | GPPM - 3. Manager Report   | 39 |



22 June 2026

Councillor Jenny Eliis, Chair, New Cemetery Masterplan Committee
Shari Blumer, Chair, Pioneer Park Museum Committee
Griffith City Council

By email only: pioneerpark.diary@griffith.nsw.gov.au ; cemetery@griffith.nsw.gov.au

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

RE: Request for historical opinion into resting place of Thomas Michael MacNamara aka 'Clancy of the Overflow'

The Griffith Business Chamber has been approached by members regarding the historical significance of Mr Thomas Michael MacNamara, buried at Griffith City Cemetery (date of death, 28 August 1943). The Chamber is writing to request that the Pioneer Park Museum Committee and New Cemetery Masterplan Committee (**Committees**) recommend to Griffith City Council that it fund and commission an opinion from an historian regarding whether Mr MacNamara was the individual who inspired Banjo Paterson's iconic character 'Clancy of the Overflow'.

On 28 May 2026, this matter was presented to the Chamber by a dedicated subcommittee formed to investigate its historical significance and potential tourism opportunities. Following the presentation, the Chamber resolved to refer the matter to the relevant Council Committees responsible for preserving the Griffith's heritage and managing Griffith City Cemetery, to consider the matter generally and recommend to Council that it fund the engagement of a qualified historian to undertake a formal investigation.

Should historical evidence support the connection, the Chamber considers that it could provide cultural, educational and tourism value to the Griffith region, while preserving and celebrating an important piece of Australian literary history.

Please see **enclosed** some material which was presented to the Chamber by Messrs Paul Pierotti and Darren De Bortoli, including historical news articles and a brief summarising some of the potential benefits if it can be reasonably established that Clancy's grave is in Griffith City Cemetery.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Kind regards,

Griffith Business Chamber
info@griffithbusinesschamber.com.au
<https://griffithbusinesschamber.com.au/>

STOCKMAN OF WHOM POET SANG

Clancy of Overflow Soon 90

"CLANCY'S gone to Queensland droving, and we don't know where he are."

Clancy of the Overflow, and his wife, a sister of The Man from the Snowy River, are living quietly in Brisbane, and on Christmas Eve Clancy will be 90 years old. Yesterday he retold the story of the famous ride immortalised by "Banjo" Paterson.

Outside the realm of poetry Clancy is Mr. Thomas Michael Macnamara. His wife, Theresa Mary, formerly Miss Troy, is aged 83. She is tall, graceful, and quick-witted, and her hair is as white as the legendary beard of her big brother, Tom Troy, who commanded the horsemen in the hills at the back of Wagga 58 years ago.

But Jim Troy was The Man from the Snowy River, "a strippling, on a small and weedy roan, called Mungo. He was well-bred, and full of spirit."

"I well remember the ride as it took place yesterday," said Mr. Macnamara. "From Troy's place near Wagga, you could see the hills in the direction of Tumut. Our adventure was not down Kosciuszko's side, as Paterson sang. 'Banjo' shifted the mountain into our country to make the tale poetic."

"Three fine horses broke away from Troy's place, including the £1000 colt, 'from Old Regret,' and they joined the wild horses in the hills. The horsemen who rode that day were Tom Troy, my cousin, Andy Macnamara, Jim Troy, and myself."

Jim Held The Mob

"When Jim joined us on little Mungo, long-bearded Tom, who sat on Yellow Clarence, laughed at Jim and his weedy animal. Then I took Jim's part. As Banjo truly says, 'Only Clancy stood his friend,' and I added, 'I think we ought to let him come.'"

"Andy Macnamara rode Roan Clarence, and I had a Lintot horse. We started after the colts, up hills and through gullies, but the wild horses took fright as we approached. 'You can say good-bye to the mob,' yelled Tom Troy."

"But Jim and Mungo went on," continued Mr. Macnamara. "Later Jim had the mob moving towards us. Tom told me to get on the next hill and wheel the mob to the right, but they beat us. Jim stuck to them, and ran them, as the poem says, 'single-handed, till their sides were white with foam.'"

Mrs. Macnamara finished the story. She recalled how her brother, Jim, brought the mob round again, and sent a warning coo-ee up the gorge to let the others know he was coming with the mob in full career. "Tom, my husband, and Andy at last held the

wild horses, cut out the colts, and yarded the others," she said.

"It was grand work," she sighed. "Poor Jim—he died when he was 33 at Cootamundra—was tired out after his task, and Mungo, smothered in foam, reared his big head on the side of a hill. 'He's all right,' said Jim, patting the little fellow fondly. That's the true story of The Man from the Snowy River."

Mr. and Mrs. Macnamara were married at Wagga in 1875, and they had a family of 13, of whom four sons and three daughters are living. Mr. Macnamara is interested in Mount Tracy, a sheep and cattle station at the head of the Cloncurry River.

Clancy has been in two big smashers with horses; in one he broke a thigh and in the other several ribs. But he is still a hale and hearty, long-legged cornstalk of the old colonial school. He loves to talk of horses, cattle, and the droving days. He was a great scrub rider in his time, and yesterday spoke fondly of the best stock horse he ever owned, "Steel, a blue-grey."

Although he regretted that horses were passing out of use, he said that he had enjoyed many motor and aeroplane trips. "I cannot see enough in motor cars," he added, "and still less in aeroplanes."

Clancy of the Overflow came to Queensland with his wife more than 50 years ago, and settled first at Eulo. They have been in Brisbane since April last year and are living at Oakleigh Flats, Gregory Terrace.

4 Hutton
David Fisher

Jim Troy was
17 years of age

Carriver Mail
Brisbane
21st December 1938

58 years ago would
place the ride in 1879
when Clancy was 31 years
old.

Theresa Troy 24 years
old when the ride took
place.

Married for 4 years.

AREA NEWS 9 MAR 1990

Clancy's grave — is it here?

A GRAVE in the Catholic Section of Griffith Cemetery has a modest headstone which bears the name Thomas Michael MacNamara, died August 28, 1943 aged 94 years.

Nothing too remarkable about that except there are strong facts which point to that grave as being the last resting place of a six foot four inch legend named Clancy of the Overflow.

It is possible to believe after investigation that Banjo Paterson may have used poetic licence in his epic poem The Man From Snowy River.

The story of the famous pony chase, first set to words by Australia's father of bush poetry, and since immortalised on celluloid, may have been transposed to the Snowy River Mountain area which the poet believed to be a more picturesque setting for his poem than the original.

Thomas Michael MacNamara, known to millions as Clancy of the Overflow, is alleged to have told his children and their children that there certainly was a real

horse chase but the venue was changed by Banjo Paterson from an area in the Riverina, near West Wyalong, to the Snowy River which the poet thought has more spectacular countryside.

The "real" story of the mammoth horse chase is included in a book by Clancy's grandson, Norman MacNamara, called from Clancy's Day to Mine.

Norman MacNamara, said his grandfather, Clancy, a veritable giant of a man, was a grand horseman and a man of great learning who entertained his grandchildren with stories of his exploits along the Murrumbidgee River as a child, with his father Michael at a place called The Overflow, before the family moved to Barmedman Run near Wyalong.

Thomas Michael MacNamara, "Clancy" later married Teresa Mary Troy, who's younger brother Jim owned a tough little mountain pony called Mungo.

According to Norman MacNamara, his grandfather told him,

By
MaryAnn Stenberg

Jim was the lad, only 17 years old at the time, who brought the horses back.

Norman said Old Clancy would talk about his association with a Mr Bogle Paterson whose son later came to fame and fortune writing poetry.

Clancy said the events of the famous epic did happen but not in the Snowy River area but instead on Barmedman Run, he told his grandchildren the names of every horse and rider in

that chase.

According to Norman his grandfather told how Jim Troy and Mungo raced after the runaway horses and because the he was used to scrub and stone the little bush pony outran all the classy horses which were useless in the scrub.

According to Clancy, Banjo Paterson didn't intend to name anybody, but changed the names and places to suit the poem and being a master poet took the race to the Snowy Mountains to make the events more spectacular and bring more life into the poem.

Clancy and his family upped stakes from New South Wales and went to Queensland when a goldrush overtook the Wyalong district.

He celebrated his 89th birthday at Prairie in Queensland and later he and his wife Teresa went to live with their daughter Mrs Kate Erskine near Griffith.

When Norman's grandfather, Thomas Michael MacNamara, died aged 94, he was buried in Griffith leaving his widow Teresa to travel back to Queensland where she lived with her son, Lewis and died at Cloncurry.

Norman finishes his book "Yes he was the real Clancy, but now he has passed on like Bogle and Banjo Paterson and his son Ius."

If Norman's grandfather was the real Clancy as he claims it doesn't detract from the glory of the poem The Man From Snowy River which was in fact filmed in Victoria.



Thomas MacNamara's grave — is this Clancy's last resting place.

THE AREA NEWS, FRIDAY, SEPT. 3, 1943

sion of Commons (Continued from Page One)

would not cure the straying
it," he said.
"LITTLE CLEARER"
"resident, proceeding, said that
beginning to see things...
After since making a purchase
Straying stock were
to motorists. If they put
up to a Magistrate an offer
did not pay his fine may be
12 days imprisonment in case

u have any suggestions about
a it would be pleased to hear
Long before I entered office
as discussed," he said.
d you like to give some of
d over for a common if want
divide one," the President said.

ic course of further discussion
any referred to Mr. Dayle
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stock cases.

STED POUNDYARD FINE
elaney went on to say that in
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net may impose a fine at the
rds.

resident, I would not look at
could not touch it with a fork
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ture, Delaney referred to cost
sed, etc.

three men (Mr. O'Brien) said
e ordinance (also a Council
charge.
President said that whilst they
on about prosecuting for stock
was on the books it would
in effect to The Council
at he both prosecutor and

Delaney I think it most im-
We go along any road and
horse.

ally said that they were make
suggestions now about abandon-
ing for use as commons.

Delaney repeated that he
they should form a deputa-
tion to the Commission.

President, I suggest that the
ne Mr. Rawlings comes up you
t up to him.

ie motion of Cr. Reilly it was
that the next time Mr. Raw-
lings Griffith they approach
the matter.

President (to Cr. Delaney):
you like to be on the deputa-

Delaney: As I have had so
o any, I think I am in duty
to attend.

President and Crs. Delaney and
will form the deputa-

RMEDIATE IFICATE INATION

W SYSTEM NEXT YEAR

school records of pupils will
n the new system of examina-
r intermediate certificates, the
r for Education (Mr. Clive
has announced.

as will be based partly on pop-
at the examination and partly
student's school record.

Evatt said that the decision to
ce the new mode followed re-
consideration by the State Cab-
the examination system.

present requirements, he ex-
were that students at the in-

Nonagenarian Passes

Mr. Thomas Michael
Macnamara

At the advanced age of 94 years,
Mr. Thomas Michael Macnamara pass-
ed away peacefully in his sleep at the
residence of his daughter, Mrs. J. C.
Erskine, Farm 74, Griffith, on Satur-
day.

The late Mr. Macnamara was born
at Wagga on December 24, 1848, his
father having property in that dis-
trict.

When deceased was about 17 years
of age his father took up Wyalong
Station for him, both being there.
That was before there was any town
of Wyalong. The first discovery of
gold at Wyalong was made in 1877 by
a shepherd on deceased's station. The
late Mr. Macnamara owned one of the
premier holdings.

Selling out at Wyalong 56 years
ago, deceased went to Queensland
where he acquired pastoral holdings
at Dalo, on the Paroo, at Cumma-
mulla on the Warrego, and Thar-
gonindab.

Disposing of interests in those parts
in 1913 he took up Mount Tracey
station, Glenelg—a property that is
now in the hands of one of his sons,
Mr. Louis Macnamara.

About four years ago, deceased re-
tired and with his wife came to Grif-
fith to live with their daughter, Mrs.
Erskine.

Deceased always took a very keen
interest in the public affairs of what-
ever district he lived in, except this
one, and he was over 90 years of age
when he came here. He was a Jus-
tice of the Peace in the respective dis-
tricts referred to.

Right up to the end he was mental-
ly alert and followed up the war news
with keen interest.

The late Mr. Macnamara was mar-
ried in Wagga in 1874—59 years ago
—to Miss Theresa Mary Troy, Toole's
Creek Station, Wagga. Like him-
self, his bride was a native of Wagga.

There was a family of 13, eight of
whom reached manhood and woman-
hood.

Besides the aged widow, four sons
and three daughters survive. The
sons are Messrs. Ius (Prairie Sta-
tion, Q.), Louis (Mount Tracey, Q.),
Owen (Cookadood Station, Q.), and
Patrick (Lessard Station, W.A.);
whilst the daughters are Mesdames J.
C. Erskine (Farm 74, Griffith), L. Mc-
Mahon (Griffith), and D. Lucas
(Squirrel Hill Station, McKinley, Q.).

There are 26 grandsons and nine
grand-daughters. Grandsons in the
services are: Lieut. J. C. Erskine,
Royal Engineers, British Forces; Ser-
geant T. R. Erskine, A.I.F.; L.A.C.
Dale McMahon, and Pte. Nat. Mc-
Mahon, A.I.F. Seven grand-daugh-
ters are also in the services.

Great-grandchildren number eight.
Brothers are Mr. Louis Macnamara
(Griffith), and Mr. Pat Macnamara
(Avondale Station, Barmedman);
whilst sisters are Mrs. S. Hydn
(Binya) and Misses Mary and Theres
Macnamara, Barmedman.

The funeral took place on Sunday,
the cortege leaving the Sacred Heart
Church for the place of interment in
the Catholic portion of the Griffith
cemetery. Rev. Father O'Dea offic-
iated. The pall-bearers were six
members of the I.O.O.F.

Messrs. J. Trenerry & Son had

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Griffith's Opportunity to Claim Australia's Most Famous Stockman

A Proposal to the Griffith Business Chamber

Regional towns across Australia invest heavily in creating tourism identities people will remember. Griffith may already have one — hidden in plain sight.

There is a compelling historical case that **Thomas Michael Macnamara**, who is buried in Griffith, was the real-life inspiration for Banjo Paterson's legendary character, **Clancy of the Overflow**. If recognised and developed strategically, this could become a significant cultural tourism opportunity for our region.

This claim is not based on folklore alone. It is supported by historical newspaper accounts, family testimony, documented timelines and references published during, or soon after, Banjo Paterson's lifetime. Publications including the *Courier-Mail*, *North Queensland Register* and *Area News* directly identified Macnamara as "Clancy" — accounts that appear to have been accepted historically and were not publicly disputed.

The story has everything modern tourism looks for:

- A direct connection to Banjo Paterson
- Australian literary history
- Bush heritage and stockman culture
- A tangible local landmark through Macnamara's grave
- A uniquely Australian story with national media potential

But this is more than a bush poetry story.

Macnamara was not only a frontier stockman — he later became a successful pioneer agriculturalist. His life reflects the same qualities Griffith is known for today: resilience, innovation, hard work and the transformation of inland country into productive agricultural land.

That connection is powerful.

Griffith is recognised for its food, wine and fibre production. Its identity is built on irrigation, agriculture and the ability to turn harsh inland landscapes into prosperity. Macnamara's life mirrors that journey — from the stock routes of the Australian bush to the rise of productive farming in the Riverina.

In many ways, the story of "Clancy" is also the story of Griffith.

Very few regional communities can claim a credible link to a figure as iconic as Clancy. The poem is embedded in Australian identity and still represents freedom, resilience, bush life and the romance of inland Australia. Yet Griffith has never fully claimed or developed its connection to that legacy.

This opportunity is not simply about historical recognition. It is about cultural and economic activation.

Potential initiatives could include:

- A **Clancy Trail** through Griffith and the Western Riverina
- Literary festivals and bush poetry events
- Farm-to-table tourism linked to Griffith's food and wine industries
- School excursions and educational tourism
- Public art, statues and interpretive signage
- Heritage storytelling experiences
- Partnerships with tourism bodies, museums and arts organisations
- National media positioning Griffith as the home of the real Clancy

Regional Australia is competing for visitors through authentic stories. People travel for stories they can connect with — and few stories are more recognisable in Australian culture than **Clancy of the Overflow**.

This is a story Griffith can own authentically.

Macnamara lived through the era that inspired Paterson's writing. His documented life aligns with the character of Clancy. His descendants maintained the connection. His story appeared in newspapers across decades. And his resting place remains here in Griffith, creating a rare and tangible link between Australian mythology and local history.

At a time when regional communities are searching for identity, visitation and economic diversification, Griffith may already have a nationally significant cultural asset waiting to be recognised.

A story that connects Australian literature, bush heritage, pioneer agriculture, irrigation history, food, wine, fibre and the enduring spirit of regional Australia.

The question is no longer whether the story is strong enough.

The question is whether Griffith is ready to claim it.

**Report: On the investigation into the identity of the Clancy of the Overflow,
published by A.B. Paterson 1899**

Fox Darcy
[REDACTED]

History

Andrew Barton Paterson was born in 1864 and grew up on sheep stations Buckinbah and Illalong. The older Paterson, also A.B., lost both stations due to poor returns caused by the drought. He was allowed to stay on at Illalong as station master. Young A.B. Paterson grew up surrounded by drovers, shearers, mounted troops, and swagmen, instilling in him a love for the bush and its lore that stayed with him his entire life. As he continued his schooling, he stayed in Sydney with his grandmother, a poet, Emily Barton. When he failed to secure a university bursary, he took a position as an articled clerk in a law office where he would eventually become partner.

He began publishing in the Bulletin under the name 'The Banjo', saying later that he still blushed to think of the first piece he wrote; 'Australia for Australians'. He would go on to publish both verse and prose in the Bulletin, including a set of bush ballads in friendly competition with Henry Lawson. When Angus and Robertson published a collection of his works, the revelation of his true identity caused a stir in society as the well-respected lawyer was also now a popular author.

Paterson would go on to be not only an accomplished lawyer, but also war correspondent, accomplished horseman and avid sportsman.

Discussion: The Identity of Clancy of the Overflow

The current request to investigate the identity of the character Clancy of the Overflow is, as stated by DeBortoli, part of an attempt to bring tourism to the area based on colonial nostalgia and to correct a perception of Griffith as being tied to 'marijuana and mafia'.

A. B. Paterson was very clear about his inspiration for his ballad Clancy of the Overflow, explaining the note which secured both the image and the rhythm of the poem in his mind:

"The ballad had its being from a lawyer's letter which I had to write to a gentleman in the bush who had not paid his debts. I got an answer from a friend of his who wrote the exact words 'Clancy's gone to Queensland droving and we don't know where he are.'"

The man he had sent the letter to was named Thomas Gerald Clancy, who becomes one candidate for the real-life inspiration for Clancy of the Overflow.

Thomas Gerald Clancy

"The Overflow" is a station situated about 32 kilometers (20 miles) to the south-east of the town of Nymagee in New South Wales.

Thomas Gerald Clancy would go on to write and publish a response to Paterson's poem which is less romanticised and portrays the darker, harder aspects of bush life.

Paterson witnessed Clancy's will, lending credence to an ongoing acquaintance between the two men, which would have begun years before when Paterson was pursuing a debt Clancy owed.

Clancy's personal papers placed him droving sheep through the Lachlan in 1882. His brother, John Clancy also worked at the Overflow around the same time.

Thomas Clancy's family are proud of, and extremely protective of, their connection to Paterson and to the ballad.

Thomas McNamara

McNamara, known to Paterson's father Andrew Bogle Patterson, while they were at Illalong was known for his horsemanship.

In an interview with the Nambour Chronicle in March 1939, the 90-year-old McNamara identified his brother-in-law Jim Troy and his horse 'Mungo' as the inspiration for "The Man From Snowy River".

McNamara himself appears to have been the loudest voice claiming that he was the 'real' Clancy, appearing twice in 1938 and 1939 in Brisbane newspapers describing a horse chase at Toole's Creek.

Summary

A.B Paterson himself refused to limit the identity of Clancy to one man. He was open about taking inspiration from the bushmen he had met in the course of his life. This certainly included but would not have been limited to Thomas McNamara nor Thomas Clancy.

The ballad and its character struck a chord in the Australian imagination, and was a convincing enough rendition to lead to multiple men claiming the title of the 'real' Clancy, which supports the idea that Clancy is a representation of a type of man that Paterson admired, and who these men aspired to be.

In the process of researching this report, the author contacted the Banjo Paterson Museum in Yeoval. This museum has now unfortunately closed, but their opinion agreed with that of the author, which is to say that Paterson's lifelong association with bushmen inspired the character rather than one particular man. They did not know who Thomas McNamara was.

McNamara's draw for Griffith specifically is of low significance. He lived in Griffith only at the end of his life and was not a pioneer in the development of the early stations nor of the town itself. Other towns hold a stronger claim to Banjo Paterson and to the ballad Clancy of the Overflow, especially where the station is located.

Unfortunately, Paterson's draw for tourism cannot be said to be particularly strong either, especially under so tenuous a connection. Yeoval's Paterson Museum has closed, and if they were unable to make success from Paterson's name when he lived in that area, Griffith has even less likelihood of profiting.

It is the opinion of the author that it diminishes the significance of the character to reduce him to one man. He is an archetype, and has a place certainly in the creation of the Nation of Australia (distinct from Australian Nationalism, which at that point in history had not developed) and its outback mythology.

Recommendation

The recommendation of this report is that Council investigate local people and organisations who have contributed to Griffith's growth and development.

The main issue arising from the request to investigate the identity of Clancy of the Overflow is the desire to move Griffith's reputation away from 'marijuana and the mob'. While Banjo Paterson may not be the best route to take, there are others.

In 2026, Griffith was named among Australia's 100 best towns to visit, ranking number 63. An internet search with the query "What is Griffith best known for?" returns information about Griffith's wineries, food, natural environment, and Italian culture.

While in the past, in the immediate aftermath of Donald Mackay's disappearance, Griffith's reputation may have been associated with marijuana and organised crime, there is little indication that this is still the case.

Appendix:

Australian individuals of note with a strong association with Griffith:

Evonne Fay Goolagong Cawley (née **Goolagong**; born 31 July 1951) is an Australian former professional tennis player. She was ranked as the world No. 1 in women's singles by the Women's Tennis Association (WTA), and was one of the world's leading players in the 1970s and early 1980s. Goolagong won 86 WTA Tour-level singles titles, including seven singles majors, and 46 doubles titles, including seven doubles majors.

Goolagong was named Australian of the Year in 1971. She was appointed as a Member of the Order of the British Empire in 1972 and as an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1982. Goolagong was inducted into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame in 1985, the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 1988, and the Aboriginal Sporting Hall of Fame in 1989. She leads the Goolagong National Development Camp for Indigenous boys and girls, which encourages Indigenous youth to stay in school.

Audrey Griffin

Audrey Griffin was present at the first Country Women's Association, formed on 20 April 1922 at the bushwomen's conference held in Sydney, that coincided with the Sydney Royal Easter Show. In 1926 she would become the president of the Griffith chapter. The Griffith CWA established one of the first baby health centres, and supported bush nurses, among other important duties.

Further Avenues for Investigation

Other individuals include Keith Hampton Todd and Jessie Marion Todd, who received an OBE and MBR respectively for their services in supporting returned servicemen. Numerous servicemen who lost their lives during World War 2, including Lionel Gibbs who hand built a glider with his brothers before his untimely death.

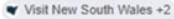
Consideration could also be given to the contributions to science and agriculture the CSIRO have made in Griffith.

While the reputation and tourist draw of Griffith do not seem to be currently suffering, there is a wealth of positive history and active citizenship to draw from if Council would like to diversify its offerings beyond food and wine.

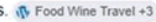
Yes, Griffith is absolutely worth visiting if you love food, wine, and rich cultural heritage. Located in the Riverina region of NSW, this vibrant city is a renowned food bowl. It boasts a strong Italian influence, dozens of cellar doors (like [De Bortoli Wines](#) and [Calabria Family Wines](#)), and major annual events like [A Taste of Italy Griffith](#). 



Key Highlights

- **Food & Wine:** With over 60 nationalities and a deep Italian heritage, you can expect incredible farm-to-table dining, fresh produce tours (such as [Catania Fruit Salad Farm](#)), and world-class wineries. 
- **History:** Explore the region's agricultural and Italian roots at the expansive open-air Pioneer Park Museum. 
- **Nature & Views:** For outdoor activities, you can hike the scenic trails at [Cocoparra National Park](#) or visit the stunning panoramic views at [Hermit's Cave and Lookout](#). 

Planning Your Trip

- **Getting There:** Located roughly a 6-hour drive from Sydney or a 5-hour drive from Melbourne, it is easily accessible by car and serves as a great detour on the Sturt and Newell Highways. 
- **Visitor Resources:** The town is well-g geared for tourists. You can plan your itinerary using the comprehensive Visit Griffith portal or by picking up a visitor guide at the local Griffith Tourism Hub. 

HISTORICAL OPINION

Thomas Michael MacNamara, Thomas Gerald Clancy and the identity of “Clancy of the Overflow”

Prepared for: Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Committee

Purpose: Independent assessment of the Griffith Business Chamber request

Original report: 17 July 2026

Revision: 20 July 2026 — expanded comparison and chronological analysis

Status: Committee briefing — evidence-based historical opinion

OPINION IN BRIEF

The available evidence does not establish that Thomas Michael MacNamara was the original “Clancy of the Overflow”. His reported evidence relates principally to the horse chase later represented in “The Man from Snowy River”: MacNamara said that Jim Troy was the young rider and that he performed the supportive action Paterson assigned to the already-established character of Clancy. Thomas Gerald Clancy has the stronger claim to the name and The Overflow association in the 1889 poem, but his case is also circumstantial and internally inconsistent. The most defensible conclusion is that Paterson’s Clancy was literary and may have combined a real name or incident with characteristics and actions drawn from more than one bushman.

1. Question referred

The Griffith Business Chamber asks Council to consider funding a qualified historian to determine whether Thomas Michael MacNamara, buried in Griffith City Cemetery after his death on 28 August 1943, was the person who inspired A. B. “Banjo” Paterson’s “Clancy of the Overflow”. The Chamber identifies possible cultural, educational and tourism value if the connection can be reasonably established.

This opinion incorporates further analysis of Thomas Gerald Clancy’s competing claim, the chronology of both men, and the important distinction between “Clancy of the Overflow” (1889) and “The Man from Snowy River” (1890).

2. Method and standard of proof

The assessment reviewed the Chamber correspondence and enclosures, the Curator’s internal report, Paterson’s poems and later explanation, contemporary and retrospective newspaper accounts, and published material about both claimants. Greater weight has been given to records created close to the relevant events, direct statements, independent corroboration and facts capable of chronological verification. Newspaper repetition and later family tradition have been treated cautiously.

The question is historical probability, not legal proof. Even a close biographical match cannot establish artistic inspiration without some bridge between the person, Paterson and the poem. Conversely, a literary character may legitimately combine a name, incident and characteristics drawn from different sources.

3. The essential distinction between the two poems

3.1 “Clancy of the Overflow” — 21 December 1889

The first poem introduces Clancy as a shearer and drover. The narrator says that he met Clancy “down the Lachlan”, later sent a speculative letter to “Clancy, of The Overflow”, and received the reply that Clancy had gone to Queensland droving. Paterson later said the ballad arose from a lawyer’s letter concerning a bush debtor and the memorable reply from the man’s friend. Paterson did not identify either claimant by name in that recollection.

3.2 “The Man from Snowy River” — 26 April 1890

The second poem reuses Clancy as an already-known and respected rider at the great horse chase. When other horsemen dismiss the stripling on his small mountain pony, “Only Clancy stood his friend” and argued that the young rider should be allowed to join the pursuit.

3.3 What MacNamara actually claimed

In the reported 1939 account, MacNamara identified his brother-in-law Jim Troy and the pony Mungo with the young rider in “The Man from Snowy River”. He said that the other riders laughed at Jim and that he, MacNamara, defended him. MacNamara expressly mapped his action to the line “Only Clancy stood his friend”. This explains why he was subsequently identified with Clancy: he claimed to have performed the real-life action assigned to Clancy in the second poem.

That account may support a possible contribution to Clancy’s cameo in “The Man from Snowy River”. It does not, without additional evidence, establish that MacNamara was the man named Clancy, the person associated with The Overflow, or the subject of Paterson’s earlier lawyer-letter incident. The two propositions must not be treated as interchangeable.

4. Chronological dateline

Date	Event	Historical significance
1835	Thomas Gerald Clancy born at Cork, Ireland.	Later biography; background only.
24 Dec 1848	Thomas Michael MacNamara born near Wagga Wagga.	Supplied obituary material.
17 Feb 1864	Andrew Barton “Banjo” Paterson born.	Essential when testing later family recollections.
c. 1865 onward	MacNamara’s family associated with pastoral properties in the Barmedman/West Wyalong region.	Places him broadly within the Riverina/Lachlan pastoral world, but not at The Overflow.
c. 1880	MacNamara later dated the Troy horse chase to about 58 years before the 1938 report. Paterson would have been about 16.	Could be a family incident later heard by Paterson; it does not show direct observation.
1880s	Paterson trained and worked in law before the poem was published.	Consistent with his later explanation that a legal debt letter prompted the poem.
c. 1887–88	MacNamara reportedly sold his Wyalong interests and moved to Queensland.	A notable chronological match with “gone to Queensland droving”, but no Clancy or Overflow link is established.
21 Dec 1889	“Clancy of the Overflow” published in The Bulletin.	The relevant identity evidence must predate this date.
26 Apr 1890	“The Man from Snowy River” published in The Bulletin.	Clancy is reused as a rider who supports the young man.
1897	Thomas Gerald Clancy wrote “Clancy’s Reply” under “Clangerald”.	An early public association with Paterson’s character, eight years after the first poem.
26 Feb 1910	Gerald Clancy interviewed and reportedly said he was “supposed to be” Clancy.	Lifetime claim; cautious wording rather than conclusive proof.

Date	Event	Historical significance
1914	Thomas Gerald Clancy died.	Later claims about him are retrospective unless supported by earlier records.
Dec 1938	MacNamara publicly presented in newspapers as Clancy; Paterson separately recalled the lawyer-letter origin.	MacNamara claim becomes prominent nearly 49 years after the first poem.
1939	Detailed MacNamara account linked Jim Troy to the young rider and MacNamara to the act "Only Clancy stood his friend".	Primary basis for identifying MacNamara with Clancy's role in the second poem.
5 Feb 1941	Banjo Paterson died.	No located statement from him confirms MacNamara as Clancy.
28 Aug 1943	Thomas Michael MacNamara died in Griffith and was buried in Griffith City Cemetery.	Basis of Griffith's local connection.
11 Dec 1943	The Age published a retrospective life story of Thomas Gerald Clancy.	Claims an Overflow connection and later meeting with Paterson, but gives a different origin story from Paterson's lawyer-letter account.

5. Assessment of the MacNamara claim

5.1 Evidence supporting the claim

- MacNamara was a genuine pastoralist and accomplished horseman with Riverina and Queensland experience.
- His reported move from the Wyalong district to Queensland around 1887–88 is chronologically close to the 1889 phrase that Clancy had gone Queensland droving.
- He gave a detailed lifetime account of the Troy horse chase and identified himself with the action "Only Clancy stood his friend".
- The MacNamara, Troy and Paterson families occupied the broader southern NSW pastoral world, making transmission of a local horse story plausible.
- The claim was made during MacNamara's lifetime and is therefore part of the historical record, not solely a posthumous legend.

5.2 Evidence limiting the claim

- MacNamara's surname was not Clancy, and no verified pre-1889 record has been located showing that Paterson or the district knew him by that name.
- No verified pre-1889 connection between MacNamara and a station called The Overflow has been located.
- No original lawyer's letter, legal file or contemporary correspondence connects MacNamara to Paterson's debt-letter incident.
- The detailed evidence concerns "The Man from Snowy River", published after Clancy had already been created as a literary character.
- The best-known reports appeared almost 49 years after "Clancy of the Overflow" and use assertive journalistic framing that goes beyond the demonstrated facts.
- Later family explanations involving a colt called "Glancy", a nickname that became Clancy, and a MacNamara property called The Overflow have not been independently verified from contemporary records.

Assessment: MacNamara has a plausible connection to the action attributed to Clancy in the 1890 horse-chase poem and an interesting chronological match in his move to Queensland. The evidence does not presently connect him to the identifying framework of the 1889 poem.

6. Assessment of the Thomas Gerald Clancy claim

6.1 Evidence supporting the claim

- His actual surname was Clancy.
- His brother worked at The Overflow, and Gerald reportedly droved a large mob of cattle from the station.
- He was an experienced interstate drover with Queensland connections.
- He wrote "Clancy's Reply" in 1897, relatively close to publication, and publicly associated himself with the character during his lifetime.
- Paterson reportedly later witnessed his will, which, if confirmed from the probate record, establishes some later personal acquaintance.

6.2 Evidence limiting the claim

- The 1943 account states that Gerald never worked at The Overflow; his association was through his brother and a droving job from the station.
- The same account states that Gerald and Paterson did not meet until several years after the poem, which does not literally match the narrator's earlier meeting with Clancy down the Lachlan.
- The 1943 explanation says a newspaper report of Gerald's droving caught Paterson's eye, whereas Paterson attributed the poem to a lawyer's letter. These accounts conflict unless more than one source was used.
- The original debt letter has not been located and no verified legal file identifies Gerald as the debtor or addressee.
- Later family testimony contains demonstrable chronological embellishment, including a claim that Gerald and Paterson were together on the Bendigo diggings in 1841, 23 years before Paterson was born.

Assessment: Gerald Clancy has the stronger claim to the name and The Overflow association, and his early response poem is significant. The evidence remains circumstantial and does not prove that the fully developed literary character was a portrait of him alone.

7. Comparative evidence table

Test	Thomas Michael MacNamara	Thomas Gerald Clancy	Finding
Actual name	MacNamara; no verified pre-1889 Clancy nickname.	Clancy by birth.	Gerald
The Overflow	No verified association. Later family claim remains unproven.	Brother employed there; Gerald reportedly droved cattle from it but did not work there.	Gerald
Lachlan/Riverina	Strong regional pastoral connection.	Interstate droving connection; precise Lachlan meeting unverified.	Slightly MacNamara geographically; neither proven
Queensland droving	Moved to Queensland c. 1887–88; close chronological fit.	Experienced Queensland/interstate drover; exact 1889 whereabouts need confirmation.	Both plausible
Lawyer's letter	No link found.	Traditional link, but original letter and legal file not found.	Gerald, weakly
Contact with Paterson before 1889	Alleged connection through Paterson's father; unverified.	1943 account says they met only after publication.	Neither
Earliest public claim	1938, nearly 49 years after publication.	1897 response poem; 1910 lifetime interview.	Gerald
Role in 1890 horse chase	MacNamara expressly identified himself with "Only Clancy stood his friend".	Clancy is the literary rider, but Gerald evidence is directed mainly to the 1889 poem.	MacNamara for this particular action

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Test	Thomas Michael MacNamara	Thomas Gerald Clancy	Finding
Independent corroboration	Pastoral life and burial established; poem connection uncorroborated.	Name, droving and Overflow connection partly corroborative; decisive bridge absent.	Gerald
Main contradiction	Evidence about the second poem is used to claim identity in the first.	Newspaper-origin story conflicts with Paterson's lawyer-letter explanation.	Both materially limited
Best historical interpretation	Possible source for an action assigned to Clancy in "The Man from Snowy River"; documented later claimant.	Strongest candidate for the name and immediate 1889 narrative framework.	Different contributions may have been combined

8. Historical opinion

On the balance of the evidence, it is not historically supportable to state as fact that Thomas Michael MacNamara was "the real Clancy of the Overflow" or that Griffith City Cemetery is definitively "Clancy's resting place". MacNamara's strongest evidence concerns his claimed role in the Troy horse chase represented in "The Man from Snowy River". That does not establish that he was the Clancy introduced in the earlier poem.

Thomas Gerald Clancy has the stronger association with the identifying features of the 1889 poem: the surname, The Overflow and a droving life. However, his claim is not conclusive. He reportedly did not work at The Overflow, may not have met Paterson until after publication, and the later newspaper account of the poem's origin conflicts with Paterson's lawyer-letter explanation.

The evidence is most coherently understood by separating the possible sources: Gerald Clancy may have supplied the name and Overflow association; MacNamara may have contributed, directly or through local tradition, to the supportive action assigned to Clancy in the 1890 horse chase; and Paterson created an idealised literary bushman from real incidents, observation and invention. This composite explanation remains a reasoned interpretation rather than a proven fact.

A narrower statement is supportable: Thomas Michael MacNamara was an authentic pastoralist, a documented lifetime claimant, and a man whose reported account offers a possible local source for part of "The Man from Snowy River". His burial gives Griffith a legitimate connection to the contested history of Australia's Clancy traditions, but not an exclusive claim to Clancy's identity.

9. Recommended Committee position

It is recommended that the Committee:

- note that the available evidence is insufficient to verify MacNamara as the original or sole inspiration for "Clancy of the Overflow";
- recognise that MacNamara's most specific testimony concerns the role attributed to Clancy in "The Man from Snowy River";
- recognise Thomas Gerald Clancy as the stronger candidate for the name and The Overflow association, while recording that his identification is also unproven;
- if interpretation is pursued, present both claims, the two-poem distinction and the possibility of a composite literary character;
- commission further work only under a primary-record brief directed to the years before 1889; and
- assess tourism potential separately from historical verification, cemetery policy, heritage approvals and cost.
- recognise that limited interpretation of MacNamara's grave may be appropriate for local historical and educational purposes, but that the site is unlikely to provide a meaningful tourism draw or justify Council expenditure.

Consideration	Assessment
Historical interest	Moderate, because MacNamara was a documented claimant
Local cemetery interpretation	Potentially suitable if cautiously worded
Educational value	Limited but genuine as an example of contested history
Standalone tourism attraction	Very low
Likely additional visitation to Griffith	Negligible
Justification for significant expenditure	Not demonstrated

10. Suggested public wording

The following wording would be historically responsible for a plaque, webpage or guided-tour reference:

Thomas Michael MacNamara (1848–1943), a pastoralist and horseman buried in Griffith, was identified in late-life newspaper reports as a possible “Clancy”. MacNamara said that his brother-in-law Jim Troy inspired the young rider in “The Man from Snowy River” and that he performed the supportive action which Banjo Paterson attributed to Clancy. This does not conclusively identify MacNamara as the Clancy introduced in the earlier poem “Clancy of the Overflow”. Thomas Gerald Clancy has a stronger association with that name and The Overflow station, while the full literary character may have drawn upon more than one bushman.

11. Dateline-based research brief

A further historian should build a documented year-by-year timeline for both men from approximately 1875 to 1890. The research should seek evidence capable of confirming or excluding the following propositions:

- MacNamara was known as Glancy or Clancy before December 1889;
- a MacNamara property was officially or commonly called The Overflow before 1889;
- either man was shearing down the Lachlan when Paterson could have met him;
- either man was the debtor or addressee in Paterson’s legal correspondence;
- the precise date MacNamara left Wyalong for Queensland and whether he was droving at that time;
- the precise date and nature of Gerald Clancy’s work connected with The Overflow;
- the date and authenticity of the will reportedly witnessed by Paterson; and
- the earliest written version of the Troy horse-chase story and whether it predates the 1938 publicity.

Priority sources are Paterson’s surviving legal and personal papers, station wage and shearing records, pastoral leases, land transactions, stock-brand registers, droving permits, postal directories, newspapers, probate files and family correspondence created before 1938. Without new primary evidence, further research is likely to refine probability rather than produce a definitive identification.

12. Notes on names and dates

- Paterson is correctly spelled with one “t”, although historical newspapers often printed “Patterson”.
- “Clancy of the Overflow” was published in 1889, not 1899.
- “The Man from Snowy River” followed in 1890; evidence about its horse chase cannot automatically prove the origin of the earlier Clancy character.
- The supplied material uses MacNamara, Macnamara, McNamara and MacNamarra. This opinion uses Thomas Michael MacNamara, matching the grave and obituary material, while retaining variants in source titles.
- Approximate dates derived retrospectively, including the c. 1880 Troy chase and c. 1887–88 move to Queensland, require confirmation from contemporary records.

Sources consulted

- Griffith Business Chamber, "Request for historical opinion into resting place of Thomas Michael MacNamara aka 'Clancy of the Overflow'", 22 June 2026. Supplied correspondence and enclosures.
- Fox Darcy, "Report: On the investigation into the identity of the Clancy of the Overflow", 2026. Internal Curator report supplied for review.
- A. B. Paterson, "Clancy of the Overflow", *The Bulletin*, 21 December 1889. National Library of Australia: <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-488923924/view?partId=nla.obj-488931510>
- A. B. Paterson, "The Man from Snowy River", *The Bulletin*, 26 April 1890. Original publication chronology and text.
- "An Old Melbourne Citizen", *Advocate*, 26 February 1910. Thomas Gerald Clancy interview and reproduction of "Clancy's Reply": <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/170030643>
- "Clancy of the Overflow: Hero of Banjo Patterson's Story", *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 22 December 1938, p. 16. MacNamara account: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/62203271>
- "Clancy of the Overflow", *Canberra Times*, 27 December 1938, p. 3. Syndicated MacNamara report: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/2480720>
- "Banjo' Rides Again", *Cairns Post*, 9 February 1939. Syndicated MacNamara report: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/41698873>
- "Clancy of the Overflow", *Nambour Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser*, 17 March 1939. Detailed MacNamara/Troy account: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/77879242>
- "Clancy of the Overflow", *Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 20 December 1939. Extended MacNamara interview: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/106204396>
- "Clancy of the Overflow ... His Life Story", *The Age*, 11 December 1943, p. 7. Thomas Gerald Clancy retrospective: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/206344537>
- "In Queensland This Week", *Queensland Times*, 5 October 1961. Later Gerald Clancy family testimony and chronological inconsistency: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/105895755>
- Clement Semmler, *The Banjo of the Bush: The Life and Times of A. B. "Banjo" Paterson*, University of Queensland Press, 1974. https://espace.library.uq.edu.au/view/UQ:200761/PR8218_A84Z852_1974.pdf
- Riverina Rewind, "Is Clancy of the Overflow really buried in Griffith or is he MIA?", 2025. Modern summary quoting MacNamara's reported 1939 identification with "Only Clancy stood his friend": <https://regionriverina.com.au/riverina-rewind-is-clancy-of-the-overflow-really-buried-in-griffith-or-is-he-mia/110567/>

Limitations

This is an independent historical assessment prepared from supplied material and publicly accessible sources. It is not genealogical proof, an archaeological assessment or a formal heritage significance assessment. Newspaper optical character recognition is imperfect, syndicated articles are not independent corroboration, and family traditions may contain accurate memories alongside later interpretation. The conclusions should be revisited if primary evidence predating December 1889 is produced.

CLAUSE CL11

TITLE Free Local Entry Trial Survey Results - Presentation

TRIM REF 26/91551

Summary

At the Committee Meeting held on the 12 November 2025, the following recommendation was made:

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Denis Couch and Jenna Thomas that:

- (a) *A 12-month trial of free general admission for local residents to the Griffith Pioneer Park Museum be implemented. This trial will exclude special events, school excursions, annual members and user groups. At the six-month mark, a community-wide survey be conducted to assess the Museum's connection to and significance within the community.*
- (b) *A visitor survey be introduced for completion by patrons upon exiting the Griffith Pioneer Park Museum, to gather feedback on their experience.*
- (c) *A targeted marketing campaign be developed and delivered by the Visit Griffith team to promote and showcase the Griffith Pioneer Park Museum.*

As part of the six-month review of the Free Local Entry Trial, Griffith City Council conducted a community survey from 2 to 31 July 2026. Residents of the 2680 and 2681 postcodes were invited to participate, including those who had not visited the Museum during the trial.

The survey sought feedback on community awareness of the trial, visitation patterns, the influence of free entry, the visitor experience and what may encourage greater engagement with the Museum in the future.

The Administration Coordinator will present the survey results live to the Committee, including the level of participation and key themes identified in the responses. These findings will contribute to the ongoing evaluation of the trial, together with visitation, operational and financial information collected throughout the 12 months.

TITLE Outstanding Action Report

TRIM REF 26/91900

RECOMMENDATION

The report be noted.

ATTACHMENTS

- (a) Action Report - Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Committee - 5 August 2026 [!\[\]\(44482a01d8c1a60f92c1b1496d5d3e8a_img.jpg\)](#) 48


ACTION REPORT**GRIFFITH PIONEER PARK MUSEUM COMMITTEE – 5 August 2026**

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Action Officer	Comment
20 May 2026	CL07 Presentation - Review of Griffith Pioneer Park Strategic Plan	Action: At the next Committee meeting staff present a report highlighting how they will further engage and give opportunities to other members of the community as part of the oral history project.	Jenny O'Donnell	05/08/2026: Report presented to the Committee 5 Aug 2026.
20 May 2026	CL07 Presentation - Review of Griffith Pioneer Park Strategic Plan	RECOMMENDED on the motion of Virginia Tropeano and Jenna Thomas that Council consider the needs of disabled patrons, visitors, volunteers and staff at Griffith Pioneer Park Museum as part of the Disability, Inclusion and Access Plan.		NO ACTION REQUIRED Accessibility to Pioneer Park Museum has been considered in the newest version of the DIAP (adopted 16 June 2026).
20 May 2026	CL01 Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Action Day - 3 April 2026	RECOMMENDED on the motion of Virginia Tropeano and Jenna Thomas that the Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Committee thank the volunteers and staff for their ongoing contribution to Action Day, and a letter of thanks be prepared.	Jenny O'Donnell	05/08/2026: Completed.
18 Feb 2026	7.1 2030 Strategic Plan for Griffith Pioneer Park Museum	RECOMMENDED on the motion of Councillor Jenny Ellis and John Nikolic that a review of the implementation and progress of the current Griffith Pioneer Park Strategic Plan be carried out on a quarterly basis.	Jenny O'Donnell	11/05/2026: To be presented at this month's meeting and then become an ongoing agenda item. 05/08/2026: Implementation and progress report given last meeting.

18 Feb 2026	CL05 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FREE LOCAL ENTRY TRIAL	Mr Couch expressed his concerns in regards to the lack of advertising for the free entry initiative. In response, Ms O'Donnell informed the Committee there has been a media release, radio advertising, billboard advertising, social media posts via Facebook, and information published on the Griffith Pioneer Park Museum website. Mr Hansen suggested there is further opportunity to continue and enhance the advertising efforts.	Communications / Jenny O'Donnell	14/05/2026: Advertisements have been made in the Council Catch-up regarding free entry on the following dates; 10/04/2026, 6/03/2026, 20/02/2026, 13/02/2026, 16/01/2026, 5/12/2025. Other advertisements have been made for Action Day 27/03/2026 and Valentine's Day 6/02/2026. 20/05/2026: Continued advertising through social media, announcements on Action Day and general advertising. 05/08/2026: Continued advertising and promotions are scheduled throughout the trial period.
18 Feb 2026	CL04 Q2, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE STATISTICS OCT - DEC 2025	Councillor Blumer asked if an Outdoor Play Park at Griffith Pioneer Park Museum is being considered in the Park Plan. This was TAKEN ON NOTICE .	Jenny O'Donnell	20/05/2026: Pending response. 05/08/2026: Advised on 20/5/2026 via return email from Urban Design Manager that Griffith Pioneer Park Museum playground will be included in the new Council playground strategy.
18 Feb 2026	CL02 POSSIBLE FUTURE ATTRACTION FOR GRIFFITH PIONEER PARK -	RECOMMENDED on the motion of Denis Couch and Councillor Jenny Ellis that the Committee	Jenny O'Donnell	20/05/2026: Noted support. Staff will

	COMMITTEE MEMBER AGENDA ITEM - VIRGINIA TROPEANO	support the investigation of night time events at Griffith Pioneer Park Museum, including regional vivid and light show experiences.		continue work on this item and report back when there has been suitable progression.
30 April 2025	GENERAL BUSINESS – ACCESS TO BUILDINGS	RECOMMENDED on the motion of Robyn Turner and Denis Couch that the Committee seek clarification on access to buildings requiring works located on land subject to Aboriginal Land Claims.	Jenny O'Donnell / Matthew Hansen	6/08/2025: Awaiting confirmation – report to the next Committee Meeting. 6/11/2025: Report to Committee 18 February 2025. 04/02/2026: Query forwarded to Council's Corporate Property Officer and Native Title Coordinator for written response. 20/05/2026: Written advice received from Crown Lands indicates 'that under Section 24J, Council, as the CLM, can do any activity that could be logically permitted under the reservation.' The advisor also recommends advice from Council's legal provider if unsure. This indicates that, as CLM, we have the authority to replace the existing structure. Item can be removed from the Action Report.