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CITY-COUNTRY CRICKET MATCH BONDS PARTNERSHIP

Indigenous students from Wilcannia will match their cricket skills with a local Ryde team next month as part of the Country Council Partnership between the City of Ryde and the Central Darling Shire.

Dubbed the 'Wilcannia Boys', the four 16 year old students, along with their teacher from Wilcannia Central School and the coordinator from Central Darling Shire Council, will drive the 950 kilometres to Ryde to play cricket, attend coaching clinics and sightsee.

City of Ryde Mayor, Cllr Michael Butterworth, who will make a special presentation to the cricket squad at the match, said: "This is another positive development in bridging the gap between country and city and especially in providing opportunities for youth from both our communities.

"It's a great initiative and I congratulate the Ryde/Hunters Hill Cricket Club for coming up with the idea."

Mr Kym Fuller from the Central Darling Shire Council said Wilcannia Central School was delighted to accept the invitation from the Ryde/Hunters Hill 'Pirates' and the students, three of whom had never visited Sydney before, were very excited at the prospects of playing with their city cricketing cousins.

In addition to the cricket match to be played at Boronia Park Hunters Hill on Sunday 14 March, the 'Wilcannia Boys' will enjoy a behind the scenes tour at the SCG and a first class cricket match courtesy of NSW Cricket, swim at the Sydney Olympic Aquatic Pool, visit Bondi, the Opera House and go for a ferry ride.

Artists from the Central Darling will exhibit their works at Brush Farm House Gallery as part of NAIDOC Week in July.

The Country Council Partnership between the City of Ryde and the Central Darling Shire was formalised in 2007. Since that time the two Councils have cooperated on a number of ideas and technology exchange programs.

Council Profiles

Located in the far west of the State, the Central Darling Shire takes in an area of over 53,000 square kilometres, making it the largest Local Government Area in NSW, but with one of the smallest residential populations. By contrast, the City of Ryde is home to 105,000 residents as well as the third largest CBD in Australia (Macquarie Park) and its 16 suburbs are spread over a 44 square kilometre area.

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