



## Christ Church Grammar School celebrates NAIDOC week 2021

Christ Church Grammar School has a proud history of providing outstanding educational opportunities for young Aboriginal men. Since 1950, more than 60 Aboriginal students have completed their educational journey at the School, including Irwin Lewis who was the first Aboriginal student to graduate from Christ Church and the first Aboriginal to attend the University of Western Australia.

The School's Aboriginal students celebrate their culture in many ways, including the annual NAIDOC week celebrations which always includes an amazing art exhibition inspired by the students' unique perspectives, backgrounds and wonderful stories.

For the 2021 exhibition the School's 13 Aboriginal students have prepared wooden shields carved with depictions of totem animals from each of their places of origin. The totems are incredibly significant - they are a natural object, plant or animal that is inherited by members of a clan or family as their spiritual emblem and define peoples' roles and responsibilities and their relationships with each other and creation.

The creation of the shields was guided by a presentation from Tyrown Waigana, winner of the 2020 NAIDOC Poster Prize. He influenced the boys' research and creation of their individual indigenous totems. The boys' shields now proudly hang in the School's Old Boy's Gallery for the August exhibition, which can be viewed from 4 to 27 August during school hours or by special appointment for all members of the community.

In addition, a Totem Trail has been created on campus, featuring acrylic versions of the shields. This trail represents protection of the country, Whadjak Noongar land in the surrounds of the beautiful Derbarl Yerrigan (known as the Swan River), that the boys have come to from all over the state. Christ Church Grammar School Indigenous Program Co-ordinator Sam Wallace says that every year the exhibition ensures the momentum of the School's Reconciliation Action Plan "This is another way of sharing the knowledge and talent of our Aboriginal students and First Nation people with all of the students and the wider community".



*Kayde Kelly (Year 7). Photo Credit: Christ Church Grammar School.*

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