

OUR WATER STORY, IS YOUR WATER STORY

12 July 2023

MEDIA RELEASE

A new, iconic mural unveiled in Gladstone, celebrating indigenous connection to Awoonga Dam

'Water Connections' a new and inspired artwork by First Nations artist Brandon Butler, operating as Gaba Art, has been commissioned and officially unveiled by the Gladstone Area Water Board.

The instantly iconic artwork features on the exterior wall of the Gladstone Area Water Board head office on Goondoon Street in Gladstone.

Gladstone Area Water Board's Chief Executive Officer, Darren Barlow, said the artwork celebrates Awoonga Dam and the long-lasting impact of the water board, which celebrates 50 years of operation this year.

"We are delighted to have commissioned Brandon Butler, a First Nations artist, to create this work as part of our 50th anniversary celebrations", Mr Barlow said.

"Central to the artwork design is Awoonga Dam and all four Traditional Owner groups, the Bailai, Gurang, Gooreng Goreeng and Taribelang Bunda Peoples are represented around the dam as part of the artwork.

"Using Aboriginal symbols and stories, alongside contemporary elements, the artwork is a beautiful, relatable piece of work which significantly adds to the appeal of the building and the street.

"This is a new, iconic artwork for Gladstone and I encourage everyone in Gladstone to have a look and be inspired by this creative representation of our region."

Brandon Butler, a Gooreng Gooreng and Gurang man, designed and created the artwork and is passionate about sharing his connection through his art.

"I'm proud to partner with Gladstone Area Water Board to successfully deliver this one-of-a-kind artwork for the community to enjoy," Mr Butler said.

"My goal was to represent kinship and the symbolic connection between the Gladstone region's Traditional Owners and Gladstone Area Water Board.

"This artwork is my symbolic interpretation of Coastal land ownership, and I acknowledge and hold respect for the four Traditional Owner Groups of the Gladstone region.

"I hope this mural will encourage the local community to learn about First Nations culture and why we must respect the land and water that we all rely upon."

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The mural, easily viewable by the public at 136 Goondoon Street in Gladstone, features six asymmetrical boards, framed by a background design painted directly onto the wall.

Brandon has worked with Gladstone Area Water Board to develop an artwork which is reflective of the role the water board and Lake Awoonga plays in the Gladstone community, as well as honouring the first nations connection to the land and water.

The artwork will be officially launched on Friday 14 July by Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing, Minister for Water and Member for Gladstone, Glenn Butcher MP.

"This mural is a new, creative, visual asset for not just the Gladstone Area Water Board but for all Gladstone", Minister Butcher said.

"This is a wonderful addition to our main street, and an important recognition of the cultural heritage of the region. The First Nation connection to this land, and its water, is recognised through this mural."

Gladstone Area Water Board, as a Queensland Government Bulk Water Supply Authority, delivers safe and reliable water services which promote economic development and enhances the lifestyle of regional Queensland. Gladstone Area Water Board owns and operates Awoonga Dam on the Boyne River, along with a network of delivery pipelines, water treatment plants and other bulk water distribution infrastructure.

To ensure long-term water security for urban and industrial customers, and the emerging hydrogen and renewables industry, the 117-kilometre Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline project is under development. When delivered, the pipeline will form part of the Gladstone Area Water Board network and provide enhanced water security and reliability for the region. For more information about Gladstone Area Water Board and the Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline project, please visit www.gawb.qld.gov.au

ENDS

Note to editors

Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water, Glenn Butcher MP, will attend the official opening of the artwork on Friday 14 July at 10:30am at 136 Goondoon Street Gladstone.

Also attending will be the mural artist, Brandon Butler, and Gladstone Area Water Board Chief Executive Officer Darren Barlow.

This is a photo and video opportunity. If you are unable to attend but would like footage or stills from the event, please contact us.

For all media enquiries, please contact Grace Duckham on gduckham@gawb.qld.gov.au or 0438 673 776, or Peta Leveritt-Baker on pleverittbaker@gawb.qld.gov.au or 0474 137 295