

LAND RIGHTS NEWS

Volume 8, Number 1, April 2009



**Leases, rangers, photos,
Aboriginal media, footy,
community development
and more..**



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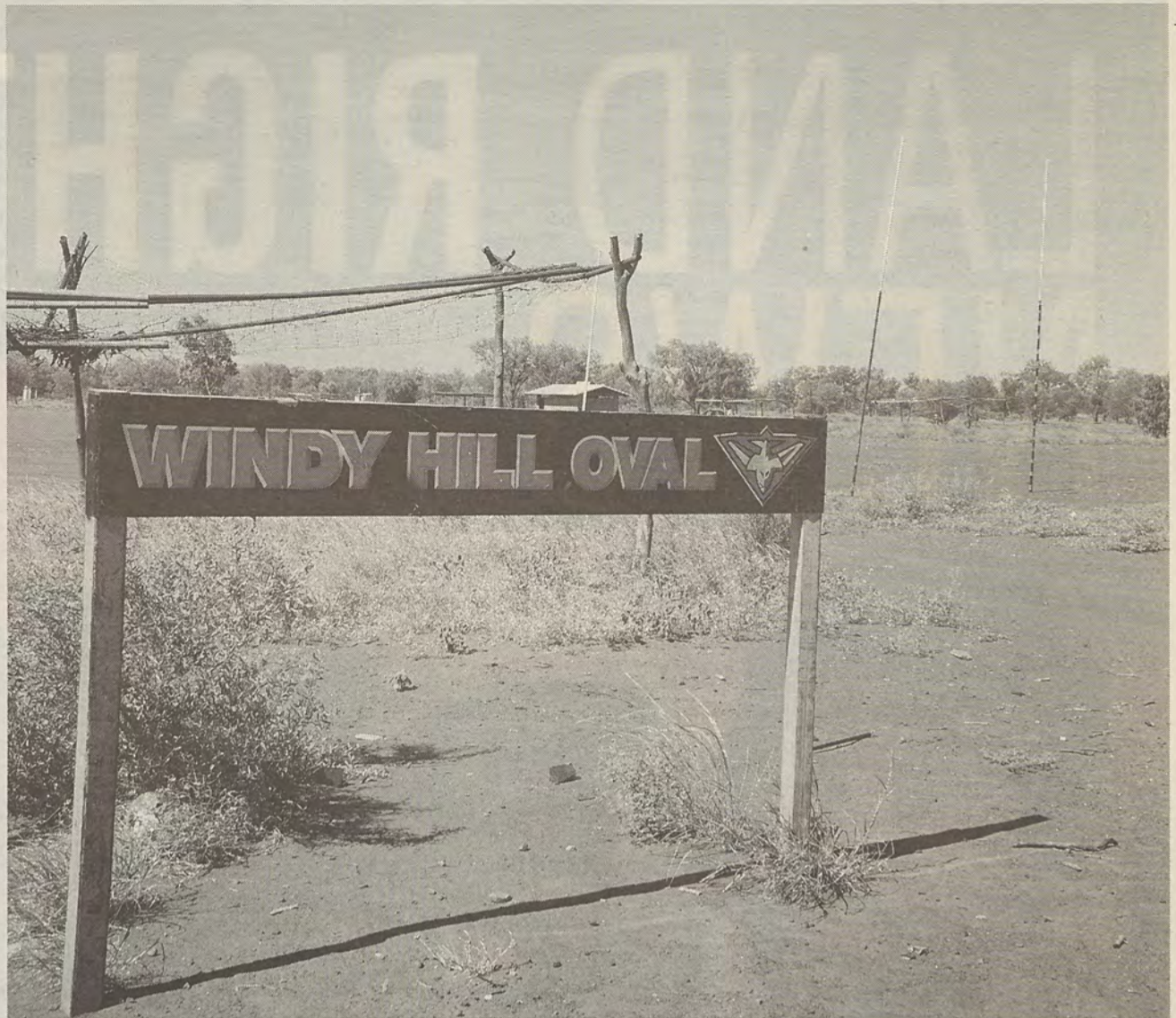
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The biggest crowd ever at the famous Essendon home ground, Windy Hill, in Melbourne was 43,487 in 1966.

The crowds at Windy Hill Oval at Ampilatwatja, 400kms north-east of Alice Springs, are slightly less, but the footy is played and supported with a similar intensity.

Land Rights NEWS

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COVER PHOTO

l-r Chris Read, Amos Urban, Ricardo Weston, Shane White and Maxwell Tasman

LEASES GET MIXED REACTION

David Ross: 'Government deals not good enough'



Above: The meeting about leases at Lajamanu

CLC Director David Ross says that the deals put on the table by the Australian Government to lease the communities of Yuendumu, Hermannsburg and Lajamanu "aren't good enough".

"The Government has got to understand that people are feeling demoralised - there's been a lot of changes and a lot of attacks on Aboriginal people and they feel the Government is just going whack, whack, whack," he said.

Mr Ross said the government is already two years into a five year lease over communities but don't have anything to show for it.

"At a meeting in Hermannsburg recently traditional owners called for a show of good faith," he said.

"They haven't even seen any repairs to housing in their community in that time, so why would they have any faith that the government would do any better over the long-term?"

"The offers are also being presented by the government in a dictatorial manner. They aren't partnerships.

"Unless the communities agree to one of the two options they are being offered, they will not get any new housing," Mr Ross said.

While negotiations are taking place with the three communities in the Central Land Council's region, the other Aboriginal communities aren't even being considered for new housing.

"In the past couple of years Aboriginal people have lost their com-

munity councils and related organisations to the super shires takeover, had their welfare income managed without any consultation or consideration, faced the existence of their outstations being called into question and are now being told under what circumstances they'll get new houses," Mr Ross said.

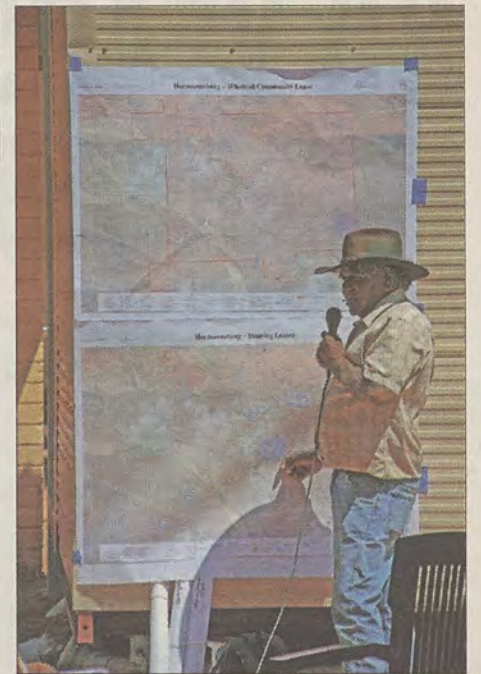
"They are always being told how things will be and apparently it's all for their own good. They are never being asked how things might work best. It's not a partnership, it's a dictatorship."

After a leases meeting in Lajamanu recently traditional owner Jerry Jangala said the government should be improving housing under the current five year lease it holds over the community.

"Right now, we're not agreeing," he said. "With the intervention and the shires everything is all mixed up.

"That government should give us houses with the five year lease.

I'm not happy for that new lease. Some people want money, money, money, but my grandfather wasn't born with money. I'm born in the dirt. We should be thinking about our land. If we give that away, and maybe I'm not right to



say anything, but the government might say, you gave us that lease, you're finished now.

"We want a say and we want to keep living on our country," Mr Jangala said.

"When people (meeting participants) say they want action (on housing) they need to be careful. There could be a trick in this one (leasing) and I'm worrying for that. It makes me feel no good."

Above: CLC Chairman Lindsay Bookie talks to the meeting at Hermannsburg; below: women at Lajamanu listen at the CLC meeting about leases recently

Central Australian lease offers continued page 22



Four Top End communities agree to leases

Traditional owners in the Aboriginal communities of Gunbalanya, Wadeye, Galiwinku and Maningrida have agreed to enter into 40-year housing leases with the Northern Territory Government.

Northern Land Council chief executive officer Kim Hill said the NLC

welcomed the commitment of \$159 million by the NT Government and the Federal Government to spend on new and upgraded housing over the next five years.

"Traditional Owners have consistently called for substantial increases in the number of houses as well as a boost in related infrastructure, as it will provide signifi-

cant and immediate benefits," Mr Hill said.

Each of the communities will receive major works including new houses and refurbishments, and include the following allocations: Gunbalanya - \$28.7 million, Wadeye - \$48.7 million, Galiwinku - \$33 million, Maningrida - \$48.7 million.

Mr Hill said access to adequate

and appropriate housing is one of the cornerstones of boosting the number of healthy Aboriginal communities in the northern regions of the Northern Territory.

Work on the projects is expected to commence in late 2009.

The lease agreements are granted under s.19 of the Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976.

30 YEARS OF THE KENBI LAND CLAIM

Almost thirty-years to the day since it was first lodged on behalf of the Larrakia traditional owners by the Northern Land Council (NLC) the Kenbi Land Claim today moved a step closer to a successful resolution.

In a significant milestone the Larrakia traditional owners, the NLC and the Northern Territory Government have reached an in-principle agreement on the settlement of the Kenbi Land Claim which was first lodged on 20 March 1979.

Under the agreement, 13,000 hectares of the land will be granted as freehold, which will allow for the development of residential and commercial interests.

The remaining 52,000 hectares will be declared Aboriginal land.

Larrakia traditional owner, Ms Raylene Singh welcomed the announcement by Chief Minister Paul Henderson on the in-principle agreement in this long running land claim, and urged the Federal Government to support it.

"I am happy about this proposal. We have been fighting to get our rights to our land recognised and

returned to us for more than thirty-years, and some of my family have passed away waiting for this to happen," said Ms Singh.

"This is an agreement that is good for all Larrakia people, and it is also good for the people of Darwin – so the Federal Government should now finalise the process and hand back our country to us so we can start planning our future."

NLC Chairman, Wali Wunungmurra also welcomed the announcement and supported Ms Singh's call for the Federal Government to grant the claim as Aboriginal land.

"This has been a long and hard struggle for the Larrakia – and they

have been strong in their commitment to regain their rightful ownership of their ancestral lands," said Mr Wunungmurra.

"We still need to have further discussions with various stakeholders including the Federal Government, but we are confident that all

interests will be met through this process in a timely manner."

The agreement is now with the Australian Government for final approval.

Above: NLC members discussing the Kenbi Land Claim settlement



The CLC is listening to your ideas

A survey of traditional owners by the CLC will be used to provide a better service to Aboriginal people in its area.

The Central Land Council wants to find out what CLC work is important for people.

It also wants to find out how CLC could work better for and with communities.

The CLC will use these findings to get better outcomes for Aboriginal people in the future.

The CLC is working with a consultant, Petronella Vaarzon-Morel, to better understand the feedback from Aboriginal people in our communities.

Petronella is undertaking surveys with Aboriginal people across the region.

Petronella has visited communities of Areyonga, Kintore, Bonya, Atitjere, Ali Curung, Yuen-dumu, Utopia, Mutitjulu, Kaltukatjara, Lajamanu and Kalkaringi to talk with people about the CLC work.

She has been asking people what they understand about Land

Council work, what they like and don't like and what could be done better in the future.

People from across the communities have responded well to the survey and Petronella is now writing up her findings in a report.

It is due to be completed in May.

The report will be used by the CLC staff and members to improve our work.

The CLC would like to thank the communities, people and interpreters who were involved in the interviews.



**Above: Interpreter Lena Taylor, Millie O'Kai and researcher Petronella Vaarzon-Morel
Right: Lena, Petronella and Jim Nukati**



Blue Bush chooks lay golden eggs



Above: Trevor Byrnes and some of his chooks on the Iwapataka Land Trust near Alice Springs

The cackling of some 400 hungry chooks is overwhelming. They are racing - really racing - across their vast pens to meet us. All of them.

The man they are all so keen to see is their owner and carer Trevor Byrnes who says that while he feeds them everyday, they just want more and more because chooks just don't have anything better to do with themselves.

Except lay about 400 eggs a day.

Trevor lives on the Iwapataka Land Trust about 20 kilometres west of Alice Springs and for the last two years he has been building a free range egg business.

Now he sells 100 dozen eggs on a good week.

"There's been a bit of battling here and there but it pays for the food and electricity I guess," he says.

"I'm on CDEP at the moment until I build it up a bit more so I can earn a wage out of it.

"That's the main idea - to create employment for myself and my family," he said.

"It's hard work - it's seven days a week - collecting the eggs, feeding the chooks and filling the water.

"You also have to clean up the waste which we are selling to a landscape supplier in town for garden fertiliser."

"We've had a lot of help from the NT Department of Business and Employment, Arrernte Council when we first started and Ingkerreke Outstation resource Services.

"Now JET employment in town help us market them," he said.

Trevor says the big money is in the private sales around town but they do sell wholesale to Charbray Meats and Aboriginal caterers Kungkas Can Cook.

He says that building a small business on your Land Trust is the way to go.

"I reckon it would be a good idea for people to get into this sort of thing - you can do it on your own place and create your own wage.

"It's getting a bit hard in town with CDEP but if you've got your own business you can build it up and make your own wage and get your family to help.

Trevor says eating his own free range eggs has spoilt him for shop bought caged eggs.

"They just don't taste the same," he said. "When I went on holiday I had to buy some and they were no good."

However don't expect to be eating Trevor's free range chooks.

"Our chooks eat layers pellets.

"They need to be fed different stuff if you are going to eat them.

"But I have eaten one or two myself. Leghorns are tough but these chooks are good," Trevor said.

Free range eggs from Trevor's beautiful chooks are available by ringing JET employment phone 89526665

\$50 a fortnight for bush humpy



The intervention has a new head. Canberra bureaucrat Mark Zissler took over from Major Chalmers recently and has already been asked to justify the actions of the Federal Government by the angry community at Utopia.

Utopia, north east of Alice Springs, is classified as an outstation, and as such doesn't qualify for the housing money that is promised to communities who sign up for long term leases.

The 100 or so residents are furious.

"Over the last 30 years, I only see 20 brick buildings on the whole in Utopia, 20 brick buildings, the rest of it's all rubbish, tin sheds, the oldest, dogs, not fit for dogs now, you know?," resident Dennis Kunoth told ABC Radio.

"People, people think Aboriginal people have got a lot of money; a lot of money might have been released but as I said a lot of it never got right here to where people need it," he said.

Furthermore the new shire is now charging rent for the existing broken down shacks and humpies.

Mr Zissler saw for himself the terrible state of housing when he visited Lena Pula in her humpy which boasts one tap and a small fridge. Ms Pula pays \$50 a fortnight to live here with four others.

The community is also outraged at the big blue sign erected outside the community.

"This is a model social structure. And the fact that we've been blanketed as being rapists, woman bashers, paedophiles and pornographic-consuming people and alcoholics, that's not us," Rosalie Kunoth Monks told the ABC reporter.

"And if you want us to break the Federal law, we will get an angle-grinder and we will cut down those signs. Unless you show us the proof of us being what you describe on those signs. It's not true," she said.

Mr Zissler said he will brief the Minister when he returned to Canberra.

Traditional Owners disappointed with McArthur River mine decision



Above: Traditional owner Harry Lansen talks to the press outside the Federal Court in Darwin

Traditional Owners from Borroloola have expressed disappointment with a decision by the Australian Government to give final approval to divert the McArthur River for a mine expansion.

NLC Chief Executive Kim Hill today said that traditional owners are disappointed with the announcement by the Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett to approve the expansion of the McArthur River mine, near Borroloola.

However, the NLC welcomes new stringent environmental monitoring requirements on McArthur River Mining (MRM), and Minister Garrett's recommendation that MRM pursue 'a more active engagement with local stakeholders, including Traditional owners.'

"Traditional owners are deeply disappointed the Federal Environment Minister, Peter Garrett, is giving the go-ahead for a diversion of the McArthur River in order for Swiss mining company Xstrata to expand its zinc mining operations," Mr Hill said.

"There has never been a negotiated agreement between the mining company and traditional owners, and a workable outcome would be the development of an agreement that would provide tangible benefits to local Aboriginal people."

Mr Hill said traditional owners would obtain legal advice regarding the decision, and as to possible avenues for compensation.

Traditional owners have had numerous cultural and environmental concerns about the mine's impact on marine life in the McArthur River and offshore, and important cultural sites," Mr Hill said.

The NLC calls on McArthur River Mining (MRM) to negotiate an agreement with Traditional Owners, and calls on the Northern Territory Government to mandate provisions to ensure all mining companies make public their Mining Management Plan, so that the environmental impact of mining operations is known to the local community.

The decision follows a Federal Court ruling in December 2008 forcing Xstrata to close the mine because the previous Environment Minister's approval for the mine's expansion did not take into account the impact on threatened species and migratory birds.

Warlpiri show how it's done



Film makers Maxwell Japanangka Tasman and Shane Jupurrurla White.

A group of young Warlpiri filmmakers involved in the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT) Youth and Media program have made a video that explains what WETT is and what WETT projects are happening on the ground.

The film is made by Warlpiri for Warlpiri in Warlpiri language (with English subtitles) and uses lots of creative and colourful ways to get the WETT story across.

The DVD will be distributed widely to Warlpiri community members, schools, libraries, community organisations, government departments and other Aboriginal groups looking to use royalty monies for community benefit projects.

WETT was set up in

2004 to support the education and training of Warlpiri in four Warlpiri communities - Lajamanu, Yuendumu, Nyirripi and Willowra.

Each year Newmont mining company pays extra royalties into a special trust account for education and training programs.

WETT programs include Community Learning Centre program, Early Childhood Program run in partnership with World Vision, funding for schools

to involve elders in school activities and take kids on country visits, production of bilingual resources and support for secondary students.

Many thanks to Maxwell Japanangka Tasman, Shane Jupurrurla White, Annan Cadden, Verona Nungarayi Jurrrah, Kathleen Doolan and Marlene Nangala Robertson for translations. For a copy of the DVD call Georgie Stewart at CLC on 89516246 or email to georgie.stewart@clc.org.

CAAMA boost for RIBS

Remote Indigenous broadcasters in Central Australia are taking advantage of the very latest technology to reach their bush audiences according to CAAMA RIBS coordinator Steve Hodder.



Above: Steve Hodder at CAAMA

"We've got a whole new digital system, whole music libraries on PC and you can voice it and create a whole show but we have to get trained up. Basically you can put a two hour playlist on a PC and just back announce each song," he said.

Steve started the RIBS job at CAAMA at the end of last year.

"I came in towards the end of last year which wasn't the best timing - there was the Christmas break and ceremony and law going on but now we're getting on track.

"We're getting more new trainees.

"Raphael Ronson will broadcast from Ltyentye Apurte, Warren H Williams

has been filling in on the Ntaria slot from here in town but that will probably be broadcast live from Hermannsburg hopefully.

"At Areyonga Jonathon Doolan is back so that's good.

But we still have to hook up with Papunya and get them back in the mix," Steve said.



Traditional Owners make business a reality at Bradshaw

An agreement between traditional owners and the Australian Defence Force has enabled the setting up of a company to maximise contract work in the Timber Creek area.

The Bradshaw and Timber Creek Contracting and Resourcing Company has completed its first work projects, and is channelling all profits back into the company.

The company is owned and staffed by traditional owners from Kununurra, Darwin, Timber Creek, Wyndham and Katherine.

Traditional owner, Daniel Jones, said local people were excited about the upcoming work opportunities, and were keen to build the company.

"We feel pride in being able to protect our sacred sites, and it is good that we are able to get jobs on our own country," Mr Jones said.

Last year, the ADF contracted the company to open an old existing road to the Fitzmaurice River, which enabled access to a cultural camp site at Mussel Hole.

The construction of 27kms of boundary fences, including gates, and flood gates came next with all the work completed on time and on budget by five traditional owners from Menggan.

This year the next stage for the company is the continuation of old fence removal around the site.

The Bradshaw Indigenous Land Use Agreement allows for the

granting of a Defence Purpose Lease to the Commonwealth over the Bradshaw Station, near Timber Creek – over 8,700 km² of land.

Under the ILUA, set up in 2003 under the Native Title Act, the Traditional Owners have consented to the use of Bradshaw as a field training area for an initial period of 75 years.

The ADF, which has constructed a runway at Bradshaw capable of taking C17 jets, will use the land for defence force exercises.

Future military exercises represent further economic opportunities for the Bradshaw company, including providing laundry services for military personnel, conducting sacred site clearances, erecting signage for protected sites, constructing boundary fences, and identification of exclusion zones.

The Northern Land Council negotiated the agreement on behalf of 800 traditional owners who speak five languages, and is responsible for looking at strategies that maximise Aboriginal employment, including training and business opportunities at Bradshaw.

The agreement ensures continued access to Bradshaw by traditional owners, and, the protection of sacred sites.

New management for Tanami Downs



Above l-r : Board member Steven Craig, new manager Kenny Satour and board member Tony Edwards

A new manager has been appointed to one of Australia's most isolated cattle stations, the Aboriginal-owned Tanami Downs.

Ken Satour has been appointed the new manager of Tanami Downs after the resignation last year of the previous manager.

Ken will be known to many people in the CLC region from his time at the Central Land Council where he worked in several positions including as the pastoral development officer.

Ken has also worked on several stations in the Northern Territory, including Mistake Creek and the old Ngulipi Station in Western Australia and adjacent to Tanami Downs.

Ken and his family are working to ensure Tanami Downs gets back on a good financial footing and provides employment opportunities for traditional owners.

In 2006 traditional owners of the Mungkurupa Land Trust, on which the station operates, decided to revitalise the station, which was declining in productivity and viability, by radically altering the way the pastoral company was governed.

The board was re-structured and its size was reduced. By doing this the company's Aboriginal owners were able to bring in industry and business expertise to ensure the station was progressing as it should.

The current board consists of Tony Edwards (pastoral consultant), Stephen Craig (Mistake Creek Station), Robyn Lawson (traditional owner) and Mary Rockman (tradi-

tional owner).

After a couple of years this new arrangement is starting to produce positive results.

In addition to this the traditional owners have invested their own money back into the station's development.

In 2006 Kurra Aboriginal Corporation invested in a five year infrastructure rebuild for Tanami Downs.

This included fencing and upgrading of watering points.

Wirntiki Aboriginal Corporation also invested in the station by funding the purchase of 44 Drought-master Bulls to improve the calving percentage on the station.

In 2008 Kurra again invested in the station by providing funds to repair the homestead and workers quarters, including plumbing and electrical upgrades.

Unfortunately the machinery on the station was left in a very poor and unsafe state but assistance from Kurra has allowed new machinery to be purchased.

In appreciation of this support the station will undertake remedial and fencing works around the outstation and maintain the outstation's power and water supply.

Other work that has been done includes the fencing of Lake Ruth to provide greater protection to the area from feral animals as well as controlling grazing pressure.

Mungkarta traditional owners go corporate

Traditional owners at Mungkarta, south of Tennant Creek, have instructed the Central Land Council to set up a corporation using any cleanskin cattle from the west side of the Mungkarta and Mungkarta 2 Aboriginal Land Trust as start up funds.

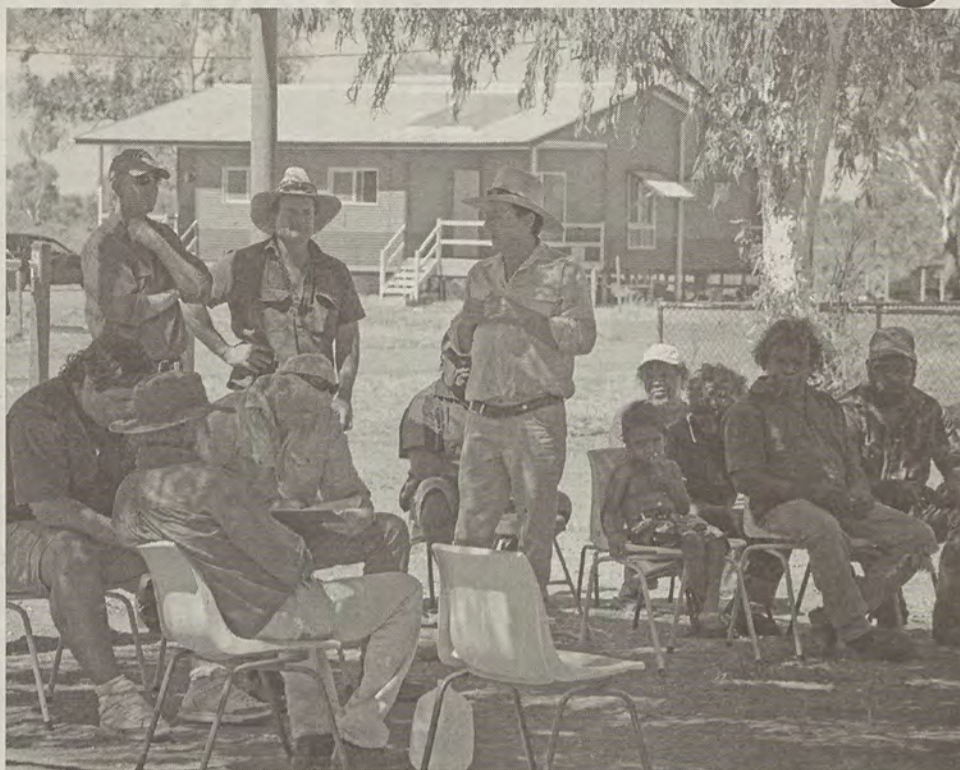
The Mungkarta Cattleman's Aboriginal Corporation was formed on the 15th of October last year (2008).

The traditional owners raised the idea of setting up their own corporation when agreeing to the grazing license with Wally Klein and Kevin McGrath.

Under the agreement, provision was made for a paddock to be set aside for the traditional owners' own enterprise with the licensee agreeing to help the traditional owners to maintain their herd.

A business development officer was provided under the Indigenous Pastoral Program (IPP) to work with interested traditional owners to help them achieve their goals through training in governance, the relevant act governing the corporation and to advise on business practises.

The traditional owners' plan involves starting off with a small



A community meeting with the lessees at Mungkharta last year

herd of 50 to 60 cattle while learning how to set up accounts, pay invoices, set up a budget and then sticking to it, fencing, bore set ups and maintenance, mustering, branding and then how to tag and sell the stock.

Corporation members have chosen their own brand and earmark and are now waiting for the licensee to do a full muster to find out how many cleanskins there are.

It's a learning process that covers all aspects of managing and running a cattle station so that at the end of the current lease the traditional owners might be in a position to take over from the current licensee or employ an experienced manager they might give direction to.

The members of the Mungkarta Cattleman's Aboriginal Corporation are a mix of younger men and women and older men.

The younger women have ambitions of being involved in the paperwork side of the business as many of them have better literacy and numeracy levels.

Members have identified that literacy and numeracy training is needed for all of them and having a real and obvious purpose to learn has given them the motivation to dedicate themselves to that.

Ongoing support will be provided to the corporation by the IPP, CLC and the Northern Territory Department of Regional Development, Primary Industry, Fisheries and Resources.

New CDEP body to lobby for improvements

Aboriginal organisations that deliver CDEP throughout the Northern Territory have come together to form a new reference group and advocacy body.

CDEP Communities NT (CCNT) has been formed out of concern over proposed CDEP reforms by the Federal Government.

CCNT steering committee member Waturr Gumana, from Gan Gan Homelands, located inland from Blue Mud Bay, said the group is committed to improving CDEP in remote Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory.

"We believe CDEP works in our communities and our Homelands," Mr Gumana said.

"We know our CDEP organisations are owned and managed by our people, for our people, in our own communities, and we need to value this knowledge."

Gumana said Aboriginal people wanted to manage their own communities and determine their own future.

"I believe that a strong CDEP is able to create strong community," he said.

"We want to encourage all Aboriginal CDEP organisations to be the best they can be and we will support them."

CDEP Communities NT is made up of the following communities and organisations:

Tangentyere Council (Alice Springs), Laynhapuy Homelands (Arnhem Land), Kalano (Katherine), Jabiru, Bawinanga (Manningrida), Ramingining, Papulu Apparr-Kari (Tennant Creek), Ingkerreke Outstation Resource Services, Tjuwanpa (Hermannsburg), Mabunji Aboriginal Resource Centre (Borroloola), Marthakal Homelands Resource Centre (Galiwinku), Mungoordba (Robinson River), and Pep-pimenarti.



Members of the NLC at a recent Full Council meeting in Darwin

THE BILBIES FIGHT BACK

Under threat from changed fire regimes, reduced habitat and introduced species like foxes and cats, the endangered bilby may be fighting back.

During the past two years, rangers and traditional owners from the Central Australian region have been conducting monitoring surveys of the iconic species, the greater bilby, over a vast area and the signs are that overall bilby numbers aren't dropping.

Under the guidance of traditional owners, the Wu-laign Rangers (Lajamanu), the Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers (Tennant Creek) and the Warlpiri Rangers (Yuendumu, Nyirripi and Willowra) have undertaken many surveys of bilbies and other threatened species and to detect foxes and cats.

Surveys have also been carried out by the Elleuwurru community members on Murray Downs station.

The survey found four active burrows, fresh tracks, scats and diggings.

Those discoveries were significant because they were the first confirmed record of bilbies east of the Stuart Highway for at least 25 years and at least 150 kilometres south-east of any other known bilby populations.

On each survey, rangers and traditional owners would drive along a road or track and stop every five kilometres to look for all types of animal tracks or footprints, diggings, scats and burrows.

Any signs were recorded on an electronic cybertracker or data sheet.

Even with the modern technology available though, organisers maintain the survey wouldn't have been possible to the same extent without the skills, particularly tracking skills, of traditional owners.

On one survey in the Lander River area in the Tanami Desert, traditional owners dug up a huge male bilby.

The find was cause for great excitement as many people

knew how to track bilbies, but they'd never actually seen one before.

Aside from the surveys, action is also being taken to reduce fox numbers.

The Warlpiri Rangers have been baiting foxes at Sangsters Bore and the Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers at Mungalawurru west of Tennant Creek.

In each of those locations, fox baiting devices specially designed by the Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service so only foxes can take the poisoned bait have been used.

The aim of the baiting program is to give threatened species a chance to rebuild their numbers by reducing the number of foxes.

The recent surveys follow a study 10 years ago and when compared with that survey, the indications are that bilby numbers are being sustained.

This good news though is tempered by the latest results showing that bilbies are disappearing from some areas such as sites near Nyirripi and Kintore.

It's unclear what the reasons behind the reductions in those areas are.

Bilbies only eat bush onions, witchetty grubs and a few types of grass seeds so they can be seriously affected by changes to fire regimes, increases in predators such as foxes and over grazing by cattle.

Therefore, the number of bilbies in an area can reflect the health of the country.

The surveys program has funding for this year and it's hoped it will be able to win support for another three years after that.

Currently it's funded by the Natural Heritage Trust and the Northern Territory Government with assistance provided by the Central Land Council and Desert Wildlife Services.



Top: Castine, Rachel and Eva looking for tracks near Mungalawurru; Above: Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers Louise and Brian using a Cybertracker Right: Clark Martin with a bilby; Below: Warlpiri Rangers tracking bilbies at Sangsters Bore.



EMERGING INDIGENOUS RANGERS IN THE NORTHERN TROPICS.

In February 2009, the NLC, supported by the successful acquisition of an Indigenous Land Council (ILC) and FACHSIA grant, recruited 25 new Indigenous rangers from six community groups across the Top End.

Focusing on important land management issues such as weed control and fire management, it is anticipated that the Indigenous ranger groups working in the communities of Acacia, Gunbalanya, Peppimenarti, Wudikapildiyerr, Timber Creek and Belyuen will be well placed to carry out this work.

These issues will be managed with the support of the Northern Territory Government's Weeds Management Branch, Bushfires NT and educational facilities such as Charles Darwin University and Bachelor Institute.

Up until the arrival of European settlers, Indigenous clans lived in a reciprocal and committed manner with the environment over a period of many thousands of years.

Natural Resource Management (NRM) occurred in various forms, often usurping traditional knowledge and rarely acknowledging nor compensating Indigenous people for their efforts.

The emergence of new land management strategies and Indigenous ranger groups in the northern tropics is renewing culturally important land management practices.

The NLC, Bushfires NT and traditional owners met in the remote Daly/Port Keats community of Peppimenarti to participate in a fire management workshop.

The aim was to examine the need for an integrated fire management plan.

An explanation of a proposed regional strategy was given by NLC and Bushfires NT staff, with the aid of maps, which describe the frequency, range and intensity of the many fires that occur in the Top End.

It is common knowledge in these parts that early dry season, patch burning can prevent late dry season wildfires due to the firebreaks created by the former. These practices, traditionally carried out by Indigenous landowners

for the preservation of hunting areas, sacred sites and biodiversity regeneration are now facilitated by NLC ranger groups and Bushfires NT.

The revitalisation of cultural practices is timely, with the threat of climate change high on the governmental agenda.

These agencies assist by providing vehicles, fire-management equipment, aerial burning and training which increases the area of land managed where communities previously, had scant resources and persons to carry out the work.

Late season wildfires are reduced in intensity and range resulting in the decrease of CO₂ emissions.

After the initial presentation, family groups from the region sat down with NLC and Bushfires NT staff and discussed which areas were currently being burned and which areas required assistance, an important first step towards a fire management plan.

Employment opportunities will be generated in the region, which will assist with CO₂ reduction in the NT under voluntary emission trading schemes that are becoming more economically viable.

More importantly strategies of this kind will build capacity of communities to direct their own land management, increasing cultural awareness, not only between generations of Indigenous people who live there, but also between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

The Peppimenarti meeting was one of several carried out in the western Top End in February with a view to expanding successful fire management models that have



been developed in Arnhem Land with Indigenous ranger groups.

Recently, NLC Land and Sea Management staff again flew to Peppimenarti to interview and recruit ranger applicants.

Through a consultation process involving the Peppimenarti community, existing CDEP rangers who have been carrying out land management activities since 2000, were chosen with one senior ranger and four ranger full-time positions filled.

The Asyrikarrak Kirim Rangers, located to the north of the Moyle River will be focusing on the control

of *mimosa pigra* and other invasive weeds, fire management, crocodile egg harvesting and the sale of hatchlings, the making of native bee hives for the horticultural industry, and the establishment of a Kakadu plum plantation, for the pharmaceutical, nutrition and gourmet foods industry.

Disease monitoring of feral pig populations and feral ant and mosquito monitoring will also provide additional income.

**Above: Asyrikarrak Kirim Rangers
Below: meeting about fire management**



Tjuwanpa Rangers make the earth move

The capacity of the Tjuwanpa Rangers based near Hermannsburg, west of Alice Springs, is growing with several of their men being trained to operate earth moving equipment.

The rangers recently completed certificate qualifications for the operation of a variety of earth moving machinery, chainsaws and welding equipment.

Organised by the Central Land Council with help from Charles Darwin University, the training means the rangers will be able to carry out road repairs, upgrades of tourist camp grounds and other tasks related to their work including using the equipment in extreme fire conditions.

Casey Kenny has been with the rangers for three years. He said he enjoyed the training.

"We've been doing training for the bobcat course, fork lift, excavator or T Rex," he said with a laugh.

"We'll be allowed to use them because we've done the course and have our certificates. We could do a lot of things. There'll be a lot of work on them."

In contrast, Aaron Meneri has only just started with the rangers. He said it's been a steep learning curve.

"Been learning a lot," he said. "All the machinery and everything. It's good to learn more things."

"The bobcat's alright. The excavator was a bit hard. The bobcat was easy."

Aaron said he'd been encouraged to seek out a job with the rangers by his family.

"My brothers talked me into getting a job instead of sitting back home. (It was) a good idea."

He's now encouraging other young people to consider it.

"I think they should think about it rather than sitting back home," Aaron said. "Learn more. It's a bit hard (turning up every day) but you get more used to it and it's alright."

Another ranger, Malcolm Kenny, said he welcomed the variety of equipment he was trained to operate.

"A bit of everything like bobcat training and the excavator, a bit of welding and oxie cutting," he said.

"It's pretty easy. I like the whole lot. We do the tourist camp inside Palm Valley, Ormiston and fix those camp sites."

"Rangers is good because you get to go everywhere doing a lot of work."

Jeremy Kenny said the training will allow the Tjuwanpa Rangers to carry out a greater variety of work in their region.

"So we can do the tourism for NT," he said. "Just fixing up some tracks, cutting some down with chainsaws for them trees that are blocking the roads and stuff."

"It's a bit hard when you first start but when you get used to it it's a bit easier."

"I like the excavator and chainsaw. We did some welding at CDU there. We'll probably get a certificate. Get a license for them."

Jeremy said the qualifications won't just be useful by their ranger work but for any other employment opportunities in the future.

"If not for rangers then prob-



Top: Tjuwanpa Rangers (front row) Jeremy Kenny, Aaron Meneri, Casey Kenny, Trevor Zibell from AFTC Industrial Training and Logistics (through Charles Darwin University), Peter Braybon and Christian Malbunka. Bottom: Danny Sneddon, from Charles Darwin University, instructs Christopher Ungwanaka, from Hermannsburg, in the art of welding.

ably at the mines or something," he said. "Yeah work on the roads, the highway, stuff like that."

Wagiman Guwardagun Rangers move into new ranger base

The Wagiman Guwardagun Rangers have moved into a new Ranger Base to care for over 4,000 square kilometres of country in the Upper Daly region.

Until recently the rangers have been working out of the Pine Creek Aboriginal Advancement Association office at Kybrook Farm.

Successful grant applications from the Northern Land Council to the Aboriginal Benefits Account and the Working on Country program have enabled the establishment of a ranger base at Lewin Springs and the employment of four male and two female rangers.

The ranger base enables the Wagiman Guwardagun Rangers to have a greater presence on country.

Their work includes implementing traditional burning practices, managing weeds and feral animals, protecting waterways, looking after sacred sites and getting young people more involved in their country and culture.

Right: the Wagiman Guwardagun Rangers.



Quolls are cruising on the Island Ark



Indigenous rangers and Northern Territory Government scientists have just returned from an annual survey of northern quolls seeking refuge from cane toads on two remote islands off the Territory coast.

Department of Natural Resources, Environment, The Arts and Sport (NRETAS) scientists in partnership with Gurmurr Marthakal Rangers from Elcho Island recently spent 12 days on Astell and Pobassoo Islands, located off North East Arnhem Land, capturing and marking the endangered marsupials.

NRETAS Biodiversity North senior scientist Tony Griffiths said preliminary population estimates show more than 2500 adult females on Astell Island and more than 450 adult females on Pobassoo Island.

"This is remarkable considering just 65 northern quolls were translocated in 2003, and after a population boom in the

last couple of years, this survey indicates populations appear to have since stabilised," Mr Griffiths said.

"A total of 404 quolls were captured and marked, and the health and condition of all the animals was excellent.

"Other fauna, including skinks, on both islands are healthy despite the large numbers of quolls now residing there, which indicates that the relocation program is not affecting the delicate ecosystems on the islands.

"The Gurmurr Marthakal Rangers also took this survey trip as an opportunity to conduct ghost net and weed surveys on Astell, Pobassoo and surrounding islands."

Left: Marthakal Ranger Wayne Dummarangi with northern quoll

Families looking after country: NRM capacity building projects

More than 50 traditional owners in Central Australia have been involved in pilot projects under a new program funded by the Natural Heritage Trust Regional Investment Strategy designed to build skills and interest in Aboriginal people in remote areas.

Staff from the CLC and the NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and The Arts (DN-RETA) helped out with training at Tennant Creek, Harts Range and Santa Teresa.

At Tennant Creek, traditional owners and Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers completed training and a survey for small mammals and reptiles with Kanttaji Aboriginal Land Trusts and Parra Freehold Lease. Twenty one species of mammals and reptiles were recorded in the areas surveyed.

At Santa Teresa and Harts Range, traditional owners completed on-the-job training to repair fencing to keep out cattle from culturally important waterholes on Santa Teresa Aboriginal Land Trust and Mount Riddock Pastoral Lease.

This work included weed iden-

tification, fencing and concreting, power tool use, occupational health and safety and environmental awareness.

Those involved were happy with the opportunity to visit and take care of their traditional country and looked forward to being involved again next time.

In the words of one senior traditional owner "...this is one of the best things to happen for us you know....all the families who are looking after country, all the blokes and men who are working on this....this is one of the best things to happen.

"We didn't have a chance to go...we didn't have any equipment for working and cleaning out.

"Now that we've got land council to help, probably it would



Top: the group at Santa Teresa, above left: Brendon, Marie-Louise, Brian, Dwayne from the Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers on a fauna survey; above right: l-r Lachlan Webb, Max Hayes, Ronnie Webb, Michael Rieff, Kevin Webb, David Dolman, Sylvester Webb and Robert Rieff

have taken a long time if we were just doing it ourselves, now there's a job for youngfella mob and that's

really good how they're working together...that's really good, the best thing."

CLC welcomes rangers



The CLC will soon have nearly just over 70 Aboriginal rangers as employees to close the gap left by the demise of CDEP. Already 40 rangers have joined the CLC and, once arrangements for the others are finalised, the CLC will have nearly 200 employees.

More than half of the CLC's staff are Aboriginal.

All of the CLC's ranger groups got together at a ranger camp at Hamilton Downs near Alice Springs recently for three days of professional development from experts in the field of land management.

The well-established Tjuwanpa rangers gave a demonstration on how to use quadbikes and spray gear, including safe weed spraying techniques.

The rangers also heard about the latest techniques in fire mapping, planning and onground fire management and were trained on using Cyber Trackers which record information in the field for fauna surveys.

Dylan Gordon from Lajamanu said ranger camps like these were an important way of keeping in touch when you live on a remote community.

"It's good to be a ranger - we learn more about the outside," he said.

American scientist Jayne Brim Box was waiting at nearby Fish Hole waterhole to show the rangers the latest scientific techniques to assess the health of waterholes. Dr Brim Box has worked with traditional owners at Uluru, Docker River, Santa Teresa, and Ti Tree on looking after precious waterholes under threat from feral animals and other sources.

Titus White, a ranger from the recently reformed Lajamanu group, said that waterholes were important for people in his country.

"We look after our waterholes - we walk around cleaning them up and check for dead animals. We like to go down there and swim," he said.

Brian Crafter from Tennant Creek group the Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers has worked as a ranger for several years.

"Aboriginal people have been looking after these waterholes for thousands of years and its important that we keep looking after them. Got to look after the main trees because they help keep the waterhole healthy," he said.

The rangers also got an inspiring induction talk about working for the CLC and an outline of the Land Rights Act, permits, and legal issues associated with cattle from legal staff.



Top: The rangers at Hamilton Downs; Above left taking a sample at Fish Hole and right, ranger Colin Joseph from the Tjuwanpa Ranger group checks a water sample; Above: Ranger groups work together on their plans for their country Right: Rangers



Nyinkka Nyunyu: rolling out the welcome mat

The Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Cultural Centre in Tennant Creek has been polished up ready for the start of a busy tourist season.

The centre boasts an outstanding permanent exhibition, which has five major sections.

They include:

Punttu (family), a collection of screenprinted self portraits by Warumungu artists providing a contemporary expression of skin groups or relationships;

Nyinta manungku (living in the land), a comprehensive display of bush tucker and other bush resources;

Wanijal payinti manu (yesterday and today) is a series of dioramas made by Warumungu artists, which outlines the history of the region including Aboriginal involvement in the cattle industry and gold mining;

Wurmulalkki mukka (returned

histories) highlights the return of traditional objects from collections of the South Australia and Victoria museums; and

Pina parinyi manu purtakijji (getting the land back) traces the history of the Warumungu land claim and celebrates the Aboriginal relationship with the land.

The Nyinkka Nyunyu centre also has a shop selling artworks and crafts to the public and a café with refreshments and meals.

Local men make artefacts in the centre's grounds, demonstrating the skills to tour groups and local students while the gardens feature a range of bush tucker that Aboriginal people across the Barkly have gathered for generations.

Right: Top from left, Kelvin Morrison, Derek Ricky, Danny Frank, Lex Foster, Mark Graham, Leon Jones and Sammy Dickenson
Right left: Danny Frank works on a coolamon at the Nyinkka Nyunyu cultural centre in Tennant Creek.

Apart from making artefacts to be sold at the centre, Danny and his colleagues also teach young people and tourists how to make them.



Above left: Workers inside the Nyinkka Nyunyu cultural centre in Tennant Creek. From left, Desley Parlow, Merisha Hayes, Rose Graham and Tina Ricky.

'From Stonecountry to Saltwater' Walk

Senior and junior members of the Numamudirrdi clan and Yugul Mangi Rangers recently completed a five day walk from the old mission at Ngukurr all the way to Wuyagibar on the coast on the Gulf of Carpentaria.

This walk was along a path traditionally used for generations under the direction of senior elders and was used to teach younger people about important knowledge of country and culture.

Starting at the old mission site near Ngukurr on October 6, people walked to Mangajarra, then on to Awumbunji and through to Wuyagiba finishing the walk.

Roger Numamudirrdi and his sons Clarry and Walter Rogers have really wanted to do this walk for a several years and with the help of Don Duggan and Joe Morrison started to plan.

Funding from NAILSMA's 'Talking Culture on Country' grants program and from the Indigenous Heritage Program made

it possible this year. As a young man Roger Numamudirrdi used to make this walk often with his family

The main reason for the walk was to teach traditional knowledge to younger generations that will help them care for the country properly, now and into the future.

Story telling by Roger Numamudirrdi, Clarry Rogers and Walter Rogers to the younger people and rangers to teach this knowledge took place all the way along the walk.

Young people were told about ancestral creation stories, about the significance of the places they went to, how to care for country, how to burn country the proper way and how look after



Stone Country: Freshwater spring on Wuyagibar Beach

art sites and significant areas like tool making sites, waterholes and spring-water places.

Along the way the rangers took plenty of video footage and photographs to make a DVD and photo books that will document the knowledge and help share it with the wider community in the Ngukurr area.

Clarry Rogers said about the project "Other Aboriginal people will want to do similar projects on their country; it's the start of something bigger."

'Talking Culture on Country'

grants for Indigenous ecological knowledge are available until late 2009.

If you would more information or would like to apply for a grant, get in touch with David Wise at NAILSMA ph 89467674 fax 89467677, email david.wise@cdu.edu.au or go to the NAILSMA IEK website at www.nailsma.org.au/projects/iek

This project is supported by funding from the Commonwealth Government through the Natural Resource Management Board of the Northern Territory.

Keeping people talking



Judy Nixon

At 21 years-of-age, the Papulu Appar-kari Aboriginal Corporation seems to have a very mixed brief.

The centre has been around for more than two decades now and chief executive officer Karan Hayward said its major focus is the preservation of Aboriginal languages in the Barkly.

But Papulu Appar-kari is also a CDEP provider.

"We're a CDEP organisation. We employ about 142 CDEP positions but our core function is language and culture and mainly making sure we've got it there for the future generations," Ms Hayward said.

"Basically we're a multimedia centre, we produce our own books. We have lots of little arms and businesses around the place but language and culture's our core."

"Where I come from in Queensland our language is basically gone but to see them here, unbelievable and I'm just in awe of the ladies and the men."

One of those ladies is Judy Nixon, who Ms Hayward describes as the heart and backbone of the centre.

Mrs Nixon has been a part of the language centre since its start.

"Most of the work that I do is as a mentor for the younger ladies to do the language work and do programs at the school," she said. "Get them prepared to do lessons with the children.

"Do interpreting and translating work for any government departments or whoever wants work done like translating from English to language.

"I made some little story books too. Helped all the other ladies with their language too.

"I speak three or four languages (five with English). I understand a bit of other languages too, you know, just by listening to them. I can't speak it but I understand it."

Mrs Nixon is passionate about ensuring Aboriginal languages are spoken by generations to come.

"I'm here as their mentor and encourage them to keep working on their languages to make us stronger so it can be passed on to the younger ones," she said.

"We don't want to let it die out. We want to keep it strong."

United Nations concern over NT Intervention



The United Nations has written to the Australian Government expressing concern over racist elements of the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER).

"This is the slap of realism that this Government desperately needs.

"The international community are crying out against this blatantly racist intervention, which is serving as a major embarrassment for us on a global stage," said Australian Greens Senator Rachel Siewert.

Chairman of the Elimination of Racial Discrimination Committee, Fatimata-Binta Victoire Dah, has written to the Government requesting a progress report on Kevin Rudd's promise to reinstate the Racial Discrimination Act.

The letter states: "The committee notes with concern that the Racial Discrimination Act was suspended as a necessity to enact the measures contained in the NTER."

"The Australian Government now has until July 31 to report to the UN on plans to reinstate the Racial Discrimination Act," said senator Siewert.

The five yearly requirement to report on compliance of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights is due this week."

"Australia is in clear breach of its obligations under the UN Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racism.

"It is high time the Federal Government acknowledged this and acted immediately to restore racial equality in this country."

The UN was responding to a complaint made by a number of Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory who live on prescribed communities.

NSW Aboriginal leader Warren Mundine

described both the complaint and those making it as a "joke"

The complaint detailed eight main areas of discrimination:

- threatens Aboriginal cultural and social norms and traditional collective ownership of land;
- undermines traditional authority and prevents traditional owners from fulfilling cultural obligations;
- undermines Aboriginal governance and decision making in relation to Aboriginal communities, assets and property and places control of Aboriginal communities in the hands of Government employees;
- transfers ownership of community housing to the Australian government;
- removes consideration of Aboriginal customary law and cultural practice in bail and sentencing in the Northern Territory;
- restricts the right to social security on the basis of race;
- removes rights of review available to other citizens; and
- imposes severe hardship on the most vulnerable in the Australian community.

It said that the "Northern Territory Intervention on the basis of racial discrimination has led Aboriginal people to perceive that it is acceptable and appropriate to discriminate against Aboriginal people from the Northern Territory and that they are less worthy of legislative protections afforded to other Australians."

Land council to come together in new home

The Central Land Council's new home will be opened on June the 11th. The multi-million dollar building will consolidate the CLC's five Alice Springs offices in one purpose-built complex opposite the CLC's current main office on the Stuart Highway, leaving only the royalties office at a separate location.



The north side of the new office while it was still under construction late last year.

Federal Government approval of the \$10 million construction followed seven years of negotiations and will bring many benefits for the community as a whole and the people the CLC represents.

CLC director David Ross said the new building will improve efficiencies for the council's operations and convenience for its constituents.

"Having all staff located in the one place will improve the way we operate, including reducing

costs, and when people, who live out bush come to do business with us, they'll have a central office to go to," Mr Ross said.

The building will have an environmental four green star or "best practice" rating.

The project is funded from the Aboriginal Benefits Account as well as money raised through the sale of the CLC's current building on the Stuart Highway.

Mr Ross said the opening of the new building is a pivotal point in the land council's history.

Below: Just some of the homes of the CLC over the years



Hartley Street



Gregory Terrace



Stott Terrace



1986-2009: 33 Stuart Hwy

Women's Business on CAAMA



A new show on CAAMA has audiences clamouring for more according to its producers.

Denella Hampton and Celestine Rowe have been hosting the show since Friday 13 February.

"It was awesome and we had a great response from the community and people are telling us they can't wait to hear it again," Denella said.

"I've just managed to do a quick interview with the first female vice president of South Africa and we've had a lot of great people on already.

"What we're trying to achieve is to hear from women in the community and tell us what they want to hear about health, education and all sorts of issues," she said.

Celestine is equally enthusiastic about their show.

"If we get other women on

board who can be role models then the sky's the limit," she said.

Denella first entered media when she joined Imparja TV's Yamba's Playtime and moved to CAAMA four years ago.

"I was employed as a promotions officer and then they needed somebody in radio.

"I filled in and I became full-time and I really love it," she said.

Celestine was first interviewed by Land Rights News when she was an apprentice diesel mechanic at the Granites Mine some years ago.

"I became a mum and ended up looking after my kids for three years.

"I've been at CAAMA for about six months now and I love it. It's the best job - ever.

"Every day is like the first day of work. It is fantastic," Celestine said.

Top: Womens Show hosts Denella Hampton and Celestine Rowe
Below: the team I-r Denella Hampton, Natasha Watkins, Marissa Wollogorang and Celestine Rowe



Gumatj sign forestry deal with Forestry Tasmania

A partnership between Gumatj traditional owners from north east Arnhem land and Forestry Tasmania will help build a timber industry in East Arnhem Land.

Gumatj Corporation's Chairman, Galarrwuy Yunupingu, said the collaboration with Forestry Tasmania would provide jobs, training, business opportunities and cheaper building materials for both the Gumatj clan and other local businesses.

"The forestry project is a win-win-win outcome," Mr Yunupingu said. "It will create a future for Gumatj men and women on their own land, using their own materials and building their own houses."

"Forestry Tasmania staff and Gumatj people will learn from each other to manage the land while creating a sustainable timber industry," he said.

Indigenous forestry workers will selectively harvest hardwood from 850 hectares of land on the Rio Tinto Alcan bauxite mining lease, near Nhulunbuy, and use the timber to build houses on Gumatj homelands, supported by the Jack Thompson Foundation.

Apart from timber milling, Mr Yunupingu said business

opportunities include the collection and sale of seeds, sales of sawn timber, processing of timber products for high value uses such as furniture, wood veneer products, the use of waste wood instead of bunker fuel to generate power, carbon credits and fire management.

Forestry Tasmania and the Gumatj Corporation will also investigate tourism opportunities based on ecotourism and cultural activities.

The Gumatj clan are Yolngu people and traditional owners of land on and around the Gove Peninsula in North East Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, including the Rio Tinto Alcan bauxite mine near Nhulunbuy.

Under the terms of the agreement, Forestry Tasmania will work with the Gumatj Corporation to develop a sustainable timber industry, based on selective harvesting and management of hardwood on the Gumatj clan estate and use of the timber for a range of associated industries.



**Above: A Gumatj mobile saw mill
Right left: Gumatj Corporation's Chairman, Galarrwuy Yunupingu with Forestry Tasmania representative**



School attendance measure begins in NT

From January this year, parents in Hermannsburg, Katherine, Katherine town camps, Wallace Rockhole, Wadeye and Tiwi Islands who are receiving income support will be required to tell Centrelink where their children are enrolled and to take reasonable measures to ensure their children attend school regularly.

Parents who fail to enrol their children or take reasonable measures to get their children to go to school, may have their income support payments suspended until their children are enrolled or attend school.

The Government says a decision to temporarily withhold a parent's income support will be a last resort.

The school attendance measure will only be used after a series of steps have been taken to increase parental responsibility including developing an attendance plan with the parent, clearly setting out

actions parents should take to improve school attendance.

Where it can be shown the parent has failed, despite help from the child's school and Centrelink, to exercise parental responsibility to ensure the child is enrolled and attending school, payments may be suspended.

Full back pay will be provided when parents exercise parental responsibility within a 13 week period.

Centrelink is currently visiting all trial communities to inform parents of the school attendance measure.

High Court Intervention loss for Traditional Owners

Traditional Owners of Maningrida have lost a High Court case challenging the Federal Intervention, but have won the right to pursue compensation for the compulsory acquisition of Aboriginal land.

The case was launched by Reggie Wurrildjal, a Traditional Owner of Maningrida, who challenged the validity and constitutionality of leases over Maningrida land in western Arnhem Land.

In the High Court ruling, the majority of judges found that an amendment to the Aboriginal Land Rights Act allowing the Commonwealth to take five-year leases over land, communities and town camps was valid.

The court said the acquisition was on 'just terms' because the

laws underpinning the intervention provided for proper compensation for Aboriginal organisations and people.

They found, however, that there were grounds for land councils to ask for 'just terms' compensation.

Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister Jenny Macklin said as soon as the Northern Territory valuer-general had determined the valuation of the level of compensation to be paid to the 73 prescribed communities, payments would begin.

ULURU RENT MONEY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Traditional owners of Uluru have invested some of the money they receive from rent into setting up data and photo archives on their communities using the Ara Irititja system originally set up for Pitjantjatjara people.

The databases were recently placed in Imanpa, Docker River, Apatula and Mutitjulu and have been enthusiastically used.

The Uluru Rent Money Community Development Project has resulted in around \$750,000

annually of the rent monies from Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (UKTNP) – leased on Aboriginal land – going towards targeted community development projects in that region. It has a number of other projects.



The Ara Irititja archives arrive...from top Docker River, Apatula and Imanpa
Bottom right: Imanpa resident Tanya Luckey and Ara Irititja coordinator Julia Burke

Young stars shine bright at media workshop

Young indigenous people on remote communities are encountering more lifestyle options and future choices than ever.

Yet many are early school leavers who have completely disengaged with formal education.

A recent youth and media workshop held at Hamilton Downs near Alice Springs was part of a research project on learning and literacy development conducted by Dr Inge Kral from ANU.

community photos.

"We've got to learn from the old people but we have to learn how to put it into the database for Warlpiri people and everybody really," he said.

"I also do video and radio broadcasts with Warlpiri Media."

He thought the workshop was valuable for everyone.

"We can learn from other people. Some people have got the answers for what we are looking for and others look to us for

Ravonna Urban from Beswick will start making a documentary about her grandfather when she returns to Beswick.

"I am making a documentary about Victor Hood, my grandfather," Ravonna said.

"Hopefully the whole community will see what its all about and we've been getting some new ideas from here," Ms Urban said.

Musician Chris Read from Wingellina uses music recording software to record his band's songs.

"I record with my band using rhythm guitar. I'm a lead singer. We record on to a computer using *Garage Band*," he said.

"You don't really have to know reading and writing for that - you can learn it, maybe one week you can pick it up."

Many of the young people at the workshop use their mobiles and the internet for banking but few had easy internet access.

Some used the computers in the arts centres and media facilities.

The young Aboriginal people at the workshop said they were using all forms of modern technology to watch videos on the web, download music and videos on their phones, send texts, record music and stories and keep up to date with the latest sport results.

The project was supported by the Fred Hollows Foundation, ANU Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy and Research and the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust.

the answers.

"So we have to come together and show the one big picture and the voices to tell us the way through media," he said.

Shane White, also from Lajamanu, worked with Maxwell on making a video for the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust.

"I learnt a lot from making the WETT DVD: editing, filming and interviews," he said.

"I started working with Warlpiri Media three years ago and I also use the database for old photos and stories.

"It's important because old people are getting sick and they need to pass on information to us," Shane said.

It made it clear that young people who have missed out on school are still able to learn and make positive contributions.

Young people from Beswick, Lajamanu, Yuendumu, Wingellina, Alice Springs and Ti Tree spent four days using computers to tell their stories in video, powerpoints and music and the chance to share their experiences with others provided inspiration for many of them.

Maxwell Tasman from Lajamanu has worked with Warlpiri Media for several years and, like many of the young people at the workshop, is well versed in the latest technology.

He works on the database set up by NT Libraries to archive



Above top and middle: the Youth Media Workshop group
Above: left Shane White and right Maxwell Tasman
Right: Azaria Robertson
Left: I-r Augustine Kennedy, Inga Kraal and Ravonna Urban



SAMSON & DELILAH

Alice Springs film maker Warwick Thornton describes his latest film *Samson and Delilah* as his “good fight”, his “reason for being”. And it shows.

Thornton's heart and soul manifest themselves in exquisite images on the screen which are so unhindered by dialogue, it is almost a silent film.

As young actor Marissa Gibson who plays Delilah says: “Aboriginal people don't say very much, we just use body language”.

Relentless and profound, this small scale film spares nobody – art dealers, governments, Aboriginal family relationships, white Alice Springs café goers. Everybody is complicit in the misery that has befallen these two symbols of Aboriginal youth.

We are all responsible for the plight of these two young people who, unlike their many real life counterparts, narrowly avert tragedy.

While Thornton spares nobody, he is equally tough on himself – not a sound, not an image, is used which doesn't support the stark and frightening reality of *Samson and Delilah*.

It is so unrelenting and sparse that the audience is herded, like *Samson and Delilah* and many Aboriginal people in Central Australia, on a bleak and inexorable journey only made bearable by scenes of delicate and exacting beauty.

Samson's brother's band, which plays on the outstation every day, thrums out the same music - day in, day out - pounding out the boredom, the monotony of life on this remote outstation into the bleached dust.

Those reggae rhythms, commonly heard on nearly every Central Australian community, become a powerful symbol of the smallness of their world.

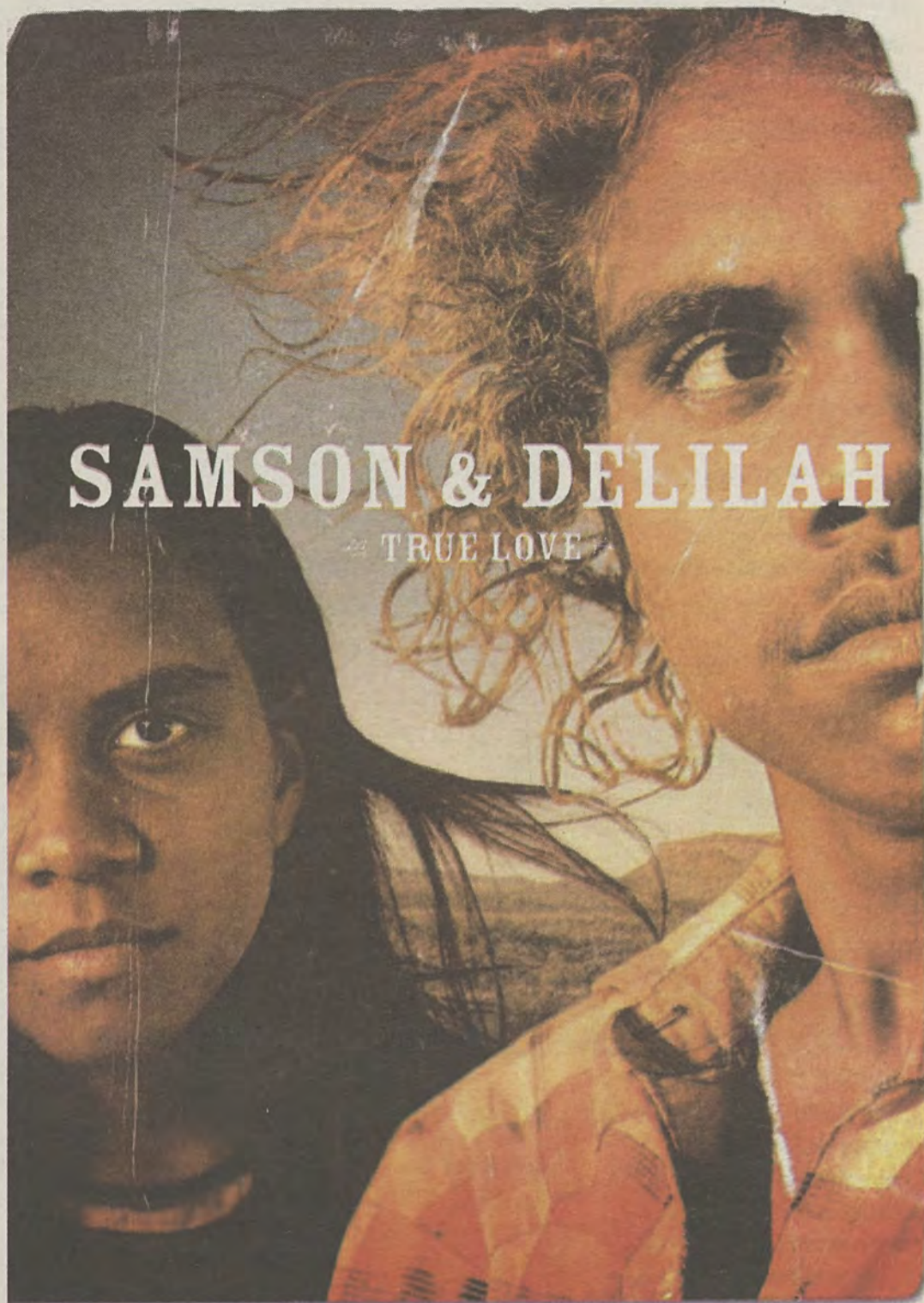
The cycle of debt and poverty are played out through the art dealers who prey on Delilah's grandmother.

The potent juxtaposition of her famous artist Nana's paintings in a smart gallery in town and Delilah's own desperate attempts to sell her own paintings to silent coffee drinkers at a café is a damning indictment of the Aboriginal art industry and its hypocrisies.

Thornton is so skilled at story telling that the audience's relationship with *Samson and Delilah* is maintained despite the cultural chasms between them.

Relentless to the end, redemption, for these two, is at hand only as a tough alternative and a very last resort.

Thornton will pick up many awards for his small masterpiece.



THE STORY

Samson and Delilah live in an isolated world – A remote Aboriginal community in the Australian desert. In amongst a tiny collection of houses, everything here happens in a cycle.

Day in and day out – nothing changes, everything stays the same and no one seems to care.

Except for *Samson*, a cheeky 15 year-old who yearns for the horizon. Even though boredom set in long ago, *Samson* attempts to occupy himself with his offbeat humour.

Unable to express his desire for something more, *Samson's* private

escape comes in a tin – he's a petrol sniffer.

When a violent eruption takes place at home *Samson* breaks the cycle and his journey begins.

Sixteen year-old *Delilah* is the sole carer of her artist grandmother, who fancies the hopeless *Samson* for her son-in-law.

When Nana passes away *Delilah* is held responsible and the traditional punishment is harsh.

Battered and bruised, an unlikely young man comes to *Delilah's* rescue. *Samson*. In a stolen car with no food,

money or idea where they are headed they turn their backs on the community and head towards the desert horizon.

The next day, out of petrol, they walk into the closest town.

The two teenagers soon discover that life outside the community can be cruel. Though hungry and rejected *Samson and Delilah* fall in love. It is all they have.

It is real.

Delilah searches for a way to improve their situation and begins to paint.

She tries desperately to sell

her work, but no one is buying. In frustration she pushes her work at potential buyers aware of their discomfort, aware of them not wanting her.

Samson tags along, the tin a constant companion. Exhausted and belittled *Delilah* also falls prey to *Samson's* demon.

By accident the two young lovers are forcibly separated and *Delilah* starts a journey of her own – a journey to a better place.

As *Samson* slowly self-destructs alone and under the bridge, *Delilah's* love guides him home.

SAMSON AND DELILAH WILL BE SHOWN AT THE CLC COUNCIL MEETING AT TITJIKALA ON 28 APRIL 2009

Rirratjingu clan celebrate Yalangbara

A new publication featuring images of more than 80 Indigenous artworks celebrates the significance of the Rirratjingu clan in northeast Arnhem Land.

'Yalangbara: Art of the Djang'kawu' is the result of a three year collaboration between the Marika family, and the Museum and Art Gallery of the NT (MAG-NT).

The book is the first Indigenous art publication to focus on one significant ancestral site, Yalangbara, a creation site at Port Bradshaw in north east Arnhem Land.

Clan member and artist Banduk Marika said she considered the publication of her family's artwork and related stories as the next step following the listing of Yalangbara

on the Commonwealth Government's Register of the National Estate in 2003.

"This publication is like entering into our parliament – the Rirratjingu parliament – we are giving the public access to information that has been forbidden for thousands of years because its time to show everyone that Yalangbara is important," Ms Marika said.

MAGNT is developing an exhibition of the Rirratjingu clan in partnership with the National Museum of Australia scheduled for late 2010.



Above: Banduk Marika and below: members of the Marika family with the new book

Red Cross Breakfast Club: free breakfast for bush kids

Aboriginal children in a number of remote communities will be eating a guaranteed 200 pieces of fruit a year as the result of a new agreement between Red Cross and Outback Stores.

The fruit will be added to Red Cross' Good Start Breakfast Club menu in any community in which an Outback Store is located.

"Over a child's primary school years we've estimated that's around 1200 pieces of fruit they probably wouldn't have eaten," Outback Stores Wellbeing Manager Julie Croft said.

"Inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption accounts for a six per cent mortality rate among Indigenous Australians according to a study quoted in the Australian Bureau of Statistics report 'The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (2008)'".

"Having one piece of fruit a day will provide half of a child's necessary daily fruit intake."

Red Cross has been operating breakfast programs in remote areas of the Northern Territory since 2006 and is now working with 33 communities and 13 homeland centres to achieve improved nutrition for children.

More than 102,150 nutritious breakfasts were provided in remote communities in the NT last year alone.

"The breakfasts include fruit when available but not all communities have a reliable source of good quality items and the supply can be inconsistent.

"By working with Outback Stores, which has as part of its business charter a commitment to maintain a reliable supply of fresh fruit and vegetables for communities, Red Cross can access a guaranteed supply of seasonal fruit every single day," Red Cross Executive Director, Northern Territory, Sharon Mulholland said.

"For some children this will mean tasting certain fruits for the first time, such as Central Desert

youngsters trying tropical fruit varieties they have never seen before."

The breakfast program partnership springs from the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the two organisations in January.

"Both organisations are focused on health outcomes in Indigenous communities and this partnership will see the development of joint policies based on the provision of healthy food and the promotion of healthy eating patterns," Ms Mulholland said.

Outback Stores says it is committed to improving health outcomes in remote Indigenous communities and has set targets

"Fresh fruit and vegetable sales have increased from between 2 to 4 per cent on entry to a store to a company average now of 7 per cent. We are aiming for 10 per cent" OUTBACK STORES

to help increase sales of fruit and vegetables.

"It will also encourage community

participation in co-operative initiatives that will improve the availability, accessibility and affordability of healthy food."

"We look at the amount of fruit and vegetables being sold as a percentage of total food and tobacco sales at a store," Ms Croft said.

"Fresh fruit and vegetable sales have increased from between 2 to 4 per cent on entry to a store to a company average now of 7 per cent.

"We are aiming for 10 per cent by December this year.

"It is important for children to be introduced to a wide range of fruits early to enhance their taste profile and increase the likelihood of eating a good variety throughout their lives," she said.

The first communities to benefit from the partnership will be Yuendumu, Imanpa, Ali Curung and Bagot.

continued from page 3

Central Australia: Leases What the communities have been offered

Three Aboriginal communities in the Central Land Council's region have been told by the Australian Government they have three options - to accept one of two government leasing offers and the new housing that comes with them or receive no new housing at all.

The ultimatums have been put despite there already being drastic housing shortages in each of the communities.

No other communities have been offered a deal of any sort so far.

The Offers

The government is offering each of the Hermannsburg, Lajamanu and Yuendumu communities two lease alternatives. A 60 year lease over the whole community or a 40 year lease over the parts of the communities where the houses are built.

The "whole of the community" lease, which covers the entire community brings with it a \$2 million payment to the community and \$2 million payment to traditional owners, but community members and traditional owners give away any control over the development of their communities.

The precise terms of a whole of community lease, including its length and the amount of the payments, are subject to negotiation.

Hermannsburg

Both options would attract \$9.6 million for housing, but the 40 year lease, which would just cover the part of the community where houses are built, does not include any payments in the deal.

Lajamanu

The Commonwealth has promised to spend \$8.7 million on new houses, major fix-ups and infrastructure (power, water, sewerage) in Lajamanu, if a long-term lease is signed.

Yuendumu

If a long-term lease is signed, the Australian Government has promised to spend \$13 million on the construction of new houses, the repair of existing houses and infrastructure (power, water and sewerage).

Summary

The CLC's director David Ross says: "We think that the housing lease is a better option - it's a shorter time and a smaller area but we also think there should be guarantees that housing will improve.

"As far as I can see, the Whole of Community leases as they stand, aren't a good deal and if people want to sign up to them we advise them to take their time negotiating with the Commonwealth in order to get the best possible deal.

The communities understand this.

They are concerned about entering into a deal that will affect their children and grandchildren - perhaps even their great-grandchildren.

"Territory Housing would take control of the houses - its track record isn't great in places like Alice Springs so if people agreed to housing leases we would want to see some rules applied.

"However the money allocated for housing is not a huge amount when you consider that infrastructure will take up about 30 per cent of it. That means in the case of Yuendumu that only \$9m would be available for housing or about 18 houses."



Carbon offset industries for Indigenous communities

A new carbon offsetting industry could create over 1000 new jobs for Indigenous Australians and generate income of \$52million per year according to a new CSIRO report.

The study of six Indigenous Land Corporation properties across Western Australia, Northern Territory, and Queensland looked at land management practices including fire management, reforestation and grazing land management. These practices can sequester carbon or change emissions regimes and the change in carbon stocks or emissions could be sold as offsets.

"This research found potential greenhouse emissions offsets from fire management on Indigenous lands are worth A\$52 million per year* to Indigenous communities," says CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems Chief Dr Dan Walker.

"In employment terms this is equivalent to 346 full-time jobs or 1029 seasonal jobs for Indigenous people.

"This industry could prevent 2.6 million tonnes of carbon entering the atmosphere each year.

"Indigenous lands account for 54 per cent of all potential emissions reductions from Australia's fire-prone savannas and rangelands, meaning that Indigenous contributions to greenhouse gas abatement are very significant to

Australia," he says.

Indigenous fire management for carbon offsets has multiple benefits - greenhouse mitigation, biodiversity protection and helping to break the poverty cycle in Indigenous communities.

The report showed the main drivers determining whether offset projects would be feasible will be access to markets and the price paid for offsets.

Other issues of importance in Indigenous land management for carbon offsets are property rights on Indigenous lands, side effects on other natural resource management considerations such as biodiversity and water availability, and whether offset projects are compatible with traditional land management practices.

CSIRO warned that while the preliminary study demonstrates that greenhouse gas offsets from Indigenous land management can operate on paper more research was needed to further explore the potential of the research findings.

* Based on potential emissions offset of 2,597,758 t CO₂-emissions per year and a carbon price of \$20 per tonne.

Yolngu support homelands: Laynhapuy

Traditional Owners from north-east Arnhem Land have spoken out in support of maintaining their homelands on Aboriginal land, following consultations in the Yirrkala community.

The Northern Territory Government is conducting a review over the development of a policy on Aboriginal homelands, also known as outstations.

A consultation process, led by Patrick Dodson, is ongoing, after which a policy will be drafted and further consultation will be carried out before the policy is implemented by the NT Government.

Director of Laynhapuy Homelands Association, Djambawa Marawilli, said Yolngu people wanted to develop their own future, living on their country.

"We want to develop our own future through eco-tourism, job opportunities, busi-

ness opportunities, and education and training in our homelands," Mr Marawilli said.

"Government should recognise us – Traditional Owners living on country."

Mr Marawilli said the identity of Yolngu people comes from the land.

"Our Homelands have stories – you might see this on bark paintings, in our song lines, danced in our dances," he said.

"Our language comes from this land – the history of our land has been handed down generation after generation.

"In our Homeland communities we make sure our children and women are safe, and we don't have the problems of bigger Aboriginal communities."

Mr Marawilli said development of a policy must include provision of housing and support for economic development 'on country'.

BOARDING SCHOOL BOOST FOR INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

The Federal member for Lingiari, Warren Snowdon announced that three Territory boarding schools will receive more than \$900,000 in Federal Government assistance to upgrade their grounds and facilities.

"Yirara College and St Philip's College in Alice Springs will receive \$682,000 and \$165,000 respectively, while Nyangatjajara College in Yulara will get \$82,500," said Mr Snowdon.

"This is a terrific boost for

these schools. All three have a strong track record in providing high-quality education to their Indigenous students."

Mr Snowdon said Yirara College will use the funds to refurbish the male and female dormitories and resurface basketball courts.

St Philip's College will construct a reception area for each of the dormitories and Nyangatjajara College will construct perimeter fencing and gates to the complex.

Traditional owners decide not to mine Koongarra

Traditional owners in Kakadu have decided to continue a ban on mining at the Koongarra uranium deposit.

The French company Areva wants to mine 14,000 tonnes of uranium at the site that is surrounded by Kakadu National Park.

The deposit sits three kilometres from Nourlangie Rock – a sacred site and major tourist attraction.

At a meeting of stakehold-

ers in Jabiru and Coinda to discuss the future of the deposit, traditional owners decided mining should not go ahead at the site.

Traditional owner Jeffrey Lee is determined for the site to be included into Kakadu National Park.

TOURISM VENTURE UP AND RUNNING



Above: McCormack family members catering at the Youth Media workshop recently. Below: Gloria McCormack

After a year of development and training, the McCormack family at Thakaperte, 45 kms north-west of Alice Springs, have developed partnerships with Discovery Ecotours and Trek Larapinta.

Lucky Miles, a local business specialising in community-based tourism, developed the concept that's led to the deals. The Central Land Council and Tourism NT have provided support to help build relationships between the parties.

"We wanted something for the next generations to do," Stephen McCormack said.

"We want to become independent."

Gloria McCormack said the family wanted to be part of the decision

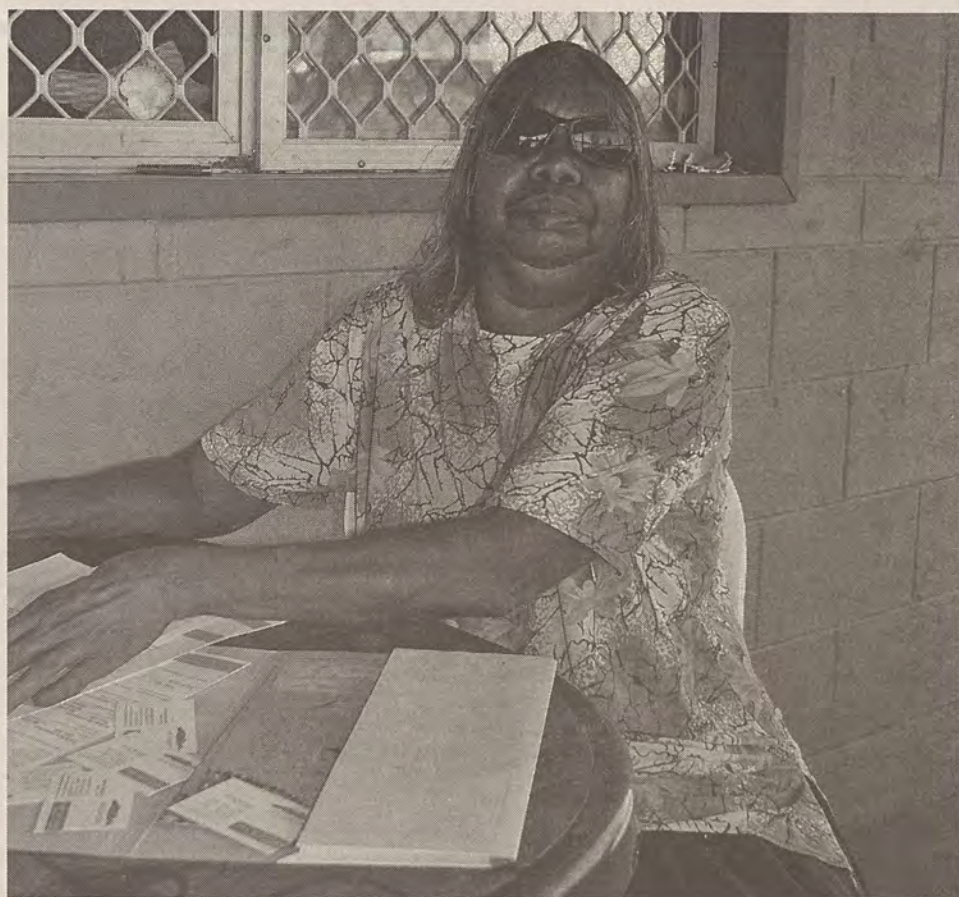
of what happened on their land.

"It's good for us to be part of the process," she said, "This is our country and we've got to look after it, but we also want to show it to people."

Shane Fewtrell from Trek Larapinta said his arrangement with the McCormacks is more than just a business agreement.

"As a locally-owned business we are endeavouring to provide a greater connection between people and this place," Mr Fewtrell said. "Supporting the McCormacks is a part of this process."

"We are just a modest part of the McCormack's vision for sustainability, but we are an extremely proud participant."



All-Stars too good for Adelaide



The Indigenous All-Stars were just too good for the Adelaide Crows in reclaiming the Pastor Sir Douglas Nichols Cup in Darwin.

The All Stars, led by Adelaide Crow Andrew McLeod, defeated the AFL club, 14.13 (97) to 6.7 (43) at Marrarra Stadium.

Former Pioneer rover and Minahan medallist, Matt Campbell, became the first Centralian to win the Graham 'Polly' Farmer

medal.

In the week leading up to the match, held every two years in Darwin, more than 60 Indigenous AFL players conducted community visits in Darwin, Jabiru, Katherine, Croker Island and Ramingining.



A selection of images from the Indigenous All Stars match in Darwin. All Stars were victorious over the Adelaide Crows. Pictures by Darren Moncrieff and Monica Napper



AND FOOTY IN THE CENTRE...

The bush makes an impact on the town

The 2008 Central Australian Football League season was the first year of a combined country and town competition, but it was the bush that forged the enduring moments for fans.

Last season brought together the five teams that had previously played in the town competition and five teams from the Country Cup competition into one league.

Some pundits had expected the town teams to dominate the league but those predictions didn't eventuate. It was Yuendumu's win over the townies, Pioneer, in the grand final and star Yuendumu player Liam Jurrah's recruitment by Melbourne in the AFL that highlighted a successful transition to the combined competition.

The bush community of Ltyentye Apurte balanced the final four of the finals nicely along with a second town team West.

AFL Central Australia general manager Jake McCauley said last year's grand final was a perfect outcome for the new competition.

"It was fantastic and from an organisation's point-of-view I don't think you could have a

better grand final," he said. "Yuendumu, what a great story. It will be interesting to see if they can back up again this year.

"Ltyentye Apurte was in the final four and Anmatjere and Hermannsburg were fifth and sixth so it was an excellent performance by the community sides. It just shows the strength of the community sides and the competition's better for having them in it."

The recruitment of Jurrah by Melbourne in the AFL's preseason draft was also a highlight of the season.

"What a great story," McCauley said. "It just goes to show the talent on show in Central Australia. I think when the new representative Northern Territory side takes shape to play in the Queensland competition this year, it'll showcase even more local talent."

The creation of the combined bush and town competition also meant great financial and travel demands on the community sides as it required they travel the hundreds of kilometres to Alice Springs twice as often during the season.

"It was probably organisation-wise as much as money-wise that contributed to the travel problems last year," McCauley said.

"This year we're confident the clubs are better off financially and organisation-wise. We're certainly going to work with those clubs and help them if they need it."

The B grade competition has been boosted this year with the addition of a team from Ltyentye Apurte, which will be the only community-based side with four town teams making up the numbers. All B grade games will also be played at Traeger Park this year.

The new season kicks off with the Lightning Carnival over the Easter weekend and a sponsorship deal means it won't cost teams to enter, although players will have to pay to enter the ground each day.

"Especially with the intervention and the distances teams travel it can be difficult for community sides," McCauley said.

Under the AFLCA's healthy lifestyle program no alcohol will be sold at the football this season except to members in Mona's Lounge.