

LAND RIGHTS NEWS

Volume 8, Number 2, August 2006



INSIDE
BARUNGA, BESWICK, MERREPEN
ALICE SPRINGS TOWN CAMPS
LAND MANAGEMENT IN THE CENTRE



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Land Rights News,



Chris Ryder rides hard to turn a beast during the CLC's horsemanship course conducted at Loves Creek station in Central Australia

Land Rights NEWS

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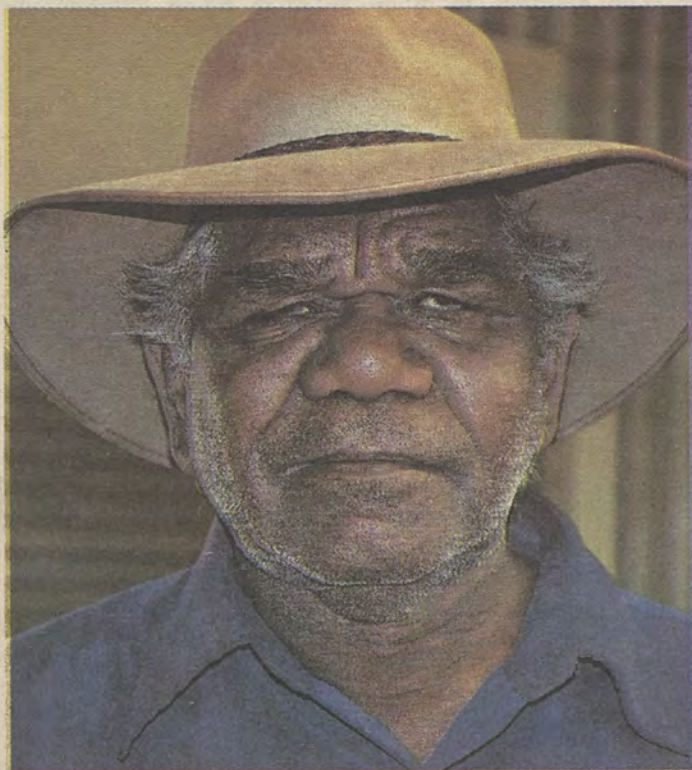
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COVER PHOTO

Wadeye kids are still smiling despite the turmoil in their community



NEW CHAIRMAN FOR THE CLC



CLC Chairman Lindsay Bookie

The Central Land Council has a new Chairman.

Mr Lindsay Bookie was elected at a Council meeting in Tennant Creek in June this year.

Mr Bookie, 62, is an Eastern Arrernte man who is well respected for his knowledge of Arrernte law and culture. He has run an award-winning 4WD tourism business on his traditional country at the northern edge of the Simpson Desert for six years.

He worked on pastoral properties in the region, served as a community police officer at Harts Range for five years and has also worked as a Central Land Council field officer.

Mr Bookie represented



Voting at Tennant Creek conducted by the Australian Electoral Commission

the Bonya region on the ATSIC Regional Council and the Bonya Regional Health Council.

Mr Bookie says he's extremely proud to be Chairman of the CLC.

"I've been a delegate and supporter of Land Council for many years and I'm looking forward for this chance to work hard for Aboriginal people," Mr Bookie said.

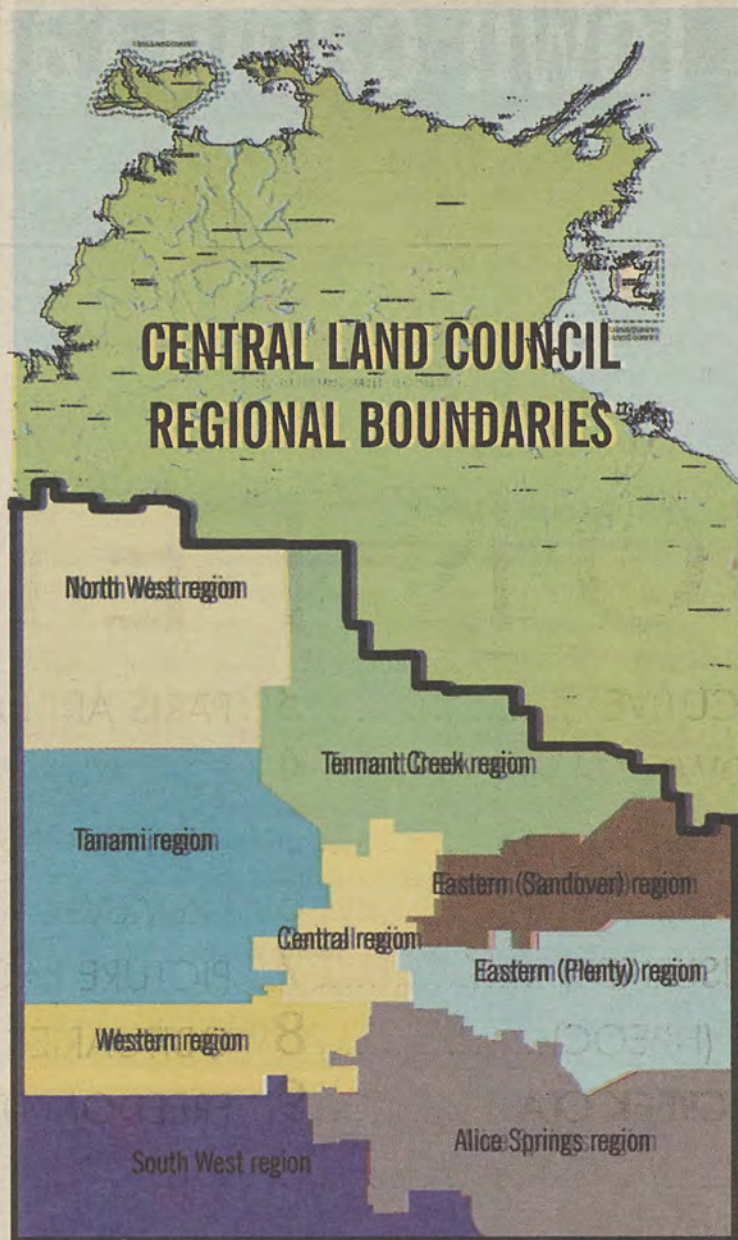
"I'm very keen to let people know about the good work the CLC has been doing - especially in tourism - but also in cattle projects and ranger programs all over Central Australia . . .

"I know we have many social problems - especially with alcohol - because I see it every day. But there are also many positive things happening and I don't want people to forget that."

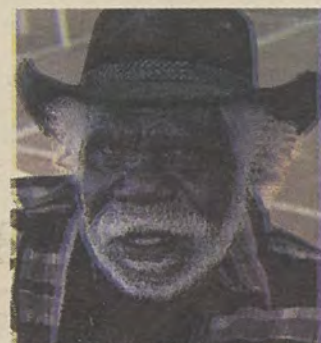
The CLC also elected a new Deputy Chairman and a new Executive.

The new Executive members are Raelene Smith, Steven Clyne, Deslie Rogers, Dennis Williams, Lindsay Corby, Brian Tennyson, Max Ray, Anthony Petrick and Ron Hagen. The Deputy Chairman is Mr Maurie Ryan from Kalkaringi.

The election was supervised by the Australian Electoral Commission.



Deslie Rogers Executive member North West region



Dennis Williams Executive member Tanami region



Lindsay Corby Executive member western Region



Steven Clyne Executive member South West region



Raelene Smith Executive member Alice Springs



Ron Hagan Executive member Central region



Max Ray Executive member Eastern (Sandover) region



Brian Tennyson Executive member Tennant Creek



Anthony Petrick Executive member Eastern (Plenty)



Maurie Ryan Deputy Chairman

New ABA members



Veronica Lynch

The new ABA members are Lindsay Bookie, Maurie Ryan, Dennis Williams, Veronica Lynch and Max Ray

Alice town camps - the future

Despite the national attention on Alice Springs town camps, when the dust dies down little may change for Alice Springs town campers

Demountable accommodation from the Woomera Detention Centre is being stored at a site in Alice Springs while the Federal Government decides where to put them.

"We don't want these demountables on town camps," Tangentyere Council CEO Mr Tilmouth said.

"We will be part of setting them up but I'm not sure we want to be part of managing them."

No announcement on possible sites has been made by the Government but it is believed that a number of blocks of vacant Crown land around the town are being looked at, including a site behind the Truck Stop and near Warpiri Camp, a

grading sewage, water and street lighting - and that was already in place before the Minister's announcement.

"The broader community takes those services for granted.

"The other \$10 million is going to upgrade houses - bringing the standard of those houses up to the standard of everyone else's for all town camps.

"The remaining \$10 million is for visitor accommodation based on the demountables from Woomera."

"We don't want these demountables on town camps.

We will be part of setting them up but I'm not sure we want to be part of managing them"

TANGENTYERE COUNCIL CEO MR TILMOUTH

site adjoining the back of the Gapview Hotel, the Old Drive In site, two sites in Power Street, two sites in Colonel Rose Drive, one site at the Tywetyere Club, one in Karnte Rd and one on the South Stuart Highway.

In May this year the Federal Government announced a \$30 million commitment to improve living conditions in Alice Springs town camps.

A press release from Minister Mal Brough at the time said: "The Australian Government is contributing \$20 million to upgrade infrastructure and essential services, build new town camps sites with amenities and construct hostel-style accommodation - \$10 million of that will be from the Aboriginal Benefit Account (ABA)."

It also said the NT Government had committed \$10 million to fund the construction of new housing and accommodation.

However, Tilmouth says that there will be no new construction.

"We have \$10 million going towards the Connecting Neighbours Program - up-

Meanwhile, the Stuart Lodge is being renovated for short term stays for hospital and doctors visits and will probably be under the management of the Aboriginal Hostels Association.

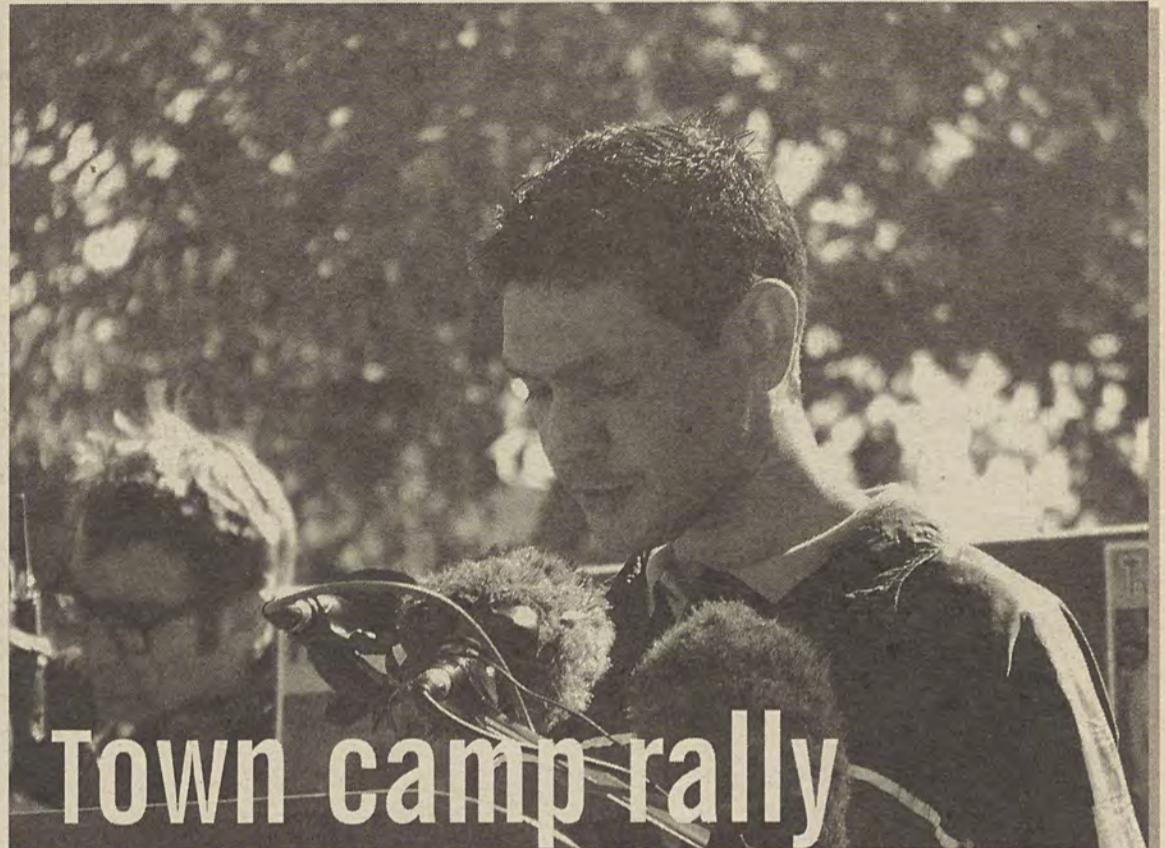
There will also be some renal accommodation associated with it.

NT Government Housing Minister Elliot McAdam recently announced \$2 million for the construction of a purpose-built accommodation facility for Aboriginal people visiting Alice Springs. It is unknown where this will be built.

Mr McAdam said the successful applicant for the grant funding must have a proven track record in the provision of appropriately managed accommodation services.

"The successful applicant must also have the capacity and expertise to provide accommodation for people with health-related problems as well as other special needs groups."

Right: The dongas from Woomera waiting for a site to be found to house visitors to Alice Springs.



Town camp rally

Mark Lockyer speaking at the town camp rally in Alice Springs

Hundreds of town campers in Alice Springs turned out at a rally in June to try and change the negative perception the public had about town camps.

During the previous 16 months there had been 15 cases of murder and the Minister for Indigenous Affairs Mal Brough had recently been in the town on a very high profile visit to highlight law and order in Aboriginal communities. The Minister described the situation as 'desperate' and that he would 'normalise' the town camps.

Two months of national media coverage had portrayed the town camps as unliveable, violent and torn apart by alcohol and drug

abuse.

William Tilmouth CEO of Tangentyere Council which administers the camps said: "The town camp rally was about town campers watching a whirlwind come through and the dust settle with nothing in it," he said.

"It was their way of standing up and saying this is the positive side of town camps."

However, many people got up and acknowledged the difficulties of living in a town camp.

Mervyn Rubuntja said he doesn't want visitors from communities who turned up and got drunk.

"What about our children? We can't live with all this drinking."

Mark Lockyer grew up at

the Hidden Valley camp and says he thinks the 'sooner something is done about this problem the better for all concerned'.

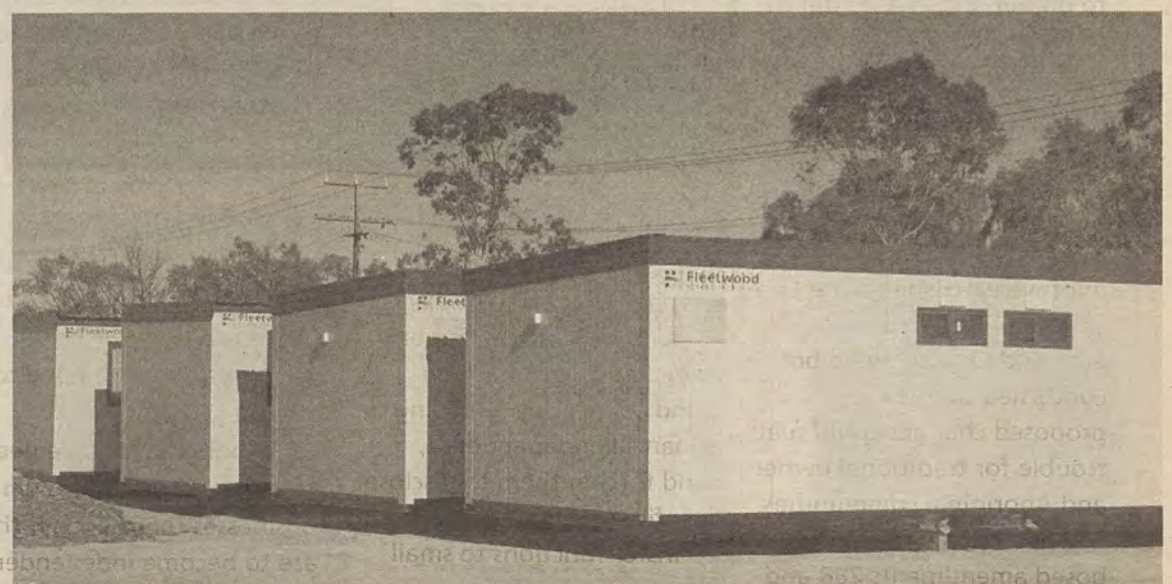
"I grew up in a town camp and by the time I was 16 I was an alcoholic and had missed out on a good childhood.

"I saw everyone around me drinking grog and fighting and I lost most of my family through alcohol.

"Children cannot protect themselves from violence abuse and neglect.

"We need to let people know that it is wrong and that we are prepared to take action to protect the child.

"Everyone is looking for a simple solution but these are not simple problems.



LAND RIGHTS ACT CHANGES

LAND COUNCILS CONCERNED

The Federal Government's move to introduce major changes to the Aboriginal Land Rights Act has caused concern amongst Northern Territory Land Councils.

The new legislation was provided to Land Councils only when it was introduced into Parliament in June 2006.

The legislation was then referred to a Senate Committee, which heard evidence from Land Councils, traditional owners and government agencies on 21 July 2006.

More than 60 traditional owners from across the Northern Territory made it to the Senate Committee hearings in Darwin to hear the evidence and to learn first hand about the proposed changes.

Many of the changes contain new amendments which traditional owners hadn't seen.

NLC Chairman, John Daly told the Senate Committee that traditional owners were worried about rushing new legislation through Parliament without giving traditional owners a good op-

"This is clearly no longer a mere delegation power but a mechanism which allows the stripping and reallocation of core functions under the Act"

DAVID ROSS DIRECTOR CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL

portunity to understand the proposed changes, or to give their informed consent to the changes.

"People are saying that this land rights legislation is too soon, too quick. How am I, as Chairman of the Northern Land Council supposed to go out and in a matter of three months, get informed consent from the traditional owners of the northern half of the Territory?" said Mr Daly.

While acknowledging that many of the changes would improve workability, the Central Land Council and Northern Land Council were both concerned that some of the proposed changes could spell trouble for traditional owners and Aboriginal communities.

The CLC said that proposed amendments 28B and

corporations that do not represent traditional owners and terminate valid land claims," he said.

Both Land Councils are concerned about the proposal to sub-lease Aboriginal land in towns. Mr Fry told the Committee that amendments would create restrictions on the ability of traditional owners to bargain commercially in relation to development in towns.

"Opportunities for sub-leasing to occur already exist under section 19 of the Act. Entertaining thoughts of amendments to facilitate this process isn't necessary," Mr Fry said.

"There is no need to place restrictions on traditional owners to bargain commercially in towns. Such restrictions appear discriminatory and could invite international complaint," he said.

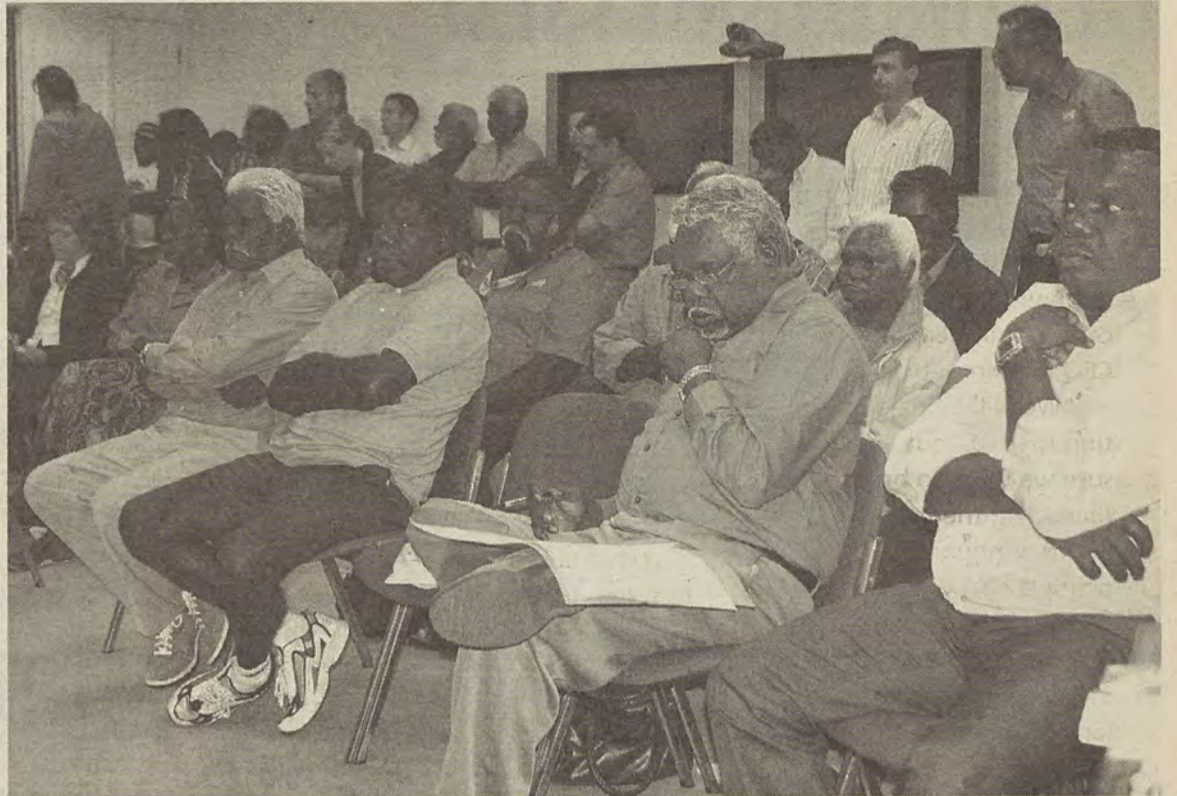
David Ross said that the CLC was concerned that communities will be placed in a position, where in order to access essential services or funding, they will be told they need to sign up to these

28C are a radical departure from normal administrative rules relating to the delegation of powers.

"This is clearly no longer a mere delegation power but a mechanism which allows the stripping and reallocation of core functions under the Act," CLC Director David Ross said.

"The NLC has very serious concerns regarding other amendments put forward by the Federal minister," Mr Fry said.

"These amendments appear to breach the Racial Discrimination Act, appear directed at breaking up land councils by removing financial independence, and forcing them to disclose confidential minutes and transfer functions to small



Above: NLC members at the hearing, Below: NLC Chairman John Daly and CEO Norman Fry front the committee with their staff

new arrangements.

"Furthermore, I am extremely concerned that some communities may already have been given this ultimatum," Mr Ross said.

Mr Ross said that all money for putting this new arrangement in place on Aboriginal land will come out of the Aboriginal Benefit Account (ABA) which is 'unacceptable'.

He also said that removing the statutory guarantee of funding to the Land Councils could result in the loss of their independence.

Mr Daly acknowledged the importance of the Commonwealth's commitment to improving the economic outlook for Aboriginal communities and townships.

However, he told the Committee that to achieve this objective, there needed to be a greater focus on education, jobs and business development.

"We are not saying that Aboriginal people do not want to own their own homes on their traditional lands," he said.

"But I think we need to look at education first and foremost, then we need to look at jobs.

"Aboriginal people need to own and run their own businesses themselves if they are to become independent.



Above: CLC Chairman Lindsay Bookie and Director David Ross at the hearing

Education is the key to this," he said.

The Senate Committee is due to report back to the Senate on 1 August.

After the Committee reports, there may be further changes to the draft legislation before the Senate makes a decision.

How to find out more about the amendments

If you want more infor-

mation about the detail of the proposed changes to the Land Rights Act, please contact your local CLC or NLC regional office.

On the the internet, details of submissions to the Senate Committee can be found at: http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/clac_ctte/aborig_land_rights/index.htm

NATIVE TITLE

LARRAKIA NATIVE TITLE CLAIM DISMISSED

The Larrakia people have vowed to fight on to the High Court of Australia following the dismissal of a claim to 575 square kilometres of land in Darwin and its rural area.

It is the first time an application for a substantial area of land in a metropolitan area has been heard in the courts.

Justice John Mansfield found the Larrakia people have not maintained traditional laws and customs since sovereignty.

Justice Mansfield said the settlement of Darwin, the influx of other Aboriginal groups, the attempted assimilation of Aboriginal people into the European community and some government policies led to the reduction of the Larrakia population and their dispersal from the claim area.

These factors disrupted the Larrakia peoples' ability to observe traditional laws and customs.

The native title claim was lodged almost 10 years ago and covered 250 pockets of crown land, mostly on the outskirts, including reserves and beaches down to the low-water mark but also land in exclusive Cullen Bay.

It also included East Point, one of Darwin's



Larrakia woman Rosie Parfitt outside the court house in Darwin

main recreational and tourist areas, and land near the old Retta Dixon home.

The court heard 70 witnesses since the case began in 2002, with Justice Mansfield taking almost two years to consider evidence.

The application was vigorously contested by the NT Government and the Darwin City Council.

Northern Land Council (NLC) CEO Norman Fry said the NLC is disappointed in the decision, and will seek to appeal the case.

"The Larrakia have

borne the brunt of the settlement of the Northern Territory and have struggled for recognition of their land rights since the establishment of Darwin in the late 1860s," Mr Fry said.

"They will continue to assert their rights as the native title holders for the Darwin region.

"The Larrakia people were successful with the Kenbi land claim, and this is the same group of people.

"There seems to be little consistency from the Kenbi native title case and this case."

rights over the lots has been described as 'perplexing' by the Northern Land Council.

"We welcome the Federal Court's judgement as confirming that the Ngaliwurru and Nungali are the traditional owners of Timber Creek", NLC Chief Executive, Fry said.

"But, the finding

that native title is non-exclusive and, despite the strength of the evidence, cannot amount to ownership is perplexing," he said.

"We are very happy that we have been recognised as the traditional owners for that land," claimant Christopher Griffiths said. "It means a lot to



The Davenport Murchison claimants with the title presented to them by the National Native Title Tribunal

Win at Davenport Murchison

After 12 years, news of a final win was an emotional time for some of the claimants in the Alyawarr, Kaytetye, Warumungu and Wakay native title claim at Athethew (Old Police Station Waterhole).

"For years we have been telling the judge that we got stories for that country, cause we got Native Title for that country. It is blackfella country," claimant Casey Holmes said.

"There were days when we were taken to sites of significance by helicopters, troopies, really rough country, with judges, lawyers, anthropologists and all the people with ties to country.

"People were asked question after question about the connection that they had to that particular place", claimant Michael Liddle said. "It took a lot out of those people."

The High Court of Australia recently refused the Northern

Territory Government's right to appeal the Federal Court's decision to recognise their native title rights and the claimants had finally won their case.

The Central Land Council lodged a native title application on behalf of native title holders with the National Native Title Tribunal in 1995 over land south-east of Tennant Creek, including the proposed Davenport Murchison National Park and the historic township of Hatches Creek.

Sadly a number of senior men and women passed away while waiting for a final decision, including some who gave evidence during the hearing in 2000.

CLC Director David

Ross said the evidence for the native title claim was strong.

"The claimants spoke strongly during the hearing about their lives, use of the country and its spiritual meaning to them.

"The judge was taken on site visits across the country, women performed ceremony and men shared ground paintings to prove their strong connection to the land.

"The evidence was overwhelmingly in favour of the claimants and now that this is settled people can get on with their lives.

"It also means that a large amount of money and resources are not spent pursuing the matter through the High Court," he said.

Timber Creek: Ownership granted, but non-exclusive

Confirmation from the Federal Court on 17 July that they are the traditional owners of vacant crown land within the township of Timber Creek was cause for jubilation amongst the Ngaliwurru and Nungali peoples.

But, the decision not to grant traditional owners exclusive

rights over the lots has been described as 'perplexing' by the Northern Land Council.

"We welcome the Federal Court's judgement as confirming that the Ngaliwurru and Nungali are the traditional owners of Timber Creek", NLC Chief Executive, Fry said.

"But, the finding

that native title is non-exclusive and, despite the strength of the evidence, cannot amount to ownership is perplexing," he said.

"We are very happy that we have been recognised as the traditional owners for that land," claimant Christopher Griffiths said. "It means a lot to

us to have that recognition. But, we are disappointed that we cannot enjoy that land for ourselves."

Mr Fry said that the NLC would carefully consider the 210-page judgement in light of legal advice to ascertain whether an appeal may be pursued regarding this issue.



Timber Creek traditional owners address the media outside the court house in Darwin

Oldest land claim settled

Amidst tears of joy and sadness, the Yanyuwa people of the Northern Territory's Gulf region took possession of their traditional lands, and in doing so closed the book on Australia's longest running land claim



For 30-years the Yanyuwa fought to have a group of islands in the Sir Edward Pellew group in the NT's Gulf of Carpentaria returned to them.

On 28 June the dream became a reality when the title deeds to Centre Island and its surrounding regions were handed back to the Yanyuwa.

Traditional owner and member of the NT legislative Assembly, Barbara McCarthy, paid homage to those who had initiated the claim almost three decades before.

"My brother spoke earlier and he said he was about 13 when this land claim happened, I was about eight," Ms McCarthy said.

"All the Yanyuwa knew this was our country and we had to sit up in court and explain something that we all knew like the nose on our faces.

"Over and over again these old people had to sit there and explain about this piece of land and that sacred site and how they were related to this person and that person.

"They went through all that in 1976.

"This is being recognised and noticed by all my family," Ms McCarthy said.

NLC Chairman, John Daly paid tribute to the Yanyuwa for their patience and persistence.

landmark day

"Today is a landmark day for the Yanyuwa people who have waited almost 30-years for this day to arrive," Mr Daly said.

"It is a testimony to your endurance and willingness to negotiate a workable solution to the obstacles that were

"All the Yanyuwa knew this was our country and we had to sit up in court and explain something that we all knew like the nose on our faces."

BARBARA MCCARTHY, TRADITIONAL OWNER AND MLA

placed before you in the pursuit of this day."

Mr Daly urged the Yanyuwa to utilise the land in a constructive manner, and to teach young people about traditional ways.

"They walk around the streets of Darwin and they're like big trees with no roots," Mr Daly said.

"Without those strong roots connecting to our country here and our traditional way of life, a lot of these kids are falling over."

The Borroloola Land Claim (No.1) was the first to be lodged (July 1977) and heard (September 1977) under the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976.

The second part of a two-part claim, the Centre Island claim (Borroloola Land Claim No.2) would meet with obstructions.

Unfortunately for the Yanyuwa, the first Aboriginal Land Commissioner, Justice John Toohey would write in

his report in 1978 that while part-one of the claim was likely to be successful for sites located on the mainland, traditional Aboriginal owners for coastal islands in the Sir Edward Pellew group could not be identified.

Undeterred, the Yanyuwa lodged a repeat claim in 1979 for the same set of coastal islands of the Sir Edward Pellew group.

In 1992 Justice Peter Gray found that the repeat claim could be



heard as the claim was asserted on a substantially different basis, included relevant information not available in the original claim, and was likely to be successful.

However, in the period between the lodgement of the repeat claim and the hearing (1979 - 1992), the NT Government utilised a number of devices in an effort to defeat the claim.

new town

In January 1980 the NT Government gazetted the boundaries of a new town so that it was not available for claim.

This was overturned as the town had not been proclaimed at the time the repeat claim was lodged.

The NT Government also purported to grant 11 leases to non-Aboriginal people for holiday houses on Centre Island.

However, the decision of the Federal Court in *NT v Hand* held that such grants were invalid until the claim was concluded.

In 1996 Justice Gray found that the Yanyuwa people were the traditional Aboriginal owners of all of the land claimed to the low water mark.

In 2006 the land was recommended for granting to the Yanyuwa.

Above: Yanyuwa woman and Centre Island traditional owner Barbara McCarthy (right) with her son 'CJ' (front) are all smiles as they enjoy the day with Chief Minister Clare Martin and family members at the recent handover.

Above left: It's all smiles for these kids at the Centre Island handover.

Below: NLC Chairman, John Daly hands over the title deeds to the Centre Island traditional owners.



Wadeye frustrated with lack of progress

Wadeye community leaders in the Top End of the Northern Territory have expressed their frustration with the lack of progress in housing, health and education services to a visiting national human rights body.

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) president John von Doussa, and Social Justice Commissioner Tom Calma, along with Northern Land Council chairman John Daly, met with traditional owners, representatives from the school, health clinic, police and talked to local residents about their standard of living.

Several groups expressed frustration with the establishment of an 'shared responsibility agreement' through a Council Of Australian Governments (COAG) trial in 2003 which local groups in Wadeye thought would help increase education resources, better coordinate health resources, and generate immediate housing funding to alleviate chronic overcrowding where the average occupancy rate is 17 people for each house.

The need is certainly there – Wadeye is the sixth largest town in the Northern Territory with 2500 residents, predominately Aboriginal; there is one Centrelink officer in Wadeye for 1800 clients; the road into Wadeye is unsealed leaving the town stranded for six months during the Wet Season; there is one public phone; no mobile phone coverage; several tribal groups now reside on the land of the traditional owners, the Kardu Diminin, which can cause social tension; health officials link overcrowding to diseases such as scabies,

TB, trachoma, rheumatic heart disease (highest rate in the world), even cases of leprosy; life expectancy for Aboriginal males is 49; and the town has four police servicing the town and region – Tennant Creek, a similar sized town has 32.

Mr Calma said HREOC were invited to Wadeye to evaluate the success or otherwise of the three-year-old COAG trials, with a particular emphasis on education, housing and health.

"Wadeye is like a lot of large Indigenous communities, and is one of the biggest in Australia, and the issues are predominantly around a lack of employment opportunities, and meaningful activities for youth to be able to participate in after-hours or during (business) hours for those unemployed."

NLC chairman John Daly said it was up to governments to uphold their funding responsibilities, especially communities in obvious need such as Wadeye.

"This has been a long-term problem – the under-funding of Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory has been ongoing for 31 years," he said.

Mr Daly said Aboriginal people wanted to take control of their future and 'lift themselves out of poverty', requiring access to a decent education – a right of all Australian children.

Mr Calma said the recent Social Justice Report 2005 looked

at Indigenous affairs during the post-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) period, and how effective new government arrangements to engage with Indigenous peoples such as 'shared responsibility agreements' (SRA) and COAG trials were.

"There is a major concern that there is no evidence or little reporting about the outcomes of the COAG trials," Calma said.

"There is also a lack of understanding by the community about what the new arrangements are. The community, in general, understand that ATSIC was abolished, but they can't really comprehend what is happening in relation to a 'whole-government-approach' to servicing.

"It is easy for government people to talk about 'mutual obligation', however, Aboriginal people in communities don't have a clear understanding of what that means, they don't realise that they have to actively participate in any processes."

Mr Calma said in his talks with local people there exists a strong desire to return to live on country.

"The message that we got during this visit is that there exists a strong desire to move back to people's individual communal lands, but there is also a concern about a recent report of the Government only providing basic services to Aboriginal outstations of 100 people or more," he said.



Above: NLC Chairman, John Daly talks with members of the Evil Warriors gang at Wadeye.

We're alive and well: Tangentyere Council

"We're still here and we're standing strong," Tangentyere Council CEO William Tilmouth says.

Tangentyere Council has just weathered months of negative publicity about the town camps it administers – murder, high rates of domestic violence and bad living conditions made national headlines and Tangentyere bore much of the blame.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Minister Mal Brough visited several times and announced the 'normalisation' of town camps which the media interpreted as the abolition of Tangentyere as the organisation which looks after housing and services on them.

"On the contrary," says Tilmouth. "It's steady as she goes".

Costs underestimated
"When the media quietened down, I think they realised that without putting more money in nothing was going to happen. Trying to achieve decent living conditions with what money was available was impossible.

"Normalisation is still part of the plan - making the town camps part of the town – and that is something we have always fought for.

"Town camps want to be treated equally with the people of the town without losing their identity and living areas," he says.

"We welcome the Town Council doing municipal programs like rubbish collection and other services



William Tilmouth Tangentyere Council CEO

that all other Alice Springs residents get but the Town Council wants to receive rates which is something we need to look at.

Tilmouth says otherwise Tangentyere's business is unaffected – the night patrols and other programs are funded and its core funding, while delayed, will be signed off.

Nonetheless, there will be changes.

"There's no doubt things are getting harder. We are going to have to think about delivering services on a contract arrangement more and more.

"It is a commercial world these days so we need to think about that," he said.

Tilmouth says there have been no discussions with Minister Brough

"It's been devoid of discussions - there seems to be a vacuum between the ICC and Aboriginal organisations"

Return of living areas brings heart felt joy

Tennant Creek



Above: The families receiving their titles to living areas at Tennant Creek

It was an emotional day at Tennant Creek recently when four families got handed title to community living areas on their country.

Edith Honlon and her family were particularly moved as her father had long fought for a living area on a pastoral lease and had been rejected many times.

"I know Old Man Dad, he will be looking down on us here today. And that he would be a proud old man. I know that he will be here with us all in spirit," she said.

"Thank you for the Warumungu people for letting us on your country to get our land, on Elkedra, back today. Thank you from the Dinnie family."

The Dinnie family received 30 square kilometres back at Imperrenth on Elkedra Station.

The Phillips and Booth families at Yurturminy on Phillip Creek got 10 square kilometres.

The long process saw many old people pass and Bunnie Napurrurla was the only original applicant left.

The Frank family also got a small area back on Phillip Creek at Pingala.

"I have grown up at Pingala, travelling around country and living with my father. He taught me a lot about country, visiting and looking after sacred

sites, passing on the stories and ceremonies for those sites," Norman Frank told the crowd.

Eliot McAdam, MLA for the Barkly Region handed titles to three small parcels of land to the Dinnie, Frank, Phillips and Booth families.

The Chairman of the Central Land Council, Mr Lindsay Bookie, congratulated the traditional owners on finally getting their land back after long struggles.

"The Dinnie family have been fighting to get their piece of

land on Elkedra pastoral lease since the mid-eighties and the old man who originally lodged the application has passed away. The others have waited 10 years to get their small pieces of land," Mr Bookie said.

Mr Bookie said he was really pleased for the families and he was glad to finally see the backlog of community living areas processed.

"It's very sad that people passed away while these excisions were waiting for the NT Government to act on them," he said.



Above l-r: Edith Hanlon nee Dinnie, Andy Dinnie, Ronnie Dinnie, Steven Tranter, CLC Chairman Lindsay Bookie, David Tranter and MHR Warren Snowdon



Above: Warren Snowdon and Norman Frank
Rear: Andrew Walker, Tony Booth, Edith Graham

Powell Creek



Above:

Johnny Benson (far right) with the Powell Creek title deeds with NLC Executive member, Jeffrey Dixon (second from right)

Under the shade of a nearby ghost gum, Johnny Benson leans across the bonnet of a vehicle, the well-worn Akubra is tilted back on his head as he listens to the words of Northern Territory (NT) Government minister, Elliott McAdam.

It's a relaxed pose, and one that belies the image of a man who has spent 20 years fighting to have the traditional lands of the Mudburra people handed back to them.

Mr McAdam is about to close the book on a campaign Johnny Benson and his family have pursued for two decades.

In June, Johnny Benson and his extended family finally received the title deeds to their Community Living Area (CLA) of Powell Creek, a small portion of land excised out of the vast Newcastle Water Station in the Barkly region of the Northern Territory.

"We started all this 20-years ago, and today we are a happy and proud people," Benson said.

Johnny Benson began his campaign to have the area excised from Newcastle Waters in the 1980's, but it wasn't until 1996 that a formal application to the federal minister was lodged by the Northern Land Council on behalf of Johnny and others.

Despite early setbacks and initial opposition from pastoralists, Johnny remained

positive and continued to seek a living area for a location known as 'Pamayu.'

The pastoralist opposition to the claim was based on a number of grounds, including the use of the old telegraph station at Powell Creek as an outstation for their pastoral activities, and that there was a desire to convert the area into a heritage tourist attraction.

But, by 1997 the pastoralists had a change of heart, indicating that they would be willing to consent to the excision of Pamayu, but before any hand-over

to the Mudburra people could be conducted there was still some significant work to be done.

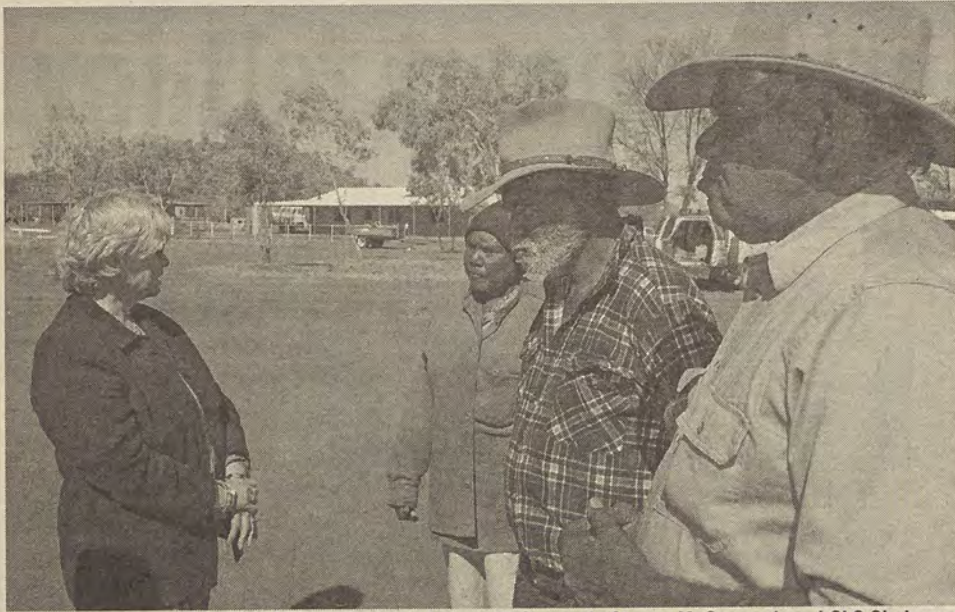
Land surveys had to be conducted, boundaries needed to be mapped and a corporation formed to receive the title deeds.

But finally, on 1 June 2006, the Mudburra people were able to take possession of the deeds, Johnny Benson included.

Born at Powell Creek, Johnny Benson spent much of his adult life working in the Barkly region as a stockman, but his home was always in his heart.



Mudburra women celebrate the return of Powell Creek with dance.



Green senator Christine Milne talks with Audrey McCormack, Steven McCormack and CLC Chairman

Greens visit waste dump site

Australian Greens senators Rachel Siewert, Kerry Nettle and Christine Milne recently visited the community who live on the land surrounding Mt Everard, near Alice Springs, one of three sites proposed for a national nuclear waste dump.

So far the Aboriginal land owners have had little success in convincing the Australian Government that a nuclear waste dump near their land would have an extremely negative impact on the lives.

"It was a great privilege to be invited by the traditional owners of the land and to listen to their cultural connections to the land," Greens energy spokesperson Senator Milne said in Alice Springs.

"These people have been completely ignored by the federal government and none of the federal ministers responsible for making decisions about the waste dump site has made any effort to see for themselves what a devastating impact a nuclear waste dump

would have.

"While the government grandstands on Indigenous issues, talking about health and education crises in communities, its own actions are undermining Aboriginal culture and community.

"It is time for the ministers to really listen to Indigenous people and to try to understand the connection people have to the land on which they live."

The Government still hasn't made an announcement as to where the nuclear waste dump site will be.

Aboriginal Community Police Officers ready to hit the streets

Below: Aboriginal Community Police Officers doing training at the Fire Station in Alice Springs recently. The 14 recruits are halfway through their training and ready to start work on communities at the end of August. Three will go to Mutitjulu and three will go to Tennant Creek with the remainder to be posted at various communities around the Territory



Western Arrarnta Dictionary launch



Above: Ntaria school children at the launch of the Western Arrarnta Dictionary at Ntaria. Left: Marilyn Armstrong presents Mavis Malbunka with an award for her help in compiling the dictionary



community living area audit

A desire to seek an easier, quieter lifestyle is just one of many factors behind the push by Aboriginal family groups to relocate to community living areas on their traditional lands.

For many, life in a family orientated environment offers more than that afforded by larger communities. Less stress and overcrowding are just two of the reasons many choose to relocate to these smaller living areas.

"Why I live there is [because] I don't get any humbug," one contented resident said.

"Someone might come now and then, you know, but I tell them, I don't like people to come.

"We are pretty happy living here. I reckon in town you have to pay more rent than here. Land, family - I am

happy all my life," the resident said. Sitting on his CLA in the Victoria River District in the western portion of the Northern Territory surrounded by nature and panoramic vistas, it's hard to argue with the resident about why he chose to relocate.

To facilitate this desire, the Northern Land Council (NLC) has been conducting an audit of all existing Community Living Areas (CLA) within its area of operation.

Information gathered on existing infrastructure, the level of basic services provided and importantly, the future desires of residents has been gathered from many CLAs in the NLC's region.

Once conducted, the audit information will be compiled and presented to the NT and commonwealth gov-

ernments in an effort to not only encourage a greater financial investment in these communities, but with the hope that a speeding-up of the granting process can be undertaken.

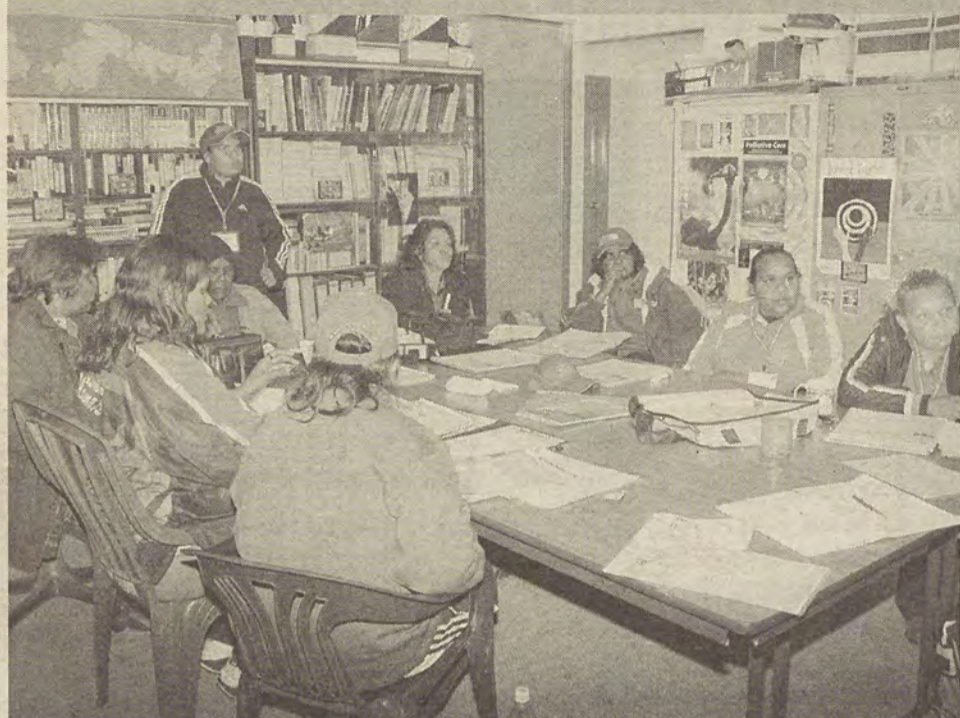
"It's easy to go around hunting," the resident said.

"My father was telling us to live here, to look after this country when he got this place. He gave us this knowledge; we got to pass it onto our kids."

CLAs are sometimes referred to as 'outstations' or 'homeland centres'. They are usually small parcels of land excised out of a pastoral lease to allow Aboriginal people to live on.

This concept gained prominence when Aboriginal people were forced off cattle stations following the Equal Pay decision of

Census on Town Camps



Census workers operating from Tangentyere Council

Clockwise around the table : Carlene Dodds (back to camera), Tiara Foster, Sandra McCormack, Audrey McCormack, Darelle Taylor, Elizabeth Moseley, Cathy McCormack, Barbara Shaw and Tischa Carter

Twelve Aboriginal Census workers from Alice Springs are getting out and about collecting ABS statistics on town camps.

The team are working from Tangentyere Council.

Census worker Elizabeth Moseley said that the group were training while they worked and would continue on other courses.

"It's quite scary with the dogs mainly on town camps but it's pretty good because the people out there are helpful with the information," Ms Moseley said.

"I don't think people really understood what the census was until we explained to them.

"I think we are getting a pretty true picture.

"In four days we've covered a lot of ground. Some things have really surprised me like the number of people in a two bedroom house and the terrible state of some of the houses .

"This is my first job for a while and its good because we all get along and it's a good team effort and it'll take me on further to a better job, better life, something different to what we normally do.

"A lot of us women doing this now are stay at home mums on the pension and it gets us out of the house and time away from the kids," she said.

Census Day August 8

At the time of going to print, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census of Population and Housing will be just around the corner.

The Census is held every five years.

The 2006 Census is to be held on 8 August 2006.

To facilitate the process the ABS has already employed about 26,000 field staff Australia-wide to deliver and collect Census forms in urban and

rural areas, including 300 positions across the Northern Territory.

"Census statistics benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities in the Territory," Gowan Bush, Indigenous Engagement Manager for the ABS said.

"Information collected from the Census helps governments and communities alike with planning and the allocation of things like education, housing and

health services."

"The Northern Territory has the highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia, and a major focus of the NT Census team is to ensure a quality count of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the Territory," Mr Bush said.

So, when the Census team come knocking on your door, make sure you are able to assist them with all necessary information.

Opal roll out a success says CAYLUS

Petrol sniffing is on the way out but unless governments follow up it won't last long, says Tangentyere Council

The roll out of Opal fuel in Central Australia has had an immediate impact on petrol sniffer numbers says the Central Australian Youth Link Up Service (CAYLUS) operated by Tangentyere Council.

CAYLUS reports that in some communities petrol sniffing has stopped and elsewhere numbers have reduced to levels not seen for 10 years.

"The early success of the Opal roll out is great news for communities that have been torn apart by the impact of petrol sniffing and vindicates the Federal Government's Opal roll-out strategy," CAYLUS' Blair McFarland said. "But it is critical that we recognise this as only half the problem."

"The reduction of sniffable petrol doesn't remove underlying causes of petrol abuse and both governments must take this opportunity to introduce well-resourced youth programs which have been shown to reduce the take-up of other substance abuse and have positive effects on school attendance and health," Mr McFarland said.

In the mid-1990s the Federal Government Comgas scheme was rolled out to the Pitjantjatjara lands replacing sniffable petrol with unsniffable aviation fuel. In the first six months there was a significant reduction in petrol abuse but when no supporting youth, training or employ-

ment programs were provided, people found alternative sources of sniffable fuel and numbers rose again.

Director of Tangentyere Council, William Tilmouth called on both governments to join forces and demonstrate their commitment to stopping substance abuse and related crimes.

"If Opal fuel is stopping the sniffing both governments should be acting now to support programs that offer our people the services and quality of life that is enjoyed by other Australians," he said.

"Youth services health services, housing and employment programs are what is needed to ensure that sniffing doesn't start again."

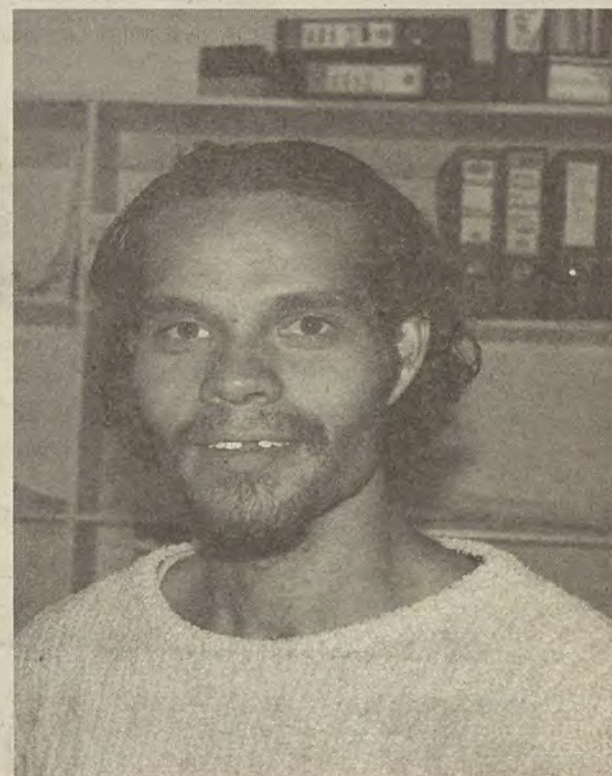
New CLC anthropology cadet

Sean Angeles (right) is now a proud anthropology cadet at the Central Land Council. Angeles has finished his first semester at Charles Darwin University and will work at the CLC during his breaks.

"I worked with Reconnect Youth Service working with a lot of young people and I always wanted to work with older people," he said.

"I think it's a good avenue to help my people especially dealing with land.

"Land is number one for us. So far I love the job," he said.



Sean Angeles

PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT Devil's Marbles land-owners visit Top End

A group of traditional owners for Karlukarlu (the Devil's Marbles) near Tennant Creek visited Kakadu and Nitmuluk National Parks to get an idea of what joint management really means in preparation for the joint management planning for the Devil's Marbles Conservation Reserve

The traditional owners decided it would be better if a smaller group worked with the CLC and NT Parks and Wildlife and they selected 12 people.

"We are together and doing this together so future generations can see. If you mob are gone, they can learn about what is planned and work together," traditional owner Frankie Holmes told the group.

The visit to the other national parks was extremely beneficial to the group who talked with Aboriginal and



Planning out at the Devils Marbles. L to R: Stanley Holmes, Casey Holmes, Frankie Holmes, Donald Thompson, Rosie Thompson, Lucy Pumper, Mona Heywood, Linda Dobbs, Ena Rex and Sheila Johnson with CLC and PWCNT staff

non-Aboriginal people who were working in joint management and shared their experiences. The plan of man-



Above: Stanley Holmes, Casey Holmes and Gordon Nappa with Kakadu National Park staff at Gunlom Falls

agement for the park is nearly completed.

Central Australian Aboriginal ranger groups get together

Aboriginal ranger groups from Central Australia got the chance to swap ideas and experiences at a workshop run by the Central Land Council near Tennant Creek last month.

The 28 rangers travelled from as far away as Docker River, Amooinguna, Lajamanu, Ntaria, Ti Tree and Tennant Creek to attend the workshop organised by the Central Land Council at Tennant Creek.

The Mission site was selected by the Muru-Warinyi-Ankkul Rangers from Tennant Creek. The rangers showcased their land management efforts to get rid of weeds, fence their country to keep out cattle, monitor the water in three large waterholes, survey the plants and animals and use fire to manage their land.

The Tennant Creek Rangers have also been busy working at Kunjarra, 30km north of Tennant Creek, building toilet blocks and bough shelters and installing signs.

Docker River Rangers spoke about their fencing work to protect water sources from



Anthea Graham talks about some of the Muru-Warinyi-Ankkul Ranger Group's recent projects

feral camels.

Lajamanu Rangers spoke about a wildlife monitoring program they are working on with Newmont.

Tjuwanpa Rangers from Ntaria spoke and screened a DVD about their work on the West MacDonnell National Park repairing fences and installing signs in nearby Ormiston Gorge and Palm Valley.

The Ti Tree group talked about recording and monitoring water-

holes on Anmatyere country and Amooinguna Rangers gave a presentation about constructing fire breaks and fauna monitoring at Trepkina Gorge and Ruby Gap in the East MacDonnell Ranges.

Rangers heard from Batchelor College and Charles Darwin University about how the Certificate in Conservation and Land Management offered in Alice Springs and on remote communities can qualify them for jobs in land management and with NT

PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT Ellery Creek Plan of Management



Above: Ntaria rangers Lawrence Inkamala, Joe Raggett, Glen Armstrong, Donovan Raggett prepare the site for the Ellery Creek Joint Management meeting focus on writing the Joint Management Plan for the West MacDonnell National Park.

The first round of joint management meetings has occurred for the West MacDonnell National Park.

The meetings have concentrated on introducing the basic concepts of joint management and what the traditional owners would like to see out of it.

The next round of meetings will

focus on writing the Joint Management Plan for the West MacDonnell National Park.

Planning groups will be formed and sections of the plan will be written.

Meetings for the Joint management of West MacDonnell National park have been held at Simpsons Gap, and M'bunghara

HOOKER CREEK TRADITIONAL OWNERS GRANT GRAZING LICENSE



Traditional owners of the Hooker Creek Aboriginal Land Trust at Riveren station. The Land trust has granted Riveren station a grazing license in return for infrastructure, training and employment

Haast's Bluff lease for cattle

The traditional owners of the Haast's Bluff ALT are leasing out part of their land to the Hayes family from Deep Well to run cattle on it in the hope that in the future they will be able to run their own cattle business.

The Indigenous Land Corporation has funded some essential infrastructure like bores and fences and the Hayes family which will run the cattle has already started work on the block.

The traditional owners are keen to ensure that the land stays healthy and doesn't get overgrazed so the CLC has helped them conduct flora and fauna surveys.

On the first trip monitoring sites were set up near all the bores and surveys of plants were done with particular regard to how much palatable grass (grass that cattle can eat) was on the property.

Anminari Nolan and Eunice Napanangka

used their tracking skills to see what type of animals were around and Patrick Nolan showed the group a place where there were possum scratchings on a tree.

Surveys will be done in future years to estimate the impact of the cattle.

A number of Aboriginal Land Trusts have leased land for grazing.

Below: Alison Mulla, Eunice Napanangka and Anminari Nolan noting which animal tracks they've seen at a survey site.



Ringers learn to ride ... proper way



Trainer Quentin Szery and Benji Kenny in the yards

Loves Creek Station in Central Australia held a campdraft and horsemanship course in July. The course was organised by the CLC Employment and Rural Enterprise Units which brought trainer Quentin Szery from Queensland. There were ten Aboriginal participants mainly from Loves Creek station and two Aboriginal apprentices from the NTCattlemen's Association, Roe Creek saleyards. Neighbouring stations - Ringwood, Numery and Mt Riddoch - helped out. Loves Creek has an excellent record of Indigenous employment.

\$5.45 million for new Uluru sunrise viewing area



Chairman of the Board of Management for the Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park Donald Fraser with grandson George at the new sunrise viewing area

The Federal Government announced funding of \$5.45 million to begin work on a new sunrise viewing area for Uluru in May this year.

The site was chosen by traditional owners and will allow visitors to see the sun rise over both Uluru and Kata Tjuta.

The new sunrise area will be located south of the current site. It will include new road access, a car and bus park, and a viewing platform

More than 400,000 visitors come to Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park every year, contributing an estimated

\$400 million to the Australian economy.

It is expected that figure will double in the next ten years and the current site is inadequate.

It's mustering time for the CLC



Above: CLC Pastoral Unit staff Kenny Satour, Dale Satour and Steven Ellis with the new truck bought to do musters on Aboriginal land. The CLC has also purchased mobile yards, quad bikes and a bull catcher. CLC Director David Ross says the new equipment will help out the smaller Aboriginal cattle enterprises where it is uneconomical to engage commercial musters.

CLC appoints Kenny Satour for pastoral development

Kenny Satour has been appointed as the Indigenous Pastoral Development Officer at the CLC after working for ten years working as a specialist in land care. He has also been appointed to the NT Landcare Council representing the Aboriginal arid sector.



Above: CLC pastoral unit worker Dale Satour fixes a bore on an Aboriginal cattle property

REAL WAGES FOR NATIONAL JOB



Real wages to Indigenous sea rangers for helping to protect Australia's extensive northern coastline from illegal fishermen and potentially catastrophic diseases such as bird flu was the call at a recent conference organised by the Northern Land Council.

More than 100 Indigenous sea rangers went to the conference at Maningrida in western Arnhem Land in the Top End.

Ranger groups in the Top End are calling for adequate resources to support their existing monitoring of the coastline, and further funding for ranger activities such as rubbish removal from beaches, feral weed and animal control and removal.

The conference at Djinkarr ranger station, 20kms from the Maningrida community, also looked at the positive effects of ranger groups in relation to language and cultural maintenance, healthy diet through bush tucker, spiritual healing through links to country, and a feeling of pride when recognised for their protection of Australia's borders in the north.

illegal fishing boats

In the past 10 months alone, the Bawinanga Djelk Rangers at Maningrida have detected and reported 29 illegal Indonesian fishing boats to Customs Australia, leading to arrests and burning of fishing boats.

Ranger groups in the Northern Territory cleaned over 50km of coastline last year, as well as removing 1000 nets.

Nets that float in the ocean get washed up on northern Australian beaches and litter the coast.

Ghost nets capture, injure and sometimes kill marine animals, especially turtles, and can damage coral reefs

Senior Djelk Ranger Matthew Ryan said it is only right and fair that

"By the time you got your funding, you be walking with a walking stick,"
CHERRY DANIELS.

the work of Indigenous rangers be recognised nationally.

eyes and ears

"We are the eyes and ears of that sea country, it is our cultural and birth right to protect and look after that coastline," Ryan said.

As senior women's ranger Cherry Daniels said: "It is vital to teach our children, our country, our song and our ceremony."

Daniels expressed frustration with the piecemeal and bureau-

cratic nature of current funding arrangements, calling for a permanent source of funding over a number of years for all ranger groups.

"By the time you got your funding, you be walking with a walking stick," she said.

Rangers also had discussions with representatives from Customs Australia and the Australian Quarantine over ongoing pest monitoring programs such as fruit fly trapping, mosquito surveil-

lance, blood collection from feral animals, weed collections, wood boring pest surveillance and plant disease collections.

Ranger groups came from across the Top End including Wadeye, Waruwu, Maningrida, Galiwinku, Ramingining, Nhulunbuy, Yirrkala, Numbulwar, Ngukurr, Borrooloola, Tiwi Islands, Alyangula, Darwin and Yirrkala, as well as representatives from Western Australia's Kimberley region.

Dhimurru sea rangers plan ahead



All in a day's work: Matthew Ryan comes to grips with a slippery customer

A visionary plan to manage Yolngu sea country is taking shape in north east Arnhem Land, with prominent land and sea management agency Dhimurru leading the way.

Dhimurru is moving forward with the Yolngu Wanga Monuk Gapu Wanga Dhimurru Sea Country Plan through negotiating and developing commitments from government and non-government agencies,

A two-day workshop held in the township of Nhulunbuy during the month of May brought together key stakeholders to negotiate the machinery and overall implementation of the plan.

Dhimurru's plan is a statement from Yolngu traditional owners about their concerns and aspirations for sea

country management. It aims to develop strong partnerships to provide its sea rangers with the necessary resources and collaborations to foster Yolngu cultural rights, responsibilities and interests in sea country and achieve the best possible results for sustainable sea country management.

The plan provides opportunities to achieve sustainable management to monitor, research, assess and manage impacts on the marine environment. It is expected that the Dhimurru Sea Country Plan will provide

a good model for sea country management based on effective collaboration and strong partnerships.

To achieve this, Dhimurru rangers need to be well trained; well resourced; and provided with access to tools and information to enhance their capacity to perform the necessary tasks.

Dhimurru will be launching the Sea Country Plan at the Garma Festival in August 2006.

The launch will celebrate the Plan in Yolngu style through manikay (song) and bunggul (dance).

native title conference: 'tradition & change'

Connections to country, Indigenous land-use agreements, recent cases such as the Larrakia decision, the Yulara decision, and the marriage of 'tradition' and 'change' were all issues up for discussion at this year's annual native title conference held in Darwin.

The conference, with the theme 'Tradition and Change, Culture and Commerce', drew 500 native title claimants and holders, and people who work with native title issues such as anthropologists, lawyers, government departments, academics and staff and council of native title representative bodies who met over three days to discuss their experiences with the process in their particular region.

Former Northern Land Council chairman Galarrwuy Yunupingu in the annual Mabo lecture outlined the early history of land rights in his community of Yirrkala in north-east Arnhemland.

Other speakers included Aboriginal Social Justice Commissioner Tom Calma, and University of Melbourne's Professor Marcia Langton.

Northern Land Council chairman John Daly said the theme focused on the dynamic processes by which Indigenous people adapt to a changing world while maintaining the traditions that underpin their societies.

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies chairman Professor Mick Dodson said the workshops provided a rare opportunity for all involved to come together and engage with the rapidly evol-

ing practice of native title.

The conference is also part of the NLCs program of events celebrating 30 years of land rights in the Northern Territory.

Now in its seventh year, the conference has previously been held in state capitals Adelaide and Melbourne, as well as regional centres Coffs Harbour in New South Wales, Geraldton in Western Australia, Townsville in Queensland and Alice Springs.

This year's event was co-hosted by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Larrakia Nation and the Northern Land Council.

Below: Kenbi dancers perform at the opening ceremony



Above: Larrakia Aboriginal Nation Coordinator, Kelvin Costello welcomes delegates to Darwin.

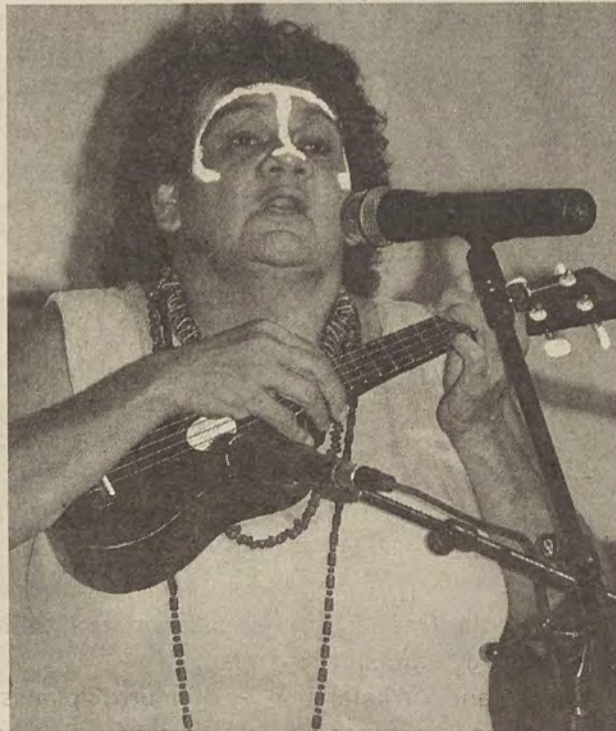
Right: Delegates Pompey (left) and Frank attend the conference



Below: Galarrwuy Yunupingu (left), Bonita Mabo and NLC Chair, John Daly



Above: Raymatja Marika speaks at the opening ceremony



Above: Larrakia woman Alison Mills sings her version of 'Waltzing Matilda'



BANGARDI LEE HONOURED AT BARUNGA

The Barunga Festival this year paid tribute to Mr Lee. Born on the banks of Beswick Creek in 1952, Mr Lee, went on to become a prominent local leader at Barunga, serving as its town clerk for a decade, followed by a decade heading up the Jawoyn Association.

A witness at a number of successful land claim hearings, Mr Lee's leadership of the Jawoyn people has led to the building of the Territory's largest Indigenous-owned tourism operation at Nitmiluk as well as a number of other enterprises.

This year's festival, which started 21 years ago and is held at the Barunga community, 80kms south-east of Katherine on the Central Arnhem Highway, is considered the longest running Top End Indigenous festival.

An exhibition of prints, a song contest featuring road safety messages, bush tucker displays, cultural contests

such as spear throwing and didgeridoo playing, a photographic display of the recent flooding in nearby Beswick community, traditional dancing and of course, the full program of sports including, a 100m sprint race, and mile race, AFL, basketball, and softball.

An added bonus for sports fans was the playing of a Katherine District Football League fixture between the Arnhem Crows and the Ngukurr Bulldogs.

Mr Lee's son, Preston, officially opened the event, and unveiled a permanent plaque commemorating the life and work of his father.

"This tribute to my father is very fitting as he did so much for his people and for the region," Preston Lee said.

Top: Bangardi Lee's son Preston Lee below: Didje player plays at the opening ceremony at Barunga



Art and sport on show at Merrepen

All roads led to the Daly River in the Top End of the Northern Territory recently for a feast of art sales, painting auctions, stalls, live music, traditional dancing, football, softball, and basketball.



The annual Merrepen Arts Festival, held at the Nauiyu community near the Daly River, drew hundreds of people from surrounding areas, with some even travelling from the Tiwi Islands to participate.

The Nauiyu community, 240kms southwest of Darwin on the banks of the Daly River, also saw live performances by Western Arnhem Land's Wild Flower, Borroloola's Sandridge Band, and the Kimberley's Fitzroy Express. In the basketball, Milikapiti won a close final over St John's College in the women's, and Marrara Christian School were too good in the men's final also over St John's College.

In the AFL, Peppimenarti took the points over Emu Point in the junior final, while in the seniors St John's College were victors over Jilkminggan. In the women's softball, Manangoora Magpies won the final over the Nauiyu Hawks.

In the Daly Dash running race

Stewart Brooks, of Nauiyu, won the men's race, while Loretta Cook, of Milikapiti, was the top women's runner. The festival was officially opened by Malak Malak traditional owner Bidy Lindsay and Merrepen Arts president Patricia McTaggart. Merrepen Arts developed out of a women's centre established in the community in 1986.

The art group took its name from the fan palm - Merrepen. The first Merrepen Arts festival was held in 1988. In 1998 when huge floods swept the region, the art centre, then in ground level premises, lost its stock of artworks and materials, so a new purpose built centre was planned. The Nauiyu community was originally formed in the mid 1950s as a Catholic mission. The traditional owners of the area are the Malak Malak people. Today the community is home to around 450 residents.

Gunbalanya on show after cyclone Monica

When Category 5 Tropical Cyclone Monica ripped through the Top End earlier in the year, surprise was expressed due to its force so far from the Arnhem Land coast.

One of those communities still experiencing the impact of the cyclone is Gunbalanya, who, despite this, opened its doors to the public recently with its annual community open day.

Rock art tours, fibre art, scenic flights, spear throwing, traditional dancing, football and basketball, local bands

and information stalls were all on offer during the open day.

Injalak Arts and Crafts Centre, who aim to preserve the

art and culture of Western Arnhemland, did a roaring trade in sales for works on paper, prints, wooden carvings of mimi spirits, and their



Above right: Injalak Arts in Gunbalanya. and baskets below Above: weaving the baskets with company



Dilly bags on sale at the Merrepen Arts Festival, Daly River.

Cyclone Ingrid fails to dampen Minjilang spirit

Before Cyclone 'Ingrid' hit Croker Island last year, the local community store had served the local people not just as a place to get their groceries, but as an informal meeting place for the past 80 years.



Above: First customers through the new store's check out

Many older members of the island community felt strongly about the site as, before it became the community store, it housed children of the 'Stolen Generation' taken from their families throughout the Northern Territory.

That all changed last year when Category 5 tropical cyclone 'Ingrid' hit the Minjilang community on Croker Island, near Coburg Peninsula, destroying the community store, and damaging many of the island's homes.

The Minjilang community is used to the annual threat of cyclones and tropical storms, but the intensity of 'Ingrid' shocked even hardened locals.

The impact of the cyclone is even recorded in a school song 'Cyclone Ingrid' written by, and performed at the opening of a new store, by local Mamarumi School children*.

So it was a time of cel-

ebration, and a little sadness, for the community when the new Majila store, funded by the Arnhem Land Progress Association (ALPA), was opened recently.

Croker Island senior traditional owner Mary Yarmirr said the day was one of remembrance and a recognition of the basic needs of the Minjilang community.

"A year ago, Minjilang Community fell down, and we were down, so today is about thanking all the people who helped us in opening this store," Yarmirr said.

"Today (the store opening) makes us feel happy, but also a little sad as a lot of heritage went when the cyclone hit that old building."

ALPA chairman Reverend Djiniyini Gondarra said the opening of the store was 'historic' and would play a vital role in the community's recovery from last year's natural disaster.

Yarmirr said many of the older members of the Min-

jilang community had 'fond memories' of the old community store, which previously served as a residential cottage for members of the Stolen Generation.

When the children were moved to Darwin, the cottage was converted into the community store.

Ms Yarmirr said the Northern Land Council played an important role in the development and management of Aboriginal land in the Northern Territory, with Croker Island no exception.

"Without the Land Council (NLC) we would not have had the Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) for this place, so I thank them for their efforts," Yarmirr said.

Ms Yarmirr also took the opportunity of the opening to criticise the apparent lack of urgency by peak Northern Territory insurance company, TIO, (Territory Insurance Office) in providing funds for rebuilding on the island.



ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

Aboriginal women rangers and land managers will meet this month at the 6th Aboriginal Women's Land and Sea Management Conference to be held at Yirrkala in north-east Arnhem Land.

The conference, from August 22 to 24, will look at landcare activities, quarantine issues, feral animal issues, weed control, nursery work, ethnobotany, tourism, and market gardens.

For more information contact Robin Knox, of NLCs Caring for Country Unit, on 08 8920 5189 or robin.knox@nlc.org.au

Cyclone Ingrid came today

(A song written by the children and staff of Mamarumi School on Croker Island, following the fury of Cyclone Ingrid which hit the island last year.)



Ingrid is coming, category 5.

We're scared But we're going to survive.

The powerlines snapped. We had no light

No food, no water, no sleep that night.

This is our story, come sit on the ground.

Cyclone Ingrid came today now there is no sound.

The rain from the sky was hitting us wet.

Ingrid was twisting but she's not here yet.

Everything smashing like a killer whale sound.

Boats upside down, trees snapped in the ground.

Six o'clock in the morning and the water came inside.

Thunder booms like a bomb, lightning flashes its strike.

Our land is broken, The animals ran away.

And the seas came up.

Cyclone Ingrid came today.

(This song is reproduced with permission of Mamarumi School on Croker Island, and appears on a CD compilation of songs created by remote schools in the Top End such as Pularumpi, Milikapiti, Adelaide River, Belyuen and Waruwu.)

NT ARTISTS TRIUMPH IN PARIS

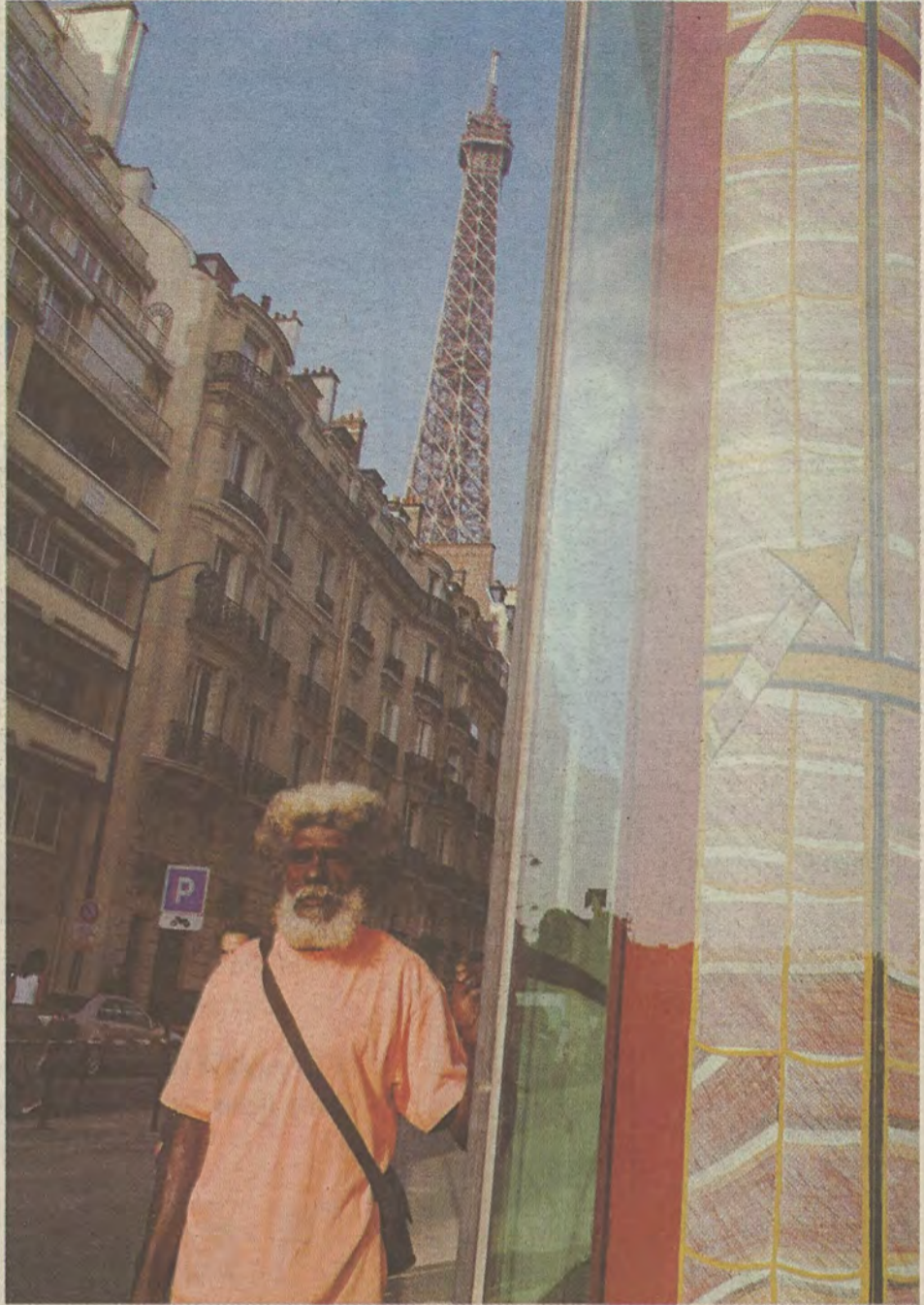
The May opening in Paris of the Musée du Quai Branly was a triumph for Australian Indigenous artists.

It is impossible to underestimate the significance of the Australian contribution to what is the newest monumental cultural institution in one of the world's most important cultural capitals.

The Australian contribution is unique among contemporary institutions because the work of eight contemporary artists has been built into the very fabric of one of the four buildings that comprise the museum.

Celebrated French architect Jean Nouvel included the concept of commissioning eight Australian Indigenous artists to permanently adorn 2,500 square metres of the building's ceilings, walls and facades as part of his winning submission to design the museum.

The eight Australian artists commissioned to work on the project are Gulumbu Yunupingu, John Mawurndjul and Ningura Napurrula



John Mawurndjul poses beneath the Eiffel Tower, alongside the ceremonial pole he painted.

from the NT, Tommy Watson, Lena Nyadbi and Paddy Nyunkuny Bedford from WA, Judy Watson from Queensland and Michael Riley



Above: Gulumbu Yunupingu stands beneath the ceiling she created

from NSW.

The Musée du Quai Branly has become known among the French as "un musée du regard sur l'Autre" ("a museum for viewing the Other"), due to the stated intention of French President Jacques Chirac to; "give arts and civilizations that have been neglected for far too long their rightful place".

Indigenous Territorians can rightly be proud of the dignity and generosity of spirit brought to the opening events by John Mawur-

ndjul and Gulumbu Yunupingu.

As the two senior artists in attendance, Mawurndjul and Yunupingu spoke with authority and insight about the spiritual significance of their work and the gift of sharing and connection their artworks bring to the world.

As Gulumbu Yunupingu said: "It's not for myself and for my family, but for everyone. We have this wonderful universe, and it's amazing to see the stars connecting Australia to the world."

CLC banners at National Museum Australia

The banners produced for the 30th anniversary of the Central Land Council in 2004 have been on display at the National Museum Australia in Canberra during June and July.

Chairman Lindsay Bookie, Director David Ross and artist Mervyn Rubuntja went to Canberra to talk about the exhibition and Aboriginal culture and politics in Central Australia.



Right: CLC Chairman Lindsay Bookie, CLC Director David Ross and Mervyn Rubuntja look at the banners at the NMA



NLC visits Kormilda College



Students from secondary school Kormilda College in Darwin learnt more about the functions of the Northern Land Council and its relationship with remote Aboriginal communities in the Top End of the Northern Territory recently with the aid of an information session. NLC officers gave a talk and showed videos to the class of 14 to 15 year old Indigenous students who come from all over the NT. Kormilda College's David Birch said the session was aimed at 'exposing the students to people and organisations outside of their communities'.

New high school at Galiwinku



Galiwinku primary school students attend the opening of the new secondary school on the island. Secondary school students from the island community of Galiwinku off the west Arnhem Land coast in the Northern Territory will no longer have to travel to major centres to complete a high school education.

Shepherdson College, a new \$2.5 million secondary school built earlier this year means Galiwinku students can now undertake a full 12-year education program in their home environment.

Previously, students

would have to travel to major centres such as Darwin or Nhulunbuy to progress beyond year 7.

The secondary school at Galiwinku is the fourth facility to be built on Aboriginal communities in the NT.

With a total student population of around 700, it's hoped the new facility will offer greater incentive to more than just the 78 secondary students currently enrolled to complete their education.

Timber Creek cooks up

Nine Aboriginal women from the remote community of Bulla, near Timber Creek, southwest of Katherine in the Northern Territory have boosted their chances of employment in the hospitality industry by recently completing a course at Charles Darwin University.

In a push to increase the number of Aboriginal people employed in the hospitality industry in remote areas of the Top End, the Northern Land Council, the Territory Construction Association (TCA), Charles Darwin University and the Department of Defence, established an

initiative to give Aboriginal people the skills to help gain work in the Timber Creek area.

NLC employment and training project co-ordinator David Ross said the women completed Certificate 1 in Hospitality at the Palmerston campus of Charles Darwin

University.

"The women learnt skills such as kitchen hand duties, cooking meals, cleaning and laundry duties," Mr Ross said.

It is hoped that the women will be able to get jobs in new developments in Timber Creek.

NUMBULWAR LANGUAGE CENTRE

Numbulwar recently hosted around 50 community members representing six remote communities and eight endangered Aboriginal languages for a Language Revitalisation workshop.

Students at Numbulwar School receive daily lessons in the local language Wubuy from experienced local teachers and Elders.

Delegates discussed issues such as inconsistent funding and reduced support for language and culture programs by the NT Government.

Ngukurr Language Centre chairman John Joshua said the 'stop-start' nature of funding for language retention is particularly frustrating.

"Our funding has always stopped and started, stopped and started," Mr

Joshua said. "We don't want our program to stop again."

Older generations of Aboriginal people in the Ngukurr community were banned from speaking their traditional languages at school when they were children.

The language program at Ngukurr incorporates five languages - Marra, Ngandi, Ritharrngu/Waagilak, Rembarrnga and Nunggubuyu.

Each of the 200 or so students learns one of their traditional languages through weekly classes run by teams of Elders and language teachers.

Mr Joshua said a dedicated language centre at Ngukurr is in contrast to past prejudices.

"It was hard when I was young because white people wouldn't let us speak our language in the class," Joshua said.

New study centre for Borroloola

Batchelor Institute has opened a new study centre in Borroloola

The study centre, with capacity for 25 students has distance learning facilities including email and Internet.

Yanyuwa Elder Annie Isaac said the study centre would allow her and local people to stay in Borroloola to study, instead of extended stays in Darwin.

"We have always wanted a place to study here in Borroloola," Isaac said.

"We don't like to leave our country all the time in order to study."

Right: Hon Pat Farmer MP (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for Education, Science & Training) and Member for Arnhem, Barbara McCarthy MLA with Borroloola women at the opening



Pumarali win in tight contest

Pumarali Thunder and Lightning have the bragging rights as the top football team on the Tiwi Islands, following their grand final win over last year's grand finalists Muluwurri Magpie Geese.

In wet and slippery conditions, the Thunder and Lightning beat the Magpie Geese, 49-44, in front of fanatical supporters in this year's Tiwi Islands Grand Final at Nguiu on Bathurst Island, north of Darwin.

Emotional Pumarali players dedicated their win to the nephew of Coach Gwain Tipiloura who tragically passed away last year, with every Pumarali player honouring him by



Above: Pumarali players savour the victory in the 2005/06 Tiwi Island Grand Final.

wearing No. 18.

Pumarali's Shane Kerinauia, who kicked five goals, was named best on ground, and was awarded the Brother John Pye Medal.

The Medal is named after Catholic priest Brother John Pye who is

credited with introducing the game of Australian football to the Tiwi Islands in 1941.

This year's contest represented a re-match of the 2002/2003 grand final, a game in which Pumarali were also the premiers.

Football on the Tiwi Islands also received a boost with the announcement that a representative side from the islands would be playing several games in a trial during the Darwin NTFL season later in the year.



Left: Shane Kerinauia, winner of the Brother John Pye Medal for best on ground.

Below: Pumarali player gets his kick away under pressure.



TJANPI FAMILY GO TO CANBERRA

Four Alice Springs-based fibre artists have just sent life-size grass sculptures of two women and two children to Canberra to teach the nation about seed collecting in Central Australia

But not before bidding them a proper farewell, as one of the artists explains:

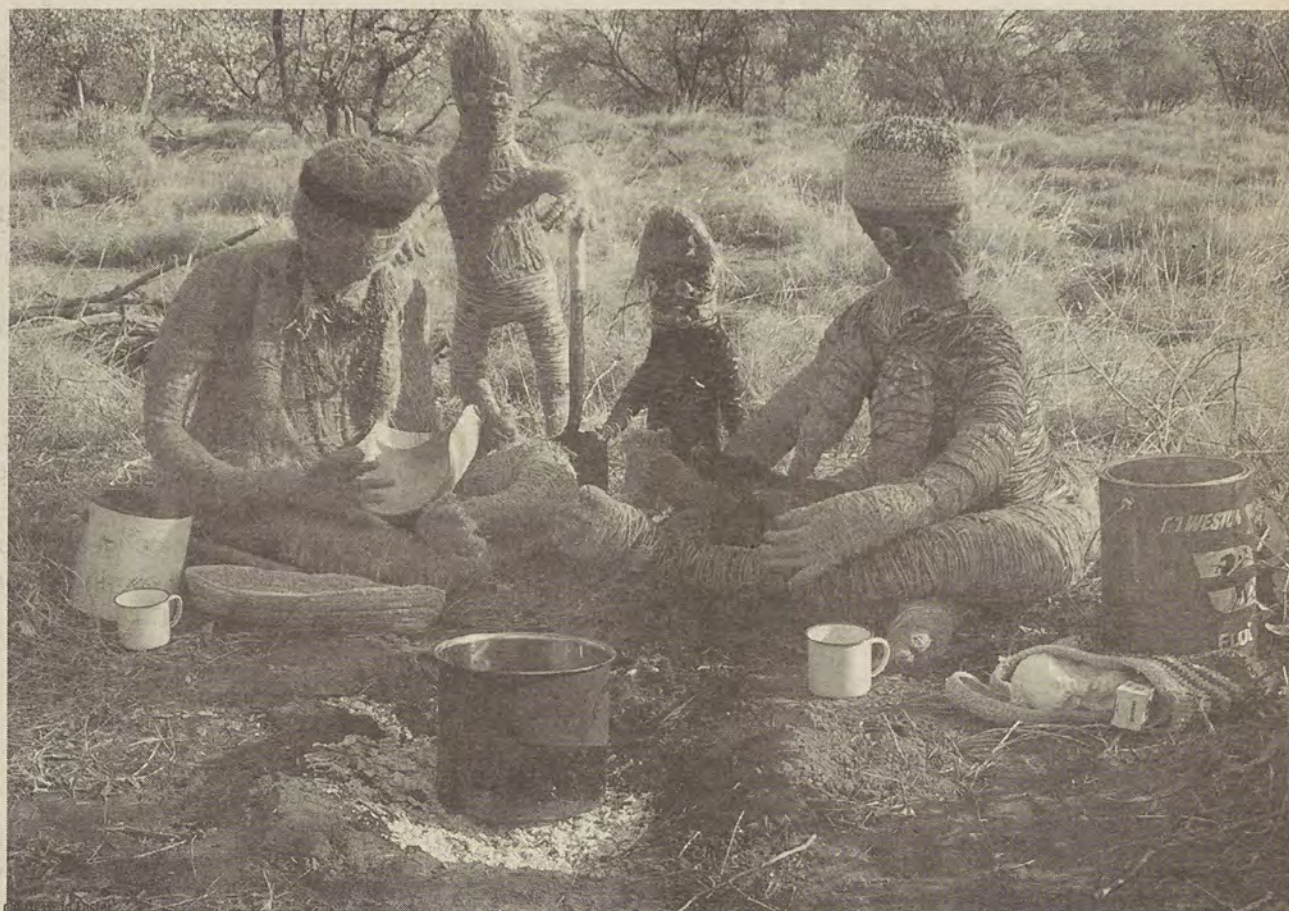
"It took us a long time to make that tjanpi (native grass) family and we'll really miss them. We took them out bush to share a last cup of tea and to say goodbye," says Jennifer Mitchell, a Ngaanyatjarra speaker from Blackstone (WA).

"They are going a long way from country now because they have very important work to

do in Canberra helping to tell a big story about collecting food out bush."

As centrepieces of the National Museum of Australia new "Bush Harvest" exhibit opening next month, the tjanpi minyma (women) and tjitji (children) will form part of a major gallery exhibit which explores Australia's national symbols and identity.

The display, developed in collaboration with the Desert Knowl-



edge CRC, reflects on the growing interest in Australian bush foods

Above: a last bush cuppa for the Tjanpi family
Left: Jennifer Mitchell with the Tjanpi Tjitji

such as wattle seed and bush tomatoes from Central Australia and macadamias from Queensland and northern NSW.

The four Western

Desert artists who made the sculptures, Noeline Baker, Nyukana Baker, Pantjiti McKenzie and Jennifer Mitchell, work with NPY Women's Council's Tjanpi

Aboriginal Baskets project.

They all live in Alice Springs to support family members who receive treatment for kidney disease.



NT music Awards on again



Milingimbi School band - 'Djambang' rocked the

2005 awards
NoKTURNL, of Alice Springs, and Yilila, of Numbulwar, have been announced as part of the line-up of performers for this year's Northern Territory Indigenous Music Awards.

The awards, to be held at the Darwin Botanic Gardens on August 25, recognise excellence and innovation in the Territory's music industry, and is part of the NT Music Festival.

Categories include Song of the Year, Act of the Year, New Talent of the Year, Traditional Music Award, Musician of the Year and School Band of the Year.

The Most Popular Song Award is given to the act with the most requested song on Indigenous radio stations – TEABBA, CAAMA and Radio Larrakia.

For more information on tickets to the big night contact Music NT (08) 8981 1995 or visit: www.musicnt.com.au



AMSANT committee member Paula Arnol and Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Director Stephanie Bell at the launch of the manual

Aboriginal health in one million words... online

The Aboriginal Medical Service Alliance of the Northern Territory (AMSANT) has gone global with the launch of a one-million word electronic manual for Aboriginal health workers and administrators.

"The beauty of this manual is that it can be accessed in an instant on the internet, it's thoroughly comprehensive and it's been designed by the people who will use it most—Aboriginal health workers and administrators," AMSANT committee member, Paula Arnol said.

The AMSANT Administration Manual is split into nine main categories: Aboriginal health, Legal, Finance, Staffing, Work health, Health boards, Funding, Policy and procedures, and Primary health care resources.

The manual is intended to enhance

Aboriginal community controlled health services, as well as taking the guess-work and complexity out of administration.

"The manual is the culmination of many months of work by AMSANT, in close consultation with the end-users, to produce a definitive tool for everyone to access and use with confidence," Ms Arnol said.

The manual can be found at www.amsantmanual.com and is expected to become an invaluable resource — not only for health workers in the NT — but for academics, students, researchers

and politicians around the world, particularly those working with indigenous people.

"The manual will further consolidate good governance in Aboriginal community controlled health services and streamline our operations right across the NT," Ms Arnol said.

GET IT ON THE WEB:

www.clc.org.au

www.nlc.org.au



Above: Margaret Orr (Mpwelarre) and Rene Douglas (Titjikala)
Below right: Anmanari Napanangka (Ikuntji/Haast Bluff) Isobel Nampitjinpa (Papunya) and Kathleen Nungarrayi (Ikuntji/Haast Bluff)

OUT AND ABOUT: LAND RIGHTS NEWS

At a recent committee meeting of Walyja at Hamilton Downs Land Rights News got snapped up...



Right: Daphne Puntjina from Utju/Areyonga

Wagiman Guwardgun Rangers

By Brenda and Verona Huddleston



Chainsaw class for the rangers

"We would like to provide some information about how the Wagiman Guwardgun Rangers are caring for their country.

"The Wagiman Guwardgun Rangers are based just south of Pine Creek.

"They have two Ranger Groups: - the men's group has 11 members whilst the women's group has five members.

"Jointly they are responsible for caring for approximately 400 square kilometres of country.

"Both the men and the women are concerned about uncontrolled wildfire, conserving biodiversity, and protecting plants, animals and sacred sites from uncontrolled fire.

"The men's ranger group was established in 2003. Important issues for the men include; establishing their pastoral business; feral animal and weed control; fire management; animal harvesting; and; controlling their cattle business.

"The women's group

was established in 2003. They are mainly responsible for running the pig nose turtle research soap business and collecting native bush plants to produce that soap.

"Important issues for the women include; improving management of the country and becoming more involved with other land owners, especially pastoralists; increasing skills and work opportunities through training and work experience, and keeping cultural connections to the land strong by regularly visiting our country.

"The women are concerned about maintaining and protecting the remaining plants and animals on their country.

"Some of them remember parts of their country being covered in the northern cypress pine.

"Until recently some of these areas were stripped of vegetation but today, these areas are being revegetated with native seed species such as the northern cypress pine.

"Traditionally the Wagiman people burnt for fishing and hunting,

they used fire sticks, and they burnt around sacred sites to clean the country for cultural reasons.

"We don't burn everything: - if you burn in the wrong places, or the wrong people burn, you get punished, you get sick.

"Today, the rangers work with surrounding property owners in the region to make sure that they protect sacred sites from wildfire, to remove sickness from their country, to protect camps, to protect property, to plan controlled early dry season burning and to hunt for bush tucker.

"The rangers watch for fire all the time, and they can go out and tell who's around just by what's been burnt and when.

"The rangers are keen to become more involved in fire management planning.

"They would especially like to know how to return their country to how it used to be, and how to protect remaining fire sensitive plants such as the northern cypress pine from fire.

BESWICK - WALKING WITH SPIRITS



Old and young walk with the ancient ones

Hundreds turned out south of Darwin recently for this year's Walking with Spirits cultural event at Wugularr (Beswick) community.

Visitors were treated to a feast of ceremony, traditional dancing and singing, youth performances, animated Dreamtime tales, puppetry and the screening of videos by local youth



about their community. The setting of Malkgulumbu (Beswick Falls) provided a stunning backdrop to the com-

munity showcase, which is in its fifth year.

MR V VINCENT farewell to a quiet leader

Vale messer's Limmerick and Finlay

Mr Limmerick
1986 - 2006

Mr Finlay
1992 - 2006

Northern Land Council members and staff are mourning the loss of two long serving, members of the NLC full council.

Messer's Finlay and Limmerick were both prominent members of the NLC, and had a combined service record of 34-years with the land council.

Mr Limmerick joined the NLC in 1986 and was a key figure for the NLC in the Barkly region.

A member for 14-years, Mr Finlay was elected to the NLC in 1992. He served two terms as an Executive Council member and one term as the NLC representative on the Imparja Television board.

NLC Chairman, John Daly, said both men will be remembered for their dedication and service to the NLC.

"The NLC has been a part of the Northern Territory's political landscape for 30-years. As NLC members, both men should be regarded as contributors in helping to shape an organisation that today is a major player in the economic development and future prosperity of Aboriginal people in the NT," Mr Daly said.

"Both were strong representatives for their regions, and strong advocates for their people.

They will be greatly missed," Mr Daly said.

A funeral service was held in Tennant Creek on 22 July for Mr Limmerick, while Mr Finlay was laid to rest in his home community of Borroloola on 29 July.

Mr Vincent was the eldest son of the celebrated Aboriginal leader and land rights advocate Vincent Lingiari.

Mr Vincent was very much a man in his father's likeness - humble, dignified and statesmanlike.

Mr Vincent was born at Wave Hill Station in the Northern Territory, and had never received any formal education but always said "life experience" had given him "an insight into

issues that are faced by our people".

He was with his father at the famous Wave Hill Walk Off in 1966.

He was at one time a member of the Central Land Council Executive, an ATSIC Regional Councillor, a Daguragu Community Councillor and a constant and impressive representative of the Gurindji people.

CLC Director David Ross said Mr Vincent was an extremely

valuable member of the community.

"No matter where he was - in front of 10 people in the bush or 500 people in Canberra - Mr Vincent could conduct himself impressively.

His speeches at events like the opening of Reconciliation Place in Canberra and at many Gurindji Freedom Days over the years were moving and inspirational.

He possessed an enduring and rare com-

mitment to his people and true leadership values," Mr Ross said.

In 2001 Mr Vincent poured dirt back into the hands of former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam in a poignant reversal of the famous ceremony in which his father took symbolic possession of Gurindji land.

"We pass on our condolences to Mr Vincent's family and extended family.

"He will be deeply missed," Mr Ross said.

The life of E Rubunjta by Tangentyere Council

Mr. Rubuntja was a popular man of our community and a great Indigenous leader, a senior Arrernte Lawman and a Pastor of the Lutheran Church.

He was a wise and highly respected elder of 84 years and is regarded as the founding father of Tangentyere Council and Yipirinya School.

He was instrumentally involved in the establishment of Aboriginal organisations such as Central Land Council, Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association and was involved in establishing the Institute of Aboriginal Development.

He was also founding member of the first Aboriginal social club, the Tyeweretye Social Club.

E Rubunjta was a gentle man who radiated an aura of great dignity, honesty and kindness.

Born on the 14th of March 1922 in Her-

mannsberg (Ntaria), E Rubuntja was strongly influenced by the early Lutheran Missionaries who ministered in the area.

From his early years, E Rubuntja was sent to school to learn to read and write without losing the significance of his bilingual upbringing.

He spoke all of the Arandic languages, as well as Pintupi, Warlpiri and Pitjantjatjarra.

E Rubuntja was sent by his father to Alice Springs (Mparntwe) in 1958 to protect sites of significance to his Dreaming Stories.

His special site was Anthepe, just south of the Gap.

Over the last decades E Rubuntja lived at Anthepe Camp, with many of his family.

E Rubunjta was a founding member of Tangentyere Council.

In the early 1970s, E Rubuntja alongside his brother W Rubunjta fought for the rights of his fellow town campers in the town which had been relegated to

the fringes.

The brothers saw a need for an Aboriginal controlled council to provide basic services, such as running water and shelter to Aboriginal people living on the fringes of the town and ensured the (now) special purpose leases and permanent housing for his fellow town campers; and the formation of Tangentyere Council.

Mr Rubuntja held the Presidency of the Tangentyere Council for many years.

He directed his energies towards establishing a proper school for the children of the Traditional Aboriginal people who lived on the "Town Camps". Yipirinya School was set up alongside Tangentyere Council and later received land, in the White Euro Dreaming site and a good place for the school.

He was a strong advocate for two way learning.

E Rubuntja was elected President of the School Council and

for the past 20 years and continued to be an active Council Executive Member and the School Council's first Life Member.

After many years working as an evangelist, E Rubuntja was ordained as a Lutheran Pastor in 1983 and become an "Inkgarte".

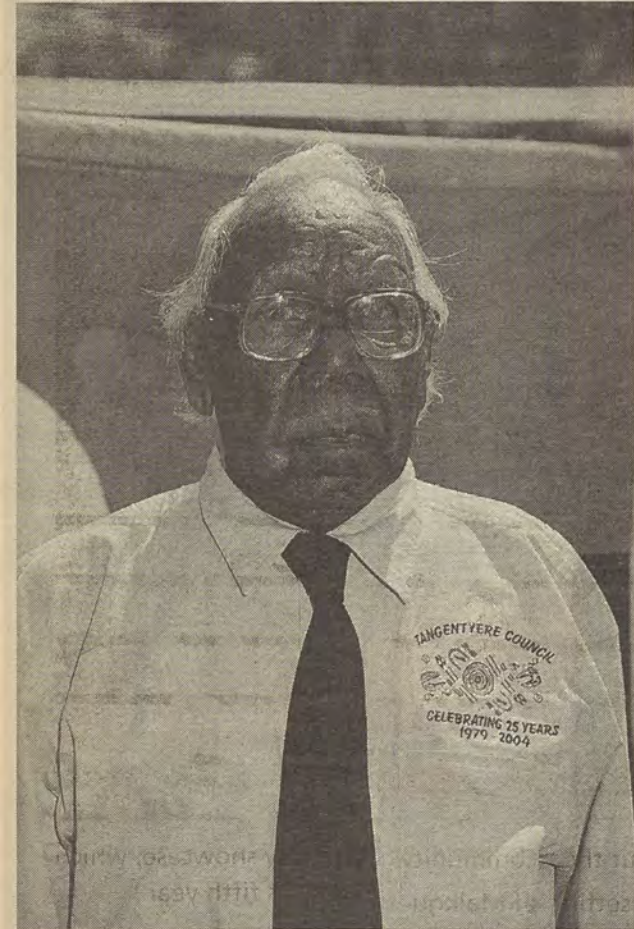
He provided pastoral care to many living in the Town Camps of Alice Springs.

E Rubuntja was renowned as a champion runner, entering races in Melbourne and Bendigo and Warnambool and came Runner Up in the Park Handicap over 100 yards at the Stawell Easter Gift Athletics Meet in 1946.

In 2000 he was named NAIDOC Centurion of the Year.

In 2001 he received the Governor-General Centenary Medal granted for major contributions of service to the Australian people.

E Rubuntja died on the 1st of July 2006, at the age of 84.



Pastor E Rubunjta

Come Celebrate

the 40th Anniversary of the Gurindji Wave Hill Walk Off 1966-2006

40 years FREEDOM DAY FESTIVAL

Recognising land, vision, determination and hope

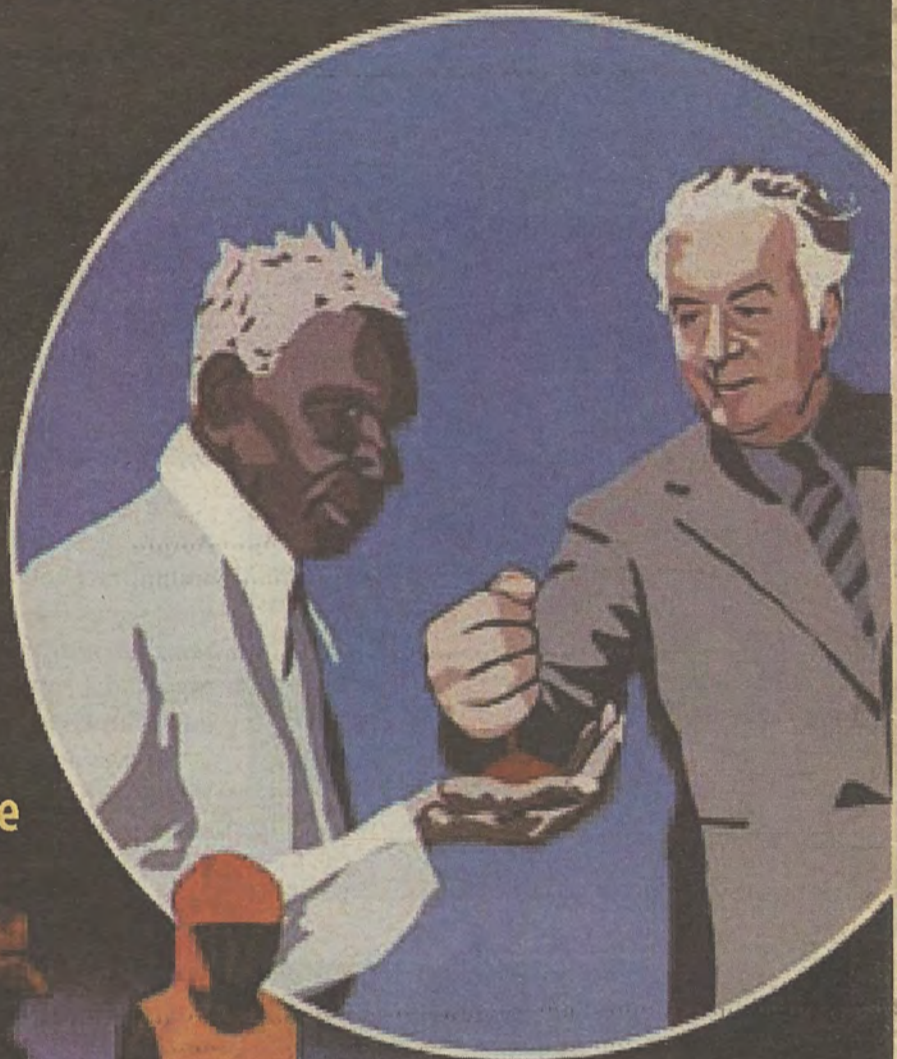
18-19 August 2006

Kalkaringi & Daguragu NT Australia

Community BBQ & Dancing
Exhibitions & Displays
Speeches, Talks & Tours
Concerts Friday & Saturday
Adults \$10
BYO tents & swags
Food & drinks for sale
NO ALCOHOL NO DRUGS

Kev Carmody • Mary G • Warren H Williams
Nokturnl • Narbalek Band • Lazy Late Boys + more

*Playing schedule is subject to change without notice



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