

LAND RIGHTS NEWS

Volume 8, Number 3, December 2006



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MACARTHUR RIVER MINE LEGAL ACTION,
LAND MANAGEMENT, FREEDOM DAY PICS....



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Actor, musician and artistic director Tom E. Lewis has been honoured with this year's \$50,000 Red Ochre Award by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board (ATSIAB) of the Australia Council for the Arts.

ATSIAB chairman Dr Chris Sarra said Tom E. Lewis was an artist who embodied an amazing and generous artistic energy across an array of artistic practice including film, theatre, music and community cultural development.

"I am proud to acknowledge that Tom embodies the principles of the ATSIAB in claiming, controlling and enhancing Indigenous culture among our country's Indigenous communities;

we consider him a true leader in 'keeping culture strong'," Dr Sarra said.

"His work as the artistic director of the Walking With Spirits Festival is but one example of Tom's commitment to creating space for the celebration and appreciation of Aboriginal art and culture."

Established by the Australia Council's ATSIAB in 1993, the Red Ochre Award recognises and honours an Indigenous artist who has made an outstanding contribution to the development and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture, both nationally and internationally.

Land Rights NEWS

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COVER PHOTO

Barabara Tjikatu at her recent ceremony to receive an Order of Australia Medal for her extraordinary contribution to both Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people through her involvement at Uluru

PERMITS

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Mal Brough is determined that the current permit system on Aboriginal land has to change. But in the bush Aboriginal people are fighting to maintain a right that they see as inextricably linked to land rights...



The current permit system on Aboriginal land looks set for change.

The system has allowed Aboriginal people to control who comes onto Aboriginal land for the last 30 years.

While it appears Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough has backed down from his initial announcement that the permit system 'be scrapped' altogether, Government bureaucrats say the most likely option is that permits are removed for most large towns and roads while being retained on Aboriginal land.

The idea has been received angrily in the bush. At a series of meetings held by the Government around bush communities in Central Australia, the message from Aboriginal people was loud and clear: leave our permit

system alone.

There was also anger that the Minister hasn't been to visit any of these communities personally to talk about such an important issue.

But Mr Brough says that permits prevent open scrutiny by the press allowing violent behaviour to happen and prevent businesses from opening on Aboriginal communities.

"I'm about trying to protect the children and trying to protect people from harm and from those who would hide behind an artificial screen.

"This is not carte blanche - just get rid of it and in doing so open people up to exploitation, I'm not about that," he told ABC Radio.

But for a group of men Land Rights News spoke to at Papunya, the Min-

ister's argument didn't hold up.

Permits have got nothing to do with no businesses opening on Aboriginal land, according to Sid Anderson.

"That's nonsense," he said.

"How we think of permits is like the Australian Government thinks of terrorists - keep them out. That's how we think - we use permits to keep out people who might bring gunga or steal paintings."

Art dealing is of particular concern to many Aboriginal people and Anderson's feelings were echoed by many in the group and elsewhere.

Sammy Butcher says that Government is always trying to 'take something away'.

"Permits help our living style. Leave them alone,"



he said.

The Minister announced a review of the permits system on 4 October 2006 but initially only gave until 30 November for submissions from communities and land councils.

He has now extended the deadline until the end of February 2007.

Above: Lindsay Bookie speaks to the CLC meeting about permits while OIPC officer Greg Roche looks on



Order of Australia for Uluru's Barbara Tjikatu

Barbara Tjikatu, a traditional owner of Uluru has won one of Australia's highest awards, the Order of Australia.

Since the Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park was handed back to traditional owners 20 years ago, Mrs Tjikatu has worked tirelessly for joint management and led the community through a difficult period of cultural adjustment and transition.

She has continued to look after the country, to protect the tjukurpa, to celebrate the stories, to train up young people and to educate non-Aboriginal people about Aboriginal culture.

CLC director David Ross said he was delighted she had won the award.

"Mrs Tjikatu's knowledge, strength, diligence and commitment as a mother, grandmother, artist, community leader, worker, teacher

and Board Member has generated respect and has been an inspiration to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people alike," he said.

Greg Hunt MP, Parliamentary Secretary with ministerial responsibility for Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, congratulated Mrs Tjikatu.

"Barbara Tjikatu is one of the principal figures in the history and development of Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park."

"She helped establish the joint management arrangements for Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park and has been a tireless Board member almost continuously since 1986."

Mrs Tjikatu was born in the Western Desert in the late 1920s.

She remembers walking from place to place in the desert region around Uluru, visiting her grandmother's country and her grand-



CLC Land Management Coordinator Tina Bain presents Tjikatu with a swag, a tomahawk and a blanket to supplement the medal she received from NT Administrator Ted Egan

father's country, and hunting and gathering on the land.

Barbara Tjikatu told the gathered press that land rights and proper

wages for the Anangu workers at Uluru were the most important issues for her.

OUTRAGE AT INTERTIDAL ZONE BACK-FLIP BY CHIEF MINISTER

Traditional owner groups of coastal lands and rivers in the Top End of the Northern Territory are outraged that recent changes to the Land Rights Act may signal an end to land won previously through legal processes.

The original Bill included a proposed amendment that land claims to the intertidal zone and the beds and banks of rivers, which were not adjacent or contiguous to Aboriginal land, be terminated.

Northern Land Council Chairman, John Daly, says it is unfair and unjust that Aboriginal people who have won their land after a full hearing before a judge should have it terminated by Parliament.

"This is said to be justified to ensure that adjoining pastoralists have access to the beach and to the sea," Mr Daly said.

"But the NLC accepts that adjoining pastoralist should have access consistent with current arrangements."

This proposal was not consistent with the joint position of the four land councils and the NT Government, which in 2003, had proposed that all outstanding claims should be determined by way of negotiation.

However, on 21 July this year, the NLC was made aware that the Chief Minister had broken this principle by agreeing with the Commonwealth's proposal that claims be terminated.

"Without any consultation, the NT Chief Minister supported termination of the claims, and called for drafting changes to ensure certainty of this result," Mr Daly said.

"It was the Chief Minister's secret support which enabled the Commonwealth Government to try and terminate the claims."

Late Senate amendments mean that termination of claims is not automatic (as originally proposed), and will only occur after a separate decision



by the Minister.

The NLC has written to the Commonwealth Government asking Minister Brough to carefully consider each matter, and to fully consult with traditional owners to deliver an outcome which benefits all stakeholders.

Land Rights Act changes rammed through

Changes to the Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act, 1976 passed by the Federal Government in September this year are likely to have an impact on the way land councils conduct their business.

The CLC and the NLC have expressed their disappointed with the federal government's decision to

pass these important amendments quickly and without the informed consent of traditional owners or the full agreement of land councils.

While many of the positive initiatives for the streamlining of land use and mining developments have generally been welcomed by land councils, the other 234

provisions contained in the Bill include many new and complex proposals that were not discussed with traditional owners.

Due to the swift passage of the Bill through the federal parliament, the Land Councils were unable to fully inform Aboriginal owners of the effects of the Bill.

Daguragu workers may claim stolen wages

More than 40 people from the Northern Territory communities of Daguragu and Kalkaringi have added their names to a list of claimants seeking compensation for lost or stolen wage entitlements during the 1960's – and there could be more.

Maurie Ryan, President of the Daguragu/Kalkaringi Council,

says an interim list has been compiled and will be provided to a Senate inquiry investigating claims of lost or stolen wages to Aboriginal people during the 1960's.

"The legal precedent has already been set in Queensland, with many of those people having received compensation. So, why shouldn't

these people do the same," Mr Ryan said.

"They deserve it, because it is well documented that they worked for flour, sugar and tea."

A Senate committee inquiry report has found evidence that government's withheld and mismanaged Indigenous wages and entitlements for more than 50-years.



Harry Nelson Jakama speaks at a recent CLC meeting

NLC to challenge McArthur River Mine expansion in court

Traditional Owners from Borroloola have instructed the Northern Land Council to mount a legal challenge to the validity of processes used by the Northern Territory Government in their approval of the McArthur River mine expansion.

The NLC has received legal advice that the Kurdanji traditional owners will take to Court in establishing that the NT Government is liable to pay compensation for the impairment of native title rights, for damage to important sacred sites and culturally significant areas, and regarding the diversion of the river in relation to its cultural significance.

"Xstrata wants to trample on Aboriginal rights and culture by permanently diverting a major river and interfering with major Rainbow Serpent sites, without negotiating an agreement with the traditional owners – and without explaining to the public why it is safe to locate tailings on a flood plain," NLC chief executive Norman Fry said.

NLC chairman John Daly said the land council was disappointed with the Northern Territory Government's decision to allow expansion of the McArthur River Mine.

"We are looking at the environmental side of this issue, and it just doesn't stack up," Mr Daly said.

Mr Daly said the mining company had not been forthcoming with NLC requests for

environmental impact data of the current mine and future development could have irreversible consequences, especially concerning groundwater.

Mr Fry said that the local Aboriginal community had received little in the way of economic benefits from the operation of the mine.

"The local Aboriginal community has received very little in the way of economic benefits or their environmental concerns laid to rest by the operations of this mine."

"Once this river is diverted from its natural course the loss of habitat of local species would be significant," Mr Fry said.

"This of course has a cultural impact in regards to sustenance and food sources for Aboriginal people in the area."

"Any future mining project in the Territory has to take into account any economic spin-offs and financial spin-offs for local Aboriginal people in the area affected," Mr Fry said.

Fry said local Aboriginal people have not been compensated and there had not been a mining agreement negotiated.

Mr Fry urged that any expansion be halted so that environmental and cultural concerns were addressed.

"Any environmental disaster in the Gulf of Carpentaria could have catastrophic consequences for the whole fisheries industry in Australia," he

said.

Traditional owner Jackie Green said the expansion would disturb an important Rainbow Serpent dreaming.

"It would take away our spirit if the mine changes the course of the river. It would take away our culture. Mother Nature should find its own natural course for this river. Ever since the mine started we have never seen any data in regards to river flow," Mr Green said.

"The dreaming is like a song that travels along the river out to the Centre Islands (off the coast of Borroloola), and it is really significant to us. Changing the course of the river would be like changing our culture."

Traditional owner Betty Finlay said the mining company, the NT Government and the Federal Government had yet to properly consult with traditional owners.

"We have been left out in the dark. Aboriginal people have nothing to lose if this mine closes. That is our river, that is where our songs go, where our ceremony goes, and if someone moves that it will spoil us inside."

"We would soon be dying today and tomorrow," Finlay said.

"The mine has to stop, and the company start talking with the NLC."

"They are not recognising the rights of the traditional owners. We are being left in the dark."



Borroloola traditional owners protest outside Parliament House in Darwin

GAS PIPELINE UNDER WAY



MacMahon general manager Robert Wilson, ENI development manager Nicola de Simone, senior traditional owner Leo Melpi and ENI managing director Eros Agostinelli

A ground breaking ceremony to signal the start of the Blacktip gas pipeline which will provide energy for Darwin occurred recently on Aboriginal land near Yelcher Beach, south of Wad-eye.

Italian energy company ENI Australia were represented by managing director Eros Agostinelli and Blacktip Gas Project development manager Nicola de Simone who were presented gifts from senior

traditional owner Leo Melpi.

The pipeline, now under construction, will supply gas to Darwin and provide some employment for local Aboriginal people.

The Northern Land Council assisted traditional owners to negotiate a commercial lease agreement to enable the construction of a gas processing plant at the Blacktip gas field.

Traditional owners will lease an industrial site which will include

a gas washing plant, compressor station and liquid storage in the vicinity of Wad-eye.

The gas processing plant is ultimately intended to be used for the generation of electricity at the Channel Island power station, located in the Bonaparte Gulf.

The agreement represents a significant commercial arrangement on Aboriginal land.

NUCLEAR WASTE

The Central and Northern Land Councils have come to different positions on the issue of storing nuclear waste dump in the Northern Territory. The CLC says that the proposed nuclear waste dump in Central Australia is unsafe, too close to peoples homes and that recent legislation will make it difficult to challenge any decisions to situate a dump on Aboriginal land.

The NLC says nuclear waste can be stored safely and the amendments to the Radioactive Waste Act ensure traditional owners cannot be overridden.

The Northern Land Council

In 2005, after a landmark resolution by its Full Council, the NLC supported Commonwealth laws to establish a national facility for the storage of medical and industrial radioactive waste in the Northern Territory.

Each year 400,000 Australians receive radiological medical treatment, and each Australian will likely receive such treatment in his or her lifetime. Presently waste is stored in over 100 different locations in Australia, particularly in hospitals including Darwin hospital - hardly ideal, and not in accordance with international best practice.

The NLC's position reflected the fact that, in the NLC's region and throughout Australia, a range of views exist regarding uranium matters - both for and against, with many people undecided.

The NLC's position is consistent with scientific advice that a waste facility can be safely located in some places in the Northern Territory. As stated in the draft report of the recent review conducted by Dr Ziggy Switkowski, "safe disposal of low-level and short-lived intermediate-level-waste has been demonstrated at many sites throughout

the world", with "over 100 sites in more than 30 countries" - including at Mt Walton near Kalgoorlie and Esk in south-east Queensland.

The NLC's support was underpinned by amendments by Senator Nigel Scullion which ensured that traditional owners will always make the final decision regarding development on their country.

The Commonwealth laws overrode 2004 NT legislation which, without consultation, prevented traditional owners from developing their country for a waste facility should they wish.

The NT Government imposed this ban despite storing radioactive waste at two locations (Darwin hospital and near Katherine), and notwithstanding that the Chief Minister has authorised the transport of Roxby Downs yellowcake by train and ship from the East Arm Port and supports the Ranger uranium mine.

The NLC also supports recent amendments which plainly benefit traditional owners by maximising the prospect of agreed outcomes with economic and employment outcomes.

The amendments mean that traditional

owners can be confident that, when the facility is no longer required and is safe, the country will be restored as Aboriginal land for the benefit of their descendants. Experience at Rum Jungle, Coronation Hill and Maralinga show that traditional owners will likely seek return of their land once it is rendered safe.

The Land Trust will be indemnified in the unlikely event that any claim regarding previous waste storage arises after the land is restored as Aboriginal land.

Traditional owners will now immediately benefit from agreements regarding their country, without delay from spurious litigation or objection by the NT Government or by individuals who do not represent the group - such as occurred regarding the Bradshaw defence agreement which was delayed for almost a year by an unfounded objection.

This approach is consistent with the scheme of the Land Rights Act, which for over 30 years has provided that a lease of Aboriginal land or certain mining leases cannot be invalidated on the basis of lack of compliance by a Land Council with consultation requirements.

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The Central Land Council

The CLC believes recent changes to the Radioactive Waste Act are not consistent with the Land Rights Act and will make it easier for a radioactive waste site to be nominated on Aboriginal land without properly consulting Aboriginal people.

"This new bit of legislation shuts another door in the face of traditional owners," said CLC Director David Ross.

Under the original Act, possible sites could be nominated on Aboriginal land once the usual consent provisions under the Land Rights Act had been followed. Under the changes, a nomination cannot be challenged, even if the consent provisions have not been followed.

CLC Director David Ross said "I think the real issue here is that Aboriginal people are not interested in the politically motivated challenges, they are interested in their rights and in being consulted about what is to take place or what is not to take place on their land.

That is what interests Aboriginal people more than anything else."

Land councils are still obliged to consult under the Land Rights Act, but once a nomination goes forward,

traditional owners will not be able to turn back. Traditional owners will have to make their decision about the whole facility, even though they will not have all the information (the government environmental and licensing reports will not be done for years) and even though they will have no say in how their land might be acquired and on what conditions a waste facility operator might move in.

Conversely, when traditional owners agree to a lease under the Land Rights Act, all the conditions of the lease are known before the lease is agreed to.

"The Government has behaved cynically in passing this legislation and it is determined to get a nuclear waste dump site at any cost," said Mr Ross.

In addition to nominating sites on Aboriginal land, the original Radioactive Waste Act also named three Defence sites which the Australian Government wants to investigate for a waste facility: Fishers Ridge near Katherine, Alcoota near Harts Range, and Mt Everard near Alice Springs.

Traditional owners for the two sites in Central Australia have made their opposi-

tion to a dump site on their land clear, including by lodging native title claims over both sites.

"We have carried out consultations on both sides of the Stuart Highway in the CLC region, and we have had those people informed by as many different people as we possibly can," said Mr Ross.

"We take informed consent very seriously and at the end of the day I am satisfied that people have made their decision after careful thought."

"The decision against it is definitely unanimous. I have right up to this day not had anyone come and say to us that they would like a waste repository on their country," he said.

Steven McCormack, who lives close to the Mt Everard site, believes a waste facility would be devastating for his family.

"This land is not empty - people live right nearby. We hunt and collect bush tucker here. We don't want this poison here."

The changes to the Radioactive Waste Act were passed on 5 December 2006. The CLC was not consulted about the changes before they were introduced into Parliament.

Santa Teresa camels fenced out



Peter Barker (front), Justin Hayes, Derek Hayes, Richard Furber, Gerard Davis, Bobby Hayes, Lawrence Hayes

Traditional owners for Santa Teresa Aboriginal Land Trust have been working with the CLC and Greening Australia to fence off two culturally and ecologically important springs from feral cattle, horses and camels.

A heavy duty feral proof fence has been installed at Hayes Springs (Mparntwenge) with another fence nearly com-

plete at Salt Springs (Irlkertye).

After the fence was completed at Hayes Springs the traditional owners worked to clean out one of the springs which was full of built up cow manure.

Once the cow manure was removed the spring began to fill with water seeping in from the surrounding rocks again.

Traditional Owner

Justin Hayes who worked on the project said: "These springs have been messed up for a long time – all my life.

"Now its dry times there are too many bullocks and camels coming here.

"This work is important – it's important to keep it clean.

"I'm happy to come out here and check on it after rain and clean it up."



Environment Minister Marion Scrymgour with NLC Chair John Daly and senior traditional owner Lofty Nabardayal Nadjamerrek

TRADITIONAL BURNING SPARKS NEW CARBON TRADE

This project is expected to reduce 100,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year – equivalent to taking 20,000 cars off Territory roads.

A landmark agreement in the Northern Territory where traditional Aboriginal knowledge and modern science is being used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions could prove a model for similar 'carbon trading' projects in future.

The West Arnhem Fire Management Agreement will implement strategic early dry season fire management over western Arnhem Land aimed at reducing the size and extent of unmanaged wildfires.

Northern Land Council chairman John Daly said that carbon credit trading in Australia is inevitable, and that this agreement showed that Aboriginal people have the potential to be a major player in the carbon marketplace.

"Today's ceremony celebrates the fact it is possible to find new ways in addition to traditional industries like cattle, horticulture, tourism and mining in creating jobs out there in remote Aboriginal lands," Mr Daly said.

"The West Arnhem Fire Management Agreement is a very important development, and it paves the way for similar developments in future."

The project is expected to reduce 100,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year – equivalent to taking 20,000 cars off Territory roads.

As part of the multi-million dol-

lar arrangement over 20 years, the NT Government will contract the Northern Land Council and Aboriginal Traditional Owners of western Arnhem Land to implement the fire burning strategy with funds received from Darwin Liquefied Natural Gas.

The burning of savannas is the greatest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the Northern Territory – with approximately 40 per cent of the Territory's gas emissions coming from wildfires.

"This agreement is an important foundation of a larger and growing plan by landowners to rebuild an economy in some of the Territory's most remote and marginal lands," Mr Daly said.

"It is a foundation stone. It encourages us not to be afraid, to think outside the square, in building an economy for future generations."

The West Arnhem Fire Management Agreement is a co-operative arrangement involving Darwin LNG, the Northern Territory Government, the Northern Land Council and relevant Aboriginal traditional owners and is seen as helping to conserve environmental and cultural values in the region equivalent to the adjacent World Heritage-listed Kakadu National Park.

Quad bikes way to go for Tjuwanpa rangers



These five Tjuwanpa Rangers completed Offroad Quadbike Training through SMART-NT recently. The men use bikes for getting rid of athel pine in creeks and searching for feral pigs.

West MacDonnells mob win conservation award



From left to right: Marion Scrymgour MLA, Carl Inkamala, Alison Anderson, Davy Inkamla, Trudi Inkamala, Dawn Ross and Colleen Mack.

Traditional owners of the West MacDonnell National Park had an award presented to them recently for their role in protecting ecosystem diversity and threatened animals and plants.

WWF Australia made the awards to the traditional owners and the NT Government for their outstanding contribution to conservation.

CLC Director David Ross said that the traditional owners had welcomed the move to joint management of the Park.

"We did a lot of consultations with the traditional owners and to their immense credit they embraced the opportunity to create jobs for themselves and their children while preserving their country and adding to

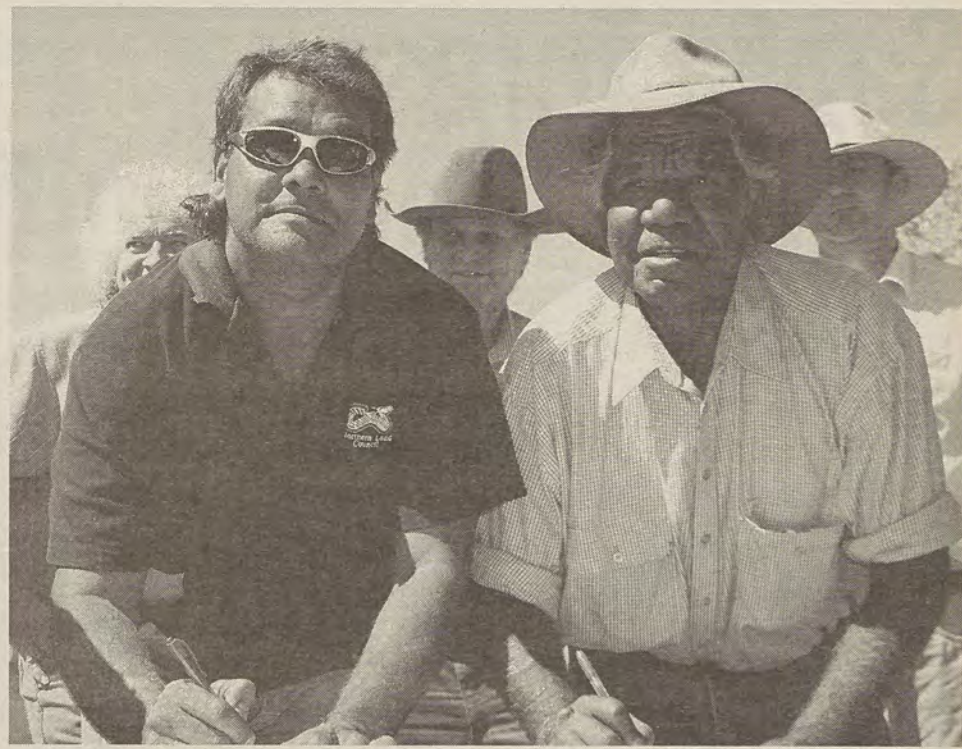
the national estate," Mr Ross said.

"The area is unique and its significant natural values will be greatly enhanced by the cultural values that joint management will bring to it.

"Central Australia benefits immensely from these arrangements and this award acknowledges that contribution.

"Congratulations to everybody involved in helping to preserve one of the world's last great pristine areas.

"However, we do urge the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Mal Brough to schedule the land that was agreed as part of the arrangements as quickly as possible," he said.



Above left: NLC Chair John Daly and above right CLC Chair Lindsay Bookie sign the second pastoral agreement.

Indigenous pastoral agreement signed again

As celebrations were being held for the 40th anniversary of the Wave Hill Walk-Off at Kalkaringi recently, an agreement was being signed for a second term.

Under the agreement cattle farmers are granted grazing licences on Aboriginal land in return for employment, infrastructure and support for Aboriginal cattlemen. In addition, Aboriginal pastoralists are given training and support for their own cattle enterprises.

This year, the NT Cattleman's Association joined the partnership of the Northern and Central Land Council's, the Indigenous Land Corporation, the Northern Territory Government.

The employment and training model has been implemented and aims to foster direct Aboriginal participation in the management and operation of pastoral enter-

prises as well as maximising employment and training outcomes.

"The strategy will result in over 300 jobs and provide a blueprint for Aboriginal employment in other sectors in the Territory, including mining, hospitality, construction and tourism," Mr Daly said.

CLC Director David Ross said: "These are exactly the sorts of programs we need to build the bush and get Aboriginal people back into work and on the path to a better future,"

"The first MOU signed in 2003 was a success.

"It laid some solid foundations and under that agreement we granted grazing licenses on Aboriginal land to a number of pastoralists in exchange for employment, infrastructure and support for Aboriginal cattlemen," Mr Ross said.

Wagiman rangers win national landcare award



Djawa Yunupingu



Wunyubi Marika

An environmental group in the Northern Territory have been recognised in the national Landcare Awards.

The Wagiman-Guwardagun rangers won a Landcare Indigenous award for their efforts to protect the land.

The Wagiman people won title to their traditional lands in the Upper Daly region and now carry out sustainable management programs in the area.

Twelve rangers have graduated in resource management from Charles Darwin University – the largest number of Aboriginal rangers ever to have graduated.

They have also set up a company

producing bush soap.

In 1999 the Caring for Country unit of the Northern Land Council commenced talking with the Wagiman traditional owners about the management of their lands.

Plans were made to establish a ranger group and in 2004 funding allowed them to employ their first full-time facilitator.

There are about 20 men and women rangers involved in cattle industry development, research, feral animal control, and fire and weed management.

The Wagiman rangers also won the Northern Territory Landcare Award in 2005.

Warlpiri put royalties towards education

Warlpiri people have put a considerable part of their royalty payments towards improving their education.

In 2004 Warlpiri traditional owners set up the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT) which is guided by Warlpiri ideas.

The royalty association is advised by projects that WETT could fund by an advisory committee and the Central Land Council has agreed to administer the Trust.

The first round of community consultations to identify projects for WETT funding were done in 2005 in four Warlpiri communities: Nyirrpri, Yuendumu, Willowra and Lajamanu.

Based on these consultations the royalty association approved five projects for WETT funding.

1. Support for the Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu Jaru Association, which is the peak Aboriginal education body in the Warlpiri region.

2. Support for the production of Warlpiri bilingual materials.

3. Support for Warlpiri schools to enable country visits.

4. Support for Warlpiri schools to pay elders and community members to be involved in school activities.

5. Vehicles and trailers for the four Warlpiri schools to take students on country visits.

All of these projects are now in place and they are already



bringing benefits to Warlpiri people.

With these projects in place, Warlpiri are now looking to fund some larger, long-term projects with WETT money.

Six ideas for education and training

programs were developed, including a Warlpiri Early Childhood Centre and a Warlpiri Youth and New Media Program.

The CLC, together with members of the Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu Jaru Association,

has just completed consultations on these ideas in the Warlpiri communities to see which ones Warlpiri think are the most important for education and training.

GOING BUSH with Cathy Freeman



Cathy Freeman with Sheila Johnston (above) and below relaxing with Land Rights News during a break in filming her SBS show *Going Bush* with men and women from TennaNt Creek and the region.



Centre educators a hit at Cairns conference

Aboriginal educators (pictured above) from Laramba, Ti Tree and Mt Allan showcased their achievements at a national Computers in Education conference in Cairns recently.

Seraphina Presley, Serena Presley, April Campbell, Janie Long, David MacCormack,

and Mick Turner came back with new skills and ideas for their classrooms and a renewed confidence about their work which they have since presented to staff at the Education Department and at a Central Australian Principals meeting.

This group's inter-

est is in interactive computer literacy resources in Aboriginal languages.

The group's presentation at the conference was so popular that it ran for two hours – well past the allocated time of 45 minutes.

THE DALY... MORE THAN A RIVER

Stop land clearing and no dams say traditional owners

Northern Land Council Chairman, John Daly, has welcomed the release of a comprehensive Indigenous management framework report into the Daly River catchment area.

Released in early September, the Daly River Aboriginal Reference Group (ARG) Indigenous Management Framework is the first time traditional owners have set out their vision for how the Daly River region should be managed.

"The report is important for many reasons," Mr Daly said. "Not only does it outline traditional owner concerns, but identifies ways and

means to preserve the river system for years to come."

The management framework features a target list of 25 objectives the ARG wish to achieve over the next three-years as part of its catchment management strategy.

Key recommendations from the report include:

- Support for sustainable economic development;
- A call for the recognition of the Daly River as a cultural landscape;
- Greater equity in decision making;
- A 'no dams' policy; and,
- The establishment of a catchment wide zoning system for manag-

ing competing interest within the region.

The ARG also argues for the maintenance of the moratorium on land clearing and the issuing of water licenses until the NT Government can guarantee that Aboriginal concerns are addressed through the strengthening of current policy and legislation.

"Aboriginal people across the NT should be involved in management practices that have a direct impact on their lives and their lands," Mr Daly said.

"Preservation of significant sites, appropriate use of available resources and the protection of the regions bio-diversity is vital for the continued use and



enjoyment of the river and its surrounds."

The NLC established the Daly River ARG as a consultative body of traditional owners dealing with catchment manage-

ment issues in the Daly River region. The group consists of 19 traditional owners from eight language groups.

The ARG's report is in response to the NT

Above: The Daly River needs to be looked after, say traditional owners
Government's Daly Community Reference Group report released in November 2004.

NLC says no to statehood

Education, land rights and housing need to be fixed before the NLC says it will support statehood for the Territory

NLC Chairman, John Daly, has said that Aboriginal people will continue to reject Statehood in the Northern Territory until there are good faith negotiations with the NT Government regarding land rights, education, and housing outcomes in communities.

Speaking before the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs in Darwin on 16 October, Mr Daly said there is a fundamental need to engage Aboriginal people in future

directions of the NT.

"Aboriginal people are hostile to the idea of the transfer of power, including the power to compulsorily acquire Aboriginal land, to the Territory. Our common experience tells us that the local Legislative Assembly does not act in a responsible or fair way when it comes to land rights, and is always tempted to spend in city marginal seats rather than in communities" Mr Daly said.

"The position of the Northern Land Council in relation to the Statehood question has remained

unchanged since the Kalkaringi and Batchelor Statements in 1998.

These two policy documents have been incorporated into a single Aboriginal Constitutional Strategy, and forms the starting point for engagement with Aboriginal people on the question of Statehood in the Northern Territory," Mr Daly said.

There are two general principles that appear in the pre-ambles to the Strategy, which Aboriginal people believe are pertinent when considering the question of statehood:

"Firstly, that we will withhold our consent

to the establishment of a new State until there are good faith negotiations between the Northern Territory Government and the freely chosen representatives of the Aboriginal peoples of the Northern Territory leading to a Constitution based upon equality, co-existence and mutual respect.

"And secondly, that the Northern Territory Government must provide adequate resources and negotiate in good faith a realistic time table for such negotiations."

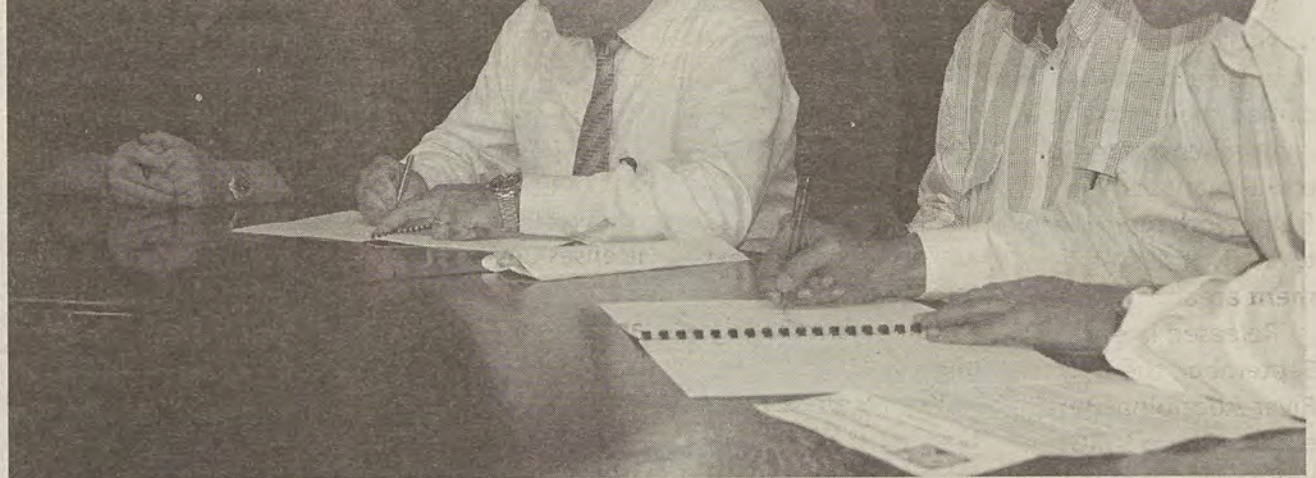
"I hope governments will be smart when thinking about the long-term future

of the north," Mr Daly said. "Their decision making must include Aboriginal people."

Below: NLC Chair John Daly



NLC SIGNS MOU WITH PAWC



Minister Kon Vatskalis, NLC Chair John Daly and NLC CEO Norman Fry sign up

The Northern Land Council's Employment & Training program has taken another leap forward with the signing of a five-year Memorandum of Understanding with the Power and Water Corporation.

"This agreement is a win-win for all concerned," Mr Fry said. "Because it is not only about providing young Aboriginal people with career opportunities within Power and Water, but it is also about developing the local and regional labour markets by building on the Wad-eye to Ban Ban Springs gas pipeline."

Under the terms of the Agreement, the NLC will:

- (i) promote awareness of the Programs to Indigenous persons including within secondary schools;
- (ii) encourage

Indigenous persons to apply for the Programs; (iii) provide mentoring and pre-employment training prior to candidates applying for the Programs; (iv) where appropriate, provide numeracy and literacy assistance to candidates applying for the Programs; and, (v) identify any employment opportunities at Power and Water for indigenous persons, particularly within remote communities.

"Both parties recognise that there are many benefits for Aboriginal people in the NLC and Power & Water working together," Mr Fry said.

"The Northern Land Council has been actively involved in partnerships that ensure that Aboriginal people can access opportunities that

might otherwise not be made available to them. Today's signing is a continuation of that process."

Since its inception in 2001, the NLC Job's and Careers Service (JACS) has expanded from a single

written agreement, to having created employment for over 400 Aboriginal people last year.

"Today, the NLC's employment program is widely regarded as one of the most successful Indigenous

employment programs in the country - we are proud of that achievement," Mr Fry said.

"We are building on the opportunities that are being presented to Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory, and will

continue to negotiate agreements with potential partners in the construction, mining and hospitality industries that offer real outcomes for Aboriginal people."

NLC EMPLOYMENT AWARDS

Northern Land Council (NLC) Chairman, John Daly, has paid tribute to the inaugural winners of the NLC's Employer Excellence Awards.

Held in Darwin in October, and well attended by members of the private and public sectors, the evening was a celebration of outstanding achievements by employers and employees alike.

The awards were an opportunity to acknowledge and recognise employers for 'making a difference' through outstanding commitment to improving engagement with Aboriginal people in the area of jobs, partnerships and land use agreements.

"The awards were an opportunity to thank those who, through their commitment to entering into

genuine partnerships with the NLC, have secured long term, real jobs, for Aboriginal people over the past five years," Mr Daly said.

"Through our important partnerships, such as our partnership with the Territory Construction Association, the NLC has successfully pursued projects that have resulted in significant economic outcomes for Aboriginal people, bringing real benefits to regional economies and creating genuine employment opportunities.

Mr Daly said the NLC is focused on jobs and the environment that creates jobs.

"That is an environment that leads to economic prosperity," Mr Daly said. "Because if we cannot build economic prosperity

for Aboriginal people here in the NT, then the Territory as a whole cannot move forward.

"Aboriginal people are the fastest growing population in the NT, and in a few years we will be the majority. It is self evident that in order to move the NT economy forward, we must build a local Aboriginal workforce," Mr Daly said.

The NLC will continue to pursue partnerships with the private sector to allow Aboriginal people to

be real contributors to the economy as a whole.

"We anticipate that the avenues provided by the NLC's employment program will provide Indigenous job seekers with a path towards employment and develop opportunities that would have otherwise not been available," Mr Daly said.

The NLC plans to host the Employer Excellence Awards as a regular event.

Below: Winners at the awards



AWARD WINNERS

EMPLOYER

Top Project

ADrail Construction Project - (Darwin to Alice Springs railway constructed by the ADrail consortium: Barclay Mowlem; John Holland Group; Halliburton KBR)

Top Employer

Austrack NT - (a subsidiary of Barclay Mowlem)

Top Individual

Marcus Humphreys

SKILLS ACQUISITION & CAREER ADVANCEMENT CATEGORY

Top Project

ADrail - (Darwin to Alice Springs railway constructed by the ADrail consortium: Barclay Mowlem; John Holland Group; Halliburton KBR)

Top Registered Training Organisation

Charles Darwin University

Top Individual Trainer

Steve Sunk

Special Mention

Bob Cush

Duncan Beggs

Steve Margetic

Steve Tiley

Jon Baker

Neville Driver

CHAIRMAN'S AWARD

Territory Construction Association

GURINDJI FREEDOM DAY



Gurindji remembered for land rights legacy

"On the site of Melbourne in 1834, a local Aboriginal chief had picked up some earth and poured it into the hand of John Batman. I reversed the process with these words: 'Vincent Lingiari, I solemnly hand to you these deeds as proof, in Australian law, that these lands belong to the Gurindji people and I put into your hands this piece of the earth itself as a sign that we restore them to you and your children forever.' (Gough Whitlam, Eulogy for Frank Hardy, Collingwood Town Hall, 4 February 2006)

"Let us live together as mates, let us not make it hard for each other We want to live in a better way together, Aboriginals and White men, let us not fight over anything, let us be mates ..." (Vincent Lingiari, 16 August 1975)

With this seemingly simple act by then Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, graciously received by the Gurindji stockman Vincent Lingiari, achieved what his people already knew – that they were the rightful owners and custodians of the land occupied by the Wave Hill Station.

The significance of the 1975 'handback' is that this was finally recognised by Australian law.

Nine year earlier, this recognition of Gurindji rights to their own country was still a dream.

Hundreds turned out last month for the commemoration and celebration of the birth 40 years ago of the Aboriginal land rights movement which took place in Kalkaringi in the Victoria River District of the Northern Territory.

The communities of Kalkaringi



WAVE HILL VETERANS

TELL IT LIKE IT WAS



As two of the original Wave Hill Walk off veterans, Billy Bunter (above left) and Jimmy Wave Hill (above right) have been to plenty of Wave Hill Walk off anniversary celebrations. Every year they are asked to reminisce about that time but they didn't hesitate when asked to take a ride out to Wave Hill and talk about what it was really like in 1966.

and Daguragu were host to the Freedom Day Festival, with this year representing the 40th anniversary of the 1966 Wave Hill Walk Off.

The strike by the Aboriginal pastoral workers of Wave Hill station, led by Gurindji leader Vincent Lingiari and culminating in the famous ceremonial 'handback' of land to the Gurindji by then Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, is seen by many as the beginning of the land rights movement in Australia.

Freedom Day is celebrated annually in the Kalkaringi and Daguragu communities, about 800kms south of Darwin.

A packed festival program included two concert nights featuring national and local performers such as Kev Carmody, Warren H Williams, Mary G, NokTuRNL, Nabarlek Band, and Lazy Late Boys.

Above clockwise from top left: Gurindji ladies, Lalla Dodd talks with Chief Minister Clare Martin and NT Administrator Ted Egan, Warumungu dancers, Kayteye dancers and singer Kev Carmody

It also included a launch of a second publication of Frank Hardy's famous book *The Unlucky Australians*.

(Contact Bernadette Walters P.O. Box 1448 Camberwell East, Victoria 3126 Australia onedayhill@bigpond.com, Phone 03 9836 5251 or Mobile 0419 586 977 for copies)

Below: Nabarlek Band



BILLY BUNTER: "Vincent Lingiari started talking about a strike in 1963. I was with him at No 3 camp.

"He had a plan. Some old people had a plan. They used to have a great big radio and some old people used to lie around and listen. Those old people were good English speakers.

"They think we've got to strike in 1964 but it didn't work.

"Someone stopped it and in 1965 Newcastle Waters people went out on strike and that didn't work. They had no support

"In 1966 we walked off here and worked because we had the Waterside Union supporting us.

"Before August the old fella Vincent Lingiari got kicked by a mule in the leg and they brought him in here and then took him to the airstrip and put him on the Conellan plane to Darwin.

JIMMY WAVE HILL: When he got back he had a letter from the union mob. At 8 o'clock in the morning, the head boy walked in here and the manager's standing there.

He told him 'I got a problem.'

'We need to have our wages go up.'

'We need to have award wages.'

'We need to have proper house with floor and things like that'.

BILLY BUNTER: Manager said 'No way'

They didn't want to build anything for blackfellas

'Well that's it', said Vincent.

'That's it.'

Calling everyone from the

houses you know

'Come on all you people. Come out now. I'm taking all my people out now.' That's what he said.

People started rushing from their houses 'Come on. Everyone come out now'.

JIMMY WAVE HILL: Started walking...

BILLY BUNTER: We went back to that top camp and rolled our swags and all our gear - like suitcase billy cans some buckets to carry water

We put the kids on top, boomerangs, spears. Some old people followed the creek here.

We didn't want to run into policeman.

The managers used to go and try and force people to come back.

They said 'we'll shoot two killers for you people if you come back'. And they said 'those two killers are too late. You should have done that before'.

Anyway our boss said 'No way. I'm taking these people west'.

Only the pensioners were left we couldn't carry them.

In November we borrowed a truck to pick those old people up Brain Manning and Frank Hardy and Paddy.

The head of the union mob brought us back to get our wages.

The old manager was standing by the woodpile. He was really wild.

JIMMY WAVE HILL: If those blokes weren't there we would never have got our money.

In December we moved west to

WAVE HILL WALK OFF

continued from page 13

where the council office is now in the creek. Bottom camp we used to call it.

Early in 1967 we borrowed tools at about 2am from the old welfare tjilpi: crosscut saw, brace and bit hatch, and plane. But he bin only helping us by night – little bit of rations when everybody asleep. But when they find out he helping us with tool and ration he got kicked out. He got into big trouble.

"We didn't know the direction of where we were going. We just walked off. We didn't know the politics, government, laws, land rights. We didn't know that.

But we knew that we wanted to walk off for better wages you know.

That's what we thought in the first place but when we got there we wanted to go for land rights

And it wasn't easy from that time. We didn't know anything about Government Liberal or Labor.

We didn't know anything about that. We didn't know we were breaking the law.

We didn't know it was Vestey land.

Old people knew it was Aboriginal land before and it belonged to them. They knew if it was owned by Vestey then they wanted it back.

JIMMY WAVE HILL: That's what the old people used to think and they were right. They had a big radio and they were always listening.

BILLY BUNTER: I think those old people knew. I think they were waiting for the right time to go on strike. They knew someone from Darwin would back them up. When that old fella got off the plane from Darwin he had a letter with him giving instructions.

JIMMY WAVE HILL: When he was in Darwin, Dexter Daniels came to him from Roper and he was asking Vincent Lingiari questions: 'How Vestey's treating you back there at Wave Hill?' 'Oh, they treating us like dog and don't give good foods, they don't give us money. We do hard work we're making money for white people and black fella don't get nothing.'

BILLY BUNTER: Further down that lane way was a dining room for head stockmen saddler mechanic cooks for each camp no1, no 2, no 3, no 4: white blokes only.

Not us. We used to sit right back under the tree with a billy can of tea. Salt meat was given to us - a really strong taste and the bread that they used to make here, salty bread.

We had no choice: dry bread, dry salty beef and a bit of tea we used to get with a bucket from a drum.

The manager and that mob had their dinner here. In that back area there used to be a meat house with beef hanging down: salty beef. And they used to throw their bones out of the window and we waited outside...

JIMMY WAVE HILL: Take them down to the camp and cook them up (laughs).

BILLY BUNTER: Only beef we got from the killer was four legs - two front legs and two back legs. Foot and head only meat we got from the killer.

JIMMY WAVE HILL: They used to have lunch just here and they would get them young girls to pull that rope for the fan - inside people eating away. Poor buggers them kids doing hard thing on the outside you know.

BILLY BUNTER: Every woman used to work in

store, cleaning up, some worked in the hospital or the kitchen.

JIMMY WAVE HILL Single quarters, dining room.

BILLY BUNTER: One woman used to turn that fan for them They used to get kids to chase the crows away – they didn't like that noise (laughs)

And round the back was the hospital - didn't call it a clinic in those days. Humpies back in bottom camp.

They were about that high (indicates about a metre). We had to crawl in. With the kids, father and mother.

Come the wet season had to put extra iron on to make a fire underneath.

Smoke would come in that little humpy and make the kids cough.

But they had to make a fire to keep warm

BILLY BUNTER: When our people used to pass away we used to carry them ourselves.

JIMMY WAVE HILL: Yeah they had about 20 trucks and land rovers but they don't help us carry the body. They said that's all right, you can carry them.

BILLY BUNTER: Yeah we used to carry the body about two miles ourselves.

JIMMY WAVE HILL: Hard days. They wouldn't give us crow bar either. We used to make a sharp stick and sit down and dig that grave

BILLY BUNTER: To get wood we used to have to walk miles although they had a big mob of wood here.

JIMMY WAVE HILL Sometimes at night we would come and steal it.

BILLY BUNTER: They never knew

They never took us back for holiday. We had to walk in the bush around here

BILLY BUNTER: Holidays we used to travel on foot away for two months and come back when the moon said it was time to do a muster.

Sometime they would make a big fire and we would know it was time to come back.

We used to cut trees, a bit of wood to send a message to another community. Mark a message on it and send it to family.

The old people would understand what the message was and when we grew up we followed in their footsteps.

BILLY BUNTER: "There was a big mob of people here.

My father went back to Yuendumu. We were taken away in 1953.

JIMMY WAVE HILL: Welfare time then...

BILLY BUNTER: We grew up in the Top End and came down from Mt Sanford and VRD to here.

It was the people moving days when welfare used to shift people around.

From Mt Doreen all around.

Some bin went to Lajamanu, some bin went to Wyndham. Some went to Newcastle (Waters) Some went to VRD.

JIMMY WAVE HILL: I was working on Delamere and they took us mob over to Waterloo Station then I was staying there for Christmas and then I came to Limbunya and then to Wave Hill

BILLY BUNTER: From that time it was a bit like stolen generation We were taken away and they didn't care if it was different tribes or different land. They just dumped us there to find a way ourselves.

And we didn't remember the family from



Gurindji ensure 'walk-off' is remembered

Kalkaringi has a new visitor centre to keep the heritage alive.

The Gurindji Heritage and Tourism Project involves the establishment of the Gurindji Heritage Visitor Precinct in Kalkaringi and the establishment of a set of related enterprises associated with tourism, land management, art and craft production and sales.

Features of the project include: seeking heritage listings of the Wave Hill Walk Off sites under the NT Heritage Act; landscaping the 'hand-back' park in Daguragu that can be utilised for self-guided tours; upgrading the cemetery and grave of Vincent Lingiari; running the Kalkaringi campground as an enterprise under this project; establishing a community history archive; and establishing a website.

that time until later after 1971 after the strike and we started to get our families together.

But we didn't know where we were heading to.

I wasn't allowed to go back in those days.

If I ran away, they would get the police on horseback and give me a good hiding here.

A whip across my back.

Some people used to run and they would shoot them halfway or give them a good hiding.

Our people didn't have a choice.

We weren't allowed to go back.

THE IDEA FOR A STRIKE

BILLY BUNTER: Old people had a Yankee bloke from America.

Used to talk to those old people. He used to camp here somewhere and they used to talk about him.

He was telling them some day the time will come to take the people out on strike. That was about 20 years earlier.

But the old people were still talking about it. They never gave up.

He was a worker. he used to run No 2 Camp and they had a big wireless aerial here.

BILLY BUNTER: Today I can look back and it looks different.

JIMMY WAVE HILL: We made something good.

Not only for us but for everybody, black and white.

BILLY BUNTER: That's why Freedom Day is good. It teaches everybody.

We feel proud but we feel a bit sad. All those people who have gone but they left something behind

We fought with them side by side. Old Mick (Rangiari), he done a good job.

NLC staff boost career options through education



Above left: New graduates Carol Christophersen and right Trish Rigby Christophersen

Two members of staff from the Northern Land Council recently boosted their future career options through the completion of tertiary courses in the fields of law and anthropology.

Carol Christophersen is the NLC Parks Officer for Kakadu National Park, and Trish Rigby-Christophersen is the Senior Projects Officer for the Darwin/Daly/Wagait NLC regional office.

Christophersen completed a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in anthropology and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, and Rigby-Christophersen completed her double degree of Bachelor of Law and Bachelor of Arts at Charles Darwin Uni-

versity in Darwin.

The sisters-in-law both acknowledge that support from family and friends, as well as the cadetship program at the NLC, ensured academic success.

Christophersen said the pressures of study, work and family were sometimes considerable.

"It was extremely hard juggling work, family (young children) and studies, not to mention moving to Brisbane away from family and friends," she said.

"My children understand what I have achieved and were instrumental in getting me there - my children now talk about when they go to uni which to me is fantastic."

Rigby-Christophersen said being a mature-age stu-

dent with a Year 10 education presented challenges from the outset.

"The old saying 'You are never too old to learn' is not only true but the experience can also be enjoyable and fulfilling," she said.

"However study is not easy, and you have to find a balance between your own high expectations of good grades, and the needs of your family and friends."

She said she wanted to be an example for Aboriginal people who feel they can't study because of their socio-economic background, their educational background or hectic family life.

Both women said tertiary education had dramatically changed their lives for the better.

Christophersen said there are lot of benefits in gaining a university degree.

"Employment has meant that I am considered in a different light. Looking back, I did not think I would be in this position today. University was something other people did and achieved, not me," she said.

"Today, I know now that I have done something really special and that I have inspired family, friends and work colleagues who know my journey."

Rigby-Christophersen said she was inspired by her grandparents and her mother who raised three girls and eight boys, and wants to use her newly-acquired legal qualifications to fight for Aboriginal rights.



Above: Karl Hampton joins five other Aboriginal people in the NT Parliament

New MP for Stuart

The Northern Territory now has six Indigenous sitting Members in Parliament, with Karl Hampton winning the seat of Stuart in a by-election in September.

Mr Hampton takes over from former Member for Stuart and long-serving Minister Peter Toyne, who has retired from politics.

The electorate of Stuart covers a large area in Central Australia, from Yuendumu and Nyirripi across to Utopia and north to Kalkaringi and Pigeon Hole.

Mr Hampton said one of his priorities is to make sure people in the bush have the opportunities presented to the rest of the Territory.

"I believe that if you are prepared to put in the hard work, you will get the results you desire," he said.

"The Territory is a remarkable place of opportunities, where ordinary citizens such as myself can become an elected member of

Parliament."

Mr Hampton included an apology to the Stolen Generation in his maiden speech.

"I feel it is appropriate for me to apologise to the Stolen Generations as a member of the Northern Territory Parliament," he said.

"I do so by saying that I feel the pain and hurt inflicted on to those people directly affected by this policy.

"I have seen the heartache that many children have experienced who have had a parent, or parents, who were taken away.

"I am proud to be a member of this government because this government has acknowledged this mistake and the impact that it has had on so many lives."

Six years study pays off for Loy



Loyola Gray

CLC Research officer Loyola Gray breathed a sigh of relief earlier this month: after six years studying part time and by distance she now has a Bachelor of Arts from the University of South Australia in Aboriginal studies.

Loyola has been asked by the University to do honours, and she says while she is still coming to terms with finishing her

degree she may well consider taking up the offer.

Studying with two kids isn't easy but Loyola says she has had "fantastic support from my family, especially my husband and kids, friends and the CLC staff"

Loyola's mother studied at IAD later in her life and Loyola says that she gained much of her inspiration from her mother's experience.

Haasts Bluff Land Trust in pastoral development

Beyond Haasts Bluff, twenty or so kilometres down the red desert track that leads to Mt Leibig and on to Kintore to the west, the country is bursting with life in golds and greens and reds, rich and full of native grasses, desert oaks and flowering shrubs.

And importantly, there's plenty of feed for cattle too.

This country is the Haasts Bluff Aboriginal Land Trust and it extends all the way to the Western Australian border.

For pastoralist Billy Hayes, who has just leased a block of 1500 square kilometres on the land trust, it presents opportuni-

ties to bring stock off his drought stricken property, Deep Well Station east of Alice Springs

For the people of Haasts Bluff it is already providing skills for their young men who are learning to fence, build troughs and sink bores for the hungry cattle which will soon be trucked over from Deep Well.

In addition, Charles Darwin University is running training on the community to get young people up to speed on the finer points of pastoralism.

"I'm really pleased to get this up and running," says traditional owner Douglas Multa.

"Get all the young

fellas, get them out here and trained is what I want to see."

The Indigenous Land Corporation contributed \$250,000 to the project for infrastructure.

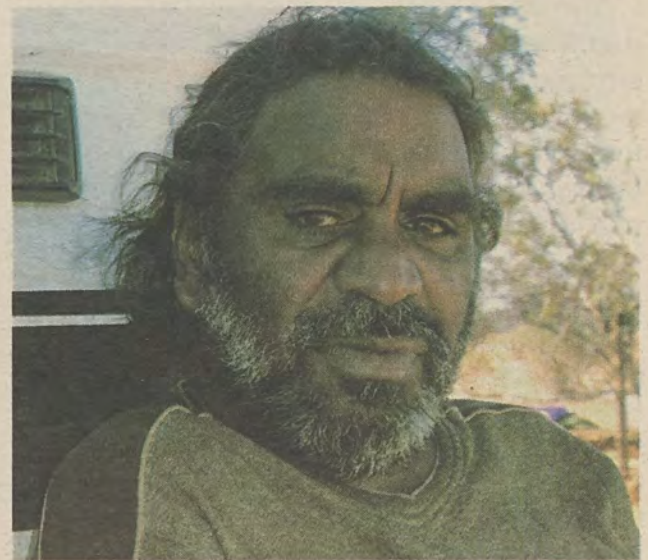
Much of the eastern part of Central Australia is suffering drought conditions while the Aboriginal land on the western side still has plenty of feed and a slightly higher rainfall.

The Hayes have the lease for five years with the option of another five years.

At the end of the lease period the block will be returned to the traditional owners to run themselves if that is what they want to do.



ABOVE: L-R Pastoralist Billy Hayes, CLC Rural unit worker Kenny Satour and CLC Chairman Lindsay Bookie at the Land Trust.



Right: Traditional owner Douglas Multa who is looking forward to the opportunities provided to young people at Haasts Bluff.

Service to the community: Patrick Oliver



Above: Patrick Oliver at Hermannsburg

Patrick Oliver knows every kilometre of the road between Alice Springs and Hermannsburg.

He drives from the community to Alice and home again nearly every day of the week.

Mr Oliver works from the Hermannsburg Health Clinic taking kidney disease patients to Alice Springs for dialysis and bringing them home again.

"I do a couple of runs while I'm in town - pick up the mail, pick up prescriptions and drop off blood samples from the clinic.

"But I don't take anyone who's drunk. I tell people this is the clinic bus not a shopping bus, not running around to Centrelink or the town camps.

Even my relations, it's the law for everybody," he says.

"I also take people in for appointments at the Hospital."

Hermannsburg Health Clinic's Nursing Manager Matthew Barnaby says they simply could not do without Patrick.

"He is the essential link between the Clinic and the Western Aranda Health Aboriginal Corporation which runs the bus.

"Everybody in town knows Patrick - the pharmacy, the Hospital, Flynn Drive.

"He's reliable and here every day and his service to is really well used - it's something the community couldn't do without," Mr Barnaby said.

Ten Canoes scoops awards

This amazing film has impressed everyone who has seen it

A film focusing on the cultural traditions of the remote community of Ramingining in central Arnhem Land has taken out several Australian Film Industry (AFI) awards.

'Ten Canoes', written and directed by Rolf de Heer in consultation with the people of Ramingining, and co-directed by Peter Djigirr, won six AFIs including Best Film, Best Direction, Best Original Screenplay, Best Cinematography, Best Editing, and Best Sound.

De Heer, who has directed films such as 'Bad Boy Bubby', 'Alexandra's Project', and 'The Tracker',

said the film was the most difficult he has made.

"The story is their story, those that live on this land, in their language and set a long time before the coming of the Balanda, as we white people are known," he said.

"For the people of the Arafura Swamp, this film is an opportunity, maybe a last chance to hold on to the old ways."

The film, set on location at Ramingining, stars Crusoe Kurudal, Jamie Gulpilil, Richard Birrinbirrin, Peter Minygululu, Frances Djulibing, with David Gulpilil as narrator or storyteller.

TITJIKALA PARTNERS WITH DESERT KNOWLEDGE CRC

Central Australian Aboriginal community Titjikala has joined with the Desert Knowledge CRC to create new research training, employment and enterprise opportunities for its residents.

Jan Ferguson, the centre's Managing Director, welcomed the community as an affiliate partner of the Desert Knowledge research network. "The agreement brings us a step closer to our goal of genuine participation with Aboriginal people in research that is useful to them," Jan said.

Titjikala leaders want to tap into a broader knowledge network to develop their community.

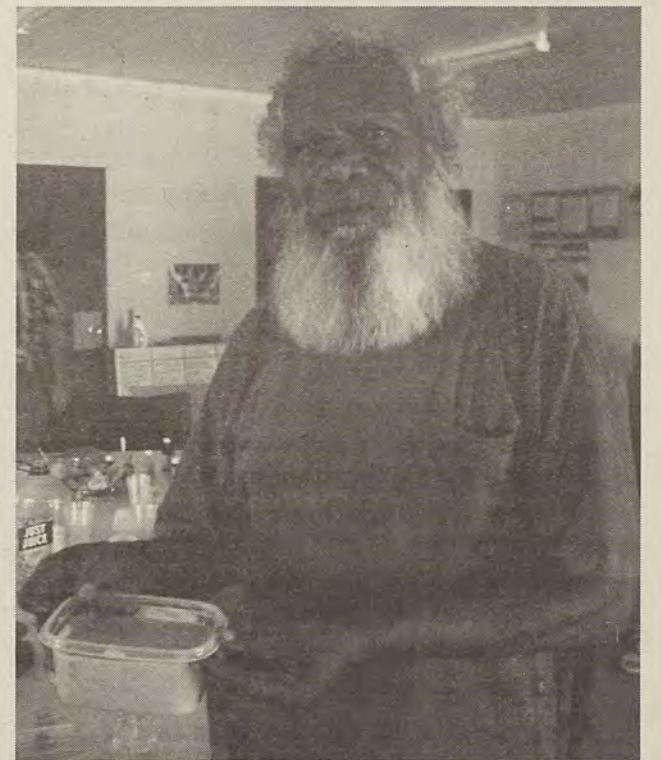
Local councillor and

elder, Johnny Briscoe, said he hoped the collaboration with the Desert Knowledge CRC would help his community.

"We like to see our projects combine the best of our knowledge with the best of Western science. We think this is the best way forward," he said.

Johnny works with Desert Knowledge researchers on Plants for People, a community development project that provides research training, documents and protects Aboriginal knowledge about bush medicines and explores the healing properties and commercial potential of the plants.

The Desert Knowledge CRC and



Johnny Briscoe makes soap from Irmangka Irmangka (*Eremophila alternifolia*)

Titjikala have agreed on stringent protocols that protect the intellectual property each organisation brings to the collaboration.

Listen to an interview with Johnny on www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/research/desertbusiness.html

Bulldozer driving handy at home

Seven men from Lajamanu have completed a machinery course at the Tanami mine which is being rehabilitated now it has reached the end of its life.

The training is part of an agreement formed between the Minerals Council of Australia and the Federal Government of which Newmont and the CLC are key stakeholders.

The men were trained on bulldozers and front end loaders and also gained operator tickets for both machines and got great experience.

CLC Mining Em-

ployment Co-ordinator Harold Howard said: "Training in heavy machinery is extremely valuable and something these fellas can use at home building roads and looking after the place.

More importantly they are gaining skills

to find employment in other industries like mining and road construction.

"They were really keen and some showed a lot of natural ability.

They went through everything - from checking that your



machine has oil cleaning air filters and visually inspecting the machine every morning and other general and essential maintenance," Mr Howard said.

Harold Howard (Chongy) CLC Mining Employment officer, Kailas Kerr, Ron Hahn, Paul Silvio (Gippo) then Silas Allen, Max Stevenson, Steven Robertson, Quincy Samuels, Jefferson Lewis and Dillon Miller, Len Carter and Brendan Hayes.

Left: Dillon Miller at work, apparently 'a natural' who was so keen he worked through his breaks.

Deadly treadlies get Epanarra on its wheels

The people who work at Deadly Treadlies reckon that the young people at Epanarra are pretty good at fixing bikes.

Deadly Treadlies from Alice Springs went out to Epanarra in November with a trailer full of parts and bikes to fix up bikes with all the young people at the school.

This year the school has been running a bike program at Epanarra. Bikes have been donated by the NT Police and members of the public. The kids maintain and ride the bikes during school time.

Deadly Treadlies worker Ian said that the



Top: Suezella Foster
Above: Renae Peterson



Above: Levina Shannon on the fix

week was started by fixing up all the school bikes.

"The young women were particularly good at fixing the bikes, and did some really complex fixing. Fixing bikes requires lots of patience and perseverance. Learning new tricks like replacing chains and fixing the brakes and gears is very tricky, especially when it is so hot.

"Once all the school bikes were fixed up, we fixed up lots of personal bikes. There was lots of work to do on many of these bikes. There was the replacing of cranks and bearings as well as new gears and brakes. Once all the fixing was done, in the evening the young people formed a bike gang to ride around the community.

"On Thursday lots of the kids went for a ride to Baptise Creek. There was still plenty of water to cool off and go swimming. It was a great way to finish the week," he said.



Above: Kumanjay Green mono
Below: Eugene Green at work



Shaun Wauchope

Top Ender following in his mother's footsteps

When Darwin-based Shaun Wauchope stepped out onto a rugby field in New Zealand recently, he was treading in the footsteps of his representative rugby-playing mother.

Shaun played in the Lloyd McDermott under-16 national squad played several games against the might of rugby powerhouse New Zealand.

"I am really excited about selection into this squad," Shaun said.

Shaun said he had to undergo selection trials in Brisbane this year as part of the Northern Territory team playing squads from New South Wales and Queensland.

He said coming from Darwin in the Northern Territory and competing against the top young rugby players down south was 'hard', which made his selection into a representative side all the more enjoyable.

"The boys we played against were all big, and quick, too," he said.

His mother, Julie Wauchope, 40, has represented the national women's Lloyd McDermott rugby team several times, and last year won selection into the international seven-a-side rugby tournament, the Bangkok Sevens.

His father, Samuel Bush-Blanasi, of Beswick Aboriginal community, near Katherine, played Australian football for the Wanderers Football Club in Darwin, and was a representative basketball player.

14-year old Shaun attends Marrara Christian School in Darwin.

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Desert Knowledge Centre ILUA

Arrernte traditional owners of Alice Springs were delighted that the NT Government decided to recognise their native title rights on land which fell outside the historic ruling of 2000 which determined that the Arrernte were the traditional owners of the town.

The blocks of land are part of the new Desert Knowledge Centre precinct and the Indigenous Land Use Agreement which was negotiated will give the Arrernte people a number of benefits including consultation over place-names and signage, recognition of Arrernte country (signage and interpretive material), a position on the Desert Knowledge Australia Board and the Precinct Management Committee and sacred site protection.

Here Artepe Chair Brian Stirling said that the traditional owners welcomed the Desert Knowledge Centre and the way the Government had negotiated the land use.

"This Indigenous Land Use Agreement is another important step for us. It is important because not only is the Government recognising our rights which were decided by the Federal Court but also recognising them on land that fell outside that ruling. We congratulate you on this good will and common sense

"It is an important opportunity for Aboriginal people in Central Australia to use our traditional knowledge about the land together with science," Mr Stirling said.

"The CLC used the Native Title Act and the



Above : Signing the ILUA on the blocks at the Desert Knowledge Centre

Courts to win our battle and now we are consulted for the first time since non-Aboriginal people came to Alice Springs

"It is hard to tell you all how much that

means to us.

"Let me just say we were left on the sidelines in Alice Springs for more than 100 years. That's a very long time."

Incompetent, lazy, complacent? Peak health body blasts Government

The nation's peak indigenous health group has blasted the Federal and Northern Territory (NT) Government's, describing them as 'incompetent', 'complacent' and 'lazy' on the roll-out of Opal fuel to remote NT communities.

Henry Councillor, Chairperson of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) says it is ludicrous that the NT Health Department had blamed logistics for preventing the roll-out of the non-sniffable fuel into Aboriginal communities.

Mr Councillor's comments come in the wake of the death this month of two teenagers at the Top End community of Gunbalanya (Oenpelli).

"By the Health Department's own admission, Opal fuel was delivered six-months ago to Oenpelli, but it wasn't hooked-up to a bowser so people could buy it - it's absurd and it's tragic," Mr Councillor said.

"The Federal Government really has to take the lead with this Opal roll-out or we'll be seeing plenty more tragedies like the one in Oenpelli."

NACCHO says the statistics relating to

petrol sniffing deaths were vastly under-reported, and often don't include related incidents such as suicide or traffic accidents.

"The cause of death is often recorded as; respiratory failure; burns, cerebral abscess, infections, suicide or cardiac arrest, when in fact, the death was directly attributed to petrol sniffing," Mr Councillor said.

Concern has also been raised in regards to the spread of HIV/AIDS in Indigenous communities.

More needs to be done says NACCHO, and urgently, to bet-

ter resource HIV/AIDS programs in remote communities.

"This is not a 'gay' or a 'white' disease, as some people think - it's a virus that can affect anybody! This is one of the messages our HIV/AIDS programs need to convey," Mr Councillor said.

"We must ensure that a comprehensive, Aboriginal-led approach to the HIV/AIDS is implemented - with enhanced primary health care, health promotion, treatment and support - to prevent such a dramatic rise in transmission, here in Australia."

Nuke waste dump

THE NLC VIEW

continued from page 6

It remains a legal requirement that a Land Council cannot nominate Aboriginal land as a waste facility without first consulting and obtaining the consent of traditional owners.

As NLC Chairman, John Daly, told a Senate Committee, any Land Council which ignores the position of traditional owners, whether for or against a waste facility, will be strung up "from the nearest bloodwood tree".

Mr Daly emphasised that the NLC has not commenced any consultations regarding a waste facility, and had not received any offer from the Commonwealth Government.

If an offer is received the NLC says it will ensure that consultations occur so that traditional owners can make their own decision.

Nyinkka Nyunyu cultural hub of Tennant Creek

More than 250 people turned up to an evening of traditional and contemporary dance at the Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Culture Centre in Tennant Creek recently.

The night, which could be described as a 'cultural exchange', saw performances by the Janganpa Dancers from Alice Springs, and the Warumungu Dancers from Tennant Creek.

The "Wurrppurjinta" project was an opportunity for the two groups to meet and share information in relation to traditional Indigenous dance performance and cultural maintenance.

Both groups were very interested in the possibility of continuing the partnership to strengthen cultural maintenance programs with young people and dance.

The Janganpa Dancers are a group of Warlpiri and Anmatjere traditional dancers and singers originally from Yuendumu who now reside in Alice Springs.

The group has been performing consis-

tently for over ten years including international performances in Korea, New Zealand and last year in Dubai for the International Festival of Desert People.

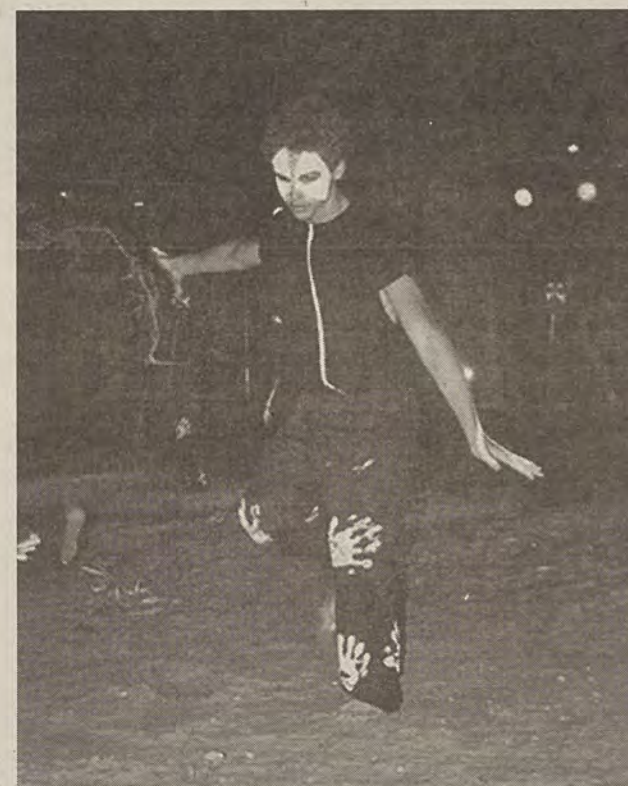
The group has been re-invited to attend this year's festival to be held in Algiers in Algeria, North Africa in December.

For the Warumungu group, dancing provides an opportunity to bring Warumungu male elders together to instruct the performance of cultural material for the younger men.

The success of this project has inspired the groups to work together in the future and would not have been possibly without the inspirational work of Junior Frank.

Also involved on the night were the NAISDA Dance College who performed contemporary Indigenous dance, directed by Simon Stewart.

The contemporary performances are derived from Indigenous traditional dances from all over Australia but removed from a sacred or ceremonial context to tell a story.



Above: Traditional and contemporary dance at Nyinkka Nyunyu livened up Tennant Creek for a night recently. Now the Janganpa group are off to Algiers

Chief Harry drops in for a visit



Above: NLC Deputy Chair Samuel Bush-Blanasi, Chief Harry and NLC Chair John Daly

Born in 1943 on a trap line near Stanley Mission in Saskatchewan, Canada, Chief Harry Cook says his father was his inspiration, and the reason he walks the path he does today.

Visiting the Northern Territory for the first time, it was Chief Cook who approached the NLC for an opportunity to sit and meet with traditional owners.

The occasion was one of shared interests and mutual respect as Chief Cook and traditional owners shared knowledge and information of Indigenous achievements in their respective parts of the world.

A leader in his own right, Chief Cook has completed seven terms as Chief of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, a position he held since 1987.

The Lac La Ronge Band is one of Canada's largest with 7000 members, and is widely recognised as one of the most

progressive Aboriginal organisations in Canada.

Chief Cook helped launch and develop the Kitsaki Development Corporation in 1981 - the economic development arm of the Lac La Ronge Band.

Kitsaki has been an active participant in the development of Canada's northern economy since 1986.

As president of Kitsaki, Chief Cook presides over a diverse portfolio of some 12 enterprises, including significant businesses in trucking; catering; mining; hospitality and forestry.

These business interests generate more than \$67 million in revenue, making Kitsaki one of Saskatchewan's top companies.

Chief Cook was a guest at the NLC's Full Council meeting, held at Crab Claw Island in October, and also attended the NLC's inaugural Employer Excellence Awards.

Health groups spend \$40,000 on open letter

Australia's leading health, human rights, aid and development organisations have published an open letter to the Prime Minister, State Premiers and Territory Chief Ministers urging them to commit to a plan to achieve health equality for Indigenous Australians.

"It is a national scandal that Abo-

original and Torres Strait Islander people live 17-years less than other Australians and that their babies die at almost three-times the rate of non-Indigenous children," group spokesperson and Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commissioner, Tom Calma, said.

"It is not acceptable for governments to continually state the

situation is tragic and ought to be treated with urgency and then fail to put in place targets, funding and timeframes to address the issue."

The groups says Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health equality may be achieved within 25 years if the minimum standards of access, support, improvement of mainstream

services, focus on early childhood development, and awareness and availability of healthy lifestyles were a priority for Commonwealth and State Governments.

"Addressing Australia's Indigenous health crisis should be a commitment shared by all sides of politics and all sections of Australian society," Mr Calma said.

DESERT FARMING - ALEKERANGE

One thousand hectares of Aboriginal land five kilometres from Alekerange is set to become an important horticultural precinct says the Central Land Council and Centrefarm Aboriginal Horticultural Ltd.

Two hundred hectares of this land is available immediately for a grower to take advantage of the window the sites provide to enable grapes and mangoes to be grown outside normal market times.

In addition, 350 hectares of Aboriginal land at Ti Tree is also available to be taken up by a grower.

CLC Director David Ross said that while there had been many inquiries from prospective growers, Centrefarm was unwilling to grant licences until the Aboriginal equity was improved.

"This is one of the largest regional development initiatives in Central Australia and while it is on Aboriginal land, Aboriginal people's share of the

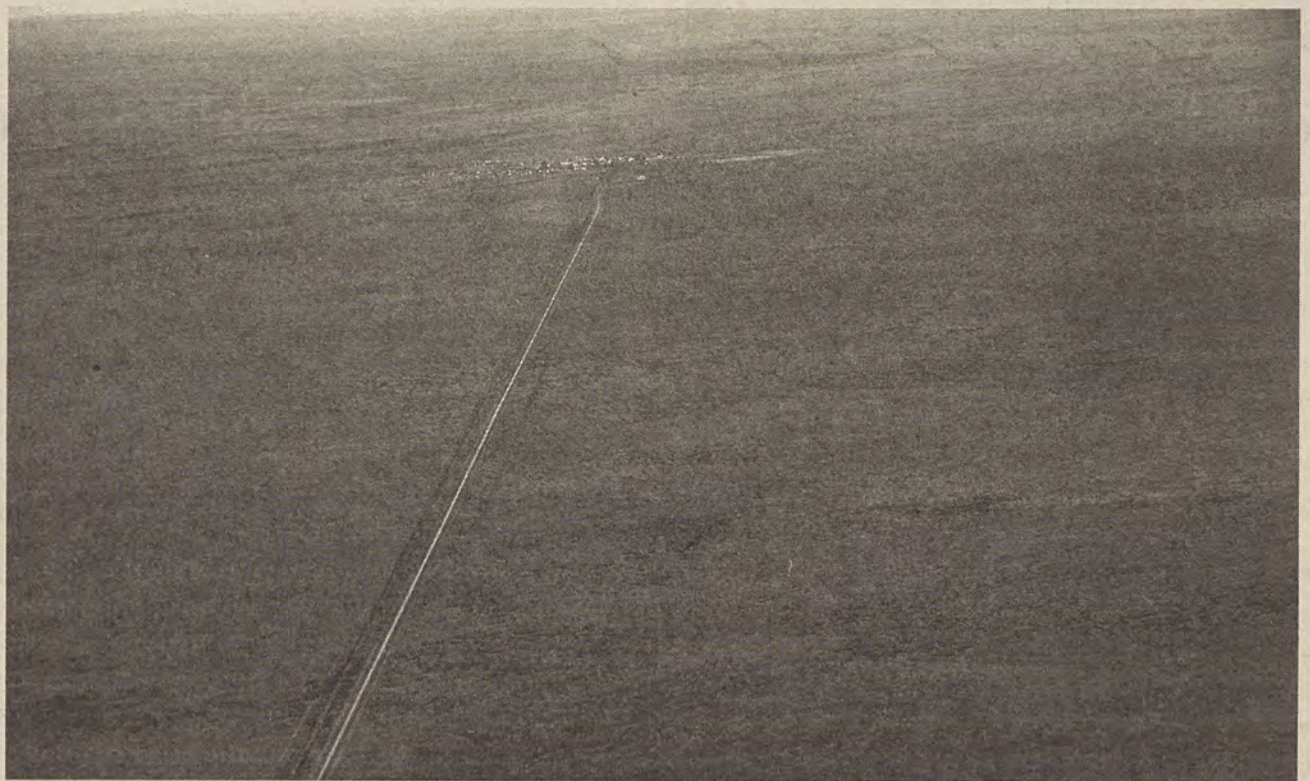
potential prosperity to flow from it needs to be increased.

"This will be of enormous benefit to the Territory economy and we are keen to avoid a scenario whereby the large stake of the profit ends up in Sydney or Melbourne."

Centrefarm CEO Allan Cooney said that while the Aboriginal Benefits Account had contributed some funding it was not enough to secure Aboriginal people's security in the long term.

"These licences will be for at least 30 years as the start up capital input is in the order of \$12 million.

"We currently have growers who would start tomorrow but we are hoping that Governments will recognise the value of these projects having significant Aboriginal ownership and involvement and boost their equity to some 30 per cent of the fixed assets such as bores, packing shed and accommodation.



Above: The block at Alekerange - the community can be seen in the top centre of the photo. Below: Grapes and vegetables grown by the people at Finke illustrating just how rich the opportunities for horticulture in Central Australia are

"We are creating not just a business but a regional economy and when the figures are worked out for creating employment for all the school leavers in the bush over the next ten years it is a fairly cheap investment in the future.

"There are 100 jobs at Ti Tree ready now and only six Aboriginal people are working in them. We

need to replicate the success of the CLC's mining employment projects and the flexible employment programs the NT Government uses in the Northern Territory's National Parks to increase participation.

"While these seem like large amounts of money, it needs to be remembered that it will set up a large, profitable and sus-

tainable industry to employ future generations in the entire region.

To complement the horticultural precinct, a solar power station costing \$6.5 million is under consideration for the horticultural precinct and to feed power to the grid for Tennant Creek and surrounding communities.



Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse - Government Inquiry

The NT Government's Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse has been established to find better ways to protect Aboriginal children from sexual abuse.

Rex Wild QC and Ms Pat Anderson have been appointed Co-Chairs of the Board.

The Board is to

report to the Chief Minister by the end of April 2007.

The role of the Inquiry is to:

- Consider the extent of sexual abuse of Aboriginal children, why it happens and why sometimes it is not reported.
- Identify ways to better protect children, and to help children who have been abused.
- Look at how gov-

ernment and non-government agencies can work together to protect children.

• Look at how the NT Government can help support communities to prevent and tackle child sexual abuse. The Board is undertaking community consultations throughout the Territory. We invite you to tell us what you think about the issue of child sexual abuse, how to

prevent such abuse, and how victims can be helped. Some questions to think about are -

- Who is sexually abusing children? Why does this happen?
- Is sexual abuse being reported? What could be done to make it easier to report?
- How can children be better protected by families and commu-

nities?

- Is your community already doing something to prevent abuse and other violence?
- What can government and non-government agencies do?
- How can agencies work better in partnership with communities?
- What do you think should happen to perpetrators? How can they be helped to

change?

To find out if the Board is visiting your community, or to arrange to make a written submission, contact the Board of Inquiry on telephone 8999-5515 or Freecall 1800-788 825 or visit our website: www.inquirysaac.nt.gov.au

MACARTHUR RIVER MINE PROTEST PICTURES



LEAVE OUR COUNTRY ALONE Macarthur River Mine expansion

Top left: Gordon Lansden, right: Steven Johnston
 Above: clapstick protest at Parliament House,
 Above right: Betty Findlay at the press conference
 Right: Borroloola traditional owners have their say to the media



Left: Borroloola ladies sing their protest



Patrick Dodson gets doctorate of Laws at Melbourne University

Melbourne University recently honoured Patrick Dodson's extraordinary career with an honorary doctor of Laws. He delivered the speech below at the University.

In country far to the north of here, a country far removed from the halls of a very great University where we are assembled today is the town of Katherine where I began my formal education at the local primary school.

A process of education which for young Aboriginal children at that time held out the possibility of an eventual life in the stock camps of the local pastoral stations or if particularly successful a job on the works department as a plant operator or truck driver.

Not that these are unworthy aspirations but at that time, at that place, these were the limitations of our expectancy with regard to our future employment and place within the broader society.

As fate and good fortune would have it I was given the opportunity to move beyond the limited parameters of Katherine Primary School and to be challenged with a world of learning and life experience at Monivae College in Western Victoria.

Here were the wonders of the classics and the sciences, here was the opportunity for endless sports and more critically, here was the opportunity to engage in a society where liberal values centred on social justice and human dignity were central to core values.

On the horizon of that opportunity laid the endless possibilities of learning

and participation that were so taken for granted by most young Australians.

However, they were by and large unseen and unattainable for most young Aboriginal children of my generation.

As I made the choices of my life and followed the roads of my fates and responsibilities, the desire for learning and for the promoting of the values of those Western District families who had so generously gathered me to their hearth has never dissipated.

The conferring of this honour today while being of great importance to me at a personal level is more importantly recognition of the values that I have spent my life trying to promote and share in this country.

The values cemented for millennium in our Aboriginal society. The laws of communal responsibility and respect for the land, the seas and rivers and defence of our rights as first Australians.

The Aboriginal people of Australia now share this continent with peoples who have come from every corner of the globe over the past two centuries.

These new Australians have brought with them the values of their societies, great knowledge and often sad and destructive histories.

We share a land and we must now learn to share our values and have the courage to challenge those who would try

to give one set of values precedence over another.

Those who would relegate one set of beliefs and values to a status below their own on the basis of some perceived greater worth based on race or religion.

In many parts of the world, those who would assert cultural, economic and religious dominance are assailing the values of societies.

They use the tools of fear to frighten our communities into submission and compliance to authority and power beyond which is the right of any nation or government.

The leadership of Ghandi, Mandela, Martin Luther King and those others who throughout history have recognised the evil of one nation or one group in a society imposing their values, culture or authority over others is now required.

The responsibility to assert the values of justice, tolerance and freedom can never be discarded either through fear of short sighted economic or political gain.

When the institutions of society and civilization that service the human rights of their citizens are threatened and undermined we must have the courage to resist their eradication and destruction.

We must have the courage to deny the harbingers of fear who would use our insecurities to frighten our society into the fortress of isolation-

ism.

We must have the courage to look on others who are different in race, religion and cultural experience and engage in the conversation of civilization.

We may then find that those things that we treasure most in our own society are equally the dreams and aspirations of others and that values we so cherish are in fact universal.

The graduands here today have had the opportunity to study and learn in one of the great learning institutions of the world.

With that opportunity comes the responsibility of taking the values that underpin this institution and apply those values to the challenges and tasks that confront each of you on whatever journey you take beyond this ceremony today.

The reconciliation of men and women to their brothers and sisters and to their environment is not just a national matter for Australians.

It is a global matter for all nations.

Today I thank the University for the honour that you have conferred on me and I challenge the graduands who go forth into their professional lives to have the courage to dream of and work towards a just and tolerant world.

We have the endless possibility all that is now required is the courage to act on that enormous potential.

MICK RANGIARI Tribute to a Great Australian

Mick Rangiari walked off Wave Hill and into history 40 years ago. He remained an advocate for Aboriginal people's rights until his death last month.

The Central Land Council paid tribute to Wave Hill Walk-Off veteran, Mick Rangiari who died in November.

Mr Rangiari had been frail for some years but still managed to make an appearance at the Gurindji 40th anniversary Freedom Day.

An accident off a horse before the Wave Hill Walkoff led to Mr Rangiari walking with a bad limp and a nickname which stuck throughout his life: 'Hoppy' Mick.

However, Mr Rangiari never let his limp dampen his enthusiasm for keeping the spirit of land rights alive.

He was one the main instigators in starting the Freedom Day anniversaries in 1983.

CLC Chairman Mr Lindsay Bookie said that Mr Rangiari's contribution to the cause of land rights for Aboriginal people was enormous.

"Mr Rangiari should be considered as one of Australia's greatest political figures and to take his appropriate place in our history.

"He was one of the few surviving Gurindji leaders from the 1966 strike and he remained a powerful advocate until just a few years ago when he became very frail," Mr Bookie said.

On 22 August 1966 the Gurindji people

working as stockmen and station hands walked off Wave Hill Station then owned by England's Lord Vestey.

Soon after they set up camp on part of their traditional homeland at Daguragu, a waterhole on Wattie Creek.

The walkoff began a long and bitter struggle. The Gurindji and their supporters were threatened with rifles and shotguns, and at one stage were near starvation. But despite enormous pressure from pastoralists and politicians they never returned to work at Wave Hill.

In 1967 Mr Rangiari was one of the Gurindji leaders to put his thumbprint on a petition to the Governor General, Lord Casey, requesting the return of their tribal lands.

He was an Executive member and an original member of the Central Land Council.

"We all give our sympathy to Mr Rangiari's extended family and to the people of Daguragu and Kalkaringi who will miss him very much," Mr Bookie said.

He was the eldest son of William and Mona (deceased), the brother of Mary (deceased).

He is survived by brothers' Horace and Ned and sisters' Kitty, Violet and Queenie, and his wife Katherine Sambo.

Top End Women rangers conference

More than 140 women rangers from across the Northern Territory met recently in Nhulunbuy in east Arnhem Land to share experiences in caring for their country.

The Miyalk (women) Land and Sea Management Conference was held at the Gulkula camp site near Yirrkala in north-east Arnhem Land and was hosted by Yirrkala Gamarrwa Nuwul Landcare

Issues discussed over the three day-conference included; the permit system; quarantine; weed control; feral animal control, particularly the influx of the cane toad; fire management; intellectual property rights in relation to traditional knowledge systems; enterprise planning; and leadership programs.

The women, some of whom came from Western Australia's Kimberley region, and Queensland, also went on cultural and historical tours of the local native plant nursery, the local art centre and Macassan Beach, where for hundreds of years Macassan traders from Indonesia camped during their annual pilgrimage to harvest the lucrative trepang, a type of sea cucumber.

The conference recommended that there be an NT Government Weed Officer position based in the Northeast Arnhem Land region to work with the Miwatj regional weeds committee and other stakeholders.

Below left: Callus Tapu and Edna Nelson Yugul Mangi Rangers
Below right: Rangers visit Yirrkala Gamarrwa Nuwul Landcare office



Above: Rangers at the 2006 Miyalk Land and Sea Management Conference

Right Mardbalk Sea Rangers from Goulburn Island
Below: Dhuwarrwarr Marika and the Yirrkala Yolngu Landcare women welcoming to country

