

LAND RIGHTS NEWS

Volume 7, Number 3, December 2008



Inside: Karlu Karlu, Gunbalanya
Education, Mataranka
pastoral, Utopia, Hidden
Valley and more....



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Land Rights NEWS

Land Rights News: Is published by David Ross and Wali Wunungmurra for the Central and Northern Land Councils.

Projected publication dates: March 2009, July 2009, November 2009

Circulation: 13,000

Advertising: Classified, quarter, half, full page available, contact the Advertising Officer.

Contributions: Land Rights News welcomes items from Aboriginal people and Aboriginal organisations.

Deadlines for photographs and copy: Two weeks before publication; for advertising copy, one week before publication date. Contact the Advertising Officer.

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COVER PHOTO

Borroloola pastoral trainees at Mataranka horse training include: Mervin Simon, Kurt Ellis, Lucas Douglas, Troydon Hogan, Jake Hogan, Shane Charlie, Dean Jack, Francis Jack and Ronald Bob

NLC sends a letter to Barack Obama

The following letter has been sent to United States President-elect Barack Obama, through US Embassy officials in Darwin, after Mr Obama's historic election win.

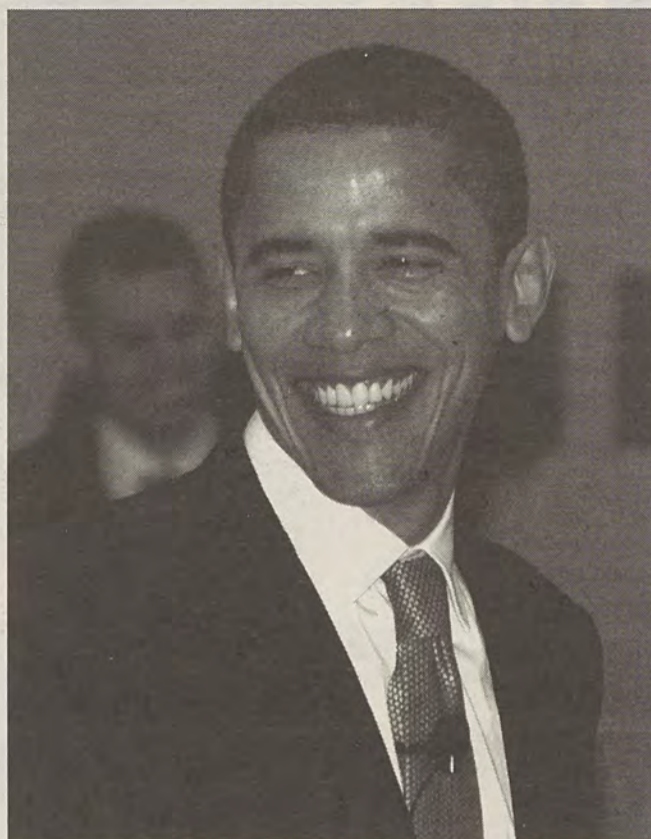
'Dear Senator
I write to congratulate you on your historic win in the United States Presidential elections.

On hearing of your election, I was absolutely overwhelmed with happiness.

The Northern Land Council is the peak representative body for Indigenous people regarding their land rights in the northern region of the Northern Territory of Australia.

At a time of considerable global challenge your victory serves as a beacon of hope for all peoples of the world as well as your own nation.

I extend to you



the well wishes of the Northern Land Council as you face these challenges during your term as President, and urge you to maintain

the dignity and spirit of inclusion you have fostered throughout your campaign.

I also particularly commend you on

the recent comments regarding First Nation Peoples.

While these comments were made in the context of the United States, they resonate as recognition of the vital contribution that Indigenous people worldwide can make to address the challenges facing us all.

We stand tall and we stand proud with you on your journey, and you are always welcome in our country.

Yours sincerely

Wali Wunungmurra

NLC CHAIRMAN

NORTHERN LAND COUNCIL

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FIBRE OPTIC rolled out in West Arnhemland

A major landuse agreement between the Northern Land Council and telecommunications company Telstra has illustrated how quickly the negotiation process can operate when traditional owners are a central focus.

A proposal for the roll-out of optic fibre cable by Telstra in Arnhem Land was received by the NLC in May 2007 – 14 months later in July 2008 all consultations and negotiations with traditional owners were completed.

Telstra has just completed laying an optical fibre cable between Jabiru and Nhulunbuy (via Gunbalanya, Maningrida, Ramingining, Gapuwiyak and Yirrkala) – a distance of approximately 800kms.

The cable will provide increased capacity to 8000-10,000 people in Arnhem Land for mobile telephones and broadband internet for schools, clinics and individuals in the region, and will be a much more reliable method of communication than the existing radio system.

Traditional owners issued two construction licences to permit Telstra to clear a corridor of up to 10m in width and install the cable 1.2 metres in depth.

Under the agreement, traditional owners are on-hand to monitor construction whenever the cable route crosses Restricted Work Areas (RWA)s which cover sacred sites or other areas of significance.

Traditional owners, such as Jacob Nayinggul, of Gunbalanya, have been employed as expert Aboriginal consultants, monitoring any works conducted within 50m of a RWA.



Above: Connie and Moses Nayinggul at one site and inset: Connie showing a piece of optic fibre

Mr Nayinggul said the project would enable the region's children to better access educational information and enhance mobile phone coverage.

He said it would improve future opportunities for his daughter, Connie, and grandson, Moses, who helped Jacob monitor construction near Cahill's Crossing.

The NLC has also ensured that there is provision for the employment of local ranger

groups to conduct monitoring activities to ensure weeds do not spread as construction takes place.

The Aboriginal communities of Gunbalanya (Oenpelli) - Maningrida, Ramingining, Gapuwiyak, Yirrkala - and the township of Nhulunbuy are now connected.

Minjilang, Waruwi, Milingimbi and Galwinku will be connected after the dry season in 2009.

Remote communities to lose TV and radio by 2013

Remote Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory have been warned that all television and radio broadcasts will be phased out by 2013 – with no news on what will replace it.

The issue was raised at a recent board meeting of Alice Springs-based Imparja Television.

Imparja Television chief executive officer Alistair Feehan said that the situation is of serious concern.

"We have lobbied the government and the other remote area broadcasters to try to get a more holistic implementation of digital broadcasting, which would mirror the services currently being delivered (and planned) by the commercial broadcasters in metropolitan and regional areas," Mr Feehan said.

Northern Land Council representatives on the Imparja board, Samuel Bush-Blanasi, and Jacob Lansen, said many Aboriginal people in remote communities would be shocked to learn about future changes to their television service.

"People in the remote parts of the Northern Territory rely on these services, and it is a concern if those services

were lost and not replaced with an appropriate service," Blanasi, who was recently elected Imparja deputy chairman, said.

Next year, the new platform in broadcasting, digital, will be rolled out, with the current analogue system being phased out by 2013.

Aboriginal residents are being warned that when analogue services cease by 2013, there are no plans for the provision of replacement digital services at 250 'self-help' remote locations.

'Self-help' locations are ones using equipment owned and operated by the local community or council, with the satellite signal down-linked and re-broadcast as an analogue television transmitter.

When first introduced, digital services were little more than a slightly wider screen version of the analogue service.

These days it comprises an en-

hanced, integrated, widescreen and high definition multi-channel service.

Federal regulator Australian Communications and Media Au-

thority (ACMA) has signalled it will call a meeting of all remote area broadcasters in the near future to discuss the issue.



Imparja board members l-r: Joe Clark, Adrian Nelson, Jacob Lansen, Samuel Bush-Blanasi, Wilton Foster, Marilyn Smith, Graham Smith, Graham Dowling and Peter Ross

No outstation support for the "lizards and wildlife": Alison Anderson

We've got to take responsibility for our own things now. Those days are over".

The Minister for Central Australia, Alison Anderson was speaking to more than 30 people living on outstations near Hermannsburg at a meeting at the Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource Centre recently.

The Northern Territory Government took over responsibility from the Commonwealth for the delivery of essential and municipal services to outstations on July this year and will implement a new outstation policy "consistent with whole of government service delivery".

"The Commonwealth will supply \$20 million a year for the next three years for outstations," Ms Anderson told the meeting.

"The Northern Territory Government will provide this money to eligible organisations to support outstations."

The Minister earlier told the media that many outstations are uninhabited and occupied only by "lizards and wildlife". These

are the outstations which will not be supported under the new outstation policy.

"If only two or three people are there, don't expect it to be resourced," she said.

"More than 500 outstations in the NT have received Commonwealth support in the past. More than 100 are uninhabited.

"More than 250 have less than 20 residents and more than 100 have between 20 and 50 residents. 457 outstations received municipal and essential service support from the Northern Territory Government," the Minister said.

Chair of the Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource Centre and outstation resident Roxanne Kenny said that while life on outstations is hard if you've got kids, it can be done and it is worth it.

"My kids are boarding in Alice Springs and we come in every day to work but I do look out at Mt Sonder from my outstation and that is pretty good. It can be done.

"There are about 50 people who have got jobs and live on outstations that Tjuwanpa Out-

station Resource Centre services. In total it services 38 outstations," she said.

Tjuwanpa coordinator Jane Rosalski said they found once people are employed they tend to move back to their outstations as they have more money for repairs and fuel.

The difficulty for Tjuwanpa, she says, is that resources are too precious to be wasted fixing a tap which could easily be fixed by the residents themselves.

"If a simple thing like the tap breaks, fix it. It's draining the resources, the time and money. It's like \$2 turns into \$2000 by the time Tjuwanpa sends somebody out to fix it with all the fuel and time," she said.

The Central Land Council says there should be more than \$20 million available given the Commonwealth Grants Commission allocation to the NT and the NT Government's own contribution to servicing residents living on outstations.

Clockwise from above: Minister Alison Anderson, Conrad Ratara and Roxanne Kenny



Government plans get thumbs down in Yuendumu

Residents and traditional owners of Yuendumu have reacted angrily to how the Federal Government plans to go about building new houses in the community and refurbish others.

The government says it won't spend any more money on housing or repairs to housing in the community unless it is given a long-term lease over housing.

The same plan is also being put by the government to the Lajamanu and Hermannsburg communities.

Many traditional owners and residents who attended an information meeting at Yuendumu on Tuesday, October 7 saw the declaration as a threat.

"They don't give us the right," Dennis Williams said. "This sort of thing is killing our people. This sort of thing is really important to our people.

"We pay the rent for these houses," he said. "We are going back to the 50s and 60s with these changes. Now we got no chance to talk. This sort of thing is hurting our people."

The Commonwealth says it will spend 13 million dollars on new houses and major repairs in Yuendumu, but only if the community's land trust agrees to a long-term lease with the Commonwealth or the Northern Territory Government.

The government says the new public housing system, which would have Territory Housing as the landlord and community members as tenants, won't work

without the long-term lease. A lease will ensure rights and responsibilities are clear and that government takes proper responsibility for the housing system.

The government offer includes two options. The first is a 60-year lease to Territory Housing over the housing areas. Under the 60-year proposal, the government will provide 13 million dollars for new housing and to fix up damaged ones.

The 60-year option doesn't provide for rent to be paid by the Commonwealth to traditional owners for the lease of the housing and requires the community to give up control over



Above: Enid Gallagher and CLC Policy officer Jeremy Dore at the Yuendumu leasing meeting

housing for 60 years.

The second option is a whole-of-community lease for 80 years to the executive director of township leasing, a Commonwealth office holder. Under this option the Commonwealth would lease the whole Yuendumu community for 80 years.

It would provide 13 million dollars for new houses and repairs to current ones as well as a two million dollar community benefits package.

The 80-year whole-of-community lease option would also pay two million dollars rent to the traditional owners.

Under the 80-year whole-of-community lease option, traditional owners and Yuendumu community members would give up control of their whole community to the Commonwealth office holder for the 80-year leasing period.

continued page 21

Senate committee looks after its own

A recent Senate inquiry into Government expenditure on Indigenous affairs and social services in the Northern Territory has wound up, rather predictably given the Labor majority of its committee members, concluding that nothing is seriously amiss in the Territory's spending of Commonwealth grants.

"Revenue distributed to the States and Territories through the Grants Commission process is provided as untied funding," the final report said. "It is available to the States and Territories to expend in accordance with their own policies and priorities."

And while "historically, service provision has been poor, that there are significant backlogs in infrastructure provision and that these problems have been compounded by governance failures at all levels", COAG and the NT Governments own "Closing the Gap" initiative would substantially address these "somewhat intractable problems".

Earlier this year CLC Director David Ross supported a suggestion by the Country Liberals' leader Terry Mills that the Northern Territory Government's spending on Aboriginal affairs be investigated.

"Since self government in 1978, successive governments have deliberately mismanaged funding provided by the Commonwealth for Aboriginal affairs," Mr Ross said.

"This disgraceful rort-ing of the system has perpetuated problems being felt in Aboriginal communities and wider society.

"A failure to spend money that's supposed to be used to educate people

and improve their health leaves you with unemployed, unhealthy people,"

Mr Ross appeared at the Senate Inquiry and told the committee that in his view, underspending is clear to see.

"I think the evidence in the real world is out there. There is a catchcry today of 'closing the gap', but education has not got any better since that report came out.

"Health problems have got worse. Housing has got worse," he said.

The CLC's submission to the inquiry said that the 2005 study in Thamurrurr by the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research was the best example of a specific detailed study which made significant findings:

"When measured against the standard of compensating for low socioeconomic status, Thamurrurr was underfunded at the rate of \$4 million per annum or \$1,944 per person.

"In relation to education, on a per capita basis, only 47c was spent on children of compulsory school age in Thamurrurr for every \$1 spent on the average Territorian.

"This is strong evidence that CGC funding allocated on the basis of disadvantage is being misspent."

The CLC's submission also accused the NT Government's 2006-07 Indigenous Expenditure Review of being riddled with systematic errors.

"The CLC is astounded that the NT would produce such a report as a cynical deflection from its mis-spending and...is precisely why CLC Director David Ross called for a Royal Commission into the NT Government's expenditure in Aboriginal affairs in August 2008."

Partnership boosts early learning and child care in Warlpiri communities



Above l-r: WETT committee members Marlkindi Rose, Fiona Gibson, Maisie Kitson, Barbara Martin, World Vision CEO Tim Costello and CLC Director David Ross

A partnership between the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT), the Central Land Council and World Vision Australia will boost the care and education of children in the Tanami region over the next three years.

WETT was set up in 2004 by the Kurra Aboriginal Corporation to utilise a portion of mining royalties to fund education and training programs in the Warlpiri region.

Now WETT, World Vision Australia and the CLC have launched the Early Childhood Care and Development program, which will focus on five key areas – life skills development and parenting support, resource development, capacity building, governance and promoting best practice.

The program aims to improve the health and well-being of children aged 0-5 years by building a foundation for children to reach their social, intellectual, spiritual and physical needs through the support of parents and carers and better early childhood services.

It will see local Aboriginal community members trained as childcare workers, the development of educational toys and other resources and the provision

of governance training.

An initial \$600,000 of royalty money from The Granites Callie agreement, negotiated with Newmont Asia Pacific, has been provided to fund the partnership by the WETT Trustee, the Kurra Aboriginal Corporation.

Following a successful first year of the program, a further \$1 million in WETT funding is likely to follow over the next two years.

World Vision Australia is funding a project manager to oversee the program with the Federal Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs funding a project facilitator to carry out on-the-ground work.

WETT is just one of several innovative projects being implemented by the CLC's Community Development unit to generate sustainable development in Central Australian communities.

CLC director David Ross praised the participants in the partnership and especially the Warlpiri people for again committing their own money to provide services that are desperately needed in these remote areas.

"Warlpiri traditional owners in the Tanami region are taking the lead and putting their royalty money into long-lasting

benefits for the whole region rather than personal gain," Mr Ross said.

"Often the projects they are funding are things that people in other parts of the country are provided with by government.

"However, forming a partnership with World Vision Australia and attracting Government funding is a smart move towards ensuring the long-term sustainability of the program.

WETT Committee Member Marlkindi Napaljarri Rose said Warlpiri people are really excited about the early childhood program.

"It gives our children a good chance to learn and grow strong from when they are babies right through until school," she said.

"It's also a good support for parents and an opportunity for Warlpiri people to get training and employment."

Already a number of projects have begun including nutrition, cooking and food information sessions with women at Nyirripi, a playgroup at Willowra staffed by local women and supported by World Vision Australia, a playgroup and crèche in Nyirripi and an education program highlighting the positive role men play in children's lives.

SEA RIGHTS

Blue Mud Bay moratorium extended



Above: NLC Chair Wali Wunungmurra and Blue Mud Bay claimant Djambawa Morowilli outside the Federal Court last year

Arrangements allowing commercial and recreational fishing to continue in tidal waters in the Northern Territory have been extended by the Northern Land Council.

An interim licensing and permit system that allows continued access for fishing was due to expire in July next year, but the NLC has extended it until the end of 2009.

NLC chief executive officer Kim Hill said the NLC has committed to the additional extension to ensure negotiations in good faith.

"This extension will ensure good

faith negotiations can occur between all partners and stakeholders for the management and development of a sustainable fishing industry," Mr Hill said.

The scheme is free and involves the automatic grant of licences to commercial operators, with recreational licences automatically granted on request.

The interim scheme was implemented in response to the Federal Court's decision in March last year in favour of traditional owners, and is administered by the NLC on behalf of the Anindilyakwa and Tiwi Land Councils.

Aboriginal flag, Islander flag, and now ... Sea Country flag



Above: the new sea rights flag and inset: flag designer Donald Marawil

With the Blue Mud Bay win in the High Court giving Yolngu people exclusive rights to coastal waters to the high water mark, claimants have created a flag to symbolise the struggle for sea country.

The 'Sea Country' flag was originally designed and drawn in September by Donald Nuan-djali Marawili at the Northern Land Council office in Nhulun-buy.

Donald took the design back to his homeland at Blue Mud Bay and discussed the design with his family, community leaders and elders.

The flag design was modified and the final design was finished in October.

Mr Marawili said the new flag is like the land rights flag 'when the old people won land

back in 1976'.

"This new flag represents the sea rights for all Aboriginal people," he said.

The colours of the flag are representative of the following:

White represents the clouds that form over the ocean.

Black represents Aboriginal people on the sea.

Blue represents the sea.

Red represents the blood of Aboriginal people, and symbolises suffering.

Yellow represents the beach sand.

Land Council business at Crab Claw Island



The Northern Land Council held its 95th full council meeting recently at Crab Claw Island, an hour's drive south-west of Darwin. Below left: NLC delegates from the Borroloola Barkly region and below: the East Arnhem NLC delegates with Jeffrey Dixon



TERRITORY GOVERNMENT BANS BILINGUAL EDUCATION FOR MOST OF THE SCHOOL DAY

A decision by the Territory's Education Minister Marion Scrymgour to force bilingual schools to teach English for the first four hours of each day goes against her department's Indigenous education strategic plan.

Ms Scrymgour has said the ban is needed to place a greater emphasis on improving children's literacy in English.

"As we move forward with transforming indigenous education we will ensure that schools in the bush have structured language and culture programs which help young Territorians to develop an understanding of their unique heritage," Ms Scrymgour said.

"However, this cannot be at the cost of children becoming literate and numerate in English. That's why I've stipulated the first four hours must be taught in English in our schools each day."

This action goes against the Education Department's own Indigenous education strategic plan for 2006 - 2009.

That plan states - "Evidence and experience

suggest that Indigenous students can and do achieve at the same level as other students where: teaching programs are relevant to the life of the students and are inclusive of Indigenous languages and culture."

Under the heading, "Action areas and priorities revitalise the bilingual approach", the department's strategic plan states - "There are 11 programs in Territory Government schools that use a bilingual model."

The bilingual programs are effective overseas and give an indication of positive results in the Territory. DEET will strengthen the bilingual program and improve its effectiveness and sustainability to deliver outcomes.

"It is expected that these actions will result in increased numbers of Indigenous students achieving lit-

eracy and numeracy benchmarks," the plan adds.

Under the section headed, "Priority 3: Indigenous languages and culture programs", the plan says, "DEET believes introducing a greater focus on Indigenous languages and culture programs in NT schools will improve indigenous student outcomes by: increasing the level of engagement of Indigenous people in schools promoting improved attendance through the provision of culturally relevant teaching programs...."

It would seem the Minister disagrees.

Northern Territory Schools with bilingual education programs

Areyonga School, Lajamanu CEC, Maningrida CEC, Milingimbi CEC, Shepherdson College, Galiwin'ku, Willowra School, Yirrkala CEC, Yuendumu CEC, Numbulwar.

Tom Calma says:

"I am bothered by the fact that this policy will only really affect bilingual schools and yet there is no evidence to say that bilingual schools do worse than non-Bilingual schools.

In fact there is evidence that bilingual students do better in English reading literacies than 'English' schools in their regions. And the English schools offer education in English for all of the hours of the school day.

So let's put that one to bed. Bilingual education does not kill off English literacy. And Bilingual education has the added benefit of developing literacies in the first language - meaning that children are learning literacies in both their first Indigenous language(s) and in English."

Tom Calma, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner and national Race Discrimination Commissioner in the annual Eric Johnston lecture titled, 'A human rights agenda for the Northern Territory'.

Exhibition bears fruit of language and culture in education

Despite the Northern Territory Government's ideological opposition to Aboriginal languages within its education system, a recent multi media exhibition by Alyawarr and Anmatyerr women clearly demonstrates their overriding desire for an education that respects and includes both local language and culture and Western culture in the system.

Indigenous Research Fellow, Charles Darwin University, Josie Douglas said the exhibition came about from a group of women at Utopia who requested support from Batchelor Institute to document knowledge about bush medicines in order to pass it on to younger generations

This *Intem-antey anem* - these things will always be exhibition is the result of Alyawarr and Anmatyerr women identifying education outcomes that are important to them and an organisation, Batchelor Institute, having the flexibility, goodwill and

dedicated staff to make it happen. Too often, remote education initiatives that are important to local people are crippled by a failure of imagination at the bureaucratic level," Douglas said.

"Part of the process included Alyawarr and Anmatyerr people getting practice at presenting knowledge in different ways, to different audiences, as part of an inter-generational team"

The group presented at the World's Indigenous Peoples Education Conference in Melbourne recently.

Above: CDU Research Fellow Josie Douglas; above and below right: the group was composed of young and older women who had all been heavily involved in the project



Permits plan left in limbo by Coalition and independents



Above: Traditional owner Jacob Nayinggul, of Gunbalanya with a permit sign on his land

The Federal Government says it will decide in the New Year what to do with its legislation that would partially re-instate the permits system in Aboriginal communities.

The legislation was knocked back by the Coalition and independent senators Nick Xenophon and Michael Fielding in the Senate recently.

That's left the Federal Government to decide whether to scrap its plans to reintroduce the permits system or return it to the Senate in the New Year.

CLC director David Ross said the Senate's

rejection of the legislation is a setback but all hope isn't lost.

"We are awfully disappointed with this outcome and look forward to meeting with senators Fielding and Xenophon and hope to convince them to support the changes when the government puts them forward again," he said.

Northern Land Council chairman Wali Wunungmurra said per-

mits were about cultural survival and the right of Aboriginal people to control their own futures.

"Aboriginal land is private property and just like every other Australian, Aboriginal people have the right to permit who comes onto their land," Mr Wunungmurra said.

Indigenous Affairs Minister Jenny Macklin said it is important that Indigenous people are able to have right of access on their private property.

"The permit system is an important one for Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory and we'll consider this further in the new year," she said.

The CLC and NLC's constituents

in bush communities have repeatedly sent them

"Aboriginal land is private property and just like every other Australian, Aboriginal people have the right to permit who comes onto their land."

NLC Chairman Wali Wunungmurra

resounding messages emphasising their wishes to have some say over who visits their land owned under Aboriginal freehold title.

The latest was in a CLC survey of the Federal intervention into Aboriginal communities.

While some of the intervention's measures received mixed support or opposition, the permits system received almost 100 per cent backing.

Racist measures continue under intervention plans

The Northern Territory's two major land councils and the Australian Human Rights Commission have all expressed concern at the Federal Government's failure to immediately end racist policies under its intervention into Aboriginal communities.

The previous Coalition government suspended the Racial Discrimination Act to allow the government to dictate how Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory spend their welfare payments.

The new Labor Government committed to a review of the intervention, which found that the Racial Discrimination Act should be re-instated, but the Indigenous Affairs Minister Jenny Macklin's response was to delay the full reinstatement of the Act for at least 12 months.

"Effectively we've ended up with a situation where it took two weeks to design a suite of discriminatory measures, but will end up taking more than two years to remove them," Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Tom Calma said.

"This is despite the Minister for Indigenous Affairs having the ability to exercise her administrative powers to remove substantial elements of the discrimination with immediate effect.

"While I applaud the government for announcing that the NTER measures cannot rely on the suspension of the Racial Discrimination Act in the long-term, the delays involved in moving to this arrangement will continue what the NTER Review Board described as the 'sense of betrayal and disbelief' among Indigenous peoples and will continue to 'undercut

the potential effectiveness of its substantive measures'," Mr Calma said.

"No one wants to see children abused, families destroyed and communities ripped apart, so I welcome this ongoing commitment to protecting women and children. But I do not, and never have, accepted that we need to resort to discrimination in order to achieve this protection."

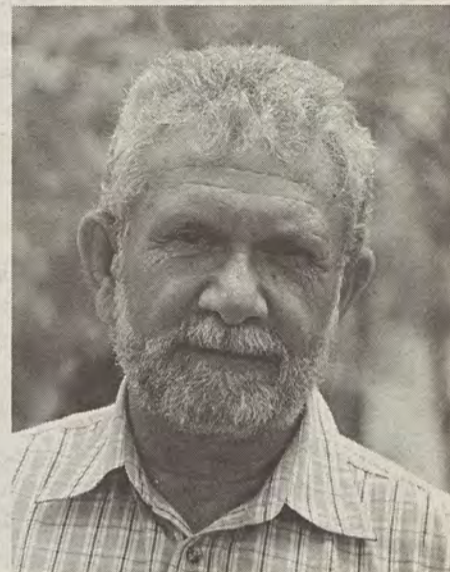
Central Land Council director David Ross said his organisation supports the report's recommendation that income management should be voluntary or only compulsory when in the interests of child protection and school attendance.

He said the CLC supports that recommendation or income quarantining becoming a national measure.

"The Australian Government should take this on board very seriously," he said. "Pushing measures on people, which they do not want is counter-productive.

"We strongly urge the Minister to take these recommendations on board and let's try again to have a new beginning.

"As we have said, and the report reiterates, unless there is participation and engagement by the Aboriginal people it purports to help, then change will



Above: CLC Director David Ross

not occur.

"This is fundamental to community development and something the Minister herself articulated in a speech at the Press Club on 27 February this year," Mr Ross said.

The Northern Land Council described the Australian Government's response to the review's report as confused and needing meaningful Aboriginal input.

"While the NLC welcomes the government flagging that it will reinstate the Racial Discrimination Act and the acknowledgement that it must pay reasonable rent for its five-year leases, we are disappointed that blanket compulsory income management will remain," chief executive Kim Hill said.

"It's reminiscent of the old mission days where every aspect of our lives was controlled, from whom we could marry, where we could live, with whom we could congregate, and how we spent our money. Frankly, we are sick and tired of being experimented on."

KARLU KARLU

It was an emotional day for Aboriginal traditional owners and hardened journalists alike when the Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Jenny Macklin handed back one of the most significant sacred sites for Warumungu, Kaytetye, Warlpiri and Alyawarr people in the Tennant Creek region on a hot day in October.



As the Minister poured sand into the hands of "Black Hat" Leslie Foster, one of the Territory's longest claims for justice came to an end, 28 years after traditional owners first made their claim for title to Karlu Karlu (The Devils Marbles), 100 km south of Tennant Creek.

The Minister also handed back title to the Alyawarr, Kaytetye, Warumungu and Wakaya traditional owners of the Davenport Range National Park.

CLC Chair Lindsay Bookie said it was a proud moment.

"This is good to see. People have waited a long time for this. Old Black Hat started this when he was a young fella and he lost all of his brothers along the way. I'm proud for them. The CLC's done a lot of work to make this happen," Mr Bookie said.

The Ayleparrantenhe Aboriginal Land Trust will hold title to 17.75 square kilometres of land at Karlu Karlu and the Erlterlapentye Aboriginal Land Trust will hold title to 1119 square kilometres of the pro-

posed Davenport Murchison Range National Park.

The neighbouring Anurrete Aboriginal Land Trust will also lease 156 square kilometres of its land to the national park.

CLC Director David Ross said he hoped the hand backs would provide a sense of relief and peace for the traditional owners.

"In the case of Karlu Karlu, these people have fought for years to protect this place against developments which would have seen road detours and a railway line cut through the site," Mr Ross said.

"Many people who fought hard passed away.

"The proposed Davenport Range National Park has also had a painful past, especially in its establishment when sites were bulldozed and desecrated and traditional owners completely disregarded during the clearing of the park boundaries.

"I congratulate all of them for their courage, persistence and resilience - it's been a tough, and often a very sad road for all of them and I sin-

cerely hope that these hand backs will provide a sense of peace and relief.

"I also look forward to the joint management arrangements that follow giving them the level of recognition and involvement in the management of these areas that they deserve for many years to come," Mr Ross said.

The hand backs will benefit about 300 Aboriginal people from surrounding communities.

The parks were handed back as a result of settlement of long standing land claims over some national parks under the Parks and Reserves (Framework for the Future) Act. The Land Trusts immediately signed 99 year leases with the Northern Territory Government which allows these parks to continue as national parks with public access under joint management arrangements.

Top: Both groups of land-owners with their titles and above: the Minister pours sand into Leslie Foster's hands
Right: the dancers completed the emotional ceremony



Batchelor media unit turns 21



At 4pm, in 1987, the first broadcast from the Radio Rum Jungle studios at the now Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, made it on to the local airwaves.

Twenty one years later, teachers, lecturers, students, past and present, and some special guests made it to the Indigenous media unit on campus at Batchelor, south of Darwin, to celebrate more than two decades of Indigenous media training and production.

One of the first broadcasters, Jenny Geia, now a nurse in Queensland, recalled the first broadcast and paid tribute to media pioneers who had passed away.

Former students and teachers including Wayne Wharton and Wayne Bynder, joined the new breed of Indigenous broadcasters



who come to Batchelor from all over the Northern Territory to boost their communication skills.

Special guests included the legendary Jimmy Little and, B2M of the Tiwi Islands, who performed on campus.

The celebration also saw the launch of Radio Rum Jungle's new outside broadcast van, which will enable coverage of community festivals and sporting events from the community itself.

Above: founding students Wayne Wharton, Jenny Geia and Wayne Bynder
Below: Rum Jungle's new outside broadcast van

Centre reopening reflects town camp resilience

The reopening of the Hidden Valley town camp community centre has rewarded the perseverance of camp residents who've seen the centre open and close several times.

The centre was reopened on October the 28th with the help of a \$200,000 one-off capital grant to upgrade its facilities. That grant represented the first major amount of money to be spent on the building in its 20 year history.

Its features include a children's playground, a colourful tile mosaic welcoming visitors and an orchard.

Tangentyere Council's director William Tilmouth told a gathering of about 50 people at the centre's opening, "It is a valuable asset to the community which we are all proud of.

"We acknowledge and thank all those involved," he said.

The centre acts as a multi-purpose family resource centre for the residents of the Alice Springs town camp and is funded by the Commonwealth Government's Stronger Families and Communities Initiative.

Hidden Valley town camp resident Austin Turner said residents have worked on the refurbishment of the centre.

"Planting trees and we did some paintings inside and outside and the Aborigine decoration out the front and the vegetables and we've got an orchard here outside with mandarin, lemon and orange. Some citrus," he said.

Cheryl McMillan is a support worker at the centre. She said the new works at the centre have made it a more pleasant and useful facility for residents.

"There's lots of little trees growing up around the front," she said. "There's lots of people that come around. Do painting, also sitting

Top: (adults from left) Stella McMillan, Alicia John, Austin Turner and Brian Turner with (children left to right) Pristina Charles and Willy Charles at the opening of the Hidden Valley town camp community centre. Below: Austin Turner, Jamila White and Jamila's grandmother Cheryl McMillan cook kangaroo tails at the opening of the Hidden Valley Community Centre in Alice Springs.



inside watching TV, especially when there's a children's program on," she said.

Mr Tilmouth said many people had contributed to the reopening of the centre, but he reserved special praise for the town camp.

"In the minds of people, this is a really big step in being able to do something for themselves," Mr Tilmouth said.

The day's festivities included a performance by Drum Atweme school drummers, a broadcast by CAAMA Radio and a barbecue including kangaroo tails.

THE WARLPIRI BUY THEIR POOL

There was great excitement as the residents of Yuendumu finally opened their long awaited pool in October this year.

CLC Director David Ross said the community had put in a huge effort.

"People at Yuendumu have wanted a swimming pool for 30 years and their decision to spend royalties to help get one is a wise investment for the community's future," Mr Ross said.

"The community put in \$400,000 of their royalty money from a nearby mine to bring their dream to reality.

"The Mt Theo Substance Misuse Aboriginal Corporation has done a fantastic job fundraising and managing the project," Mr Ross said.

"Warlukurlangu Artists put in a substantial amount of money and philanthropic organisations also contributed generously."

Some of the funding came from the now defunct *Pools in Remote Areas* scheme. This scheme operated under a shared funding arrangement was a split between the Commonwealth Government, the Territory Government, and the Yuendumu Community.

The CLC was a member of the Steering Committee to manage the project

David Ross says the Land Council is working hard to persuade the royalty associations it helps administer take a more long term view of the money.

"Our job is to ensure that Aboriginal people get the best outcomes they can from those royalties," Mr Ross said.

"These mines won't be around forever and unless they spend some of that money on things that have long term benefits they could be left with nothing for their kids,"

"We have managed to persuade people to start spending money from land use agreements and rent on projects that will benefit the entire community," he said.



Above: Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Jenny Macklin cuts the ribbon to the pool; middle, left and right: it was really a kids day...
Above: Mt Theo founder Peggy Brown OAM

Managing our northern rivers

The value of rivers and wild food resources to Australia's Indigenous people is the focus of new research that will help water management in northern Australia.

The research will record Indigenous people's social and cultural knowledge relating to water and will survey them to quantify the economic benefit households derive from their use of aquatic plants and animals.

CSIRO researcher Dr Sue Jackson said the survey will involve asking Indigenous people questions such as how many fish they've caught or bush cucumbers they've collected over the past few weeks, with a comparison then made with the cost of purchasing the same amount of food from the community store.

"In what is a 'first' for this kind

of study, we'll also be looking at what effect different water levels, or flow regimes, have on the patterns of resource use by Indigenous people," Dr Jackson said.

Malak Malak Traditional Owner, Bidy Lindsay, is concerned about the impacts of people on the Daly River and billabongs, which she says have changed substantially over the last five to 10 years.

"Pigs, horses and cattle have stirred up the edges of some billabongs. We go to catch fish and turtle there but we don't catch much anymore," she says.

"Now that water in the river is



Food collecting in the Daly region

not good. It's not healthy that river anymore."

The research will focus on two catchments – the Daly River in the Northern Territory, and the Fitzroy

River in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, and will employ Indigenous people as advisors on river health.

Stone Country on show at Gunbalanya

The escarpment country surrounding the community of Gunbalanya, three hours drive east from Darwin, has always had an effect on Western visitors ever since, Baldwin Spencer declared in 1912: 'The most beautiful spot I have seen in the Northern Territory'.

The inviting wetlands and rock escarpments provide a stunning backdrop to the township of Gunbalanya also known as Oenpelli or Kunbarlanjnja, situated on the eastern boundary of Western Arnhem Land

The annual Gunbalanya Open Day enables Aboriginal and non-Ab-

original visitors a chance to sample the local culture through a sports carnival, rock art tours, cultural performances by the Karrabarrda traditional dancers, scenic flights, bush tucker samples as well as visits to the local art centre, Injalak Arts and Crafts.

Popular Aboriginal

bands Nabarlek and Wildflower performed to adoring crowds that night.

The musical performances were coupled with the screening of locally produced animated films made by the children of Gunbalanya, Turtle and Echidna and Orphan Boy.



Below: Kids with Deloris the Dinosaur, below right dancers show for the big crowd, Above: Gunbalanya's spectacular landscape



Bringing in the harvest: Centrefarm training pays off



Top: Carl, middle l-r Dwayne, Michael, bottom: Kimmy, Malcolm

There's no point in training without a job at the end of it.

Anmatjerre people in the Ti Tree region have been training in the horticultural industry this year and now they have been hard at work getting a crop of table grapes off the vines.

The training has been sup-

ported by Centrefarm, a company the CLC set up some years ago to develop horticultural opportunities in the CLC's region.

Centrefarm CEO Allan Cooney says the feedback they have been getting from the employers has been extremely positive, and by all accounts

the Ti Tree workers are a very welcome addition to the scarce labour resource.

The group are working in the area until March and then picking fruit in New Zealand.

They are being paid standard industry wages for their work.

Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers moving on up



Two Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers from the Central Land Council Tennant Creek office recently graduated from Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management through Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education.

Anthea Graham and Lisa Rex (pictured) received their certificates at a graduation ceremony in Alice Springs in September. After the ceremony both Anthea and Lisa said that were very proud to have completed the course and to have had the opportunity to attend the graduation ceremony.

Both rangers have since begun studies in Certificate III.

Bilbies found on Alyawarr Country



In October a group of traditional owners from Illeuwurru went out looking for bilbies and found them on Murry Downs nearby.

Well, they found everything to do with the elusive bilbies - short of pulling the bilby from its hole - four active burrows, fresh tracks, scats and diggings

This bilby population is highly significant as it is the first confirmed record of bilbies east of the Stuart Highway for at least 25 years and it is located at least 150 kilometres south-east of any other known bilby populations.

It is also one of only a few bilby populations known in the Northern Territory to occur in mulga country.

This survey was one of many undertaken in the CLC region over the last two years as part of the "Implementing recovery actions for the bilby and other key threatened species", funded by NHT.

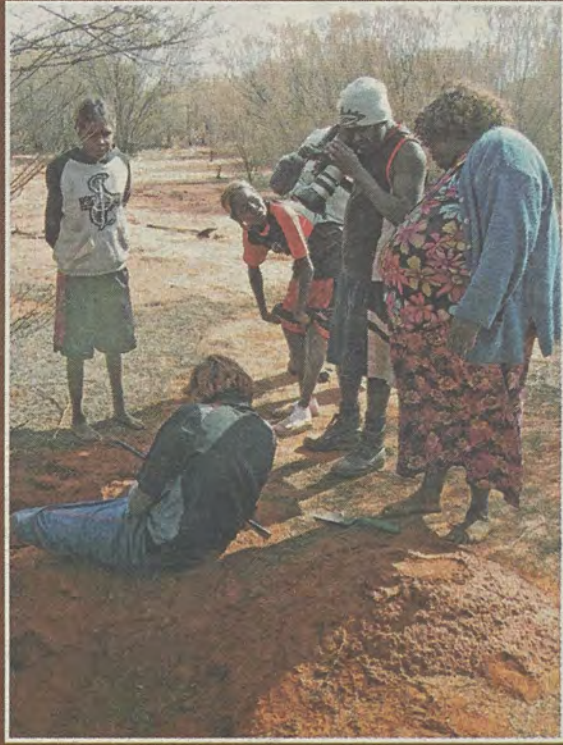
The CLC has been recently funded to continue this work.

CLC Womens Land Management gets out on country

The Central Land Council, Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, and PY Media worked together recently to engage young women in learning about their country.

During the country visits, PY Media trained young people in multi media and produced three films about mala tracking, rabbit hunting and collecting and telling stories about honey ants.

The CLC's Womens Land Management Development Project supports traditional owners from five communities - Tennant Creek, Willowra, Mutitjulu, Lajamanu and Alice Springs - to undertake country visits.



Above: filming the search for honey ants near Uluru

These visits focus on recording traditional ecological knowledge, identifying natural and cultural resource management issues and carrying out on-

ground land management.

The documentation of country visits is carried out by young women who are given multi-media training.



Above: filming the Willowra country visit with Willowra school and older members of the community. The kids learnt about digging for echidnas (above) and how to prepare them for cooking (right)



Sea rangers help map seabeds



Above: Ranger Patrick White checks out the screen

Indigenous sea rangers and Northern Territory marine scientists are pioneering the first attempt to combine traditional Indigenous ecological knowledge with the latest hi-tech marine mapping technology.

Indigenous sea rangers from the Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation, based at Nhulunbuy, teamed up with marine scientists in a bid to map the marine seabed features around Bremer Island, off north-east Arnhem Land.

The seabed map-

ping survey used a hi-tech underwater remote operated vehicle together with traditional ecological knowledge from sea rangers.

The Bremer Island survey also tested a new methodology that uses high resolution imagery of shallow

waters to undertake preliminary mapping of different habitats.

The results of the survey will be compiled into a detailed seabed habitat map that will assist Dhimurru Sea Rangers in the management of the marine habitats around Bremer Island.

Indigenous rangers receive \$26 million Federal boost

The Federal Government has recognised the important work conducted by Indigenous rangers in northern Australia in protecting biodiversity with a \$26 million boost

The funding will enable an extra 44 Indigenous rangers to be employed on a full-time basis at a cost of \$2.6 million.

The \$26 million package also includes:

\$21.65 million to boost the work of Indigenous rangers on Australia's 25 declared Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA)s over the next five years;

\$2.454 million this year to help develop new IPAs;

\$2.662 million to employ up to 44 Indigenous rangers this year through eight Working on Country projects.

Environment Minister Peter Garrett said the funding would

fight biodiversity loss through protecting turtles from ghost nets, fighting weeds and wildfire, and controlling feral animals.

"A huge proportion of Australia's habitat is on Indigenous-owned land and much of it is incredibly remote, so we rely on the dedication and skills of Indigenous people to conserve it for all Australians," Mr Garrett said.

"As we face threats from climate change our environment needs its Indigenous rangers more than ever."

The Federal Government has signalled it plans to create an 'environmental rescue force' of 300 Indigenous rangers.

Rangers help save endangered Golden Bandicoot



Above: Scientist Carol Palmer and Gumurr Marthakal Ranger Bruce Lirawa check the population of bandicoots released on the Wessel Islands

Aboriginal rangers are continuing to work to save the endangered Golden Bandicoot, with recent surveys signalling a boost in numbers.

Members of the Gumurr Marthakal Ranger group, based at Galiwinku on Elcho Island, as well as Kakadu National Park rangers, joined scientists on a recent three-week field trip to the Wessel Islands where some bandicoots were released last year.

The Golden Bandicoot once occurred across much of Australia but now the species is considered one of its rarest, with populations known

only in a small area of the north Kimberley mainland, a few Western Australian islands, Marchinbar Island, and Guluwuru Island.

Populations have been decimated by changed fire regimes, predation by cats and foxes, as well as the effects of disease.

The trip aimed to sample the bandicoot at both its single known Northern Territory natural population on Marchinbar Island and on Guluwuru

Island where 12 bandicoots were relocated.

It will take continued surveys over a number of years to assess the success of the translocated Golden bandicoots, which 18 additional bandicoots will join on Guluwuru Island.

Scientists found Golden Bandicoots (*Isodon auratus*) living on Marchinbar Island during a wildlife survey trip in 1993, estimating their population at around 3000.

Government to look at community stores

The operation of local community stores in remote Indigenous communities is the focus of a new inquiry by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs.

The Committee will consider the food security and cost of living pressures of these remote Indigenous communities which may go some way to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians on life expectancy, educational achievement

and employment opportunities.

It will also look at food supply, quality, cost and competition issues; the effectiveness of the Outback Stores model and other private, public and community store models; and the impact of these factors on the health and economic outcomes of communities.

Further details on the inquiry can be found at www.aph.gov.au/atsia or on (02) 62774559. Submissions close by 20 February 2009.

New generation of station riders



Above: Rodney Payne saddles up

The next generation of Aboriginal workers took their first step towards employment in the cattle industry recently with trainees completing a skills course.

The Northern Land Council's Jobs and Careers Service (JACS) held a one-week introductory horseriding course at Charles Darwin University's Mataranka Station involving 30 students from Binjari, Borroloola, Robinson River, Tennant Creek and Canteen Creek.

JACS manager David Ross junior said the course would enable the students to gain skills that would help them gain work in the cattle industry.

"The course gets the young men used to working on a station, learning things such as fencing, mustering and horseriding," Mr Ross jnr said.

Bronson Dick, 24, of Borroloola, hopes to become a lecturer and

mentor at the Katherine Rural College, following seven years of work and training in the cattle industry in northern Australia.

"I've worked with cattle all of my life, and I am a ringer by trade," he said.

"This type of work is really good, and I recommend it to other young fellas."

Mr Dick said since he was 17 he had worked in pastoral camps, fencing camps and weaner camps across the East Kimberley, Queensland/Northern Territory border, and Newcastle Waters.

Mataranka station, run by the Northern Territory Rural College, is located 90kms south of Katherine, and runs an average of 1500 breeders.

Tanami Regional Partnership Agreement signals a new era of Aboriginal businesses

The Central Land Council says an agreement signed in October between the CLC, Newmont Asia Pacific, the Australian Government and the Northern Territory Government will make a significant difference to Aboriginal people who live in the Tanami region, north west of Alice Springs.

The Tanami Regional Partnership Agreement (TRPA), which initially involves Yuendumu, Lajamanu and Kalkaringi, seeks to create opportunities for employment in the mining industry, improve education, develop Aboriginal businesses and build the capacity of local communities.

CLC Director David Ross said the TRPA builds on the hard work done by the CLC and Newmont over many years.

"Our partnership with Newmont to get Aboriginal people into em-

ployment and training has set a national example and I congratulate them: many Warlpiri people already have taken the step out of welfare and become valuable skilled workers," Mr Ross said.

"The TRPA takes that successful relationship a step further – for the last year we have been talking to Warlpiri people about their ideas for business enterprises.

"This has been extraordinarily successful and a number of Warlpiri people have approached us about

businesses they would like to set up like vehicle recovery and repair businesses, campgrounds, market gardens, bakeries, earth moving businesses, mustering companies, and housing maintenance companies" he said.

"Our job is to assess the ideas, develop business plans if they look feasible, and assist them to get the business up and running in a sustainable way so that they can truly participate in the economy of the Tanami.

"Some of these



Above: l-r Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Jenny Macklin, Harry Nelson and MLA Karl Hampton signing the partnership agreement filmed by PAW Media member Francis Kelly

ideas are building on already successful businesses, some are new. We already have some tangible outcomes: JW Ringers in Kalkaringi is already up and running and employing three men at Wave

Hill station. A fencing contract for Newmont by people from Kalkaringi was done in record time. Business plans are being done for small Aboriginal organisations gearing up to contract to the

mining industry.

"We are linking in the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust which Warlpiri people have set up with their own royalty money to achieve educational outcomes that

the community wants," he said.

Mr Ross said Aboriginal people are increasingly keen to engage and utilise the opportunities presented to them in the mainstream economy.

Tiwis claim the Vernon Islands

After more than 30 years, Tiwi Islanders appeared before the Aboriginal Land Commissioner for the first time this year to claim traditional ownership of the Vernon Islands – a series of uninhabited islands between Darwin and Melville Island.

The claim covers 7655 hectares of land and areas of the inter-tidal zone.

The claim provided an opportunity for the Tiwi and the Northern Land Councils to work together, with the NLC representing the claimants and Tiwi Land Council providing advice and logistical support.

The NLC conducted over 100 consultations in preparation for the claim and extensive traditional evidence was presented to the Land Commissioner at the Nguui hearings.

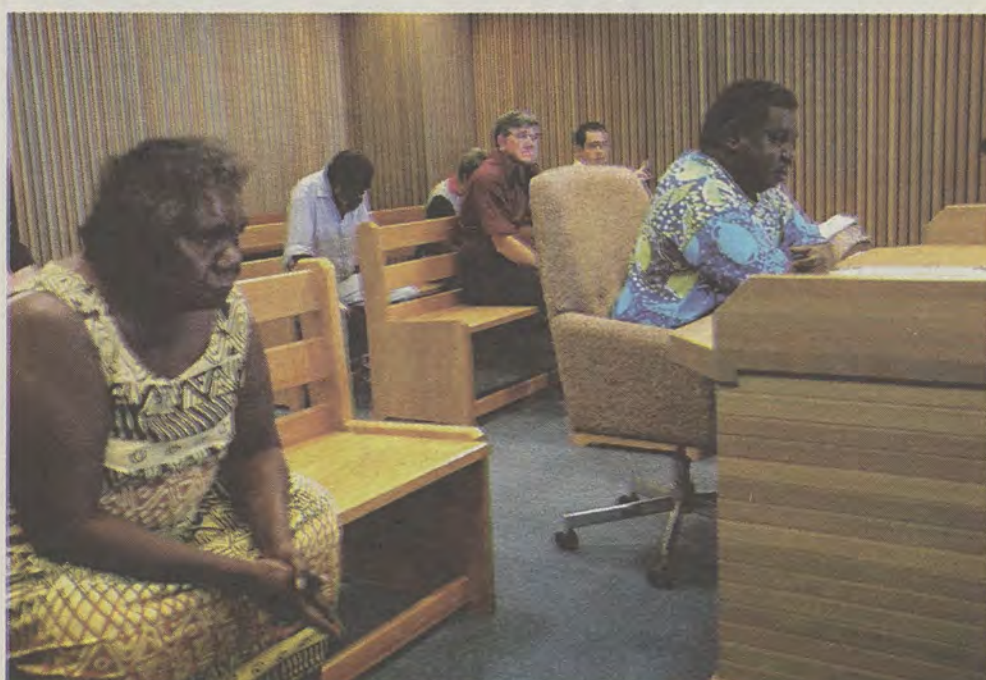
Traditional owners recounted the creation stories for the Vernon

Islands, told of ceremonies on the Islands and spoke of the history of travel by dug-out canoes from Nguui to Darwin.

As one claimant explained: "(Old people) used to travel in a dugout canoe from Nguui to Darwin. And coming back, hunted for turtle at the three islands (Vernon Islands)."

Traditional owners argued that they have strong links to the islands, which Tiwi people regard as a plentiful spot for turtle and dugong.

In a show of solidarity, NLC chairman Wali Wunungmurra attended all three days of the Nguui



hearings, together with members of the Tiwi Land Council.

The Aboriginal Land Commissioner is likely to make recommendations about the claim in early 2009.

Above: Tiwi traditional owners give evidence the Aboriginal Land Commissioner

Dr Ford appointed to AIATSIS Council

A senior lecturer from the Finniss River has been selected to join Australia's leading centre for information and research on Australian Indigenous peoples.



Dr Payi-Linda Ford

Dr Payi-Linda Ford, of the Rak Mak Mak Marranunggu peoples from Kurrindju (Finniss River), will join the council of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), based in Canberra.

AIATSIS Council chairman Professor Mick Dodson said her appointment acknowledged her contribution to promoting respect

for Indigenous knowledge systems.

"Through her contribution to language and cultural diversity in educational settings, in social justice and cultural diversity, and in community development and adult education, Dr Ford has gained enormous respect for her commitment to advancing Indigenous issues and to promoting social justice," Professor Dod-

son said.

Dr Ford is on temporary secondment as a senior Indigenous policy officer in the NT Department of Regional Development, Primary Industry, Fisheries and Resources and will be returning to her position as senior lecturer at the School of Australian Indigenous Knowledge Systems at Charles Darwin University in Darwin.

Government passes test on Indigenous affairs – just

The Government's National Apology to the Stolen Generations in February this year marked a line in the sand for the beginning of a new relationship with Indigenous peoples, but despite some terrific initiatives and hefty commitments, many things are still being done 'to' Indigenous people rather than 'in partnership' with them, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Tom Calma says

Delivering his final speech in the *Essentials for Social Justice* series, Commissioner

Calma said the government had set high expectations for its first year in office, but it needed to do some business differently to achieve more positive changes.

"Over the last 12 months we've seen the historic and long-overdue National Apology, followed by commitments to closing the gap in Indigenous health inequality. We've also seen real steps taken towards creating equal life chances for Indigenous children," Mr Calma said.

"While I accept that change takes time and that the govern-

ment's commitment to a new approach is a work in progress, some mixed messages and contradictions remain.

Commissioner Calma said he was particularly concerned that new policies had been developed rapidly, but without significant engagement and participation of Indigenous peoples.

"People tell me as I travel around the country that they are overwhelmed by the level, and the constant nature, of change

"Many things are still being done 'to' Indigenous people rather than 'in partnership' with them," Tom Calma said.

"We've also recently seen the independent review of the Northern Territory intervention lauded as an exercise in consultation and engagement, however there was little connection between this review's recommendations and subsequent decisions taken by government," he said.

"Despite these concerns, the last 12 months gives me hope that things can change for the better. "A new national Indigenous representative body will firm up a true partnership with the government and deliver lasting change."

Central Australian play wins prestigious Deadly Award



Trevor Jamieson and his mother who is the subject of some of the play

A confronting Central Australian play that challenges us to change our understanding of indigenous history has taken out a prestigious Deadly Award in the 'Most Outstanding Achievement in Theatre' category.

Ngapartji Ngapartji's Director and writer, Tasmanian Scott Rankin, and co-creator and key performer Trevor Jamieson, accepted the award recently in Sydney.

Ngapartji Ngapartji, Pitjantjatjara for "I give you something, you give me something" tells the true story of the Spinifex people (a clan of the Pitjantjatjara people) of the Western desert who were moved off their lands to make way for British atomic testing carried out between 1953 and 1965.

Test sites in the arid rangelands of South Australia remain uninhabitable for the next 250,000 years, after bombs almost the size of the Hiroshima bomb were dropped there.

Trevor Jamieson said, "I am immensely proud of this play. Its evolution over a nine year period has seen hundreds of people, both indigenous and non-indigenous; explore new ways of working together."

Jamieson is a Spinifex man himself, so the story is personal.

Since 2006, Ngapartji Ngapartji has sold out to a national audience of 30,000 with standing ova-

tions at every performance.

Jamieson also acknowledged the support of writer and director, Scott Rankin with whom he collaborated to make the play a reality.

Rankin, National Creative Director of Big hART, is known for his work in comedy, mainstream theatre, experimental community based projects, film and television. His work has been included in Tasmania, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Edinburgh Festivals and his plays have set box office records and received exceptional reviews.

The ground breaking play has also founded a world-first on-line Indigenous language program.

Over 350 people have enrolled in the on-line learning site, which is hailed as a model prototype by linguists. <http://ninti.ngapartji.org>

Ngapartji Ngapartji's success recently culminated in Alice Springs, with performances in front of a home audience.

Preparations are now underway for the play to travel to London to perform at Origins – the First Nations Theatre Festival in May 2009.

Expansion marks three decades of education

The Yipirinya School in Alice Springs has celebrated its 30th anniversary by opening \$1.6 million worth of capital works in its grounds.

A computer laboratory and multi-purpose hall have been built at the school and its administration building has been renovated and expanded.

The works mark a new era of confidence held by authorities in the school.

"Six years ago the government was at the point of closing this school," school principal Ken Langford Smith said during the celebrations.

"They stopped all work on this building and froze all the school funds," he said.

"Since then however we have turned the situation around, regained the confidence of the government, dramatically boosted our enrolments, achieved very pleasing academic results and completed a five-year plan of building developments, which has included a modern kitchen and dining room, a new staff room, new language classrooms as well as the developments you see today.

"Davie Inkamala (school council chairman) and the school council can be really proud of what has been achieved," Mr Langford said.

Aboriginal academic and former teacher Marcia Langton said the Yipirinya School should be held as an example of success-

ful Indigenous education programs to governments.

"Yipirinya should be a model for governments and policy makers in addressing the health, education and chances of Aboriginal children," Ms Langton said.

Aboriginal elders, traditional owners and parents faced a fight with authorities through the courts to make the Yipirinya school a reality.

"There were many other obstacles but the school's founders never faltered," Ms Langton said. "Their tenacity and determination was inspirational and now complex buildings and facilities is cause for pride and joy."

"The goal of teaching children in a bilingual and bicultural curriculum has recently been the subject of negative government policy in the Northern Territory.

"I found it astonishing that a government with such a poor track record with all of its majority monolingual programs and resulting statistical failure to provide an adequate education to Aboriginal children should blame multilingual and bilingual schools, which are in the minority for its failures, especially given that bilingual schools in the Northern Territory are successful," she said.

Right: Yipirinya students



Warlpiri and Utopia women at Tullamarine, en route to the World Indigenous Peoples Conference (Education) left to right: Jenny Taylor, Jeannie Pwerl Mills, Gail Woods, Katie Kemarr Morton (seated), Dorothy Kemarr Kunoth, Rosie Pwerl, Noranda Ngwarray Loy, Pansy Petyarr McLeod, Patsy Kemarr Long, Lena Pwerl, Margaret Carew. Their presentation was called: Rlterkan Mwerr: art, language and bush medicine at Utopia

CLC takes broad brush approach to uranium education

The Central Land Council has been working hard to educate Aboriginal people in its region about uranium as more exploration applications are sought by companies looking for uranium on Aboriginal land.

While many traditional land owners in Central Australia are familiar with other forms of mining, uranium exploration and mining is something new to the region since the Australian Government announced the Northern Territory was open for uranium business and uranium prices increased markedly in 2007.

The language used is unfamiliar and so too are some of the environmental and political issues related to it.

CLC director David Ross said, "Our staff have gone to great efforts to inform traditional land owners about those issues by providing a whole range of information in a variety of forms from all sides of the debate.

"Now mining companies and other land councils have recognised the balanced approach of the CLC to disseminating information to its constituents and invited its staff to share its methods by making presentations interstate."

In 2005 CLC staff organised a visit for traditional land owners



Above: CLC delegates learn how to use a Geiger Counter at the recent CLC meeting in Tennant Creek;

to the Olympic Dam uranium mine in South Australia to meet with the mining company, traditional land owners in that region and South Australian environmental groups. A DVD was made of the visit so the knowledge gained from the exercise could be passed on to other traditional owners.

A visit to the Ranger uranium mine in Kakadu National Park in the NT's Top End was conducted last year with similar meetings organised with the mine operators, traditional

land owners from the area and the Office of the Supervising Scientist, which monitors the mine.

A DVD was also made of that trip and is being presented to traditional land owners across the CLC region.

A third DVD was filmed during a "uranium information roadshow" in the northern Tanami region last year. The DVD features speakers in favour of and against uranium mining and a government representative explaining the approval and regulatory processes. Such presen-

tations, including visual material detailing all the issues surrounding uranium, are being provided at meetings across the CLC region.

"The CLC's main concern is to ensure that traditional land owners are fully informed of the issues if they have to make a decision about exploration and, as a consequence, mining," Mr Ross said. "These efforts have been prioritised in areas where exploration applications are focused but are also occurring in all parts of the CLC region."



Above: CLC delegates listen to the presentation on uranium at the Council meeting in Tennant Creek. The roadshow banners are on display

And Angela Pamela...

In the case of the Angela Pamela exploration project south of Alice Springs, the deposit is on a pastoral lease where the Native Title Act applies and not Aboriginal land, so traditional land owners cannot stop the project proceeding.

Now that the government has granted the exploration licence, traditional land owners are concerned that the exploration work be done in as safe a

manner as possible.

The CLC is talking with the company in an effort to ensure sacred sites are protected.

The CLC is also holding discussions with the company about maximising employment opportunities for traditional land owners who might want to take them up.

"Traditional owners' major concerns with the Angela Pamela exploration proposal are that the

country be protected, ensuring that water in the region remains safe and uncontaminated and that dust issues are properly dealt with," Mr Ross said.

"It's important to note that, as is the case in the wider community, there are a broad range of views on uranium exploration and mining amongst traditional land owners across Central Australia and many people are still forming their opinions."



Kwenentyaye Peltharre Lynch

Well known in the Alice Springs region Pop Lynch's passing in October this year was the end of an era. Pop Lynch was largely responsible for the scheduling of stock routes as Aboriginal land in the Northern Territory.

Kwenentyaye Peltharre Lynch passed away in Alice Springs on 28 October 2008.

He was a highly respected Arrernte man grounded firmly in Aboriginal law, who throughout his life used his skill and intelligence to take on an ever changing world.

As he often said, he was a man with many names - the three the white people had given him, his Arrernte skin name, and his traditional Aboriginal name.

To people who met him and to his family, he was simply Pop or Popsie.

When I first met Pop, I addressed him with the respectful term 'old man'.

Despite his 64 years of age at the time and his cultural standing, he growled me for using a term that he believed should be reserved for men more senior than him.

This was not so much about counting years but an issue of respect, of knowing your place and behaving the 'proper way'.

The combined qualities of precision and tenacity underpinned his life and his achievements - characteristics he learnt growing up out bush in the "Aboriginal university".

As his daughter, Margaret Lynch, recalls him saying, "I learned the hard way ... I lived off the land, walking, eating grass."

Pop was born in 1928 at the Alice Springs Telegraph Station into an era of enormous change.

The town was known as Stuart then, a fledgling European outpost a mile down the Todd River, the completion of the Ghan railway still a year off.

When the telegraph services shifted to the town, the old Telegraph Station

site was used to house Aboriginal children taken in to learn the European world.

Known later as 'the Bungalow' it was a place his family made sure he was not to end up in.

His parents had the foresight to return to the bush and he grew up at Bushy Park, 80 kilometres north of Alice Springs.

There he learned the skills for station work as well as learning the country of his ancestors while droving cattle for the white pastoralists.

It was hard work, "from Aherlkeme (dawn) to Uterne Irrpeme (sun down)".

On trips to his outstation he would point out the boundary fence between Yambah and Bond Springs pastoral leases that still stands straight today.

Its posts cut from mulga with an axe, dug into the ground by hand, and holed for the wires with brace and bit. A painstaking task, which must have given him plenty of time to ponder the issue of land rights.

With a growing family of his own and under pressure by post-war government policy progressively pushing Aboriginal people into settlements, Pop found work with Milton Little's woodcutting business north of Alice Springs and his children went to the town's Catholic school.

He subsequently worked for a contracting company owned by a local Italian family.

He developed high quality skills operating machinery and a fondness for Italian food, as dinner in the camp was regularly pasta with a glass of homemade red wine, or ngkwarle.

Ngkwarle untyeye, the

nectar of the corkwood (Hakea) tree flowers, has the uncanny resemblance to red wine, and its sweet taste is celebrated highly in Aboriginal tradition.

Pop was apmerek-art-weye, traditional owner, of the Corkwood Dreaming and knew the potency of the songs and the power of the sites.

He was responsible for looking after the sacred sites on his country, Arnapipe, and as his children had children, he was increasingly concerned that they knew their father's and grandfather's country.

In the early 1970s there was talk of land rights in the Northern Territory.

Pop's land, being under a pastoral lease, meant the Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976 was to deliver little at first.

The Central Land Council, however, was established and provided an agency that the Lynches, Turners, Palmers, Rices, and McMillan families, banding together, could use to push a case for some small living areas excised from the pastoral lease.

Although initial negotiations in 1975 with the Yambah leasee looked promising, the dream of families living on their respective countries was to become a drawn out struggle.

In 1984 the Yambah families took matters into their own hands.

Pop, along with the senior members of the other families led a move to set up camps on the stock routes and reserves around the pastoral station.

At the same time the CLC lodged claims under the Land Rights Act to stock routes and reserves across the region to prevent the

government from alienating those small parcels of land.

The families resisted intimidation and gunshots. After five years and growing frustration over the inaction by governments, they established a protest camp on the McGraths stock reserve alongside the Stuart Highway for all those passing to see.

Nationwide support for the protest ensued and ABC program Four Corners covered the story.

Pop spoke to Land Rights News in 1989 at the height of the protests and explained his case:

"Before Kidman got that country, we had the land. The land was there all the time.

"They put the mark around the boundary - that's whitefella way. When they put that line they cut our country in half.

"But we had our map all the time since the earth was put up.

"The Aboriginal map is different than squares. It's just like a snake, not square.

"Between tree and tree, hill and hill, that's how we follow our story. All the country's named. ... We are entitled to that land because it's my father's and grandfather's land, it belongs to us."

This was talk of prior Aboriginal title, something the Australian law was not to recognise until Eddie Mabo won a similar argument in the High Court in 1992.

Pop was going to make sure that they were not going to be the people that land rights forgot and the campaign culminated in the protest camp moving off the stock reserve and on to the pastoral lease.

The families were prosecuted for trespass however

the action against them failed, the judge possibly sensing a soundness in the Yambah families' reasons.

The then Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Gerry Hand, intervened decisively and instigated a Memorandum of Agreement which was signed by the Prime Minister Bob Hawke and the Northern Territory Chief Minister Marshall Perron in September 1989.

This allowed for the scheduling under the Land Rights Act of portions of the claimed stock routes and reserves across the Northern Territory.

On 13 December 1991 Pop celebrated the handing of title to the Mpweringe Arnapipe Aboriginal Land Trust and gaining title to a small portion of his country.

Many challenges have followed since gaining title in establishing his family on the land.

Over those years Pop responded tirelessly to the CLC and others seeking his help.

Among other things, he was an important contributor to the Arrernte Dictionary, played a key role in the successful Alice Springs Native Title Claim, and oversaw site protection work in his area for the Alice Springs to Darwin railway.

He turned 80 in June 2008, this last year of his life.

In accordance with his wishes, he is buried on his beloved country. I feel confident now in saying farewell 'old man', a teacher and friend of many.

Rodger Barnes
Central Land Council
13 December 2008

L. Turner Angale - a great loss for Alice Springs

For a woman who was so physically tiny, Ms Turner spent much of her life struggling against forces that believed they were stronger than her. But they weren't, because eventually L Turner Angale won nearly every battle she took on.

L Turner Angale bore witness to two of the great victories for the Arrernte people of Alice Springs and played her part in the triumphs

She was born in the 1920s and played a crucial role in preventing a dam being built over important sacred sites in the Todd River and as a witness in the Arrernte native title claim.

Ms Turner Angale lived a traditional life with her family in a humpy at Irlpme on Bond Springs north of Alice Springs, learning about her father's country, her culture and law.

Ms Turner's early life was in many ways like other Aboriginal people in the Alice Springs region at that time.

Her father worked on Bond Springs and the family, who lived in humpies made from bullock skins in a large camp, walked to town on weekends to pick up rations.

As a child she was hidden from Sargeant Stott by her mother and remembers many children being taken away.

After marrying as a young girl, she moved around with her husband for station work.

She cared for the sheep and nanny goats on the Garden Station and they lived at Santa Teresa, Altunga, and Charles Creek as well as Irlpme.

Ms Turner's life was typical of the dispossession suffered by Arrernte people. However, she took her role as caretaker for her traditional country very seriously and fought hard against one of the most shameful acts by the Northern Territory Government in local history.

In 1983, former Northern Territory Chief Minister Paul Everingham announced the construction of a recreation dam near the Alice Springs Telegraph Station.

The lake would destroy and

desecrate a number of sacred sites, including Werlatye Atherre, an important part of the Two-Women Dreaming, which extends north and south of Alice Springs, connecting different language groups throughout Central Australia.

Traditional landowners had consistently told the Northern Territory Government that Werlatye Atherre, which was registered under the Northern Territory Government Sacred Sites Act, could not be destroyed, but Everingham was determined to proceed.

A few weeks after the announcement, the traditional landowners established a protest camp near the Alice Springs Telegraph Station.

The traditional landowners maintained the protest camp for six months until a fire caused two tragic deaths and the protesters had to leave the camp area in accordance with Aboriginal tradition.

The Commonwealth Government intervened and halted the work temporarily while it inquired into the issue.

It found that the significance of Werlatye Atherre made the area unsuitable for any recreation lake.

The Northern Territory Government reluctantly dropped the proposal, but in 1988 a large flood claimed the lives of three Aboriginal river-campers.

The new Chief Minister Steve Hatton blamed the traditional owners of Werlatye Atherre for the deaths and the Northern Territory Government renewed its push.

This time Junction Waterhole slightly further north was chosen and early in January 1990, AAPA issued a certificate under the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Act authorising a dam to be built at Junction Waterhole.

The traditional landowners were horrified: many had not been consulted at all and others had only been given half the story.

The Central Land Council fought hard and commissioned engineers to look at the proposal but the Northern Territory Government dismissed all objections and gave approval for the dam to proceed.

There were a number of temporary halts to the work and AAPA withdrew its certificate, but work continued until 1992 when the then Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Robert Tickner issued a declaration under s.10 of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act to protect the sacred sites around Junction Waterhole for a period of twenty years, effectively preventing the construction of the proposed dam.

It was only the second s.10 declaration ever made and was a major victory for the Arrernte traditional landowners who had fought for so long.

Ms Turner Angale was an important contributor to that victory.

Ms Turner Angale then went on to become a witness in the long struggle by the Arrernte to have native title recognised over the town of Alice Springs.

The application was lodged in 1994, and despite the preparedness of the former CLP Government to publicly acknowledge Arrernte people as the traditional owners of Alice Springs, a mutually agreeable settlement could not be negotiated despite the best efforts of the native title holders and the CLC.

It meant that the claim would have to be contested in the Federal Court.

L Turner Angale was one of those claimants whose evidence was heard

in the long hearings which would follow where, as a member of one of the three estate groups involved she talked about her connection to her country.

In May 2000, six years and many thousands of dollars later, the Federal Court handed down a major decision formally recognising that Arrernte native title holders continue to retain their rights as traditional owners and decision makers for most of the reserve, park and vacant crown land in Alice Springs.

This decision was the first in Australia to recognise native title in an urban area.

For the Arrernte, almost 130 years after European settlement began in the Centre, the common law of Australia had finally recognised their native title rights and interests as the owners of the Alice Springs area for thousands of years.

The Federal Court decision bears testament to the determination of Arrernte people to maintain their traditional connection to country against overwhelming odds, and it also demonstrates the resilience and strength of Arrernte culture that provides the foundation for so much of the community life of Alice Springs and Central Australia.

Ms Turner Angale lived the early years of her life in a humpy, another Arrernte dispossessed of her land, she had to hide to escape becoming part of the Stolen Generations, she fought to protect her father's country from an indiscriminate dam and finally won native title over her land.

For a woman who was so short on stature, Ms Turner Angale spent much of her life struggling against forces that believed they were stronger than her, but history has already proved them wrong.

Government plans continued from page 4

The 80-year whole-of-community lease option would also pay rent to the traditional owners.

The rent for the first 15 years of the lease would be two million dollars and would be paid up front.

Under the 80-year whole-of-community lease option, traditional owners and Yuendumu community members would give

up control of their whole community to the Commonwealth office holder for the 80-year leasing period.

However, while traditional owners would not have decision making power over development or other decisions, they would still be able to give advice to the Commonwealth officer through a consultative forum.

The traditional owners would also relinquish any effective control via the permits system.

"The two million dollars is a bribe. It's our own money from the mines," Mathew Egan said. "It's not the Federal Government's."

"We've got to stand up for our rights," Jeanie Egan said. "They want to take

this town. We've got to stand up for our rights."

Jimmy Langdon added: "We're supposed to look after the land, but there are changes that destroy the land. If you say yes, you will have no rights."

"We can say so many things, we can be angry about so many things, but at the end they do

anything."

Anger at the meeting was also directed at the Labor Party for not providing stronger representation for Aboriginal people.

"What about our Labor politicians?" Dennis Williams said. "We put them in power and they don't even care. I think we should make some kind of indigenous party."

PICS AROUND THE TERRITORY



Top l-r Douglas Multa from Haasts Bluff and Hilary Wirri from Kintore at the recent CLC meeting at Tennant Creek; Drum Atweme members and Bradshaw Primary School students Richard, Doolan and Jess at the Hidden Valley Community Centre opening in Alice Springs recently;

Middle l-r: an Injalak weaver at Gumbalanya recently; NLC delegates at its 95th full council meeting recently at Crab Claw Island, an hour's drive south-west of Darwin.

Bottom l-r: CLC delegates enjoy the last issue of Land Rights News; and women at Gumbalanya's open day

From Little Things Big Things Grow

Published by One Day Hill and
Affirm Press

RRP: \$19.95

Paul Kelly and Kev Carmody's song, *From Little Things, Big Things Grow*, is the anthem of the land rights movement in Australia, telling the story of the Gurindji people and their stand against the might of cattle baron, Lord Vestey.

It is the story of the 1966 walk-off by the Gurindji from Vestey's Wave Hill cattle station in the Northern Territory.

What began as a strike over wages and conditions ended as a battle for land rights that predated Mabo.

In the first months following the beginning of the strike, the Gurindji moved camp to Wattie Creek, in the heart of their traditional land and waited.

They knew they had right on their side and would win out.

In August 1975, Prime Minister Gough Whitlam arrived and poured sand into Gurindji strike leader Vincent Lingiari's hand, symbolising the return of Gurindji land to traditional owners.

The book is available at bookshops nationally.

Ngukurr celebrates 100 years

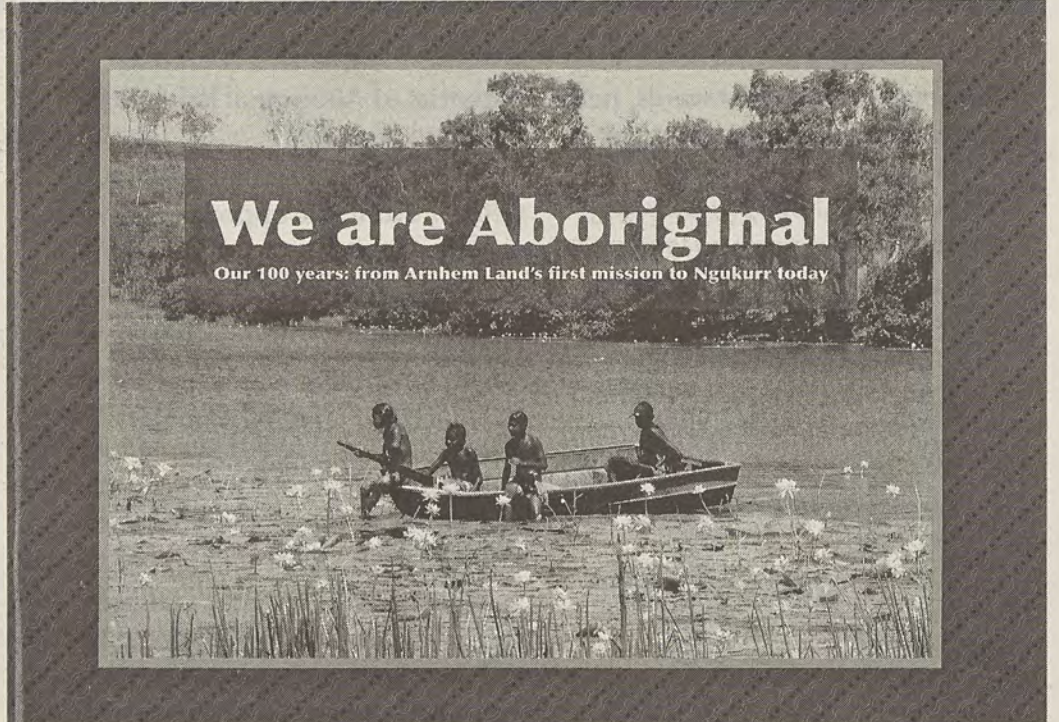
Remote Aboriginal community Ngukurr celebrated its 100th anniversary in September.

400 people attended celebrations included bush raft racing, sporting competitions and a battle of the bands.

Ngukurr in southern Arnhem Land, started as the first mission in the area after three Indigenous and three non-Indigenous missionaries sailed up the Roper River 100 years ago.

The celebrations began with a re-enactment of the landing of the missionaries and this was followed by a series of prayers, and a number of people telling stories of what life was like at the old mission.

'We Are Aboriginal: Our 100 Years', a book and DVD set has been produced by the com-



munity to mark the celebrations and is an historical account of the Roper River region.

All profits from sales go toward supporting literacy at Ngukurr School.

Natasha's road to success



Above: Natasha Abbott

Territorians prove too deadly

Aboriginal Territorians in the fields of music, sport and education have made a splash in Sydney with this year's Deadly Awards.

Territorians recognised in the 2008 Deadlies included: Singer Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu: Singer of the Year, Album of the Year, and Artist of the Year; Paul Djolpa McKenzie from Maningrida: Outstanding Achievement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education; Michael Long: Ella Lifetime Achievement Award for Contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sport; Auriel Andrews: Jimmy Little Lifetime Achievement Award for Contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music;

Jodie Cockatoo-Creed shared an APRA Song of the Year award.

A Central Australian who was runner-up in a national Indigenous training award has said the honour shows that hard work does pay off.

Natasha Abbott is a community relations officer with Newmont's Jundee Operations in Western Australia but previously worked for the company at its Tanami operations in Central Australia.

Originally from Alice Springs, Ms Abbott now lives in Perth.

She said finishing second in the Australian Government's National Training Awards – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the

Year 2008 – is a great thrill.

"The award is something I am most proud of," she said. "It highlights to me that by putting in the hard work and showing commitment through work and enjoying life at the same time can really pay off by opening the doors to endless training and employment opportunities for you."

She got her start with Newmont with help from the Central Land Council's Mining Employment Unit in an entry level administration job.

"The reason I enjoy my work is that I've found an employer that

has invested their time and money into me by providing me with all my training and employment needs over the years to get me to where I am today - being a community relations officer for an international company that has mine operations around the world," Ms Abbott said.

"I get to travel, meet new people and see places and be involved in something I really enjoy the most by supporting Aboriginal people through an employment and training system at the mine site where I want them to succeed through the system the way I did."

Job success stories abound at NLC employer awards

A mining operation in Tennant Creek, an Indigenous pastoral program, and the NT cattle industry have all been recognised for their efforts in employing and training Indigenous Territorians at a recent awards night in Darwin.

The second Northern Land Council Employer Excellence Awards, held every two years, reward employers in the Northern Territory for helping to get Aboriginal people job-ready.

The award winners also went one step further by actually placing graduates into ongoing jobs.

NLC chairman Wali Wunungmurra said the land council's Jobs and Career Service had assisted more than 800 Aboriginal people into ongoing employment through referral and mentoring.

"This success has seen an increasing number of employment and training agreements between the NLC and employers," Mr Wunungmurra said.

"It is important for government and industry to acknowledge the

significant unrealised economic potential of Aboriginal land in the Northern Territory."

Mr Wunungmurra added that significant economic opportunity exists on Aboriginal land, with the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) providing the framework for genuine economic development.

"The key to Indigenous economic prosperity is within the Land Rights Act and by meaningful engagement of Aboriginal people in job creation," he said.

Partnerships through land-use agreements have been highly effective in boosting Aboriginal job numbers in the NT, a process which has been enhanced by the commitment of organisations and individuals.



Above: NLC Chairman Wali Wunungmurra and MC Charlie King
left: The NLC Chairman and Chairman's Award winner Mark Ford
Below: Doug Nelson, Ian Chamberlain and Brian Nelson with their awards

AWARD WINNERS

Chairman's award – Indigenous Pastoral Program.

In 2008, IPP placed 34 Indigenous people into training with over a 90% completion rate, and placed more than 50 into jobs.

IPP aims to have 70 participants trained in station skills, and more than 60 participants placed into jobs.

Top Trainer – Ian Chamberlain, Brian Nelson, Industry Services Training.

Heavy machinery trainer Ian Chamberlain was recognised for his efforts at Bootu Creek mine where he drove Aboriginal trainees to the work site one by one in his ute everyday until the NLC could find other means of transport.

Top Registered Training Organisation – Industry Services Training (IST).

IST has helped train more than 150 Aboriginal people in partnership with NLC over the last two years.

Top Project in Training – Indigenous Pastoral Program through the NT Cattlemen's Association.

IPP has produced four certificate courses in station hand skills with over 80% completion rate.

Special Mention Category – Lesley Doherty.

Formerly of the NLC, Lesley facilitated the NLCs JACS 5-year strategic plan.

Top Individual – Tammy Kassiou, chief executive officer, Industry Services Training.

Tammy has implemented innovative ways of providing jobs to Aboriginal people.

Top Employer – OM Manganese.

The mine started in 2005 at Bootu Creek, 110km northeast of Tennant Creek and has achieved an Indigenous employment rate of 25% for the mine's construction workforce, and 15% of the mine's 200 operational workers.

Top Project in Employment – Indigenous Pastoral Project.

In 2007 and 2008, the IPP provided four courses with over 90% completion rate, and 80% into employment. It provided 60 jobs to Indigenous people.

Partnerships Award – Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association.

The peak cattle industry body in the NT has signed a 5-year agreement with the NLC.

