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Jessica Warriner



Greg Barr, Susan Waller and Kobi Morrison. Picture: Jon Hewson

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Singing into Noongar future

THE Walyalup Kannajil choir brings Aboriginal songs and the Noongar language to the community.

The choir has conducted a series of community singing workshops in Fremantle that started in May, where people learn Aboriginal songs in Noongar and English.

Choir co-ordinator Susan Waller said each week Kobi Morrison and Leonie Wilkes, musicians from Aboriginal-led choir Macjilil Moorna, came together to learn songs.

"Walyalup Kannajil was inspired by a personal desire to learn more about the local

Noongar culture and language," she said.

"The Noongar culture is so rich, being one of the oldest living cultures in the world. However the Noongar language is endangered, with estimates that there are only about 400 fluent speakers left in the South-West."

Ms Waller said the aim of the choir was to bring the Fremantle community together to actively learn, explore and express Noongar culture and language through song.

"For me personally, I have deepened my knowledge and appreciation for Noongar cul-

ture and history," she said.

"I have learnt a number of Noongar words and phrases, including how to introduce myself and express how I am feeling, as well as the names of local animals.

"We can talk about sensitive subjects such as racism in a safe environment and ask questions that we may have been afraid to ask or talk about before and, of course, the joy of singing and making new friends."

The workshops are held Thursdays from 12.30pm to 2.30pm at Fremantle PCYC.

Leah Roberts