

Land Rights

NEWS



One Mob, One Voice, One Land

Vol 5 No 2 June 2003



**INSIDE: Wukidi Ceremony,
Native Title Conference, Pastoral
MOU, CAAMA concert pics...**

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Stars of the future: Members of the Willowra junior football team take time out to pose for a snap after attending a community carnival in Ti-Tree

Land Rights NEWS

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Editorial, Advertising:

PO Box 3321, Alice Springs NT 0871
Ph: (0889) 516215 Fax: (0889) 534344

PO Box 42921, Casuarina NT 0811
Ph: (0889) 205100 Fax: (0889) 452615

Subscriptions:

PO Box 42921, Casuarina NT 0811
Ph: (0889) 205100 Fax: (0889) 452615

Accounts:

PO Box 3321, Alice Springs NT 0871
Ph: (0889) 516215 Fax: (0889) 534344

email: media@nlc.org.au
 media@clc.org.au

web site: www.nlc.org.au
 or www.clc.org.au

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COVER PHOTO

Yolngu dancers perform at the Wukiti ceremony at the Supreme Court in Darwin.

Remembering Dhakiyarr...

Exactly what did happen to Dhakiyarr Wirrpanda, a Yolngu man from east Arnhem Land charged with murder and convicted of spearing Police Constable Albert McColl in 1933, may remain a mystery forever. But members of his family can take strength from knowing that his spirit is now free to journey to his ancestors.

In a special Wukidi ceremony held on 28 June to liberate Dhakiyarr's spirit and cleanse those involved in his death, Yolngu memorial poles were placed inside the Supreme Court building in Darwin as symbols of remembrance and healing.

"It was really special for Dhakiyarr's family and also a remembrance of Dhakiyarr. As you seen today, all the senior and young people came in today to view Dhakiyarr's ceremony. It was a really strong ceremony," senior leader Djambuwa Marawili said.

With dignitaries such as the NT Administrator, Chief Minister, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the NT and the Chief Justice of Australia in attendance, the ceremony began with a ritual symbolising the cleansing tides of a tidal surge, before moving inside the Supreme Court building to install the ceremonial poles.

The poles were prepared by some of the Aboriginal art world's most renowned artists, including Gawirrin Gumana – winner of the 2002 Telstra Art Award – Dhukal Wirrpanda, Wuyal Wirrpanda, Djambuwa Marawili, Miniyawany Yunupingu, Wanyubi Marika and Wukun Wanambi. The poles will stand forever to commemorate the memory of a man whose disappearance almost 70 years ago still remains unsolved.

To understand the story of Dhakiyarr's disappearance, you have to travel back to 1933 when he voluntarily gave himself up to authorities after spearing Constable Albert McColl at Woodah Island in the region known today as Caledon Bay in east Arnhem Land.



Constable McColl was part of a police contingent sent to the region to capture and apprehend those responsible for the deaths of five Japanese trepangers who had arrived in the region keen to harvest the Asian delicacy. It was never determined that Dhakiyarr was involved in the incident.

Upon reaching the region, Constable McColl and his colleagues began tracking any likely suspects.

Their efforts led to the capture of Dhakiyarr's wife Djaparri, who, along with others, was bound in chains and lead along by Constable McColl.

On witnessing his wife in chains, Dhakiyarr – (pronounced Tuckiar) – reacted by throwing the fatal spear that pierced Constable McColl's heart.

Dhakiyarr and others were eventually persuaded to give themselves up by a mis-



Left and above: Wukidi ceremony at the Supreme Court in Darwin

sionary contingent from the region. On arrival in Darwin, Dhakiyarr was subsequently charged and imprisoned for the murder of Constable McColl.

Throughout the trial proceedings Dhakiyarr's lawyer refused to argue that he had been defending his wife Djaparri at the time of the incident. Dhakiyarr was eventually tried, judged, and sentenced to death by hanging.

An appeal to the High Court was lodged, and on 8 November 1934, the High Court concluded that Dhakiyarr had been denied natural justice. The Minister for the Interior ordered he be set free and allowed to return to his homelands. Dhakiyarr was never seen again after his release.

Yolngu believe they are weakened by not possessing the bones of Dhakiyarr, which they believe may have been buried at the old Kahlin Compound site in Darwin or perhaps even thrown into the harbour. The ceremony is their way of freeing

him from his years of restlessness, allowing him to find peace at last.

To facilitate the journey of healing, Dhakiyarr's family presented a gift to Constable McColl's family in an effort to heal the wounds of their loss 70 years ago. They also thanked the High Court which in 1934 ruled Dhakiyarr's trial in Darwin "was not fair or just".

Albert McColl's nephew Alan McColl travelled to Darwin to be apart of the ceremony. He said the ceremony was significant to his family on a variety of levels.

"We think it's wonderful. We're really happy to be here," he said.

"It will, I believe, put a closure to the whole thing. If we can build a bridge to better understanding between the two families then that's where we are looking at.

"It's not everybody in Australia or anything else. In a small way it's a family-to-family thing, and that's what we are really looking at."

NT Budget - what's in it for Aboriginal people?

Aboriginal organisations in the Northern Territory have generally welcomed the Territory Government's second Budget since coming to office, with significant new spending on health and education specifically targeted at remote areas.

The Budget for 2003-2004, which was unveiled on 27 May by Treasurer Syd Stirling, also includes significant Indigenous-related spending in the areas of environment, housing, infrastructure, culture and justice.

While the Government still has much work to do to reverse the effects of decades of neglect of the needs of Aboriginal people living in remote areas, the

increased focus on social equity is an encouraging development.

"In education, the recommendations of the *Learning Lessons Report* have provided the blueprint for developing programs to meet the need of Indigenous students more effectively," Treasurer Syd Stirling said.

One of the highlights from the NLC's point of view was the allocation of \$5.25 million for the Itinerants Project over the coming 12 months – well up on the \$500,000 outlaid in the 2002-2003 financial year – with the project to be expanded beyond Darwin and Palmerston to take in the major regional centres of Katherine, Tennant Creek, Nhulunbuy and Alice Springs.

Included in the Government's record

\$561 million health budget was a \$99 million commitment to community health services, including expenditure of \$3 million on the construction of new health centres at Minjilang and Daly River and upgrading facilities at Galiwinku, Umbakumba, Ramingining, Lajamanu and in Central Australia.

The Budget also allocates \$2.55 million for existing renal services and for 'closer to home' renal dialysis throughout the NT, which will complement capital works providing renal dialysis facilities in remote communities.

The Government has also put some meat on its promise to implement the findings of former Federal Labor Minister Bob Collins' *Learning Lessons Report* into In-

digenous education, with \$3 million allocated to providing secondary school facilities at Kalkaringi and Miniyeri and for upgrading existing facilities at Maningrida.

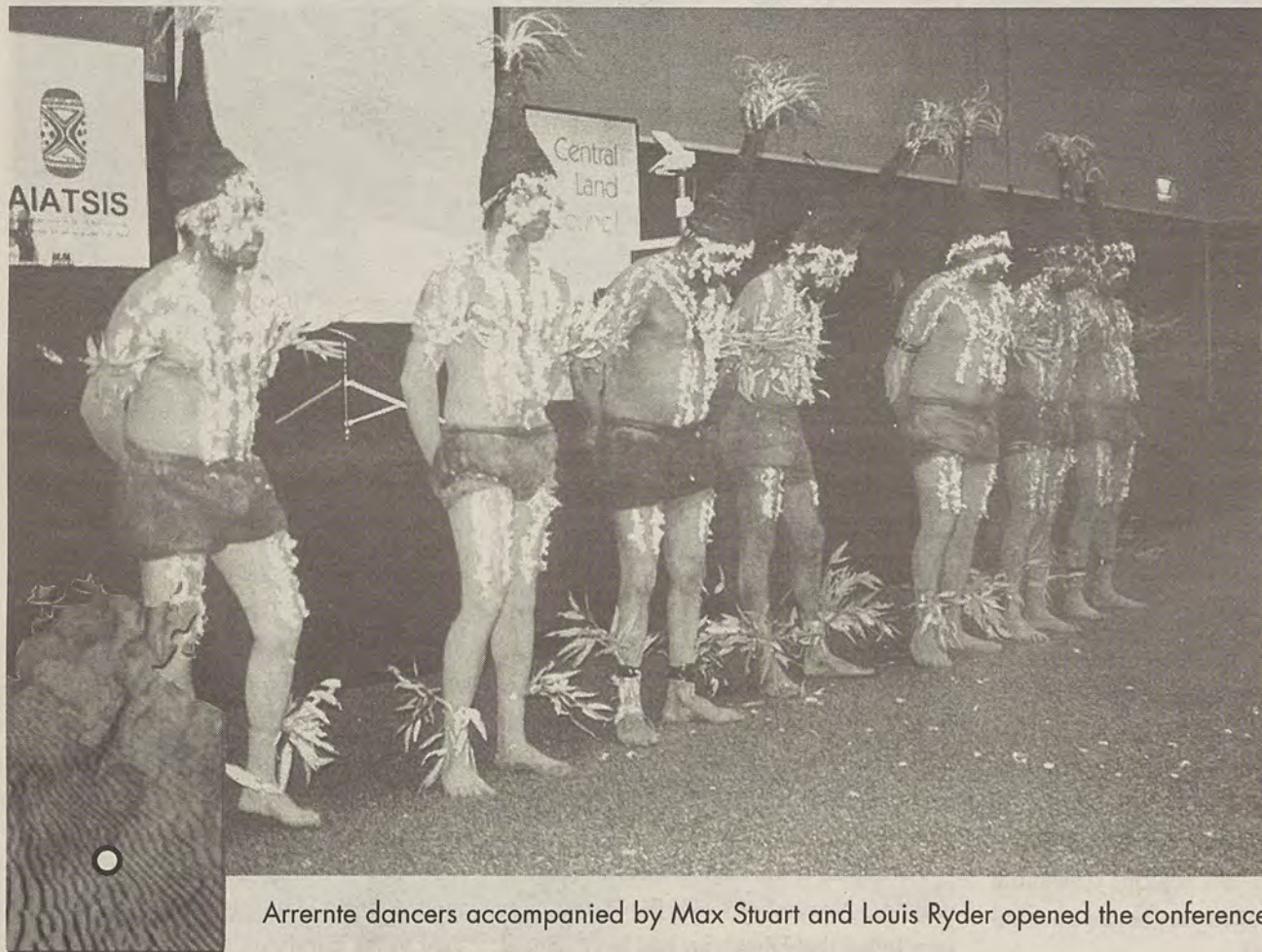
Minister for Housing and Community Development John Ah Kit will oversee a \$26.1 million Indigenous Housing program.

Mr Ah Kit also announced the first funding for his recently announced *Stronger Regions – Stronger Futures* strategy, with \$800,000 allocated to employ an additional 10 development officers to work closely with communities to enhance capacity building efforts.

"Their brief will be to build on success, rather than picking up the wreckage of failure," the Minister said.

Alice Springs Native Title Conference

There were speeches, book launches, films, and a cast of hundreds from all over the country at the recent Fourth National Native Title Conference hosted by AIATSIS and the CLC in Alice Springs.



Arrernte dancers accompanied by Max Stuart and Louis Ryder opened the conference

A 'Welcome to Country' ceremony on the banks of the Todd River the night before the conference by the Alice Springs native title holders, the Lhere Arthepe Aboriginal Corporation, provided the perfect introduction to the week.

The following day, Arrernte man Max Stuart opened the conference with characteristic colour and some extraordinary singing, while Louis Ryder accompanied him with clapping boomerangs and young Arrernte men danced.

In an emotional speech, Bonita Mabo called for a public holiday instead of the Queen's Birthday – to be called "Mabo Day" – and backed the call up with a petition.

Mick Dodson, Aden Ridgeway, Geoff Clark and many other Aboriginal leaders were there, including Larissa Behrendt, Harvard Law School graduate and Professor of law at the University of Technology, Sydney.

Noel Pearson delivered a blistering speech on the Native Title Act, the industry that has grown up around it, the Courts, and the judges who made the determinations.

The native title process, he said, is not a true litigation process as the only people who could lose were those with interests in native title, that is, Aboriginal people.

Marcia Langton took a shot at the 'alpha males' who launch native title claims to satisfy their egos and forget about the small gains on the ground such as those made by the Lhere Arthepe Corporation in Alice Springs.

She said that it was important for the Arrernte people in Alice Springs to have reached the point where they sat at the table with bodies like the Alice Springs Town Council, when even a decade ago the traditional owners of the town were still ignored.

Professor Christine Zuni Cruz, the first Pueblo woman to earn tenure as a law professor, came from the

University of New Mexico to talk about Indian peoples' right to self-determination and the position they occupy within the confines of the US nation state.

CLC director David Ross reminded the conference goers what it was like to be ignored and unrecognised.

"I remember being an 18-year-old and standing in a bar in Perth – and no one would serve me, or even look at me. They just acted as if I wasn't there. I can tell you that lack of recognition leaves you feeling very empty," he told the crowd at the end of the conference.

Native title, he said, was just one way of achieving acknowledgment as Aboriginal people. Constitutional change was another.

All leaders turned up to the youth forum, including besieged ATSIC Chairman Geoff Clark, and gave the young people there the benefit of their experience.

The closing dinner was a night where people let their hair down and many apparently didn't get home until the wee hours. Central Australian man John Braun compered.



The hit of the conference youth forum - the drumming workshop

Eddie "Koiki" Mabo: The legacy lives on



Bonita Mabo on the 11th anniversary of the High Court's Mabo decision

As prominent Aboriginal identity and activist Noel Pearson delivered the opening address at the Native Title Conference in Alice Springs on 3 June, there was one particular individual who looked on and listened attentively.

For Bonita Mabo, the day was significant in more ways than one.

Not only did it fill her mind with memories of her late husband Eddie "Koiki" Mabo, and the struggle he endured to have his land rights affirmed, it also marked the 11th anniversary of the Australian High Court's decision declaring the concept of "terra nullius" (empty land) null and void.

It was a landmark legal decision that gave birth to the concept of native title for all Indigenous Australians, and the very reason more than 460 delegates were gathered in the room.

As Noel Pearson continued to speak, emotion swept over Mrs Mabo, and tears began to form in the corner of her eyes. But then, reacting to a phrase from the Pearson address, a crooked smile filled her face as she reflected on the battle he had waged with such vigour. A battle that had ultimately seen Eddie Mabo leave this world with such a proud legacy for all Indigenous Australians.

Mrs Mabo has witnessed the impact that successes and failures of native title claims have had on people, and is concerned at the growing sense of frustration with the native title legislation as it stands.

However, she remains proud of her late husband's achievements, saying he could never have imagined the impact his legal struggle would have on Australia.

"If it wasn't for him, none of this would be going on today," Mrs Mabo said. "Eddie, before he died, he knew he was going to win his case."

Warlpiri research continues on Coniston Massacre

Nearly every Aboriginal person in Central Australia knows the story of the Coniston Massacre where Aboriginal people were murdered in revenge for the attack on Fred Brookes at Yurrkuru, also now known as Brooks Soak, in 1928.

This year is the 75th anniversary of the event and Warlpiri, Kaytetye and Anmatjerr people have been talking about ways to commemorate Coniston.

Duncan Brown, Jeannie Herbert Nungarrayi and Teresa Ross have been part of a team who have been researching the project and collecting stories about the events.

They have visited many of the sites where people were killed and also visited the cave where Bullfrog - the man who murdered Brooks - hid while the party, led by Constable Murray, went

past hunting down any Aboriginal person he thought may have been involved.

The cave itself is very small and Bullfrog apparently hid there with his little dog for several days.

Many innocent people were killed and many fled off their traditional country to find safety elsewhere.

The Coniston events happened in August and September - the first wave triggered by Brooks' death and the second wave in September by an attack on Nugget Morton at Boomerang waterhole late in August.



Above: Warren Williams, Jeannie Herbert, Teresa Ross and daughter Mikaly, and Duncan Brown at Partilirri

Far left top: Teresa Ross at the cave where Bullfrog hid from Constable Murray;

Bottom far left : Duncan Brown with Johnny Nelson Jupurrula at Baxters Well where Mr Nelson's father was killed.

Left: Lady Morton

Below: Paddy, Jeannie Herbert and Jackamarra Ross at the Yuendumu Arts Centre talking about the Coniston Massacre



Central Anmatyerr Picture Dictionary

An Anmatyerr picture dictionary for children was launched at the Central Australian community of Ti Tree recently.

It is the first in a series of 12 picture dictionaries to be published by IAD Press and contains nearly 600 key words and has more than 400 illustrations.

The Central Anmatjerr picture dictionary developed from an idea by school staff and community elders from Ti Tree, Mount Allan and Laramba (Napperby) as a way to assist teaching their children to learn to read and write in both the Anmatyerr language and English.

Institute of Aboriginal Development

linguist Jenny Green coordinated the development of the picture dictionary template. IAD Press, the Telstra Foundation, the Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training and the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training have all assisted.

Chairman of the Telstra Foundation, Herb Elliott, said that IAD Press's picture dictionary project was one of the 100 projects addressing issues faced by children and teens in Australia that the Telstra Community Development Fund has supported in its first year.

"The Board of the Foundation is very focused on projects that will help Austral-



School kids at the Central Anmatjerr Picture Dictionary launch

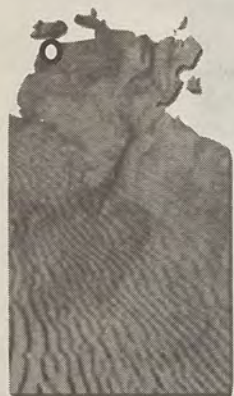
ian communities deal with problems of modern society and contemporary issues as they affect our children and young people - projects that intervene early in a young

person's life to help avoid the pathways to disadvantage, developmental problems, low educational and social achievement and juvenile crime," Mr Elliott said.

Mala Elders tackle itinerants issue

"It's time to come home".

That was the message given to Aboriginal people living an itinerant lifestyle in Darwin by a group of Top End Aboriginal elders who visited Darwin midway through May.



Senior Gumatj man and NLC Chairman Galarrwuy Yunupingu, who organised the visit, said the Mala Elders had made a "positive start" in their efforts to help re-

solve the itinerants issue in Darwin.

"In our visit to Darwin we went out to the long grass camps and talked to our people, we talked to the Government, we listened to Larrakia representatives and we discussed the issues among ourselves," Mr Yunupingu said.

"This is incredibly important because it is the first time Aboriginal elders have been invited to Darwin to discuss the whole itinerants problem with both the Larrakia and our country men and women living a long-grasser lifestyle."

The Mala Elders comprised Djambuwa Marawili, Jabani Lalara and Joe Gumbala from East Arnhem Land, Felix Bunduk from Wadeye, Andy Andrews from Katherine and Cyril Kilippa (Rioli) from Tiwi Islands.

They delivered four key messages to their country men and women living in



Tiwi elder Cyril Kilippa Rioli talks to countrymen in Darwin

long grass camps: the need to respect Larrakia country; that drinking time was over; that the humbug must stop; and that it was time to come home.

Speaking at a press conference held during the visit, Mr Kalippa said the Elders had spoken to their countrymen in a quiet, non-pushy way. "I just explained that people in Darwin weren't happy with anyone making a nuisance, not just them but anyone," he said. "Most of my people said the

main reason they came to Darwin was to deal with health problems."

Mr Gumbala revealed that he himself had once lived in the long grass when he was younger. "One of the things about living that lifestyle is that you're lost, lost to your community," he said. "Many Aboriginal itinerant people are important members of their own community, ceremony people. That's why we need them back, to help look after things."

The Elders' visit had an immediate affect, with groups of people taking advantage of the financial assistance offered by the Elders to travel back to Milingimbi, Ramingining, Elcho Island, Groote Eylandt and Wadeye.

However, Mr Yunupingu said the visit was just the start of the long-term Return to Home strategy, with the Elders planning several more visits back to Darwin to continue encouraging their countrymen to abandon the long grass.

"The Elders' participation is a very important component of the strategy but no-one should think that their presence offers a quick-fix solution to the itinerants problem," he said.

"There are fundamental issues in remote Top End communities that need to be tackled in order to stop the drift of people into Darwin and other major Top End centres."

Following the visit the Government beefed up its commitment to the year-old Darwin and Palmerston Itinerants Project, with \$5.25 million allocated in the most recent Budget (see story page 3) to expand its activities across the Northern Territory. The Itinerants Project will now be extended to the regional centres of Katherine, Tennant Creek, Nhulunbuy and Alice Springs. ●

First graduates from Larrakia training program

The Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation (LNAC) in coordination with Mission Australia and Centrelink is providing meaningful training and employment options for unemployed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Through the community Work for the Dole Program, candidates can access a variety of programs designed to enhance skills and increase employability.

With Mission Australia as their sponsoring organisation, LNAC ventured into the training arena in November 2002, offering candidates an opportunity to become involved in LNAC's existing Landcare program. The initial invitation attracted some 25 candidates keen to work in the project.

Speaking at the graduation ceremony on 20 June, Larrakia Landcare Coordinator Cecil Lewis said the level of participation had been good, with participants acquiring many skills along the way.

"They've learnt a variety of skills in the area of landcare and maintaining a work site as well as cross-cultural awareness as the program also involved non-Indigenous participants," Cecil said.

He added that there were also other benefits to be gained by joining the program.

"The program not only provides participants with an opportunity to acquire new skills, but also makes them eligible for training credits should they decide to continue further with their chosen program."

Work programs are provided by a variety of participating organisations. Participants are able to choose from activities such as Landcare, Aged Care Support and Community Retail support programs, all of them approved by Centrelink.

One of the successes of the Larrakia program has not only been participant numbers, but the cultural sharing workers have had exposure to by working in a cross-cultural environment.



LANC Work for the Dole graduates are all smiles after completing the program

"Cross-cultural benefits have been obvious, with non-Indigenous participants also learning from the project," a Mission Australia spokesperson said.

With the success of the first program now established, the LNAC has committed itself to two more programs of a similar nature. ●

The Changing Face of Festivals

The start of the Dry across the Top End kicks off the festival season for Aboriginal communities but numbers are down and Barunga's gone. What's the way forward for these events? Apparently long term vision, smart business plans and good media coverage...

The start of the Dry across the Top End kicks off the festival season for Aboriginal communities, with tourists and locals alike eager to share in the riches of Aboriginal culture.

As well as being a chance for communities to put their best foot forward, festivals are also a significant money spinner.

However, so far this year festival visitor numbers have been down for a number of reasons, most of them to do with a general drop-off in tourist arrivals in the Northern Territory.

Already this has claimed its first victim, with the Barunga Festival cancelled for the first time in almost two decades. Organisers of this year's Merrepen Festival at the Daly River community of Nauiyu Nambiyu have also confirmed that visitor numbers were down on last year.

But some observers claim there is more to the difficulties facing festival organisers than just the tight tourism market.

Paul Amarant, who has coordinated the last four Barunga festivals, says there is now a lot more competition between festivals for what is effectively the same pool of sponsorship money.

"To run a really good festival you need solid backing from sponsors," he told *Land Rights News*. "There are a lot of demands from other events these days."

The Barunga Festival achieved national recognition in 1988 following then-Prime Minister Bob Hawke's agreement to the Barunga Declaration, in which Wenton Rubuntja, Galarrwuy Yunupingu and other Indigenous leaders called for a Treaty between black and white Australia.

Many NLC staffers remember how difficult it was to find a good camping spot during the festival's halcyon years, when literally thousands of visitors poured through the Barunga Community's gates on the first weekend in June.

"In the beginning Barunga ran on the goodwill of performers, who were pleased just to be performing in front of an Aboriginal audience," Mr Amarant said. "These days dancers and music acts charge a lot more money, far too much money for us to match."

Mr Amarant said it was not just other Aboriginal festivals that were taking more of the sponsorship dollar but also big-city spectacles such as the Arafura Games and the Aboriginal All Stars football match.

"We must have sent out over 100 letters asking for support this year but not much was forthcoming," he said. "A majority of our council wanted the Festival to go ahead but decided in the end it would have been too financially irresponsible."



In the beginning.... Galarrwuy Yunupingu unveils the Barunga Statement painting in 1988

"There are a lot of sad people around Barunga."

So how do other festival organisers cope with the increased competition for the sponsorship and tourism dollar?

Garma Festival organiser Alan James said the Yothu Yindi Foundation realised early on that it needed to take a long-term view to capitalise on the undoubted potential of a festival celebrating Yolngu culture in remote north-east Arnhem Land.

"We needed a business plan that was sustainable ... we took a 10-year view and, now that we're into our fifth year, we're beginning to see the rewards," he said.

"Because we're so remote and have to provide all the infrastructure on site, we can

only host a limited number of guests in addition to Yolngu clan members."

"It's expensive to get here and so we have to aim for the top of the tourism market."

"We also target sponsors in a strategic way with a different theme for each year's Garma Forum. What most people wouldn't realise is that we started planning for this year's Forum two years ago."

Garma organisers also ensure good media coverage by organising media packages, the provision of satellite links and event updates on the festival's dedicated website, while at the same time maintaining copyright control of all media material generated by the Festival.

"This gives us the sole right to generate income from such things as calendars, post cards and CD sales," Mr James said.

Meng Hoeschle, Merrepen Arts Centre Coordinator and the organiser of the annual Merrepen Arts Festival, says the combination of an art auction and a concert featuring well-known acts (this year it was the Darwin Symphony Orchestra, the Baker Brothers and Nabarlek) serves to differentiate the Festival from its peers.

"We were about a third down in terms of visitor numbers this year but we still attracted around 2,000 visitors and our art auction still went really well," she said.

Once again it appears to be the type of visitor that Merrepen attracts that makes the difference, with wealthier art lovers being more in evidence than budget-conscious backpackers.

"The sports carnival remains integral to the success of the Festival but, for the tourist market, it's the art and the concert that makes the difference," she said. "Another selling point is our no-alcohol policy."

Merrepen also plans to step up its online marketing efforts, setting up a dedicated website which should be up and running by October.

The message in all this seems to be that the era of the amateur, grass-roots Aboriginal festival is coming to a close. In order to survive and prosper in this more competitive age, festivals need to plan carefully and market themselves strategically. ●



Picture courtesy Yothu Yindi Foundation

Performers at last year's Garma Festival

After a lifetime of travel... Patjarr is the ultimate



"This is the most unique experience I have had in a lifetime of travel." This was what one American tourist had to say after he spent a night at the little community of Patjarr in the Gibson Desert.

The three Americans flew into the community on the Ngaanyatjarra lands, 260 kilometres north of Warburton, in their own plane from Uluru for a cultural experience they had planned and paid for.

These three Americans were just the first in a community initiative tourism project supported with training by Ngaanyatjarra College and it was an outstanding success for both the people of Patjarr and the tourists.

The worst criticism provided in the tourist's feedback to the community was that going to the toilet at night was just a bit scary because all the dogs barked and ran after them, and that perhaps some campsites had a little too much rubbish and toilet paper around.

Apart from that they rated the food, travel and accommodation and the friendliness of the people as top notch, "an incredible experience into another culture".

Pete Alsop, tourism trainer with the College, said that everybody at Patjarr was incredibly excited.

"Everybody was amazingly generous too – they put on inma, they took them looking for honey ants, showed them paintings and special places and generally gave them the time of their lives," he said.

Patjarr resident Dorothy Ward thought that these types of enterprises would help build a stronger community.

"We really like doing it because the tourists really like it. We took them around and showed them places and the older men



Top to bottom: planning for the visit; visiting other tourist enterprises to see what visitors actually experience; more planning; kids painted up for dancing

were singing songs and they enjoyed the dancing. Somebody cooked some kangaroo and showed them that and I made damper for them and they really liked that. They've never seen corroboree so it was exciting for them. They loved it."



Historic alliance focuses on Jabiru's future

For the first time, a coalition of the Jabiru region's key stakeholders – including the Mirrar traditional owners and mining company Energy Resources Australia (ERA) – have come together to consider the future of the township.

Jabiru was originally established more than 20 years ago by the Northern Territory Government and ERA to service the proposed Ranger and Jabiluka uranium mines.

It is public knowledge that the Ranger mine's uranium deposit has a finite life and, while no decision has been taken on when or if mining operations will cease, all parties have agreed that it is important to safeguard Jabiru's role as a regional centre in West Arnhem Land.

Earlier this year a Working Group was formed to oversee the work of the Jabiru Region Sustainability Project (JRSP), with respected researcher Mat Fagan appointed as the project's coordinator.

As well as Mirrar representative Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation (GAC) and ERA, Working Group members also include the NLC, the Commonwealth Director of National Parks, the Jabiru Town Development Authority and the Department of the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory.

Among the many things under consideration are possible avenues to create sustainability and diversify the economic base in the region. The project is also investigating the most appropriate arrangement for recognising Aboriginal traditional ownership in Jabiru while providing security of tenure to commercial interests.

Jabiru already has a well-developed support services base and it is important that trades and skills currently located in Jabiru are retained.

While it is clear that Jabiru's proximity to Kakadu National Park holds major potential for future tourism development,



Top: Ranger plant
Above: Jabiru town centre

other possibilities include the establishment of an educational centre to cater to the entire Arnhem Land region and an investment in environmental research facilities given Kakadu's status as a World Heritage Area.

"The key thing is that all the main players in the region are now engaged in the task of future planning," Mat Fagan said.

"Although other Australian communities facing economic change, including south-west Western Australia and Newcastle, are going down a similar path, Jabiru is unique in the prime role taken by Indigenous people in the process."

Yvonne Margarula, the senior traditional owner for the Jabiru region, says it is vital that Aboriginal people are involved in every aspect of the future development of Jabiru.

"Everyone knows Jabiru is Mirrar land but people haven't been respecting Mirrar as traditional owners," she said. "I'm happy that all these different people are working today to give Mirrar part of the control of Jabiru. I think Balanda and Bininj might start listening to us."

Bob Cleary, the chief executive officer of ERA, agrees this is a very significant process for everyone and it is an integral part of ERA's long term strategy.

"For this project to be effective it is vital that the traditional owners, the Mirrar and key stakeholders in the region continue consulting and working together for a sustainable future," he said. "ERA is dedicated to this process and will continue to support the project."

KEEPING THE KNOWLEDGE

Galiwinku 's Knowledge Centre will help keep Yolngu culture strong



A revolution is taking place in the preservation and propagation of traditional Aboriginal knowledge and practices with the opening of the Northern Territory's first Aboriginal Knowledge Centre on Elcho Island, off the north-east Arnhem Land Coast.

Located in the main town of Galiwinku, it has taken two years to build although the concept has existed for 20 years.

The opening ceremony was held at Galiwinku on 12 June and was attended by senior NT Government and Aboriginal figures, including Minister for Community Development the Hon. John Ah Kit, NLC Chairman Galarrwuy Yunupingu and senior traditional owners.

Richard Gundhuwuy, an elder of the Garrawurra clan and one of the key proponents of the Centre, said it would ensure that Yolngu culture remained strong.

"Those people who have lost everything, all their culture, their songs, stories, language and ceremony. This is an example to them. To give them some guidelines, to look at the foundations," Mr Gundhuwuy said.

Sharing his enthusiasm for knowledge retention is the Centre's Liaison and Training Officer Joe Neparrnga Gumbala.

Joe has the huge task of communicating with educational institutions, documenting items and historical information that have been removed from the island since its establishment as a mission colony in the late 1930s.

While returning all the information seems unlikely according to Joe, retaining the information that exists locally is now vital.

"You've got all that stuff that's been



The Galiwinku Knowledge Centre is now open and online.

taken for a long time sitting in Melbourne or Sydney or Brisbane or wherever. They are sitting in small boxes and they are not creating something towards Yolngu people's culture," Mr Gumbala said.

The Knowledge Centre building itself consists of three main elements: a keeping place, a museum, and a library.

System developer Entity1 has worked in close consultation with the community to ensure that all information contained on the Centre's database is accurate.

The site also incorporates a sophisticated security system to protect secret and sacred information, and has been set up to cater for over 80 database tables that store a multitude of information.

"It's a complex relational database system which covers all aspects of the Galiwinku culture and history," a spokesperson from Entity1 said.

"All the information is available over the internet, and it is hoped that educational institutions will use the site as an educational aid."

Once logged on to the site, information can be accessed via three levels, with connections to specific information that may explain clan names, the significance of flora and fauna to cultural practices and beliefs, and a brief explanation of ceremonial activities.

The timing for the centre could not have been better according to Mr Gumbala.



Far left: Local residents now have direct access to historical and cultural information. Top: Future generations will benefit from the information preserved at the GKC.

"We have to talk about it, we have to keep things for the next generation, and it starts today. This is the time, otherwise there is nothing in the future," Mr Gumbala said.

Fortunately, Yolngu continue to maintain their traditional social structures and cultural practices, with a well-defined and commonly accepted leadership.

The role of the Centre is closely related to the community concerns of maintaining Yolngu society, including strengthening leadership.

A central element of the project is that the value system that determines the priorities and evaluation of the Knowledge Centre is Yolngu.

Repatriation of sacred objects to the appropriate clan groups commenced in a digital form in October of last year.

Museum articles such as historical information and artefacts have been retained and documented courtesy of a library service that will continue to manage the community's information.

Richard Gundhuwuy's reasons for endorsing the Centre's creation are simple.

He wants his people's culture kept intact and at home.

"The strength of our people remains in keeping our culture strong.

"Yolngu people need to work hard on maintaining their traditions.

"We can see the problems with our young people, they no longer respect their traditions from the father, uncle or anyone," Mr Gundhuwuy said.

"This Indigenous Knowledge Centre can become a place where they can see and learn about the history and the culture of Yolngu people and regain their strength," he said.

The Centre is expected to act as a hub for the whole Miwatj region, allowing surrounding communities such as Milingimbi, Ramingining and Gapuwiyak to

aboriginalart.org

Top End art centres go on-line

Aboriginal-owned art centres in the Kimberley region and across the Top End of the Northern Territory are now far more accessible to the buying public following the launch of a dedicated website on 19 May.

The Commonwealth Government's Networking the Nation project provided \$600,000 to the Association of Northern, Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists (ANKAA) to develop the website, www.aboriginalart.org.

It links more than 30 independent Aboriginal art centres and allows visitors to the website to browse for different art media, for information about the art and craft centres, for examples of artists' work and for links to affiliated organisations.

While the art centres are open to the public, their remoteness has put them out of reach of most of their potential market. Now buyers will be able to access electronic images of artworks for sale and, if they choose, conclude a purchase from anywhere in the world.

In the NLC's region, art centres are located at Timber Creek, Katherine, Beswick, Myallaluk, Daly River, Batchelor, Darwin, Jabiru, Oenpelli, Waruwi, Maningrida, Milingimbi, Galiwinku, Ramingining, Nhulunbuy, Yirrkala and Ngukurr. ●

enter and preserve their data on the Galiwinku system.

The NT Government has backed the project, and is closely monitoring the establishment of similar systems on Bathurst Island and in Central Australia.

It has also assisted in setting up some 30 e-library systems throughout the NT.

If you are interested in visiting the site, you can do so by logging on to www.galiwinku.com. ●

Land Rights Act reform, Parks talks dominate Full Council agenda

In April the Northern Land Council brought together its 83-member council for the first of two Full Council Meetings scheduled to take place this year.

Held amid the lush, tropical setting that is the South Alligator Resort inside Kakadu National Park, the meeting was an ideal opportunity for members not only to catch up, but also to discuss and address some major issues for the Top End's Aboriginal population.

High on the agenda were the ongoing negotiations with the NT Government over proposed amendments to the Aboriginal Land Rights Act.

Prior to the Full Council meeting, members of the NLC Executive Council and representatives from the NT's three other Land Councils met with Chief Minister Clare Martin to discuss the changes.

Early indications are that negotiations are proceeding with a healthy sign of cooperation.

It's a similar scenario with the ongoing talks surrounding the future management of some 50 NT parks and reserves throughout the NT.

The proposed expansion of the McArthur River Mine at Borroloola raised concerns during the Full Council session. After much discussion, members eventually voted to register their support for the protection of affected traditional owners' rights.

NLC members were also keen to see an overhaul of the fines mandated under the NT Sacred Sites Act and the Aboriginal Land Rights Act to ensure they provide a sufficient and uniform deterrent.

If successful, the changes will see the fines raised from \$1,000 to \$10,000 under the Land Rights Act, bringing it in line with the NT Sacred Sites Act.



Clare Martin and Galarwuy Yunupingu discuss changes to the Land Rights Act

Proposed amendments to the Land Rights Act would also stipulate that any company deemed to be responsible for the desecration of a sacred site could find itself subject to a \$50,000 fine, compared with the current fine of just \$1,000.

Agreements were also entered into with the Dhimurru Aboriginal Land Management Corporation, which has been given the go-ahead to continue managing tourism activities in the East Arnhem Land region, and the Bureau of Meteorology, which has been granted access to establish an automatic weather station in Milingimbi.

In another agreement, Film Australia and Yolngu traditional owners signed off on a documentary concerning traditional law in the East Arnhem Land region.

Below: Members of NLC Katherine Regional Council



Borroloola safe-house gets the go-ahead

The Northern Land Council has endorsed an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) between traditional land owners in Borroloola and the NT Government, allowing the construction of a women's safe house in the town.

The ILUA was given the go-ahead by council members at the NLC's 84th Full Council Meeting that took place at the South Alligator Resort from 7 to 10 April.

The Native Title agreement is unique, as it allows the development of the safe house to proceed, while retaining native title rights and interests of traditional owners for the future.

The ILUA is between traditional owners and the Mabuñji Aboriginal Resource Centre and will run for 25 years.

At the end of this term, native title will still exist and further negotiations regarding the land can occur.

NLC Chairman Galarwuy Yunupingu said the outcome was a win-win solution for both parties.

"This issue was at a stalemate until native title rights were guaranteed," Mr Yunupingu said.

"People wanted the facility built, but not if it meant they were going to be denied native title rights. But now, this much-needed facility can be constructed free from uncertainty."

Territory Housing has allocated \$400,000 towards the construction of the shelter which will provide 24 hour care for women and their children with facilities for up to 10 adults and five children – including those visiting from other communities or interstate – to stay for up to two weeks. When complete, the shelter's staff will consist of a permanent Coordinator and two assistants, all with First Aid training.

A key aspect of the project is the intention to build the shelter between the Borroloola Police Station, the local Norforce headquarters, and a Night Patrol block currently occupied by the Women's Centre and health clinic.

"Everybody's quite happy about that," Mabuñji Aboriginal Resource Association General Manager Sylvia Francis said. "Everybody's happy about it being next to the Police Station. It adds extra security."

With concerns over land tenure now resolved, work will commence on the facility in the next few weeks with the shelter expected to be ready for occupation in January 2004.

"We're very happy that the land tenure has been sorted out and that everything can now go ahead," Ms Francis said.

ATSIC and the NT Government have committed funds towards the operational cost of the shelter.

"The NLC worked hard to broker a deal, and this is a positive sign of the type of developments that can be achieved with the right approach and a government willing to listen and work with people on the ground," Mr Yunupingu said.

NT Electoral Commission under review

Discussion about a Review of the Northern Territory Electoral Commission provoked hours of discussion at the recent CLC Council meeting at Mistake Creek. Delegates felt very strongly about their right to vote and how this should be conducted by the Electoral Commission...

The results of these discussions formed the basis of the CLCs input to a joint NLC and CLC submission to the Independent Review of the Northern Territory Electoral Commission.

The Land Councils strongly support the establishment of an independent Electoral Commission in the Northern Territory.

Aboriginal aspirations for increased political participation were clearly articulated in the Kalkaringi Statement (1998), and detailed further in the Aboriginal Constitutional Strategy (1998).

Both documents clearly state the need for an "independent electoral office".

The existing electoral system in the Northern Territory, for a range of reasons, has not ensured equitable representation for the Aboriginal community and this is demonstrated by the fact that only nine Aboriginal candidates have been elected to the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly since 1971. While not the subject of this review, the Land Councils are strongly of the view that a system of proportional representation should be introduced into the Northern Territory as a means of improving Aboriginal representation. The Land Councils support:

- an ongoing electoral education and enrolment program.
- a single Electoral Commissioner appointed by a selection committee of the Parliament.
- fixed-term elections with a fixed timetable. Fixed-term elections have the effect of preventing political opportunism and manipulation and provides certainty to all involved. It also allows for elections to be held at a time outside the Wet Season and at a time when there is minimal chance of conflicting with traditional ceremonies.

- the electoral roll available on the internet. In particular, this will allow communities and their members to check enrolment from anywhere with internet access.

- the optional preferential system, requiring voters to indicate a preference for at least one candidate listed on the ballot paper, and giving voters the option to mark further preferences for as many other candidates as the voter wishes, as the best voting system for the Northern Territory. This is particularly so taking literacy and numeracy issues into account.

- Aboriginal voters having both candidates' photographs and party names included on ballot papers.

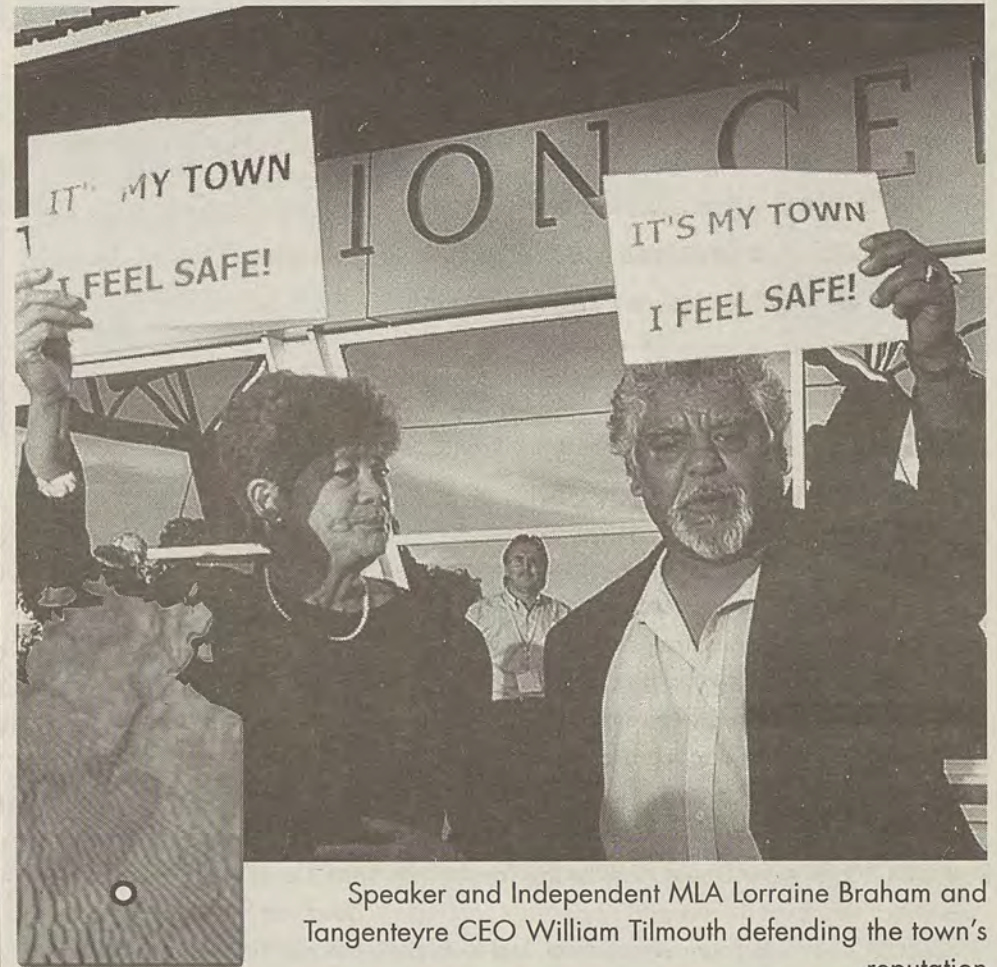
- In the past fining Aboriginal people for failing to vote has been inconsistent and it is suggested that a formal first offence warning system be introduced and that this, plus more effective electoral education and appropriate siting of mobile polling booths, should assist in rectifying the non-voter problem.

- the retention of assisted voting and also that it be as private as circumstances may permit.

- some degree of flexibility be maintained with mobile polling to ensure that client needs, as far as possible, are met.

- mobile polling be carefully planned to take into account changes to Aboriginal communities, including population movements and the establishment of new communities. It is essential that all staff are adequately trained and that, as far as may be possible, Aboriginal people are employed as both members of mobile polling teams (and also static polling places) and as casual assistants in locations where language skills are required.

NT Parliament comes to Alice Springs



Speaker and Independent MLA Lorraine Braham and Tangenteyre CEO William Tilmouth defending the town's reputation

Alice Springs residents got the chance to witness the Northern Territory Parliament first hand at the end of April when the Alice Springs Convention centre doubled up as Parliament House.

Thousands of people trooped through the doors of the Convention centre to watch the first ever Alice Springs parliamentary sittings. CLC Executive members were welcomed to Question Time by the Speaker. Schools, communities, town residents all came to see the politicians in action – and some told *Land Rights News* they were rather shocked at the aggressive nature of the debates at times.

There was much debate on law and order issues, and outside the chamber, a demonstration, organised from CLP MLA Richard Lim's office, which called for a crackdown on crime by residents. Counter demonstrators, proclaiming that they did feel safe in their town, provoked a surprise reaction from the Speaker, Lorraine Braham, who threw her lot in with them and borrowed one of their banners to wave.



Batchelor students spent an afternoon observing pollies first hand at the Alice Springs Convention Centre



CLC meeting at Mistake Creek in June

Central Australian forum calls for regional body



A meeting at Hamilton Downs near Alice Springs last month to talk about Aboriginal education attracted a core group of representatives from communities and Alice Springs.

The meeting was organised by the CLC and funded by the NT Government.

Some key issues were on the agenda:

- Aboriginal representation in decision making about education;
- reforming the way schools work together - from an individual basis to one where schools are working together in a region;
- allocation and distribution of

education resource including language/cultural maintenance

- resources provision of secondary education; and
- youth at risk

Two significant recommendations came out of the meeting:

- The need to establish a regional education representative body that has authority to represent all Aboriginal people in Central Australia on matters to do with education policy and resource allocation.
- The need to reform schools into Group Schools so that schools can work together in regions.

Working together would include teaching the same curriculum, sharing (specialist) teachers and monitoring students who may need to move to another community or town during the school term.

The Central Land Council has been taking a very active role in calling for improvements in Aboriginal education

Bottom: CLC director David Ross at the forum with Rene Davies and Margaret Swan at Hamilton Downs

Below: discussions led to two significant recommendations



New study centre for Nyirрпи



The people at Nyirрпи, 480 kilometres west of Alice Springs, have been so determined to improve their English language skills that they lobbied hard until they got their own study centre.

The Batchelor Institute Jintirlparnta Study Centre was finally opened at Nyirрпи in April this year. It's called

Jintirlparnta because that is the name of the country that 'new' Nyirрпи was sited on when people moved from 'old' Nyirрпи.

Nyirрпи has long been a community interested in education and they asked Batchelor Institute to provide a lecturer for them in 1996.

They got a lecturer, but students still found themselves being shunted between a school classroom and a dilapidated 'silver bullet'.

Now the students are enjoying a modern building with men's and women's areas and up-to-date technology: internet, a satellite dish and email.

Last year 67 students from Nyirрпи were enrolled with Batchelor Institute



Above: all the mod cons - the new study centre

Below: Dora Napurula and Lena Nungarayi Brown at the opening dancing with the young girls



Top End Batchelor Graduation Ceremony

Wayne Barbour – Batchelor Graduate

By his own admission it was a long hard slog, but finally, after eight years of dedication and commitment, NLC staff member Wayne Barbour graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree of Applied Science, Natural and Cultural Resource Management from the Batchelor Institute of Tertiary Education in May this year.

Wayne's achievement is not just the recognition of a personal milestone, it is also an accolade for the Institution itself, because Wayne is just one of an elite group of individuals who now have the distinction of being the Institute's first-ever degree graduates.

"It feels good, and does give that added value to the achievement," Wayne said.

"But it has also been a big challenge to complete the program. That in itself gives me a great sense of achievement."

A Batchelor Institute graduation ceremony is like no other.

The combination of European traditions with Indigenous cultural practices demonstrates the "both ways" educational philosophy adopted by the Institution.

Attracting students from all regions of Australia and situated in a quiet community some 80 kilometres south of Darwin, the campus is set amid an environment that encourages study.

It's a long way removed from the Institute's humble beginnings some 30 years ago in an annexe at Darwin's Kormilda College.

Long-standing Chairman of the Batchelor Institute Council, Gatjil Djerrkura, has been attending graduation ceremonies for numerous years, but perhaps none of them have been more significant than this year's ceremony.

He said the main goal of the Institute was to continue to pursue accreditation as Australia's first Indigenous University.

The graduation of degree program students in 2003 is regarded as a significant milestone in this campaign, which Mr Djerrkura has made his main priority during his time in office.

"As Chairman, I will continue to work towards the goal of achieving university status," Mr Djerrkura said at the ceremony.

Helping Mr Djerrkura achieve this



Eight years and a lot of hard slog later Wayne gets his degree

goal are people such as Wayne Barbour. Their dedication to their studies isn't just a reflection on their character but is also an endorsement of the Institute's staff and facilities.

With the Institute's 93 per cent graduate employment record, the statistics are in Wayne's favour. It's an opportunity he's keen to explore.

"This has all come about because I wanted to learn, wanted to compete with people in higher positions than me," Wayne said. "Now, thanks to the degree, I have the opportunity to do that."

Following his recent appointment by the NLC, Wayne is now helping Aboriginal people make decisions on a variety of development programs and agreements concerning their land, and he is doing this by applying the knowledge gained through his work and studies.

"I grew up at Retta Dixon Home and left there at 18 not even able to write my name," Wayne said.

"But now, having achieved my degree, it has given me a great sense of achievement and helped me to gain confidence."



Peppimenarti kids welcome the graduates as they arrive for the graduation ceremony



Children from the community of Peppimenarti join in the celebrations

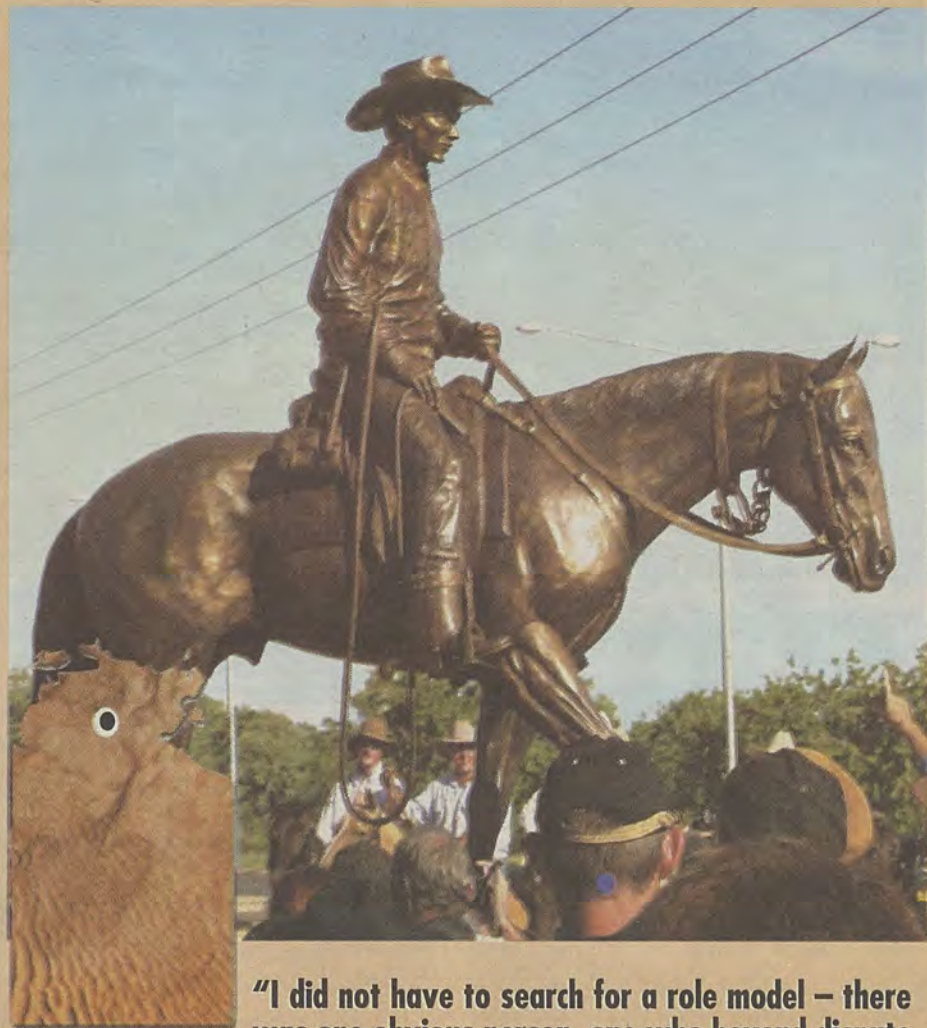


Top student Anne Pollock, receives her award from Gatjil Djerrkura



Batchelor Institute Council Chairperson Gatjil Djerrkura delivers the opening address on graduation day

Sabu Peter Sing



"I did not have to search for a role model – there was one obvious person, one who beyond dispute qualified in a variety of ways." Mrs Terry Underwood, Year of the Outback Project Coordinator, Katherine Region

As Terry Underwood explains it, the thought process wasn't too long, nor too hard when a decision needed to be made as to who would embody the image of the Territory Stockman.

Sabu Peter Sing was, in Terry's words, "perfectly obvious," and was chosen with the blessing of his immediate family.

Sabu's mixed racial background, combined with a high level of respect from his peers and his unique horsemanship and animal husbandry skills, made him a stand-out candidate.

"Sabu's outstanding skills as a bushman, horseman, stockman and cattleman were widely recognised and acclaimed," Terry said. "Sabu epitomised different races and cultures."

What began in 1999 as an idea inside Terry's head soon progressed into a project that concluded on April 4, 2003 when the statue was unveiled for the first time.

Today the monument not only pays homage to the individual chosen, but to the NT pastoral industry as a whole.

"Now, through Sabu, the chosen representative of all people – blackfella, whitefella, yellafella – our history and heritage will be immortalised," Terry said.

Conceiving the idea was the easy part. Turning it into a reality was another story entirely, with the proposed one and a half times life-size sculpture budgeted to cost \$180,000.

A total of 86 financial backers were eventually enlisted with donations varying from \$50 to \$10,000.

Such was the project's publicity that even Sabu's former employer Lord Vestey chipped in with a donation.

With the funds raised, a decision then needed to be made as to who would sculpt the monument.

Archie St Clair, himself a former Territory stockman and helicopter pilot, was eventually chosen to create the piece.

The final result is a statue that is not only reflective of the pastoral industry in the NT, but is also incredibly detailed in its re-creation of a regional icon.

Described as a gentle, humble man, Sabu Sing was born a Wardaman man and began his working life as a stockman on Wavehill Station in the early 1950s.

Such was his reputation and experience that by 1978 he became the first Aboriginal man to be elevated to a managerial position when he was appointed Station Manager at Manbulloo Station just outside of Katherine.

Tragically killed in 1993, the memory of Sabu Peter Sing has now been preserved forever in bronze.

His image has not only become the representative of an industry, but also stands as the Territory's contribution to last year's Year of the Outback celebrations.

Move to beef up pastoral activities on Aboriginal land

An ambitious strategy has been drawn up to foster the growth of pastoral activities on Aboriginal-owned stations throughout the Northern Territory over the next 20 years.

The strategy stems from a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Northern and Central Land Councils, the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) and the Northern Territory Government's Department of Business, Industries and Resource Development (DBIRD) which was signed in April this year.

Under the agreement the ILC has allocated \$400,000 a year over the next three years to fund four full-time positions to help streamline the process. Split between Alice Springs and Katherine, two of the positions will work out of DBIRD offices and the other two will work out of Land Council offices.

The jobs have already been advertised and it is expected appointments will be made by the end of July.

The key concept underlying the MoU is to improve the employment and training prospects for Aboriginal people wishing to be part of the pastoral industry while at the same time planning for the expected increase in demand for beef cattle in Asia over the next 20 years.

Land Council figures suggest that the cattle herd on Aboriginal land in the NT numbers around 80,000 head. DBIRD believes this could be raised to 180,000-200,000 head with appropriate land management regimes and infrastructure investment in place.

"What we're trying to do here is help Aboriginal people set up strong corporate structures so they can drive the development of economic activity on their properties," NLC Caring for Country Unit Land Management Facilitator Mark Ashley said.

"In the past the NLC had a pastoral unit which was our default management structure for a lot of these groups. What we're trying to do now is increase the capacity of on-site groups to manage their activities themselves."

"It's not just pastoral activities either – we want to encourage multiple land use practices, such as tourism, so that all a community's economic eggs are not just in one basket. The main thing is that all

enterprises must be both economically and environmentally sustainable."

Mr Ashley said that, in the NLC's area, initial efforts would be focused on Amanbidji Station in the Victoria River District, Miniyeri community on Hodgson Downs Station and the Roper River Valley community near Ngukurr in the Gulf Country.

The NLC's role is to identify all the appropriate people who speak for country, organise initial meetings, help people work through conflict resolution where it exists and facilitate identification of multiple land use strategies.

"Once that process has taken place the DPI will then come in and provide technical advice, assistance, and broker contacts with other NT pastoralists to get the various enterprises up and running," Mr Ashley said.

Traditional owners for Amanbidji Station have already spent the past year in consultations over multiple land use proposals and are currently evaluating offers from several potential partners.

"They are looking at an agistment option combined

with building and running their own herd," Mr Ashley said.

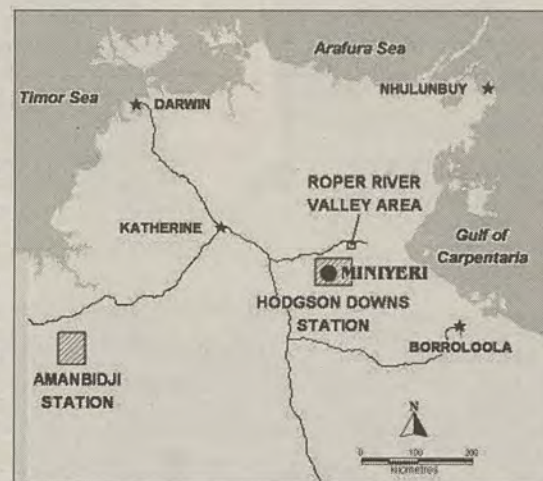
Betty Lawrie, a Ngarinman traditional owner and a director of the Amanbidji Aboriginal Pastoral Company, says that so far she is "very happy" with what's happening.

"After many years of frustration, we're finally getting somewhere," she told *Land Rights News*. "All my brothers are very happy with the project, hopefully we can get some work for our kids out of this."

Combined funding from the ILC and from FarmBis will see directors of Aboriginal-owned pastoral companies receive training in corporate governance over a one to two year period to ensure they have the skills to whatever business enterprise they decide on.

"This training will use culturally appropriate tools such as picture books to train directors in the principles of long-term business management and financial reporting," Mr Ashley said.

"We've already contracted the Alice Springs-based Pangaea Littlefish company to provide the training."



Mistake Creek still leading the way

Steve Craig describes the pastoral property he runs as "God's own country" and it certainly looks like it.



Manager Steve Craig



Mistake Creek or Malngin No 1 Aboriginal Land Trust seems to have it all – clear running rivers, spectacular pastoral country, a wharf only 350 kilometres away and an Aboriginal manager and board of directors who have made it into one of the most successful pastoral properties in the NT.

Cattle from the station command top prices in the live export trade and when you've got 18,000 of them getting fat out in the paddocks you know you're in the right business.

Steve reckons there are no secrets to success. "I don't think you have to be a

rocket scientist or anything – just be prepared to work. And it probably pays if you've got the board of directors from the cattle company behind you," he said.

"There's a few of the old fellas on the board who know about cattle. And we've got a few girls on, and they understand the money side of stuff which has been pretty good. We've got four girls and five blokes on the board."

Traditional owners Ray Duncan and Jacko Cook are justifiably proud of their land and the way they run it.

"Oh, it's really good. Cattle, everything alright, and cattle sale, and money just build up. We run that place, and it's really good," Ray Duncan said. "Everything working really good with the manager and all the directors. We have directors coming to meetings every month. We run that place properly good."

According to Steve Craig, pastoralists in the region are becoming much more environmentally conscious.

Mistake Creek at one time had been so overstocked it was nearly bare and erosion created enormous gullies through it.

The property lies in the catchment for the Argyle Dam and the WA Government has been concerned about the dam silting up from the rivers that flow into it.

The station has been regenerated using Natural Heritage Trust and Landcare Australia funding through the Victoria



Ringers branding calves at Mistake Creek.

River District Conservation Association.

"Everyone's sort of getting pretty well land care conscious now because there's funding there to do it. You've got to be pretty lazy if you don't want to do anything about it," Steve said.

"We all know what it was like years ago, and we don't want it to go back like that. I haven't got any secrets on how to do anything - just what you see, just look after how you see it."

"We shot 30,000 donkeys last year with assistance from ILC funding - and we were the one that the ILC said would be used as an example, show other Aboriginal places it can be done without any hassles.

"If you've got 18,000 head of cattle and you take 30,000 donkeys out of it,



Traditional owners of Mistake Creek Jack Cook and Ray Duncan

you get a lot more feed."

The next big project is developing the adjoining Brumby Plains property - the Malngin Aboriginal Land trust No2

Palumpa Rodeo musters pre-school funds



It was midday, hot and you could smell the fear in the air. Palumpa Station had organised a rodeo to help Nganmariyanga School raise money for its new pre-school and the moment of truth had finally arrived.

A number of people had suggested they might have a ride in the bull event and it was put up or shut up time.

The whole Nganmariyanga community turned out to have some fun and watch the teaching staff make fools of themselves – and no one was disappointed!

The rodeo, which took place on 31 May, went off without a hitch thanks to the hard work and safety consciousness of the station manager, Paul Donald.

The school staff worked all day making and selling hamburgers, hotdogs and drinks (all of which had been donated)

that were enjoyed and appreciated by all who attended the event.

There was bull riding, saddle bronc, bareback riding, a team event (which was won by the teaching team in what must be close to a world record time) and the kids had to snatch \$20 from the tail of a calf.

The NLC was among the many sponsors from across the Top End whose support ensured that enough money was raised to fund the construction of the pre-school.

Currently there are 142 children enrolled in the primary school with 19 more at pre-school, but it is expected that the construction of a dedicated pre-school could see a big jump in the number of children attending pre-school and



Getting the calf ready for the kids' event

create more room for better facilities in the main school.

Construction work on the pre-school has already begun and the school authorities anticipate it will be ready for

students in nine weeks' time.

Longer term the community is hoping to win funding for the establishment of a high school - but that's another rodeo entirely!

Look before you leap



Big business - the Callie pit in the Tanami from the air
Mining is big business in the Tanami and if there is a possibility that a large mining company is going to come along and dig a very large hole in the ground on your country, it pays to know exactly what that means. That is what some Tanami traditional owners were doing when they paid a visit to the Granites gold mine earlier this year.

Twenty people from Mount Liebig, Papunya, Nyirripi, Kintore and Yuendumu checked out the mill where gold-bearing rock or ore is crushed, mixed with water and chemicals like cyanide to extract the gold, this is then melted and poured into moulds to cool as gold bars.

Importantly they saw an old open cut mine where tailings (water mixed with sand and mud – the leftovers after gold is extracted) were being pumped in to fill up the old hole and the waste rock dumps.

Some pits are still open and may never be filled, and some smaller pits are being filled in and rehabilitated with soil on top.

Cyanide is a big safety and environmental concern with gold mining.

The Newmont staff pointed out that cyanide levels in tailings water are much lower these days due to new technology, and animal mortality is reduced.

At times in the past animals like birds and dingos would die from drinking the water in tailings dams. This appears to have been largely solved now, but it is constantly monitored.

Traditional owners had a look at the 93 metre long road trains that travel 40 km from Dead Bullock Soak (DBS) east to the

Below: Alice and Jeannie at Dead Bullock Soak



Granites mill over a bitumen road.

Transport is a big issue in the Tanami because the roads are not good enough even for current traffic that is mainly light.

Heavy mine traffic around new discoveries would need major road upgrades in nearly all cases.

They also saw the huge Callie pit which is 200 metres deep (see photos).

The mining trucks now go down underground, over one and a half kilometres deep, to pick up gold ore that is blasted from the stopes using drilling and gelignite, and they cart it back to the mill for processing.

Waste rock dumps near to the Callie pit are also big changes to the landscape and one is over 40 metres high

Under the Land Rights Act, when traditional landowners say yes to exploration, it also means they have said yes to mining.

However, exploration rarely reaches the stage of a mine because exploring for minerals is a high risk process and usually the companies do not find enough minerals to mine and make money.

However, in some cases they do and in the CLC region there have been a number of new mining leases start up in the last 10 to 15 years. ●

Below: Some of the group at Villa



Promising news on pipelines to Gove

The NLC welcomed a Heads of Agreement signed between Alcan Gove and Woodside Petroleum which will allow Alcan to fuel its expanded bauxite mining operations with gas from Woodside's Black Tip field in the Gulf of Bonaparte.

The agreement, which was signed on 6 June, will require the construction of 1,000 kilometres of pipeline from Wadeye to Gove across land either owned by Aboriginal people or covered by native title claims.

"This project has huge potential for all Territorians and particularly for Aboriginal people living in remote areas all the way from the Darwin/Daly region through to East Arnhem Land," NLC Chief Executive Norman Fry said.

"This will offer many economic development opportunities for Aboriginal people living along the pipeline route and we

● Meanwhile, the NLC's Employment and Training Unit has continued to ramp up its activities, with a new joint venture underpinning the creation of up to 30 training positions for Indigenous people seeking work on construction projects.

The joint venture between the NLC, the Territory Construction Association and the Northern Territory Government aims to maximise Indigenous involvement on major projects such as the Wickham Point LNG plant.

The NLC will interview applicants and



Larrakia Nation's Kelvin Costello, John Daly, Syd Stirling and TCA's Steve Margetic at the joint venture announcement

will work on their behalf to ensure their interests and aspirations are met."

Mr Fry said one of the key requirements from the NLC's side would be that substantial training and employment opportunities be made available to Aboriginal people. "I am pleased to see that the NT Government has said it will work with us and Alcan to develop such openings," he said. "The NLC and traditional owners have been working on this project for 18 months and a lot has already been achieved in terms of surveying potential pipeline routes and consulting with Aboriginal communities."

The NT Government said the cost of developing Black Tip, building the pipeline and expanding Alcan's operations in Gove would total about \$2.5 billion.

It estimated that up to 1,700 workers would be needed during the construction phase. Chief Minister Clare Martin said her Government had established a dedicated Task Force to the entire undertaking, with negotiations between the various parties likely to last a year while Alcan completed a feasibility study into its plant expansion.

provide ongoing support for them while the TCA will put in place accredited training courses, with funding from the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET).

NT Minister for Employment Education and Training, the Hon. Syd Stirling, said the Larrakia traditional owners of Wickham Point would have priority access to the \$200,000 program.

The agreement, reached after discussions with the Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation, includes provision for some full-time employment upon completion of the 15-week training period.

Co-announcing the agreement, NLC Deputy Chairman John Daly said the deal would have a positive impact on Aboriginal economic development. "This agreement is a further example of the excellent results being achieved by the NLC in association with the TCA, as already demonstrated by the successful outcomes achieved on the Alice Springs to Darwin Railway Project," he said. ●

Good Umpires

'Good Umpires' was the title given to a recent event in Alice Springs which starred as its guests old adversaries Wenten Rubuntja and Bernie Kilgariff. However as the title – taken from Wenten's description of Bernie in his recent book - implies, these two men have been leaders in their communities for many years and have a strong respect for each other. Also honoured at the ceremony was Eli Rubuntja who received a Centenary Medal. Tangentyere CEO William Tilmouth gave the following speech about Eli Rubuntja at the ceremony.

"The saying "the Quiet Achiever" can be directed to many, but none is more deserving than Senior Arrernte Aboriginal Lawman and Pastor of the Lutheran Church in Central Australia, Eli Rubuntja.

He is a wise and highly respected Elder and is regarded as the Founding Member of Yipirinya Bilingual School in Alice Springs, Tangentyere Council and the Tyeweretye Aboriginal Social Club. He is a gentle man who radiates an aura of great dignity and kindness.

Born in 1922 in Hermannsburg (Ntaria), Pastor Rubuntja was very strongly influenced by the early Lutheran Missionaries who ministered in the area.

From early years, Pastor Rubuntja was sent to school to learn to read and write without losing the significance of his bilingual upbringing, which was to play a very strong role in his later dealings with the ways of the broader community and their attitudes to education. Pastor Rubuntja speaks all of the Arandic languages (of which there are 9) as well as Pintupi, Warlpiri and Pitjantjatjara. He also

reads and writes several, a skill learned during his early bilingual education.

Pastor Rubuntja was sent by his father to Alice Springs (Mparntwe) in 1958 to protect sites of significance to his Dreaming Stories. His special site was "Anthepe", just south of Heavitree Gap (Ntaripe) in Alice Springs. He lives on this "Town Camp" to this day.

As President of Tangentyere Council, the Resource Agency for the "Town Camps" in Alice Springs, Pastor Rubuntja directed his energy towards establishing a proper school for the children of the people who lived on the "Town Camps". The school, Yipirinya, was set up alongside Tangentyere Council without any funding from either the Northern Territory or Federal Government, as both had refused their support. Pastor Rubuntja went to Canberra to ask for help and financial assistance without success. He continued to work with many others who shared his dream as active School Council members and teachers of Aboriginal culture.

After many years of fighting for fund-



Left to right: Good umpires Wenten Rubuntja, Bernie Kilgariff, Eli Rubuntja, Bernard Abbott and Jenny Green

ing, but teaching with nothing, a senior official from the Department of Education in Alice Springs came to Pastor Rubuntja's house to inform him that Yipirinya School had received recognition and registration. Yipirinya School Council, teachers and Tangentyere Council were elated and celebrated. The School Council received a grant of land, which was the White Euro Dreaming site and an appropriate place for the school.

Pastor Rubuntja was elected President of the School Council and has become the School Council's first Life Member. Despite his advancing years he is still a very active member of Tangentyere Council's Executive, though he is no longer the President. A list of his achievements and awards include:

- Tangentyere Council's first Presi-

dent, a position he held on and off over 25 years until he recently retired. He remains as a member of the Executive.

- Yipirinya School's first President until recently stepping down and is now a Life Member.

- Tyeweretye Club's first Vice President from its inception in 1983.

- NAIDOC Aboriginal Leader 1987.

- Runner up in the Park Handicap 100 yards Race at the Stawell Easter "Gift Meet" in Victoria in 1946. This is now an annual race for professional sprinters.

I can talk a lot about the achievements of this great man – his influence on people's lives is felt everywhere. We owe it to people like Eli to continue the struggles for equality, recognition of the importance of language and respect for culture" ●

'Gentle giant' calls it a day at the NLC

When David 'Wewak' Ross looks back on his time at the NLC, it is the successes in claiming back Aboriginal land that stick in his memory the most.

"Else Station, Robinson River, Hodgson Downs, Muckaty, Bauhinia Downs, Urapunga – I was involved with all of those land returns," Weewak said. "Getting land back was a real highlight."

Wewak, who retired from the NLC on 13 June, was honoured by staff at a special morning tea on Friday 20 June.

NLC Chief Executive Norman Fry paid homage to the long-time Borroloola office manager, describing him as the "gentle giant" of the NLC who had made a major contribution to the organisation's regional services.

"Older Aboriginal men like yourself are invaluable role models for the younger generation," Mr Fry said at the

morning tea. "We will all miss you and wish both you and your wife Shirley a happy retirement."

Wewak, whose mother was a Ngalakan woman from the Roper River area, was born in Birdum in 1942 and spent most of his childhood in Darwin's Retta Dixon home before leaving in 1956 to take up work at Mountain Valley station near Bulman.

As well as working hard as a station hand Wewak also polished his footballing skills to such an extent that, after just two seasons in Darwin, he received an offer to play professionally for the West Perth club – one of the first Aboriginal players from the Top End to receive such an offer.

By the time he started playing in Perth Wewak was already married to Shirley and had one child.

"It was hard yakka playing that season in Perth. In the end I got a bit homesick

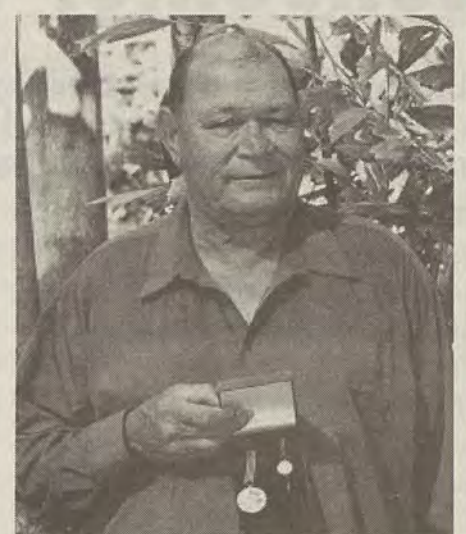
for my missus and baby so I came back," he said.

Wewak picked up where he left off, spending the next 11 years working mainly for the Transport and Works Department driving trucks and bulldozers. He joined the NLC's Katherine office in the 1980s and worked there for seven years, then moved to Borroloola.

During that time his family expanded with the birth of seven more children, then expanded still further with the arrival of grandchildren.

"I've got 30 grand kids all up now, most of them living around the Territory," Weewak said. "We're yet to decide whether to live in Darwin or Katherine but either way we'll be close to family."

Wewak's life achievements were recognised with the award of a Centenary Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours List announced on 9 June. The award was in rec-



Wewak with his Centenary Medal

ognition of his contribution to the Katherine region – especially his work with children – and for his work at the NLC. ●

Congress turns 30

Central Australian Aboriginal Congress celebrated 30 years recently and more than 500 people turned up at Congress to celebrate the day.

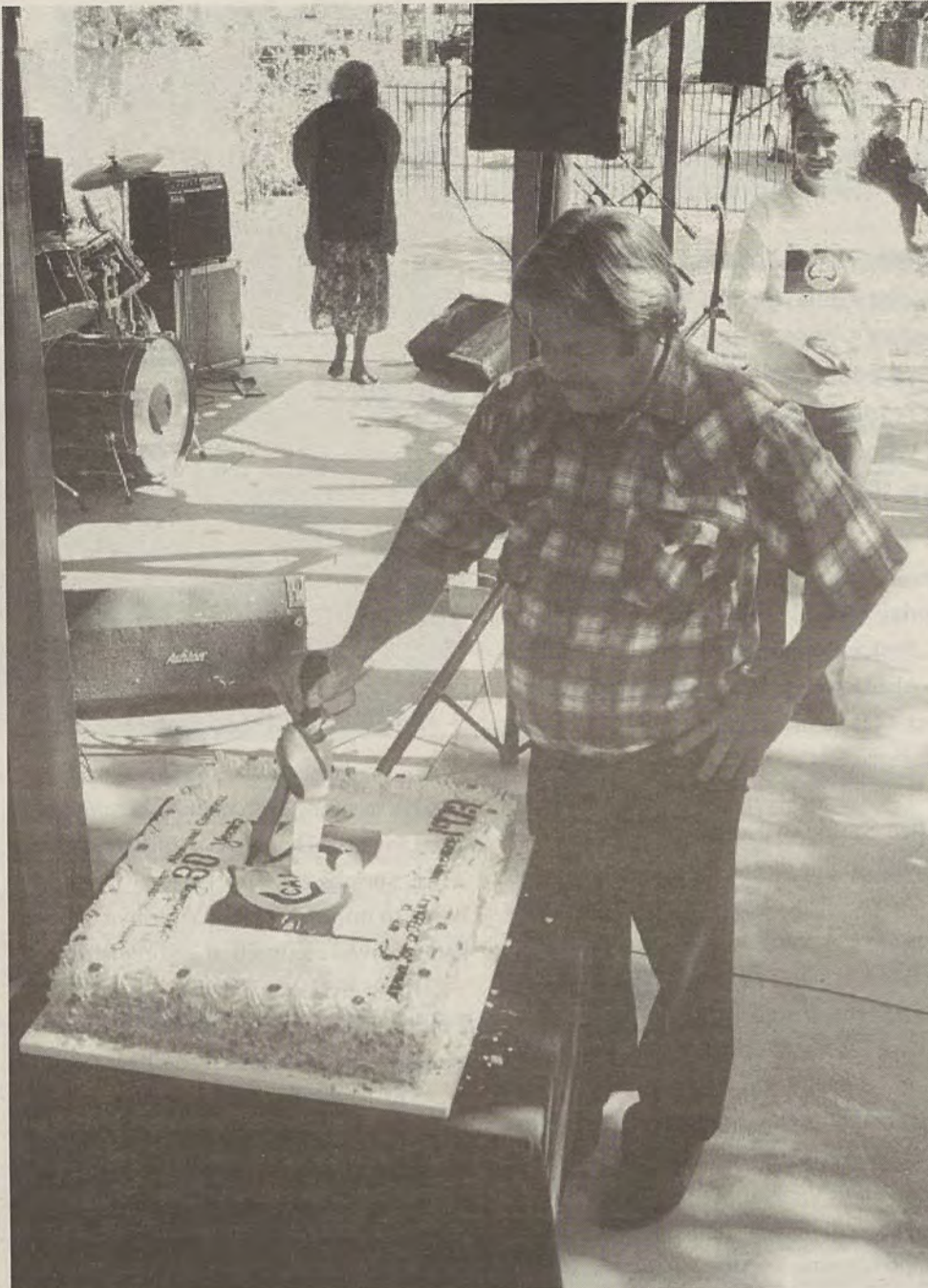
Congress is the oldest community-controlled Aboriginal organisation in Central Australia.

Last year Congress provided services to more than 7,670 clients from Alice Springs and the Town Camps, outstations and communities.

Coinciding with its anniversary, Congress has begun a social history project to document the organisation's establishment, history and development.

Far right: There was plenty of action for kids at the Congress anniversary - face painting, tug-o-war, Cuz Congress and Yamba. There was also traditional dancing and Bayden Williams and his band.

Right: Congress Chair Robbie Rossignol cuts the giant cake



Footy legend takes stand on Aboriginal consumer rights

AFL football legend and respected Territorian Michael Long is the face of the Northern Territory Department of Justice Consumer and Business Affairs 'Indigenous Consumer Justice Campaign'.

The campaign is aimed at informing Indigenous people, especially those living in remote communities, about their consumer rights and what steps to follow when purchasing goods.

The multi-media campaign involves three educational and informative videos, which includes advice on some of the major consumer issues affecting Indigenous Territorians such as:

- Buying used cars
- The safe use of debit cards and PIN numbers; and
- Shopping - warranties and keeping receipts.

The campaign is being spearheaded by a series of television advertisements on Imparja TV which will run through until the end of August.

Posters have also been produced to accompany the educational videos.

If you are holding meetings with Indigenous Territorians or travelling to remote communities and would like copies of the video and posters please contact Marilyn McDonnell-Davis on 8999 6136 and they will be forwarded to you, free of charge.

For further information about your rights as a consumer, contact Consumer Affairs on 8999 1999.

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NLC demands consultations on Daly



NLC Deputy Chairman John Daly has called on the Northern Territory Government to start consultations with Aboriginal people over proposed agricultural developments on the Daly River as a matter of urgency.

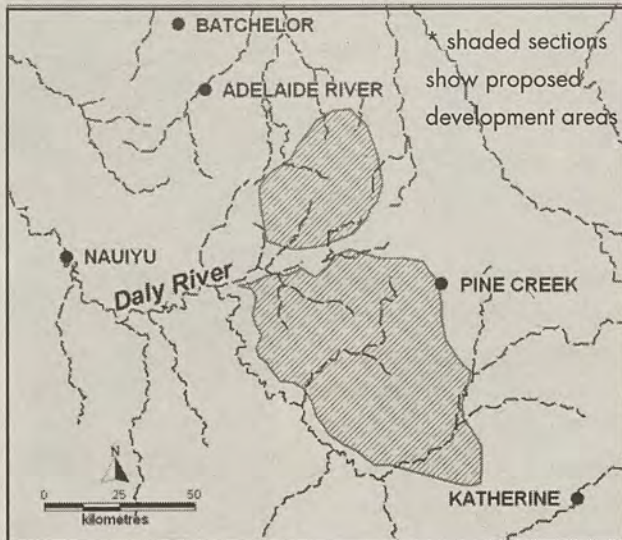
"NT Lands and Planning Minister Kon Vatskalis has already sanctioned the clearance of 7,000 hectares of land in the Upper Daly region, yet not once has he consulted with Aboriginal stakeholders," Mr Daly said. "For all we know vegetation clearance could have begun already."

"It seems as though the development plans are being kept secret from Aboriginal people."

There are few rivers left in Australia that have not been degraded to at least some extent by large-scale agricultural activities. Currently in a near-pristine state, the Daly River retains virtually all of its pre-colonial environmental assets.

Supporting the biggest diversity of freshwater turtles of any Australian river system, the Daly River is also believed to be an important breeding ground for freshwater bull sharks as well as an important habitat for other uncommon species such as whip-rays and sawfish.

It is thought that the proposed agricultural developments will involve widespread tree clearing and the pumping of water from the river and water table for irrigation, and the variety of crops grown could involve the extensive use of herbicides and pesticides.



"The Daly is an important ceremonial track and contains sites of significance to us," Mr Daly said. "A lowering of the water table brought about by water usage as planned will not only expose these sites visually, but will also make them prone to destruction."

"How do we measure the impact herbicides and pesticides will have on the local barramundi, bream and other edible fish species? And will these elements be transferred to local residents who rely on these species as a regular source of food? Will this in turn have an impact on major fishing tournaments held along the river? If so, how do



John Daly: many unanswered questions

local residents regain the revenue lost as a result of this?"

"There are many questions to be asked and answered, yet requests by the NLC for the Government to inform Aboriginal people and to consult with them over the agricultural developments have been ignored."

The NLC has written to the Minister on several occasions, the most recent being 29 April, but has still not received any clear indication of development timeframes and the process under which consultations will take place with Aboriginal communities.

Exotic bees 'a danger' to local fauna and flora

Concern over the impact of European honeybees on Top End fauna and flora has led the NLC's Caring for Country Unit to warn of the dangers of introducing exotic bee species to Aboriginal land.

Hives of European bees have already been found in Arnhem Land, with the most recent discovery being in September last year when Ramingining's Djakamirr rangers stumbled across a hive during their regular land management activities.

It was the most easterly European beehive ever found in Arnhem Land, indicating that the exotic bees are slowly spreading right across the Top End hinterland from their original infestations in agricultural regions to the west.

The NLC's Caring for Country Unit (CFCU) has already cautioned against various proposals to introduce honeybees (both European and Asian) onto areas of Aboriginal land, where the intention was to use them to pollinate crops such as melons.

This is because introduced bees provide a potential reservoir of disease, and also compete with native insects for nectar (such as native bees that produce sugar bag) and for nesting places (such as possums and birds) in tree hollows.

They can also become a nuisance to humans, as has recently occurred in some parks in the NT.

CFCU manager Michael Storrs said there was no reason to bring introduced bees onto Aboriginal land, as local insects – including native bees – were quite capable of pollinating crops.



A European beehive

"We will now seek out more information about the potential adverse impacts of honeybees and consult with our stakeholders ahead of presenting our findings to Full Council for a longer-term resolution to this issue," Mr Storrs said.

Maori sea rights win sets precedent for Top End

In a case which has ramifications for sea rights claims in the Top End, a Maori claim over seabed and foreshore around Marlborough Sound on New Zealand's South Island has been upheld on appeal by New Zealand's highest court.

In the New Zealand case, traditional owners in 1997 applied to the Maori Land Court for the right to claim ownership of Marlborough Sound. The NZ Government successfully argued against the Maori Land Court hearing the case, saying the Crown owned the seabed.

The Maori appealed this decision to New Zealand's Court of Appeal, which in a unanimous decision in June agreed that the case should go to the Maori Land Court. While the New Zealand Government can still appeal this decision to the United Kingdom's Privy Council, it has indicated it will legislate to extinguish native title and confirm Crown ownership of the seabed and foreshore. Maori, including Maori members of the Government, have opposed this course.

The Court's decision, and any subsequent decision by the Maori Land Court, provide a precedent for Aboriginal people claiming rights regarding seas over and adjoining Aboriginal land in the Northern Territory.

The NLC is currently preparing a Federal Court case on behalf of Yolngu claimants in Blue Mud Bay, which is in north-east Arnhem Land. This will be a major test case of outstanding legal issues concerning Aboriginal sea rights under both the Land Rights Act and the Native Title Act. While final court dates have yet to be set, it is likely that the Blue Mud Bay case will begin in the second half of 2004.

National Landcare Conference

Indigenous delegates at this year's National Landcare Conference held in Darwin pushed for the establishment of a National Caring for Country Conference to focus on Indigenous people's land management expertise.

Such a forum, they said, would provide an opportunity to present proposals to be developed into solid land management practices that are understanding and respectful of Indigenous culture.

The proposal was a highlight of a conference that drew more than 500 delegates from around the country and from overseas, including representatives from China, Kenya, East Timor, New Zealand, Fiji, Phillipines, Indonesia, Vietnam, USA and South Africa.

With a host of issues to discuss, the conference also provided an opportunity to debate on a wide range of Landcare issues, and served to highlight the success stories associated with the Landcare movement across Australia.

A major initiative of the conference was

its exploration of avenues toward growth and sustainability for the global Landcare movement.

At a local level, Indigenous land care groups are also making inroads into maintaining and improving traditional lands. Working in tandem with various non-Indigenous organisations, Aboriginal Ranger groups are initiating programs that not only care for country, but can also provide economic benefits.

Wanga Djakamirr Ranger Coordinator, Debbie Cesari says her colleagues from the remote Northern Territory community of Ramingining were amazed at the reception they received after their presentation to delegates that had attended the Indigenous Forum component of the Conference.

"Everyone was on a high because they were recognised for doing the work they are doing every day," Debbie said.

"We just tried to keep it simple. It lifts the profile of what people are doing on their country."

Now into their fourth year, the Wanga Djakamirr Rangers are looking to generate their own income to supplement the exter-



Wanga Djakamirr rangers with Debbie Cesari

nal funding they already receive, and they're hopeful of acquiring a licence to collect wild crocodile eggs.

"It's a Wet Season project, so we hope

to get the project up and running by next year," Debbie said. "Establishing a commercial market base isn't an easy task at the moment."

2003 Women's Land Management Conference



A peaceful lily-covered billabong on the Wambunggu Outstation, located approximately 820km from Darwin on Limmen Bight,

was the site of this year's Women's Land Management Conference (WLMC).

From 7-29 May, 160 women and children converged on Maria Lagoon for the annual women's conference campout, hosted by the Yugal Mangi Women Rangers.

Their senior ranger, Cherry Daniels, opened the Conference and ranger Valmai Roberts read out an apology from Chief Minister Clare Martin, who wished the Conference well.

This year's conference was a great success, with a record number of women attending.

Women from communities throughout the Top End including Maningrida, Pine Creek, Wadeye, Barunga and Goulburn Island (just to mention a few) enjoyed



A record number of delegates attended the 2003 Women's Conference held at Wambunggu Outstation on the Limmen Bight

the chance to catch up with relatives and friends of old and new to talk about issues relating to their land and life.

Women talked about issues of concern to them and activities they could do to look after country. Cherry showed women how to prepare a work plan and a monthly timetable of ranger activities. Opportunities for working with junior rangers were also discussed.

This year's practical training and workshop sessions were very interesting and were well received by the women, who were keen to get in and give it a go.

The women responded well to instruction on how to safely use whipper-snippers, weed spraying equipment, chainsaws and

a Waterwatch testing kit. Other highlights included a workshop on interpreting and recording information on a GPS, quad bike lessons and an autopsy of a pig which was thoroughly checked for disease and then cooked in a ground oven and served up for the dinner later that night.

Each day after the meeting the women were given the opportunity to explore the surrounding billabongs and rivers in search of fish and turtle.

Some however, were happy just to find a relaxing place for a swim.

As in previous years the women used the Conference as a forum to share their feelings and views regarding damage to their country from introduced plants and

animals, living with the dreaded cane toad and the problems associated with trying to pass their traditional knowledge onto their children.

The conference continues to help Aboriginal women on many levels.

It keeps them informed about the different types of training and land management courses, it also helps them to improve their public speaking and writing skills, work on planning activities and most importantly it provides them with an awareness of other women's activities and land management issues.

Special thanks to the traditional owners, the Fairhead Family for permitting the Conference to be held at Wambunggu Outstation and to the Farmbis program for assisting with costs.

Also many thanks to filmmakers from Barunga (Marie Brenon and Delma McCartney), staff from NLC, Batchelor Institute, NTU, AQIS (NAQS), DIPE, ALEP and Parks and Wildlife for dedicating their time and for making this year's conference a memorable one.

For more information about next year's conference please contact Robin Knox on (08) 8920 5189.

CAAMA CONCERT



CAAMA put on its first concert for the year at the Alice Springs Convention Centre recently and it was a hit. Letterstick Band, Jody Cockatoo Creed, Sammy Butcher and others all played to a packed house, compered by John Braun. Top left: Sammy Butcher; right: Letterstick Band
Left and right : concert-goers out for a night on the town.



Merrepen Festival delivers again



This year's 16th Annual Merrepen Arts Festival at the Nauiyu Community was a great success. Each year the Festival continues to grow in both size and popularity and has become a widely renowned and greatly anticipated event on the Territory's cultural calendar.

On Saturday night visitors and locals alike were once again serenaded under the stars by the delightful sounds and magnificent fireworks display of the Darwin Symphony Orchestra.

After the Orchestra concluded, concert-goers were then worked into a frenzy by the lively tunes of the Nabarlek Band who finished the night off with a big bang.

Over the three days visitors were also treated to performances by the Palumpa Dancers and a Samoan Dance Group, who performed traditional songs and dances from their region.

There were many artists young and old whose traditional and contemporary artworks wowed the crowd on Auction Sunday. This year's Auction highlight was a piece by Grace Kumbi entitled 'Barramundi' which sold for just over \$2,000.

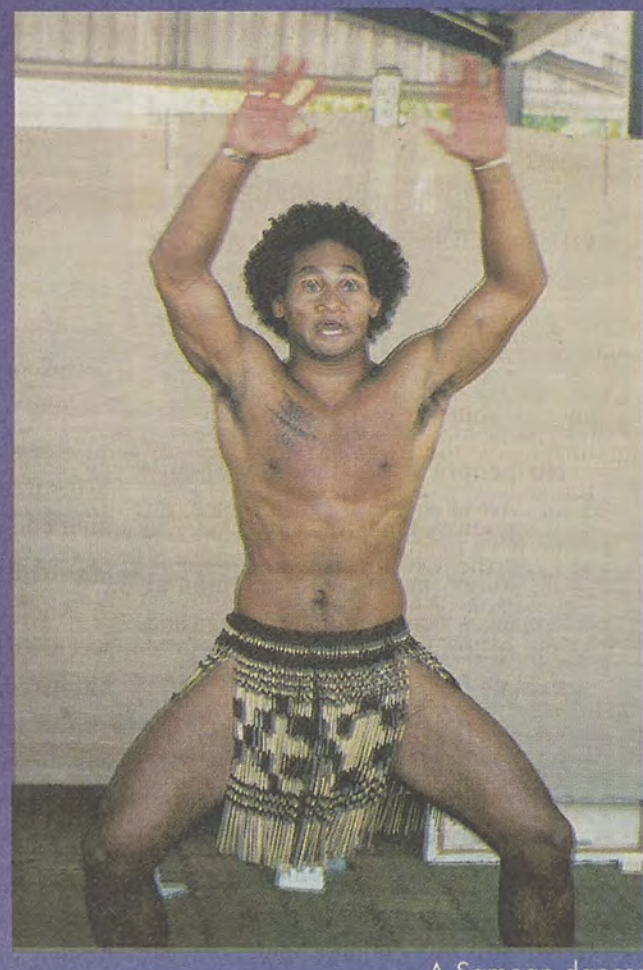
Other arts and crafts included a dazzling display of screen printed t-shirts, sarongs and fabrics, hand-woven bags and baskets and much more, there was something to suit everyone's tastes and budgets.

As in previous years, this year's Festival attracted many keen competitors from communities throughout the Top End who came to compete in the Basketball, Softball and Football Carnivals. The competition over the three days was fierce and highly spirited.

- Eventual grand final winners were:
- Women's Basketball: St John's beat Belyuen (29-27)
 - Men's Basketball: St John's beat Marrara (53-32)
 - Women's Softball: Peppimenarti beat Port Keats (19-9)
 - Football: Beswick beat St Johns (17, 6, 108 - 6, 16, 52)



Grace Kumbi's Barramundi



A Samoan dancer

Koori Mail reaches major milestone

May was a special month for national Indigenous newspaper the *Koori Mail*, which celebrated its 300th edition in style.

Owned totally by five Aboriginal organisations in Bundjalung country on the far north coast of NSW, the *Koori Mail* has now been in business for more than 12 years. The occasion was celebrated with a special dinner at the Ballina RSL Club on 10 May - a seafood feast featuring the very best that Bundjalung country can offer.

Representatives of the hundreds of Aboriginal people who own the *Koori Mail* were joined by special guests, including Australian Democrats senator Aden Ridgeway and singer Troy Cassar-Daley, who also are Aboriginal success stories from the NSW north coast.

Messages praising the newspaper came from many government leaders across the nation, including Northern Territory Minister John Ah Kit who applauded the "professional broad national view" of the *Koori Mail*.

Land Rights News also sent a message of congratulations in recognition of the tremendous work done by the newspaper in



reporting the Indigenous stories so often ignored by the mainstream press.

The newspaper has come a long way over the past decade. Established originally by one Aboriginal couple, the paper went through some tough early days before being taken over by the five owning organisations.

It now has grown throughout Australia,

employs correspondents in every State and Territory (there are two in the Top End), and the head office in Lismore, northern NSW, has the latest in pre-press newspaper production technology.

In the NT, the *Koori Mail* is available in every major newsagency, and there is a substantial list of subscribers, including groups and people in remote

Left: Celebrating the Koori Mail's 300th edition at Ballina, northern NSW, are (back from left) Senator Aden Ridgeway, Koori Mail director Terry

Randall, Koori Mail Editor Todd Condie and Koori Mail director Don Daley and (front from left) Koori Mail chairman Russell Kapeen, Koori Mail director Robyn Ferguson and entertainer Troy Cassar-Daley.

communities.

Koori Mail chairman Russell Kapeen, a Bundjalung man, thanked all those who had contributed to the newspaper's ongoing success.

"We are grateful to our brothers and sisters around Australia for their support," he said. "We like to think we give back that support through producing a fine self-funding newspaper, as well as providing scholarships and sponsorships around the nation."

In the NT, the *Koori Mail* funds an annual scholarship at Batchelor Institute.

For more details on the *Koori Mail*, see the website www.koorimail.com or call (02) 66 222 666.

GARMA 2003

Visual Arts will take centre stage at this year's Garma Festival, which will run from 8 to 12 August at the Gulkula ceremony grounds near Nhulunbuy in the Northern Territory's north-east Arnhem Land region.

Announcing the theme for the 5th Annual Garma, Yothu Yindi Foundation Chair Galarrwuy Yunupingu said: "Our art is a national treasure, an international treasure, it's unique in the world ... We have to protect this knowledge, and let (people) ... understand what it means."

"No people's art stands over any others'. Art is equal; it's got no race, no colour. It's a universal language."

Art, songs, dances and ceremonial performances form the core of Yolngu and other Indigenous cultures in Australia.

It is through art, song, dance and associated ceremony that Indigenous people sustain their culture and maintain their law.

In recent years there has been increasing awareness of the need to prevent misuse of Indigenous cultural and intellectual property.

This will be one of the areas explored in the Indigenous Arts and Culture four-



day forum running from 9 to 12 August.

Another highlight of the Garma Festival will be a Performance Symposium, titled "The effects of commodification of Indigenous music and its interaction with visual arts".

Other activities will include the daily staging of a major ceremony (bunggul) and production of sand sculpture by the clans' Djungayas (clan ceremony leaders of the north-east Arnhem region); a Government Leaders forum; music and recording workshops for young and

emerging bands of the north-east Arnhem Land region; and yidaki (didgeridoo) masterclasses.

Some 20 Yolngu clans will participate in this year's Garma. Visitors are encouraged to camp out but accommodation is also available in Nhulunbuy.

Early bookings are recommended given restrictions on visitor numbers.

For more information, visit the Garma website at www.garma.telstra.com.

Below: last year's Garma Festival Photo courtesy Yothu Yindi Foundation



GARMA FESTIVAL
8-12 August 2003
bookings:
www.garma.telstra.com

Journalist convicted for trespass

The Northern Territory Supreme Court has upheld the right of traditional owners to decide who can visit their land by convicting a journalist for trespass following an incident at the Aboriginal community of Wadeye in November last year.

The decision by Justice David Angel reversed a lower court's decision not to record a conviction against Paul Toohey, at that time the Darwin-based correspondent for *The Australian* newspaper.

Mr Toohey was arrested at Wadeye on 13 November after he had gone there to report on the funeral of an 18-year-old man allegedly shot by police, despite all media access to the funeral being denied by traditional owners.

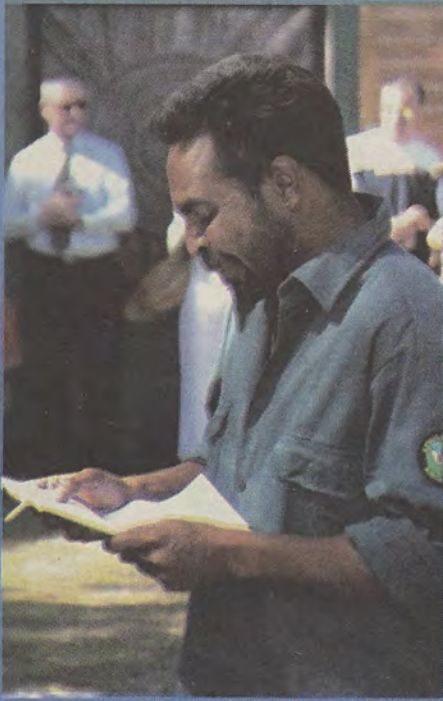
Although Mr Toohey pleaded guilty to the charge of trespass on Aboriginal land in a subsequent court appearance, Magistrate David Loadman elected not to impose a fine or record a conviction.

The Director of Public Prosecutions appealed the decision to the Supreme Court, which resulted in Justice Angel's recent decision.



From top left to right : Maureen Cambell at the Education Forum at Hamilton Downs, Nora Long returning a baby donkey to its mother at Willowra, Joe Bird at Alekarenge, native title conference dinner in Alice Springs left to right: Pat Dodds, Christine Zuni Cruz, Patrick Stirling, NT Deputy Administrator and native title holder Pat Miller and Mr Zuni Cruz. Stanley Jim with his many dogs in Alice Springs recently, Compere John Braun, Teresa Ross, relative, Jeannie Herbert and Teresa's daughter Mikaly Native title conference dinner - Sabella Turner and Patrick Stirling, Ladies at patirlirri soakage near Willowra recently

PEPPIMENARTI



Stewart Hodgson gives the welcome to country



Peppimenarti was the cross-roads of Australia's arts community on May 30 when it held its first ever community cultural event, showcasing the talents of its artists and weavers to a host of visitors who had flown and driven in especially for the event.

Visitors to the event – "Awa Yedi I Falmi Warrim Pek Durrimu", which translates as "Group Men and Women Actually Doing Painting" – included gallery owners, collectors from interstate and Northern Territory political leaders including Chief Minister Clare Martin and Minister for Community Development John Ah Kit.

The level of interest was remarkable given that the community's art program only began three years ago with the support of Darwin gallery owner Karen Brown. Today, Peppi artists such as Regina Wilson, Pincher Talunga and Theresa Lemon command four-figure sums for their works based on traditional weaving patterns and body painting designs.

Visitors were welcomed by Peppimenarti Community Council vice-president Stewart Hodgson, who said Peppimenarti was proud of the fact it started its art program with its own money.

"We all agree on the need for strong communities in the Bush," he said.

Ms Martin and Mr Ah Kit praised the efforts of the Peppimenarti community with Mr Ah Kit using the occasion to announce \$22,000 in seed funding to progress the establishment of an Indigenous Knowledge Centre at Peppimenarti.

Local dancers then entertained the crowd, after which collectors and gallery owners began the serious business of purchasing many of the various works displayed on the outside walls of council buildings.

Among the collectors was Rupert Myer, who sits on the board of Melbourne-based philanthropic organisation the Myer Foundation and who headed the recent Federal Government Inquiry into Australia's Contemporary Visual Arts and Craft Sector.

During a series of media interviews Mr Myer spoke of the pleasure it gave him to see the positive difference an arts program made to an Aboriginal community such as Peppimenarti. "My Inquiry found that there are more than 20,000 artists in Australia generating about \$160 million of economic activity," he said.

"Eight thousand of those artists are Indigenous and 5,000 of those reside in the Northern Territory. That shows the tremendous contribution Aboriginal art is already making to the economies of communities across the Top End."

FOOTNOTE: The Federal Minister for Revenue and Assistant Treasurer Senator Helen Coonan has exempted Indigenous artists living in remote communities from the need to have an Australian Business Number (ABN) until at least June 30 2004. This means that NT art centres are not required to withhold tax from payments made to Indigenous artists for another year.



Pincher Talunga



Peppi students with a display



Local plants are used for dyes



Performers at the Cultural Day



Regina Wilson with one of her works



Artworks adorn the Peppi Council offices

BRIEFS

ATSIC Review paper released

The Federal Government has released a discussion paper prepared as the first stage of the current Review of ATSIC being undertaken by an independent panel comprising former NSW Liberal Parliamentarian John Hannaford, former Federal Labor Government Minister Bob Collins and Indigenous academic Jackie Huggins.

The paper said submissions indicated that ATSIC had "reached a crisis point in respect of its public credibility and with its Indigenous constituency", although there was also evidence that many parts of ATSIC were operating well and that there was overwhelming support for an effective national body to represent Indigenous peoples and interests.

The paper nominated four models for reform of ATSIC and said this would require more effective arrangements for engagement between regional ATSIC councils and State and Territory governments.

A final report is due to be presented to the Federal Government by the end of September this year. For details, visit: www.atsicreview.gov.au.

Meanwhile, the Federal Government announced in April that it would move to separate ATSIC's current powers into two bodies, with ATSIC retaining its policy-making powers while responsibility for managing ATSIC programs and making individual funding decisions would rest with the newly-created Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services (ATSIS) agency.

The measures are due to take effect from 1 July.

Senate rejects islands' excision

A Federal Government Bill designed to remove 3,000 islands from Australia's migration zone, including many islands belonging to Indigenous people, has been voted down again in the Senate.

The Federal Government last year mounted a campaign to inform Aboriginal islanders in the Top End that their rights as Australian citizens would be unaffected by the Bill.

Native Title training online

The Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) has released a collec-

tion of online training materials designed to assist those engaged in native title negotiations.

Called the *Learning About Native Title* learning toolbox, it combines practical information with animated case studies to show how the native title process works. To view a sample of *Learning About Native Title*, visit www.nativetitle.edu.au or contact Australian Training Products on 03-9655 0600 to order a CD Rom.

Grog price-fixers caught out

National retailer Woolworths and the Arnhem Club will provide \$300,000 to establish a service to address alcohol-related problems in Nhulunbuy after admitting they engaged in price-fixing activities in regard to certain takeaway alcohol products sold in Nhulunbuy between March 1997 and August 1999.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is continuing to pursue court action against a third Nhulunbuy alcohol retailer, the Walkabout Club, in relation to alleged price fixing activities.

New arts rights for communities

Indigenous communities will soon be able to take legal action against inappropriate, derogatory or culturally insensitive use of copyright material under amendments to the Copyright Act to be introduced by the Federal Government later this year.

While individual artists currently have these rights, the communal culture underlying much of the art (including films) produced on Aboriginal communities has left a substantial amount of art unprotected.

Peris considers future in politics

Olympic and Commonwealth Games gold medallist Nova Peris says she has yet to make any final decision about a career in politics but has indicated running for a Northern Territory-based Senate seat is a likely option.

Ms Peris has not ruled out moving interstate from Canberra but says any entry into politics is at least three years away.

She told reporters she would ultimately like to be involved at a federal level.

Finke Desert Race

Dust, noise and a lot of fun



The Landers buggy in full action

Dust, engine oil and noise aren't everyone's idea of fun but 12,000 people in Central Australia braved freezing temperatures to watch hundreds of bikes and buggies fly down the 230 kilometre track to Finke on the Queens Birthday weekend.

Shannon Landers and Vance Glynn squashed themselves into a buggy to join the fast and furious action in one of the Northern Territory's biggest sporting events.

Unfortunately, like many others, they didn't make it to Finke.

"The first 10-20 kilometres were just a blanket of dust. You couldn't see three metres in front of you," Shannon Landers said.

"The only way we knew where we were going was by catching up to another vehicle and watching his tail lights disappear around corners.

"Then we got caught up in the dust of another vehicle and we were really close to the car and he made a little sharp left hand turn close to the corner and we didn't make it.

"We hit a gully going pretty fast - nearly 100 kilometres an hour - we hit the rut and it caused the front wheel to snap off. That pulled us up in our tracks pretty fast," Shannon said.

No doubt. Losing a wheel is serious stuff but it's all part of the gruelling course that makes the Finke Desert Race one of the most successful races in Australia.

"There were some pretty close calls when we got caught up behind other cars," he said.

"It was good to see a lot of Aboriginal competitors in the motor bikes - there were quite a few Alice Springs communities in it which is really good for the sport."

It was the first time Shannon and navigator Vance Glynn had entered the race and their Southern Cross Toyota 1600 engine kept them in class two while anything larger puts them up with the big ones in class one.

"There's a lot involved with fuel, tyres, setting up a pit crew.

"We were all pretty inexperienced this year but next year we'll have a better idea. "Off road racing is the ultimate motor sport. The Finke is a pretty big hype - it's really exciting," he said. ●

Dialysis Appeal incorporates

The Dialysis Appeal in Central Australia reached an important milestone in June, becoming an incorporated body.

It will now be known as Western Desert Nganampa Walytja

Palyantjaku Tjutaku (literally 'Making our families well').

Office-bearers are: Marlene Ross Nampitjinpa (President); Bundy Rowe Tjupurrula (Vice-President); Marilyn Nangala (Secretary/Public Officer); and Pamela Tolson Nakamarra (Treasurer). Sarah Brown will continue to expand her role as local manager in Alice Springs and Joy Wurst as patient support worker.

Njunjul the Sun

By: Meme McDonald and
Boori Monty Pryor

Published by Allen and
Unwin

RRP: 15.95

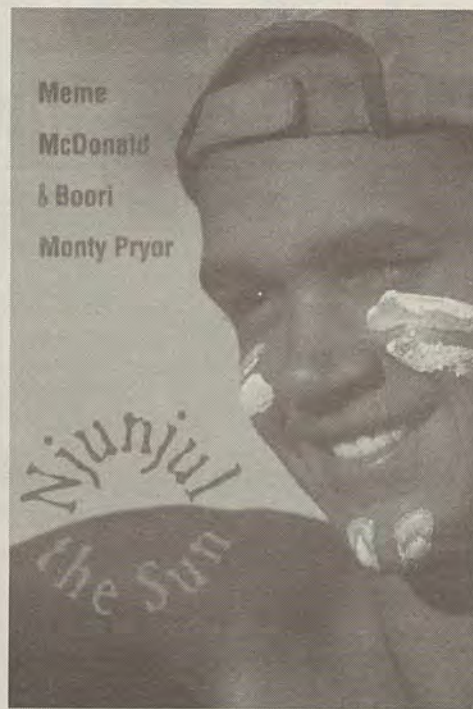
This book is an open and honest account of one boy's struggle to break free from the restrictions of his and his family's unhappy existence on a Murri community ironically called "Happy Valley" in North Queensland.

Its easy-reading style is sure to appeal to older children and it was recently short-listed for this year's Older Section of the Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year awards.

At the beginning Njunjul is lost and somewhat disillusioned with his existence, for trouble seems to be a way of life for everyone in the community.

In Njunjul's mind the 'bullymen' (or police) seem to target Murri fellas just for being black. After a brief and terrifying encounter with the police Njunjul starts looking for a way out of the depressing monotony of community life. He has "lost the taste for knowing the old ways" and is wanting to experience "what is new and exciting on the other side of town".

This is where the journey begins for Njunjul. He is given the opportunity to go and live with his Aunt and Uncle in Sydney in the hope that it will break the cycle and give him a more positive out-



look on life. However things are slow to change for Njunjul, and he feels out of place with none of his family and friends around to keep him company.

Initially the city is exciting but Njunjul soon begins to feel trapped.

But with the help of his Aunt and Uncle, Njunjul finds his way through his own personal despair, and in doing so he also finds himself and his culture again.

The language of 'Njunjul the Sun' is very simple and easy to read.

The main character Njunjul speaks in pidgin/slang which is very entertaining and real.

The reader is easily fooled into thinking that the book is an autobiography and not in fact fictional. In short this book is about a journey of self-discovery and the trials and tribulations that we all encounter along the way. ●

Development and Indigenous Land: A Human Rights Approach

Published by: Human Rights
& Equal Opportunity
Commission

This free handbook has been designed to provide Indigenous Australians with information concerning their human rights to assist them during Indigenous land use negotiations with would-be developers.

It is intended to augment other nuts-and-bolts literature on Indigenous land use agreements produced by such bodies as the National Native Title Tribunal by setting out a series of negotiating principles based on the human rights of equality, protection of culture and self-determination.

Its contents stem from an Indigenous forum on mineral resource development held in Alice Springs in May 2002, which was co-hosted by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Bill Jonas and Griffith University's Professor Ciaran O'Faircheallaigh.

As such the handbook makes for quite a dry read, with a strong academic/legal tone throughout. However, its recent publication is timely given the rise of ILUA negotiations around the country as a means to bypass the morass of native title court proceedings. ●

It aims to set out standards of behaviour that developers should abide by during negotiations with Indigenous stakeholders, such as recognising cultural values, respecting the status of traditional owners and custodians, respecting Indigenous peoples' decision making processes and their right to be involved in environmental management.

The message is, if the developer can't abide by these requirements during the negotiating process, there are probably good grounds for doubting whether the developer will abide by any ILUA reached once the negotiations finish.

The handbook also contains extracts from a case study by Griffith University researchers into the profiles and policies of six mining companies and various land use agreements reached for resource projects around Australia.

There is some useful information here about the link between corporate social responsibility and business performance but, once again, the academic nature of the piece makes it hard to follow.

Still, the handbook will make a useful addition to any professional native title negotiator's reference library. ●

Out of the Desert - Stories from the Walmajarri Exodus

By Walmajarri Storytellers
Published by Magabala
Books

RRP: \$39.95

The stories in this collection come from the Walmajarri people, and tell of their epic journey from a traditional desert existence to station life and the trials and tribulations of modern life within one generation.

The Walmajarri people are from the northern Great Sandy Desert, south of the Fitzroy Crossing in Western Australia.

The stories are divided into four sections; stories of life in the desert, of first contact with white people and their animals, of leaving the desert and of adjusting to living on the station.

Each story is presented in the traditional language with an English translation, complete with biographies of the storytellers.

The collection is accompanied by beautiful illustrations and photographs of the country and the storytellers.

The stories are about the lives and experiences of the Walmajarri people.

One story tells of an old man's refusal to drink tea which he had never seen before. It is fascinating because of the real experiences which are conveyed, it pro-

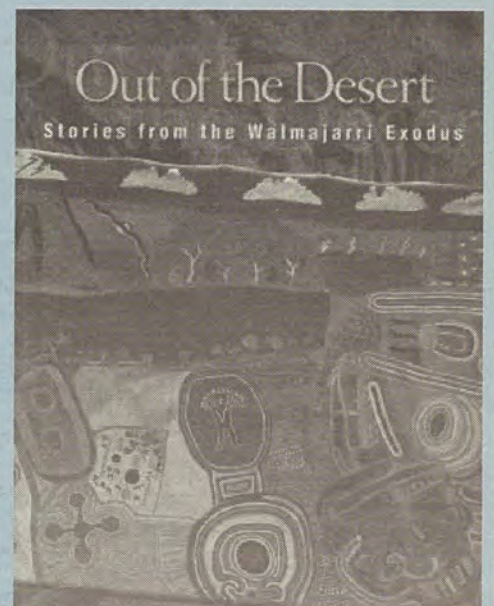
vides an amazing insight into how the Walmajarri people lived.

Many of the stories are about the search for water, enormous thirst and the collection of food.

Later in the book, there are stories of how it felt the first time that motor vehicles, aeroplanes and foreign cattle were seen.

The stories in the book do not have a moral tone, there is no lesson to be learnt from the stories. In most cases, there is just a story to be told of how food was found, or not found.

Though this is presented in the form of a story book, and would be loved by children, it is also a fascinating window into the traditional way that



people lived, and the impact and experience of those people from the Great Sandy Desert who met white people for the first time. ●

William Charles Wentworth

8/9/1907 - 15/6/2003

Australia's Indigenous peoples have had few more determined advocates than the late 'Bill' Wentworth, a man who argued passionately for their cause at the highest level of government in an era when such opinions were either ignored or greeted with hostility.

It was in large part because of his activism that a referendum was finally put to the Australian people in 1967 to count Indigenous Australians in the Census and to remove the prohibition on the Commonwealth from making special laws relating to "the Aboriginal race". This referendum passed with the largest majority ever recorded for constitutional change.

It was also during his tenure as Australia's first-ever Minister for Aboriginal Affairs from 1968 to 1971 that the groundwork was laid for the enactment of Aboriginal land rights legislation across the country. Aboriginal people in the Top End in particular benefited from Wentworth's advocacy via the *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act*, which was implemented by the conservative Fraser government in 1976 and remains the most powerful land rights



PHOTO COURTESY NEWS LTD

legislation in Australia.

Wentworth's activism sits oddly with his privileged background, coming as he did from a famous pioneer family at the heart of Australia's political establishment.

However, it is a fact that long before entering politics Wentworth had developed a great interest in Indigenous Australian history, culture and welfare. He was familiar with at least two Aboriginal languages and toured extensively through Aboriginal communities in the Outback at a time when Aboriginal people were virtually invisible to the wider Australian public.

Often travelling alone with his wife during these trips, he witnessed first hand the shocking conditions suffered by most Aboriginal people but also learned to respect the depth and vitality of the many Aboriginal cultures he experienced.

Despite being consigned to the backbench during the long Menzies era, Wentworth made sure his voice was heard, arguing in 1959 for a comprehensive effort by the Australian Government to record the culture of Australian Indigenous peoples. As a result, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (later to become

known as the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, or AIATSIS) was established in 1964.

Wentworth was also instrumental in the creation of the Council for Aboriginal Affairs in 1967, which under the leadership of Herbert 'Nugget' Coombs oversaw the dismantling of assimilationist government policies.

As a Minister in the Gorton government, Wentworth argued strongly in Cabinet for land rights legislation, the provision of federally funded equity for Aboriginal businesses, an Indigenous work-for-the-dole scheme and legislation to protect sacred sites. These were radical proposals for the late 1960s, but they have all subsequently come to fruition.

Wentworth was appalled by the terra nullius doctrine pronounced in the 1971 Gove land rights case and, once again, had the satisfaction of seeing it overturned in the High Court's 1992 Mabo decision.

Many Indigenous leaders, including ATSIC Chairman Geoff Clark and AIATSIS Chair Mick Dodson, have publicly mourned the passing of Bill Wentworth – a supreme individualist, a political maverick, and a true friend to Australia's Indigenous peoples. ●

MINING SURVEY – CAN YOU HELP?

Aroha Te Pareake Mead, a lecturer in Maori Business at the Victoria Management School, which is part of Wellington's Victoria University in New Zealand, is conducting an informal survey of Indigenous peoples' views on the viability of seeking a Code of Ethics from the global mining industry.

The survey questions are:

1. What are the first associations you have when you hear the term 'mining companies'? The association could be a word, an image, a movie, a song, a situation, a product – the first thing that you think of.
2. Do you think it would be worthwhile for Indigenous peoples to negotiate a Code of Ethics with the global mining industry?

All responses will be recorded anonymously.

Please send comments into Aroha Mead via email at Aroha.Mead@vucw.ac.nz, or by post to:

c/- Maori Business,
Victoria Management School,
Victoria University of Wellington,
PO BOX 600,
Wellington,
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND.



Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Commission

'A Fair Go for all Territorians'

The goal of the Commission is to promote equal opportunity and protect Territorians from unlawful discrimination.

We do this by education, community visits, providing information, investigating complaints and helping to settle complaints through conciliation or a hearing.

At present we receive very few complaints about discrimination from Aboriginal Territorians, especially from out bush. We suspect discrimination is happening, particularly when people come into town. We think people don't complain because they don't know about the law and how quickly complaints can be sorted out.

We have made a video to help Aboriginal Territorians understand what discrimination is and what can be done about it. The video has been translated into 12 Aboriginal languages.

If you have been discriminated against, want to see the video, want us to visit your community or would like to know more:

Phone: NT Freecall 1800 813 846
Darwin (08) 89991444 TTY: (08) 89991466
Alice Springs (08) 89515858 Fax: (08) 89813811

Helpline for Managers 1800 501 288

Postal: LMB22 GPO Darwin NT 0801
Email: complaint.adc@nt.gov.au
Website: www.adc.nt.gov.au

TIWI FOOTY



Grand Final action as a Pumarali Lightning player drives his team forward despite the attention from his Muluwurri opponents in the 2003 Tiwi Island Grand Final



"Play on!" - calls the Umpire as a Muluwurri player kicks long in the Tiwi Island Grand Final



It was a long, hard day for the Magpies



Two of the Best: Maurice Rioli and Michael Long

TIWI GRAND FINAL

30 March at Stanley Tipiloura Oval

Pumarali 2.4 5.7 8.9 11.10 (76)

Muluwurri 3.0 3.4 3.8 7.10 (52)