



11 December 2024

Dear Friends and Supporters of Highways and Byways,

We are writing to let you know about some exciting changes at Highways and Byways.

As you are aware, there has been a strong friendship between the Missionary Sisters of Service and the Sisters of St. Joseph for many years. You will have seen reference to a growing collaboration between the two organisations in recent issues of the Highways and Byways newsletter. In particular, you will have read about the recent funding support received from Mary MacKillop Today for our longer-term programs.

Following this recent collaboration, both Highways and Byways and Mary MacKillop Today have agreed to work together as one entity. We are excited to utilise the strengths of each organisation, to enable us to respond more effectively to the needs of marginalised communities across Australia.

There is a great complementarity of strengths in the programs of Highways and Byways and Mary MacKillop Today, as outlined broadly in the table below.

Table 1: Complementarity of Highways and Byways and Mary MacKillop Today

Highways and Byways Programs	Mary MacKillop Today Programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• focus on building connections for those who are isolated geographically and socially;• support Indigenous people in connecting to culture and community through Country, honouring individual and communal identity;• have a flexible, grass roots approach that can adapt to the changing realities of running projects in small, remote communities;• action the principles of integral ecology, as emphasised in Laudato Si' and Laudate Deum;• are built upon a strong network of relationships throughout remote and regional Australia, which are a legacy of the Missionary Sisters of Service. This network creates great capacity to reach and connect with those most disadvantaged by location.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• focus on building partnerships that create opportunities for self-determination through education and the teaching of practical life skills to women, men and children.• provide significant grants to communities across Australia through Mary MacKillop Today's Community Grants Program;• support First Nations students to access tertiary studies;• help people on low incomes to break the cycle of poverty and enhance their self-worth through No Interest Loan Schemes.



Highways and Byways

HEALING THE LAND.
HEALING OURSELVES.
TOGETHER.

On Tuesday 10th December, Highways and Byways officially became a part of Mary MacKillop Today. This decision allows the Highways and Byways Small Grants Program to continue in its current form, enabling future opportunities:

- The Mary MacKillop Today Highways and Byways Small Grants Program will be coordinated by Mary MacKillop Today employee Chrys Fernando. Chrys will be available to contact regarding any queries relating to the 2024 and 2025 Program at Chrys.Fernando@marymackilloptoday.org.au
- Free2b Girls will become a partner of Mary MacKillop Today, and continue the *Free2b Girls*, *Free2b Time* and *Free2Fly* program
- Under the direction of Todd Dudley, the North Eastern Bioregional Network will continue the *Restoring Nature and Communities*, supported by a \$30,000 donation from Highways and Byways
- Megan Brown will continue the *Seeds of Connection* programs at the First Nations health clinic in Roma, CWAATSICH (Charleville and Western Areas Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islanders Community Health Limited), with the support of a \$30,000 donation from Highways and Byways

The Highways and Byways Consultative Committee has been established to work in partnership with Mary MacKillop Today. This committee will set the theme and guidelines of the Small Grants Program and assess the grant applications for funding.

Stories of the impact of the Highways and Byways programs will be shared with you through the Mary MacKillop Today Newsletter (three times a year) and via the [website](#). To ensure this is possible, we will need to provide your contact details to Mary MacKillop Today. We expect this transfer to take place on 23rd January 2025. Your contact details will be retained by Mary MacKillop Today in accordance with its [privacy policy](#).

If you do not wish for your contact information to be shared with Mary MacKillop Today, or would like more information, please contact us by email at admin@hb.org.au, or by post to Highways and Byways, 90 Albion Rd Box Hill 3128 before 22nd January 2025.

The Missionary Sisters of Service will continue to send their newsletter to you, and the next newsletter is expected to be sent out in April 2025.

Your continued support of the Highways and Byways Program through Mary MacKillop Today can make a profound difference in the lives of marginalised communities across Australia. Please be assured that any donations and bequests that have been made to Highways and Byways Ltd will be used as intended, directly supporting those who need it most.

Thank you for your ongoing support of this wonderful work that helps communities at the margins to thrive.

Warm regards

Jane Collopy
Executive Officer
Highways and Byways

Marg Casey
Board Chair
Highways and Byways

Stancea Vichie
Board Director
Missionary Sisters of Service