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*Esperance Community Arts receives core funding from Country Arts WA, which receives funding from the State Government through the Department of Culture and the Arts and Lotterywest.*

## **MEDIA RELEASE: Esperance Nyungar Doll-Making Project**

**Date: 09 /11 /2016**

Noongar artists Geri Hayden and Marcelle Riley visited Esperance last week to deliver the first in a series of doll-making workshops as part of the Esperance Nyungar Doll-making Project. Hayden and Riley currently manage Community Arts Network's Narrogin office and have run similar projects based on the very successful 'Yarns of the Heart' program in many communities (<http://www.canwa.com.au/project/yarns-of-the-heart/>).

Yarns of the Heart was first run in 1994 and is inspired by Nyungar doll-making practices used over many decades.

This 12 month project is funded by the Department of Culture and the Arts through their Community Engagement program. It provides opportunities for community members of all backgrounds and ages to gather together and share stories whilst creating dolls that represent important people, experiences or times in their lives.

Participants can create their own doll designs or use a simple template to get started. Each doll is unique and can be decorated to symbolise its personal significance to its maker. Dolls often represent family members, friends and aspects of the maker themselves.

Six community sessions were run over three days at the George Street Centre and in the evenings at Esperance Community Arts Space. An average of 20 people attended each session, demonstrating strong interest in the project.

Hayden and Riley will return to Esperance for another three visits and will continue to share their skills in doll-making, eco-dyeing and basket making. At the end of the project they will assist community members to install an exhibition to celebrate and share the year's work with the wider community.

Project participants are also invited to take part in informal doll-making sessions in between the visits by Hayden and Riley. Dates, times and locations for future sessions will be advertised.

This project is a partnership between Esperance Community Arts and Escare and is part of a 12 month Indigenous Arts program that aims to create spaces for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal artists and community members to share skills and work together.

For more information about the variety of programs run by ECA contact Jane Mulcock on 9072 1158 or email [admin@esperancecommunityarts.org.au](mailto:admin@esperancecommunityarts.org.au).

**-ENDS-**

**For more information or to organise a photo opportunity contact:**

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Opening hours: Tuesday - Friday : 10am – 2pm or by appointment. Ph: 08 9072 1158**