

# Land Rights

## NEWS



**One Mob, One Voice, One Land**

Vol 4 No 1 March 2002



**INSIDE: Tnorala handback,  
Sea Claims, Book up, Sports  
and more...**

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Kids from Ernabella having fun at the Yirara Bush Sports Carnival

## Land Rights NEWS

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### COVER PHOTO

SHEENA TURNER AND HER DAUGHTER  
KINTARA

# Ah Kit - telling it like it is

**In a major speech in March, John Ah Kit MLA, the Minister assisting the Chief Minister on Indigenous Affairs, set out the NT Government's agenda for Aboriginal affairs.**

Media reporting of the speech focused on his comments about the "brutal truths" of dysfunctional communities, a "cargo cult mentality" and an "ideology of despair" in some communities.

However Mr Ah Kit spent most of the speech defining how the new Labor Government's approach to Aboriginal affairs would be different from that of previous CLP governments and he outlined a range of positive initiatives.

He said: "The list of statistics demonstrating the dysfunction in our Indigenous communities is staggering, so much so that recounting them here in any detail would be pointless."

He said the Government must act: "If we do not turn things around for our Indigenous citizens we risk the creation of a permanent underclass for which future generations, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, will pay potentially overwhelming economic, social and political costs.

"Secondly, we must act on the basis of the principles of social justice to which the Martin Labor Government has committed itself and on which we will be judged."

The social justice principles are; equity, in which all citizens of the Northern Territory receive a fair distribution of economic resources and power; equality of

rights, in which equal, effective and comprehensive rights are available to all our people; access to essential services, in which there is fair access to employment, education, training, transport, health care, housing and child care; access to information, so as to protect privacy as well as ensure freedom of information; and the rights to full participation in social and community decision making which affects our citizens.

Mr Ah Kit, as the Minister responsible for local government, said that since self government, NT Governments' main dealings with Aboriginal communities had been through the local community government council structures it set up.

NT Governments pushed this structure on communities which gave it more power over them.

While community government promised self determination, it had failed in this and there was much suspicion in communities about the structure. But he said the failure was not the fault of hard-working community members or public servants who had tried to make things work

"Previous governments used Aboriginal local government as part of their trench warfare against the Land Rights Act, and used special purpose grants as political carrots around election times," Mr Ah Kit said.

"The long term economic basis of Aboriginal communities cannot rely on welfare supporting whole populations. It is critical that regional strategies be developed to provide the basis for local and regional economic development."

Mr Ah Kit said he wanted to turn around the local government reform and development agenda announced in 1998 to look at regional service delivery, instead of just amalgamating community councils. He will encourage NT and Commonwealth government agencies to pool funding for regional services and support "needs-based rather than submission-based funding of services supplied to Indigenous communities".

However Mr Ah Kit would ensure "the

CLC delegate Francis Kelly talks to Minister John Ah Kit at the CLC Council Meeting at Karlinjarinyi in March



## Honesty welcomed but solutions needed: Fry

**Responding to John Ah Kit's Ministerial statement, NLC Chief Executive Norman Fry welcomed his frank acknowledgement of the problems faced by Aboriginal communities.**

"I probably would not agree with him as to the extent of the dysfunction and despair in Aboriginal society, but I am grateful for his honesty in calling it as he sees it," Mr Fry said.

"What Mr Ah Kit's statement really points to is that Aboriginal people in the NT have been badly served by all levels of government for many decades. The failures at the Commonwealth and Territory level are manifest in the problems of health, education and housing.

"I particularly appreciate Mr Ah Kit's refreshing analysis of the weakness of NT local 'community' government with its inherent internal contradictions which lead to almost inevitable failure to deliver for its constituents.

"My only concern about the statement is that after mapping out a broad sense of

the scale of the problem in Indigenous communities, Mr Ah Kit's proposed solutions seem rather limited at this stage."

Mr Fry said a "whole of governments" solution was needed to deal with the problems Mr Ah Kit had identified.

"John Ah Kit refers to the Commonwealth Grants Commission's report on Indigenous funding, and the level of disadvantage suffered by Aboriginal people in the NT," he said. "The clear conclusion from the CGC's report is that past NT Governments have been able to spend Commonwealth money allocated on the basis of Aboriginal need on anything they liked.

"I hope and trust that our new Government will ensure that money earmarked to address Aboriginal disadvantage will be spent to alleviate those problems." ●

## Ruddock's Five-Point Plan

**The Federal Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Philip Ruddock, unveiled his "five point agenda" for the portfolio at the ATSIC Policy Conference on March 26.**

The five points Mr Ruddock put forward for debate were:

- Shifting the policy emphasis towards individuals and families.
- Replacing welfare dependency with economic independence to liberate the individual from poverty and disadvantage.
- Recognising that there is shared responsibility between Government and Indigenous people.
- Making substance abuse a central focus of attempts to improve Aboriginal health.
- Ensuring Indigenous-specific resources are targeted and distributed to areas of greatest need.

Mr Ruddock's speech also indicated a strongly negative view of the approach taken by Indigenous leaders in previous years.

Mr Ruddock spoke of a "culture of blame and victimhood," a "mindset of passive helplessness" and the "rhetoric of victimhood".

Delegates at the ATSIC Policy Conference reacted quickly to the proposed change in emphasis to individuals and families, rejecting the implied shift away from recognition of Aboriginal peoples' collective rights and interests.

However, other aspects of the speech were welcomed, particularly the proposal to respond to the Commonwealth Grants Commission's report on Indigenous Funding by sending a message to the States and Territories about their use of Indigenous funding.

In terms of Northern Territory issues, Mr Ruddock's speech appeared to send some signals about the direction of reform for the Land Rights Act.

The emphasis on "individual entrepreneurship" and "home ownership" could be interpreted as references to amendments to the Land Rights Act to weaken the control over Aboriginal land by traditional owners to benefit individuals. ●



# A road swap win for all

Traditional Owners have gained title over two redundant road reserves and tourists have gained better sealed access to Gosse Bluff west of Alice Springs in a road swap deal made possible by an amendment to the Land Rights Act.



**Bevan Malbunka and Max Stuart with titles to two road reserves returned to traditional owners**

Minister for Indigenous Affairs Philip Ruddock presented the titles of the road reserves to Ralph and Bevan Malbunka on behalf of members of the Ltalaltuma Aboriginal Land Trust and Max Stuart on behalf of the Haasts Bluff Aboriginal Land Trust at Hermannsburg on 6 April.

The handovers result from a road swap

agreement made in 1999 following two years of consultations and negotiations between the then NT Department of Transport and Works, the Traditional Owners and the Central Land Council.

The Traditional Owners agreed to surrender the land for the two new roads to the Northern Territory in return for two

roads that were no longer required.

The new roads are the bitumen road from Namatjira Drive at Tyler's Pass to Larapinta Drive at the Ipolera turnoff, and a new access route into the Tnorala (Gosse Bluff) Conservation Reserve. They were constructed and opened to the public in 2000.

The old unsealed roads returned to traditional owners are the former Namatjira Drive alignment from Tyler's Pass to Larapinta Drive near Hermannsburg, the former Tnorala access road and the Katapata Road from Tyler's Pass to Katapata Gap on Larapinta Drive.

Central Land Council Director David Ross said: "The road swap deal is a win for tourism and for traditional owners.

It shows too that the Land Rights Act can be amended amicably to benefit all parties.

"The new roads provide more direct and more comfortable routes for those travelling from Kings Canyon to Glen Helen.

"Access to Gosse Bluff in the Tnorala Conservation Reserve is now much simpler and more direct via a sealed road.

Traditional Owners gain greater privacy and better control over their land with tourist traffic now restricted to the new alignment of Namatjira Drive.

"This marks another stage of the Traditional Owners, the CLC and the NT Government working together to develop the Mereenie Loop Road and tourism generally."

The agreement required an amendment to the Land Rights Act in 2000.

Previously, the Act allowed the grant of redundant public roads that were through Aboriginal land granted after claim, but not roads through schedule 1 Aboriginal land (basically former reserves).

The Aboriginal land in this case is schedule 1 land.

Now, the Act allows redundant public roads to be granted to Land Trusts, whether the relevant Aboriginal land was granted after claim or was scheduled.



## No more commercial fishing in McArthur

Commercial barramundi fishing in the McArthur River will end from 1 July this year following an announcement by Northern Territory Fisheries Minister Paul Henderson on 13 March.

The traditional owners in the Borroloola region, who were consulted by Mr Henderson well in advance of his announcement, broadly welcomed the way in which the decision was made.

The previous CLP Government had announced its intention to close the McArthur River to commercial fishing ahead of the last year's Territory election but – as usual – had failed to consult Aboriginal people over its plans.

Traditional owner Ms Roddy Friday said she was particularly pleased the NT Government had acknowledged traditional owners' concerns over the potential adverse effects of an increase in recreational fishing as a result of the decision, especially in regard to the protection of sacred sites.

Ms Friday said the Government's move to appoint five Indigenous fishing officers in the Territory from next year – including one to be based at Borroloola – was also a positive development.

"We look forward to working with the Government to formulate a local code of conduct for recreational fishing in the

Borroloola region as well as in developing a longer-term management plan for the fisheries resource of the Northern Territory," she said.

However, Ms Friday said her community would suffer some loss of employment and income after 1 July because two Indigenous-owned commercial fishing ventures based in Borroloola would no longer be able to operate in the McArthur River region.

She said her community looked forward to promised Government assistance in developing alternative opportunities in and around Borroloola.

Northern Land Council Chief Executive Norman Fry agreed, saying that while he was generally pleased with the way the Government had managed the McArthur River closure he remained concerned about the loss of fishing income.

Mr Fry said the NLC was keen to work with the NT Government to find alternative economic opportunities for the local community, such as recreational fishing ventures and other tourism-related activities.

## Fresh gains in intertidal land rights decisions

Two recent decisions by Aboriginal Land Commissioner Justice Olney have delivered significant gains to Northern Territory land rights claimants, recognising for the first time that intertidal land rights exist even if adjoining land is not owned by Indigenous people

In the first claim decided on by Justice Olney in mid-March, traditional owners in the McArthur River and Manangoora regions won their claims over the intertidal zone of a wide stretch of Gulf of Carpentaria coastline running from Bing Bong Creek in the west to Robinson River in the east.

In a legal first, the judge recommended granting the intertidal claims despite the fact the traditional owners did not own the land stretching back into

the hinterland from the high tide mark.

In the second decision delivered towards the end of March, Justice Olney once again found in favour of the Maria Island, Maria Island Region and Limmen Bight River Land Claims, recommending to the Minister that large areas of intertidal zones as well as river banks and beds of the Limmen Bight River be granted to a Land Trust for the benefit of traditional owners.



# Cyanide kills in the Tanami



Emergency workers at the Tanami Highway spill site Inset: Ranger

**Roy Curtis, a Police Aid at Yuendumu, was returning from a hunting expedition in February with a carload of children when he came across hundreds of dead birds around a pool by the Tanami Highway about 400 km north west of Alice Springs.**

He suspected the water was poisonous and reported it to Neville Poulson, the CLC's Tanami region Coordinator who went to have a look.

"When I drove out there, I knew straight away it was some kind of poison, there was white stuff around the water. I thought about a cyanide spill, I'd seen the pools of it at the gold mines and knew it was dangerous. I put the window up and drove past slowly. We were scared too. I could see finches, drinking from the pool, flying to a tree then just dropping out, it was so dangerous," Mr Poulson said.

He rang the police at Yuendumu and then the CLC Mining Section. "I went to Warlpiri Media (broadcasting Pintubi, Anmatjere, Warlpiri - PAW - Radio) and asked the announcer to repeat each hour that no Yapa should go hunting around the Chilla

Well area, people had to be careful out there. A lot of Yapa go hunting around there, it's a most important place."

Mr Poulson said when they heard the story, "Old people were crying, not for the land but for the birds, they are sacred things there, so much, we love them. We live by them and we respect them."

About 800 Zebra Finches, 30 Pigeons, 15 Budgerigars, ten Singing Honeyeaters, 10 Fairy Martins, two Black Kites, a Spotted Nightjar and a Dingo were found dead within 70 metres of the cyanide pool.

The pool was 100 km to the west of Yuendumu along the Tanami Highway and 150 km to the east of the Granites gold mine.

A couple of hours after Mr Poulson's alert, a Granites gold mine crew arrived then Police from Yuendumu. Police closed off the area as a crime scene so Forensic Police could investigate. It seems that about 5000 litres

of diluted sodium cyanide was dumped by the road a few days before.

An Emergency Response Team from the mine began the clean up of the site on the Tuesday after Forensic Police had completed their investigation. The team first spread a chemical over the pool to neutralise the cyanide. Then they removed soil to a depth of half a metre and took it to the mine for further decontamination. They filled the hole with clean soil then pumped 30,000 litres of water mixed with neutralising chemicals from a tanker onto the site and let it soak in.

Testing of the area so far indicates the danger has passed and the cyanide has been neutralised. Further testing will be done after the next rains to check that no residue rises to the surface.

The Work Health Authority is now trying to solve the mystery of who caused the spill. They are testing water collected from the site which could point to who dumped the solution. The culprit may be liable to prosecution by the Police on a range of charges. The CLC has written to the Director of the Work Health Authority requesting a copy of its report which is expected in mid-April. CLC will keep communities informed as soon as there are further developments.

Cyanide is used in the gold mining process but strict procedures govern its storage, use and its transport by contractors to the Granites gold mine.

There have already been discussions about better ways of notifying communities and outstations in the event of another cyanide incident. The incident has highlighted the dangers of cyanide pollution and of heavy trucks and road trains travelling on the notoriously dangerous dirt highway.

## New environmental regime at Ranger



Uranium miner ERA Ltd has agreed with the Northern Land Council's demands for international certification of environmental management processes at its Ranger and Jabiluka operations in West Arnhem Land following what NLC Chief Executive Norman Fry described as the "very disturbing" series of uranium run-off incidents at both sites.

In a letter sent to NT Industries, Business and Resource Development Minister Paul Henderson on 4 April, ERA undertook to be compliant with the international ISO 14001 environmental management standard by July 2003 and to have gained accreditation by July 2005.

Mr Fry said the NLC had been obliged to take decisive action to address the loss of confidence in environmental management at the mine site. The Land Council had taken up the issue with ERA and its new owner, global mining giant Rio Tinto, as well as key regulators Mr Henderson and his Department of Business, Industry and Resource Development (DBIRD) and the Federal Office of the Supervising Scientist (OSS).

Mr Fry welcomed ERA's decision but said the regulators also needed to improve their performance.

"The Ranger mine is the responsibility of the mining company ERA in the first instance, but the Commonwealth and Northern Territory Governments also have a major responsibility for monitoring the company's performance and ensuring compliance with the highest environmental standards. The spate of incidents over the recent past indicates failure in each of the areas of responsibility," he said.

"First and foremost the mine is situated on a Commonwealth lease, and it is time that the Commonwealth Government started to ensure that adequate environmental management is implemented."

Mr Fry said there had been a number of operational errors that had led to high levels of contamination in waters adjacent to the site, and that ERA had failed to adequately detect the high levels within an appropriate time frame.

Although ERA discovered the high contaminant readings on February 11, the NLC was only informed two weeks later. The NLC immediately passed the information on to the traditional owners via officers of the Gungjehmi Aboriginal Corporation.

"The fact that ERA did not notify stakeholders, including the traditional owners, until two weeks after the event just compounded the problems," Mr Fry said. "ERA and the two governments involved must not lose sight of the fact that the traditional owners live in the area affected and rely on it for their physical and cultural sustenance."

It is now known that an alleged contaminant spill from the Jabiluka project area - which also made national headlines in early March - was based on misleading readings. However, while laboratory testing has since confirmed contaminant readings from the Jabiluka site remained at all times within acceptable limits, the NLC remains concerned at the lack of communication with traditional owners relating to the Jabiluka scare.



# Alukura leads way in new birthing agreement

An historic birthing agreement has been reached to encourage and improve Aboriginal women's health in Central Australia.



Heather Campbell, Valerie Burdett, Donna McMasters, Margaret Liddle, Margaret Orr, Jane Aagaard and Betty Carter

The Birthing Agreement is a collaborative effort between Congress Alukura and Alice Springs Hospital - two providers of antenatal and obstetric care in Central Australia.

Congress Deputy Director Donna Ah Chee says the newly signed agreement will ensure Aboriginal women are given greater choice and participation in their antenatal and obstetric care needs.

"It will encourage and allow Aboriginal women to exercise their right to incorporate cultural practices and beliefs during birthing by ensuring that Alukura midwives can maintain their skills so that Alukura birthing traditions

can be maintained and strengthened," Ms Ah Chee said.

The agreement is designed to encourage mutual respect and understanding between providers, which will give Alukura midwives visiting privileges at the hospital to manage the births of Alukura clients.

"It signifies opportunities for whole new growth and development in relationships between hospital services and community-controlled Aboriginal health services.

"We believe that increasing women's choice will help to keep women strong and therefore the culture strong," Ms Ah Chee said.

Primarily Alukura (meaning special place for women)



Maureen McCormack and Helen Kantawarra

was established to provide a culturally appropriately place for women to birth which incorporates law, culture and language.

One of the founding members of Alukura, Betty Carter was overwhelmed by the signing of the Birthing Agreement and said it marked a new era for Aboriginal women.

"We have all grown a bit more open now and we are both ready to learn from each other. We want to say thank you - we think that attitudes have changed a lot over the past 20 years," she said.

Northern Territory Minister for Health and Community Services Jane Aagaard, a signatory on the agreement, said local organisations would benefit greatly in terms of sharing knowledge and opportunities which could only lead to positive outcomes.



## Danila Dilba - the dream that never died

The establishment of an Aboriginal Medical Service in the city of Darwin has brought many benefits to the greater community of Darwin.

Since it first opened its doors to the public in 1991 Danila Dilba has travelled a path of continual growth. Ten years on it is a facility that not only provides Aboriginal people with a venue they can go to for treatment delivered with care and understanding, it also devotes itself to the training of future health professionals.

However, like many services of its kind, the path to success wasn't an easy trail to travel. Overcoming political negativity, financial restraints and general credibility for the services delivered were obstacles that had to be contended with.

Danila Dilba however has managed to negotiate these hurdles and in November 2001 celebrated 10 years of operation.

The story of Danila Dilba begins in the 1970s after the devastation of Darwin by Cyclone Tracey. The eventual evacuation of people from Darwin to southern capitals brought them into contact with similar medical services which themselves were in the early stages of operation.

Having seen the benefits these services could offer, many indigenous Darwinians returned home with the seed firmly planted in their minds of setting up a similar Aboriginal Medical Service in Darwin.

By 1979 the Aboriginal and Islander Medical Service (AIMS) was up and running, Aboriginal people now had access to greater medical services - but more needed to

be done.

Progress was gradual, but in 1985 positive signs began to emerge when for the first time, Aboriginal health workers were recognised as professional. The release of the first National Aboriginal Health Strategy in 1989 confirmed what many had feared - the health of Aboriginal Australians was in an appalling state. Something needed to be done to address this issue.

A public meeting in Darwin in 1990 adopted a positive approach. It was then that a working party was set up to explore options and avenues towards establishing an Aboriginal-controlled and operated Medical Service. By August of 1991 staff had been employed and a lease signed with the NT Government for office space in inner Darwin.

Finally, in November of 1991 when everything was in place, the doors were opened on Darwin's first Aboriginal community controlled health service - Danila Dilba Biluru Butji Binnilutlum Health Service. The Dream that had never died, had become a reality.

To celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary a limited number of folio-sized books have been produced retracing Danila Dilba's history from its modest beginnings through to the popular Darwin icon that it is today. Copies of this publication are available from the service itself. For further information phone Erin Lew Fatt on (08) 8936 1745.

## New CEO at Danila Dilba

Danila Dilba has welcomed the appointment of Ms Kez Hall to the position of Chief Executive Officer.

Ms Hall replaces the outgoing Pat Anderson who, after almost eight years in the job, is leaving the organisation to take up the position of Chairperson at Australia's peak Indigenous health body, the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation.

Danila Dilba's Executive Director, John Robinson, described Ms Hall's appointment as appropriate.

"It's appropriate that a strong local Aboriginal woman was stepping into the gap left vacant by Ms Anderson's departure," Mr Robinson said.

With major expansions planned, Ms Hall takes over during an exciting period.

Ms Hall sees her move as a natural progression for her prior work in the field of Indigenous Health.

"I have been working in the government health sector since 1997. This experience and the work I have been involved in at the national and international level in human rights, I believe, equips me to bring another set of skills and ways of working to Danila Dilba," Ms Hall said.

Kez Hall was destined to take up a role in indigenous governance. Her mother Violet "Vai" Stanton was a leader and pioneer in the struggle for Aboriginal rights.

Vai's contribution was later recognised when a Danila Dilba facility was named in her honour.

Ms Hall will take up her position with Danila Dilba on April 22 this year.

# IAD heading in the right direction



Meet the new IAD board members (from left to right): Betty Pearce, Chair Graeme Smith, Mavis Malbunka, Maureen Abbott, Neville Khan, Director Eileen Shaw, Greg McAdam, Harold Nayda, Owen Cole, Margie Lynch, Pat Dodds, Deputy Chair Debra Maidment, Philip Watkins, Donna McMasters and Jenny Hampton



May Berger

## Welcome aboard, John Berto

The Northern Land Council has boosted its executive team with the appointment of John Berto as Deputy Chief Executive Officer on 25 February.



John is a vocational training expert who rose to be a Senior Manager at the Federal Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs – where most recently he was in charge of the Darwin-based Indigenous Education Unit – before leaving to work in the training industry.

However, many at the NLC would remember John from his years as a Field Officer in Jabiru during the 1980s.

While John's main role during his time at Jabiru was to consult with land owners about mine proposals and other development initiatives, his skills as an automotive mechanic also came in very handy to Indigenous people in remote West Arnhem communities.

An Altywarra man whose mother was one of the Stolen Generation, John was born in Darwin but moved to Katherine in his teenage years where he completed his mechanical apprenticeship. He also managed to fit in a promising football career as a ruckman and centre half-forward with St Mary's, helping the club to a premiership win in 1983/84.

"I never won any Nicholls medals – the buzz for me was just to play A-grade," John said.

After his time in Jabiru, where he rose to the position of Senior Field Officer, John took up a six-month spell as the NLC's Executive Officer for all of Arnhem Land.

He consolidated his management skills still further when he took up an opportunity to go on exchange for a year to the Central Land Council as their Executive Officer for council membership.

In the early 1990s John started work for the Federal Department of Employment, Education and Training in Gove as the Senior Vocational officer for all of East Arnhem Land, eventually rising to be the Regional Manager of DEET's Gove office. In 1997 he moved back to Darwin.

John sees his main focus in his new role at the NLC as day-to-day management, helping to take some of the workload off Chairman Galarrwuy Yunupingu and Chief Executive Norman Fry.

"I'd like to make the organisation more transparent in terms of its processes, not just to government but to our constituents as well," he said. "One of the main issues we face as an organisation are the barriers between head office and our regional offices."

But despite the heavy workload the married father of three intends to keep indulging his passions of fishing, camping and just getting away from it all: "I've got a big family, relatives from the Tiwi Islands to Darwin, Katherine and Alice, so there's plenty of country to cover."

With a new board, director and many students completing studies the Institute for Aboriginal Development (IAD) is looking at a bright future ahead.

The new Chair, Graeme Smith, said: "I'm very pleased with elections and nominations to the new board at IAD and feel honoured to be selected as the Chair for 2002.

"We have a wonderful mix of youth, knowledge and experience taking in the different backgrounds and areas of expertise.

"I along with all members of the board look forward to a challenging and successful year ahead in fulfilling our commitments to the community who have entrusted us to continue steering IAD in the right direction for the benefit of the local Aboriginal community."

The newly appointed director, Eileen Shaw, says the staff and students are looking towards a bright future with



Brian Day, Shirelee Taylor and William Fitz

enthusiasm and excitement as IAD marks off the first semester for 2002.

A graduation ceremony was held in early March where students received certificates and diplomas in a number of courses such as work skills, administration training, Aboriginal management and tourism.

For more information on courses and training available at IAD, call 8951 1311.



Max Hayes, Jonathan Hayes and Rosabella McMillan



## Chariots of gold

**A new agreement with the Giants Reef company for mining on the Warumungu Land Trust will revive gold mining west of Tennant Creek, providing a range of employment and training opportunities.**

The Tennant Creek-based Giants Reef company has been an exploration company for most of its 15 years but is now moving into mining.

Giants Reef recently bought the Normandy Mining interests including the Warrego mine and processing works and has negotiated new agreements with CLC covering the Edna Beryl and Chariot deposits.

The new agreement will allow Giants Reef to develop the two mines and process the ore at Warrego processing works which closed down in 1999.

Giants Reef has begun development of the shaft to access the Edna Beryl gold deposit on a mining lease covering the old Phillip Creek mission block.

The Edna Beryl shaft mine last operated in the 1950s

and work to get it going again includes rehabilitating old shafts and upgrading the access road to and from the Stuart Highway.

Chariot will be an underground mine with a small open pit and it's hoped work on it will begin this year. It is expected to have a life of four years with extensions if further gold veins are discovered.

The company intends to hire staff locally, rather than being a fly-in fly-out operation, and the agreement has strong provisions covering protection of sacred sites and employment and training of local people.

At present Giants Reef has four exploration agreements on the Warumungu Land Trust and two other exploration agreements in the region on Aboriginal land. ●



CLC's Tennant Creek staff Ronald Plummer and Brenden Wyman with Norman Frank inspecting a new culvert through a swamp on the access road to Edna Beryl mine. The road has been upgraded as part of the new operation.

## Seabed claim heads to the High Court



**The NLC will find out later this year whether traditional owners can proceed in the High Court with their Beagle Gulf Area Land Claim, a test case of whether seabed in the Northern Territory's bays and gulfs can be claimed under the Land Rights Act.**

In 1997 the NLC obtained legal advice that the seabed of bays and gulfs is unalienated Crown land which may be claimed under the Act, due to the Northern Territory's original founding document which described the Territory as including "bays and gulfs". As a result claims were lodged to all bays and gulfs in the Northern Territory.

In 1998 Aboriginal Land Commissioner Justice Olney commenced hearing the Beagle Bay claim as a test case. He released his judgment in December 1999, in which he agreed with the Northern Territory Government's position that seabed in gulf and bays below low water mark cannot be claimed.

The NLC subsequently appealed that decision to the Full Bench of the Federal Court, which upheld Justice Olney's decision in a two-to-one majority ruling. The dissenting judge, Justice Merkel, said that all unalienated Crown land in the NT – including the seabed – may be claimed.

On 14 September last year the High Court granted special leave to hear an appeal from the Federal Court's decision. The appeal was heard on 6 March, and a decision is expected later this year. ●

## New seas team in place at NLC



Dean Yibarbuk, Djelk Ranger, with Ranger boat

**The NLC has backed up its push for Indigenous sea rights with the appointment of two new seas-focused officers within the organisation.**

Already on deck is Paul Josif, who started as the Caring for Sea Country Coordinator in February, while a new Seas Policy Officer is due to start in May.

The NLC will build on the gathering sea rights momentum across the Top End, which began in earnest

with the High Court's recognition last year of the Croker Island people's native title claim over their traditional sea country. The push continues with the Beagle Gulf test case for seabed rights in the Northern Territory's gulfs and bays set to go to appeal in the High Court later this year.

The NLC's *Caring for Sea Country Strategy* aims to build traditional owners' capacity to participate sea country management "so they can increasingly assert their traditional authority and rights over sea country."

NLC chairman Galarrwuy Yunupingu said: "The key is to work through existing Aboriginal resources and community organisations. For instance, they may already have a CDEP, ranger, environmental health or landcare group that they can use to build their sea country management skills base. Our job is to broker support for community-based initiatives, and help them get started."

"The vision is for Aboriginal people to play a controlling role in sea country management, and that includes comprehensive participation in such things as marine and coastal management, fisheries enterprises and tourism."

The NLC's work has been supported by the World Wide Fund for Nature.

"By linking up Indigenous and scientific knowledge you can get really good outcomes and good management," Mr Yunupingu said. "For instance, we could be developing commercial fishing methods that are more in line with traditional practice."

Already the NLC Caring for Country unit has embarked on participatory planning work with the Wadeye community to help it put together a coastal management plan.

It is also about to start sea country planning with the Mabunji Resource Centre and is working with the Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation and Djelk Rangers at Maningrida.

Otto Champion, a representative from the Djelk Rangers, gave an impressive presentation to the recent Indigenous Governance Conference in Canberra during which he spoke about their work and some of the barriers to sustainable utilisation of their sea resources.

After the conference he said he was looking forward to working with the NLC and the Top End network on sea rights, which takes in coastal people from the Kimberleys in Western Australia to Cape York in Queensland. ●



# Everyone's into book up

Some of the biggest financial organisations in Australia are examining how book up works, why people use it and how problems with it might be solved.

Book up is the practise of businesses, such as stores, giving short-term loans or credit to people.

As security, the business gets people to either have their social security cheque posted to the business where they then have to cash it, or the person hands over their keycard and PIN number so the business can take money directly out of the account, or people have to sign a blank account withdrawal form or a direct debit authority for the store keeper.

Book up has good and bad sides to it. For some people the store offering book up acts like their bank, letting them get goods on credit, meaning they don't have to carry cash and be humbugged by relatives.

The main problem for consumers is that the store or business has control of where and how the money is spent and often only the storekeeper has any idea of how much is owed or how much is being charged for goods and the book up service.

ATSIC is already investigating the issue with the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) in an inquiry into banking services in indigenous communities.

An ASIC report released in March said book up was most common among Indigenous communities in northern Australia but also happened in other states and territories.

The report also identified legal problems with book up. Is it legal to hand over a keycard and PIN to another person or what rights does the consumer have if the business with their cheque or keycard rips them off, or if someone else steals the keycard with the PIN from the store and

withdraws money?

Options for overcoming book up problems identified in the report include better financial and consumer education, better access to alternative banking and financial services and better ways of operating book up.

The last option of making book up work better for consumers is part of an approach by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC).

With a range of other organisations it has developed a voluntary "Storecharter" to address the obligations of stores to treat customers fairly.

The ACCC hopes stores will adopt the charter or communities might declare that their community store will operate according to the charter.

Under the charter, stores providing book up must give detailed receipts and keep a detailed record for each person's account including dates of purchases and how much the person owes.

The account has to be available for inspection by the consumer and anyone helping them or others such as Police or consumer affairs officials.

Stores cannot book up against a customer's account unless they have permission.

While the ACCC cannot support stores holding customer's bankbooks or credit cards, it says that if it does happen, stores have to keep them safe from being stolen and that the customer can have the book or card back when they want to.

The ACCC Chairman Alan Fells will launch the charter in Alice Springs in late April at a consumer workshop organised by ATSIC.



Asyrikarrak Kirim Rangers (Peppimentari) raising awareness of the weed mimosa at a community open day

## Caring for Country projects win major ABA funds injection

Sixteen community-based Caring for Country projects are soon expected to receive \$652,400 in funding from the Aboriginal Benefits Account (ABA).

The projects are located across the Top End, with the total value of the projects including community input (through CDEP) and support from other agencies totalling \$4,893,500.

The NLC's Caring for Country Unit late last year assisted a number of community-based land management groups to apply for ABA funding from mining royalty equivalents which are paid into the ABA by the Commonwealth Government under Section 64(4) of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act.

Although it has now been confirmed that Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister Phillip Ruddock has approved funding for the 16 projects, it is not known how long it will take the ATSIC unit which looks after the ABA to provide the funds to communities through the NLC's Caring for Country Unit.

The new funding for land management came from recommendations of the ABA Advisory Committee meeting in Darwin (4 & 5 December 2001). The Committee decided to recommend to the Minister that allocations under s.64(4) are made in accordance with the priorities of each of the four Land Councils. The NLC ABA Advisory Committee members requested the Minister to divide the NLC region's proportional allocation into Land & Sea Management, Major Economic Projects, and a Ceremonial Fund.

The decision to allocate a significant portion of the NLC's s.64(4) allocation to land and sea management is based on a recognition that a major challenge to Aboriginal landowners is to manage their

resources to protect their interests and create an economic base.

Increasingly, sustainable management of land and sea resources is being recognised by economists as having a significant capital or monetary value. The management of land which has so far avoided the worst effects of salination, over-clearing, weed infestation and feral animals is even more important. Both natural and cultural values can contribute to the development of regional and local economies, assisting Aboriginal people to get jobs and stay on country.

Seven of the 16 projects add to existing management of the weed mimosa. Another involves the setting up of a community HF radio network for land management, while others assist land management programs in the Victoria River District, build organisational capacity for regional fire management in Western Arnhem Land and Ngukurr regions and help conservation of traditional ecological knowledge in the Ngukurr region.

A further \$1.6 million has now been allocated for new land management projects.

The NLC is still waiting to hear whether the Minister approves a new system which will reduce delays and increase regional autonomy in decision making. Notices will be placed in *Land Rights News* and other relevant media, and information will also be sent to community organisations. For more information please contact Michael Storrs, Executive Officer, NLC Caring for Country Unit on 08-8948 1338.

## Councils under scrutiny

The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) is examining the four Northern Territory Land Councils' performance in serving the interests of core constituents - Aboriginal landowners and native title claimants throughout Land Council areas.

The audit is the result of a directive from Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister Phillip Ruddock.

The Land Councils welcome the opportunity to demonstrate they are efficient and effective in fulfilling their obligations under the Land Rights Act and the Native Title Act. The Audit Office will also review ATSIC's administration of the Aboriginal Benefits Account.

The audit will begin in early April and

will not be completed until year's end, with the following areas under close scrutiny:

- Legislation - does an appropriate framework exist to ensure compliance with all laws and regulations?
- Planning and resource allocation - are these in line with the objectives of relevant legislation and Land Council priorities?
- Service delivery - are appropriate financial management systems in place to meet internal and external requirements?
- Performance information - are systems in place to produce financial and non-financial information for effective monitoring of performance?
- Procedures, guidelines and training - are appropriate processes in place?

# Army and Bradshaw Traditional Owners close in on land use deal



Army units such as these could soon be a regular feature of the Bradshaw landscape



**A cooperative relationship that has existed for many years is likely to continue as the Australian Army and Traditional Owners in the Northern Territory finalise an Indigenous Land Use Agreement for Bradshaw Station, located south west of Darwin.**

Bordered by Innesvale Station, the Victoria and Fitzmaurice Rivers, Bradshaw was purchased by the Army for use as a defence training facility.

Construction of a bridge over the Victoria River is already under way with further development scheduled to take place on Bradshaw. Once operational, the facility will consist of nine training sectors, two airstrips, personnel camps, amphibious landing areas and a variety of storage depots.

Defence exercises are expected to vary from minor contingents of from five to 15 personnel to large forces of 500 or more, with major exercises possibly involving foreign defence forces likely to take place every two to three years. The majority of training however is expected to take place during the Top End's "Dry Season".

But Bradshaw will not be totally lost to Traditional Owners, with arrangements being made to provide access to the extent that the area is not used by Defence for

training. There is some guaranteed access for traditional, ceremonial, hunting and fishing purposes.

"Traditional Owners consider access as a very important issue," an NLC spokesperson said. "They do have plans to conduct a variety of activities on Bradshaw, but they also understand and support Defence's need to adopt the necessary safety practices."

An essential part of the agreement is the consultation of Traditional Owners on matters relating to the protection of sites of significance.

"This is a big issue with Traditional Owners. And fortunately Defence is keen to work with people on preserving the integrity of these areas," the NLC spokesperson said. As construction of Bradshaw ramps up, it's hoped that employment, training and business opportunities will also flow the way of Traditional Owners. For now though, talks still continue, with an agreement expected to be finalised soon. ●



Jacob Presley from Ti Tree and Perry Langdon from Yuendumu using their new equipment



## Weeds management on the go in the centre

**The Central Land Council Director David Ross says the launch of the weed management program in Yuendumu, 290 kilometres north west of Alice Springs, gives local Aboriginal people the ability to take control and manage the rapid infestation of noxious weeds in their community.**

Mr Ross says the new program has been made easier with the help of a weeds equipment library which allows community members to actively get involved with weed management work on their country.

"The program aims to provide communities like Yuendumu with training and equipment to identify and control weeds locally," Mr Ross said.

"The CLC will continue to actively promote weed management on Aboriginal land with ongoing promotional material helping community members to easily identify and control various weeds in their area.

"Noxious weeds in our communities throughout central Australia are becoming increasingly destructive to our native flora and fauna.

"CLC staff have been working closely with traditional owners and Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (DPIF) to combat noxious weeds through positive eradication programs involving community members and appropriate equipment to enhance the long term benefits."

The weeds management program has acquired a weeds equipment library which includes two new quad bikes and spray equipment obtained through the joint program with CLC, Indigenous Land Corporation and DPIF.

The CLC and DPIF will jointly oversee the program with training and monitoring of the weeds equipment library over the next four years.

It is envisaged that the weeds equipment library will be available for loan by communities throughout central Australia who identify a weeds problem in their region.

Communities are encouraged to contact the CLC Land Management unit or DPIF if they want to find out more about the weeds program and equipment library. ●

# Port Keats answers call to arms



**In an effort to ensure that the Australian Army maintains a pool of motivated young Australians from which to draw its manpower, the North West Mobile Force (NORFORCE) is currently identifying young people from remote communities who exhibit the necessary qualities to be a soldier in today's modern Army – and the early signs are positive.**

Plans are well advanced to introduce a cadetship program into selected communities in the Northern Territory and north-west Australia, and with a group of hopefuls already waiting to join the ranks, its success seems assured.

The Top End community of Port Keats is one location keen to join the program with up to 40 hopefuls ready to go.

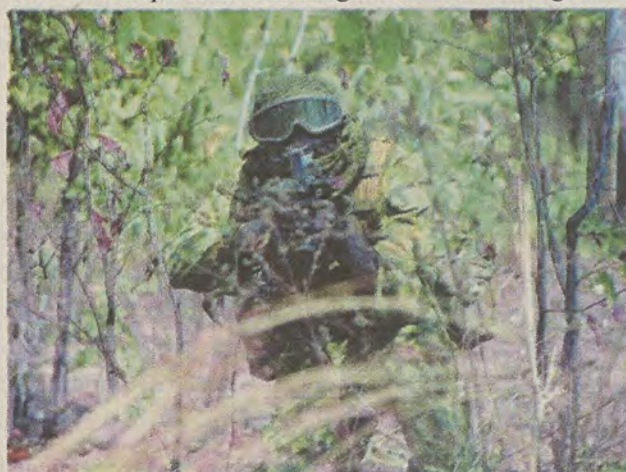
Senior community members have been instrumental in helping set up the program. They see the benefits and consider the program to be an ideal opportunity to combat boredom and inactivity among the community's youth.

The cadetship program will not only offer a passage to the regular Army, but also aims to provide life skills for participating youths and build upon what is already considered to be a strong relationship between the Army and Aboriginal people in the NT.

Intended to be more than just a diversionary program for bored youths, the program also allows for racial

interaction and the sharing of cultural practices and values.

Being a part-time soldier is popular with the NT's large Aboriginal population, particularly their involvement with Norforce where they have a strong presence, making up more than 40 per cent of the Regiment's total contingent. ●



Aborigines make up 40 per cent of Norforce troops

# A second paper for Aboriginal Australia

It's taken two years of planning, but at last Australia has a second newspaper devoted to Aboriginal issues with the launch on 27 February of the *National Indigenous Times*.

Managed by Owen Carriage, the Indigenous entrepreneur who started the *Koori Mail* 10 years ago, the new publication will be published every two weeks and aims to differentiate itself from its competitor by concentrating more on mainstream issues. Three issues have been published already with a fourth due out as *Land Rights News* went to press.

Editor Chris Graham said that while the paper would be seeking to attract the same audience as the *Koori Mail*, it also hoped to broaden its appeal beyond the Indigenous community.

"Indigenous people are never asked about immigration or GST or parliamentary privilege or any of those sorts of issues. We're going to be covering them," he said.

"We'd also love to look at how other Indigenous peoples in other parts of the world have grappled with the problems of dispossession."

While Chris himself is non-Aboriginal, the paper's representatives in Victoria and

South Australia are both Indigenous.

"The way forward for Indigenous people is partnerships between black and white – our future cadet journos will be mainly Indigenous," he said. "Our first cadet, probably to cover sports, will be employed in the very near future."

Chris said the N.I.T.'s ultimate goal was to have a reporter based in every State and Territory as well as in major regional centres such as Alice Springs and Broome. He said the paper would also welcome contributions from Aboriginal people across Australia.

The *National Indigenous Times* is based in Bateman's Bay and has given itself six months to find its feet. Chris said the paper hoped to have a 20,000-strong circulation base within a year, although much depended on the ability to achieve distribution into remote areas.

"Remote distribution is a very, very difficult thing to do. We're pinning our hopes on the community stores – if they can get food in there, we should be able to get our papers in there," he said.

Further down the track the paper will look at putting out an on-line edition, although at this stage the focus is very much on producing the paper with the limited resources to hand.

In the meantime, if you've got something to write about or simply want to make contact with the paper, you can email Chris at [editor.nitimes@bigpond.com](mailto:editor.nitimes@bigpond.com).

Meanwhile, good news for *Koori Mail* readers living in remote areas! The paper has gone online with the March 20 edition, with all editions of the paper free online until June 30 at [www.koorimail.com](http://www.koorimail.com). After that there will be a special subscription package available for web access.



Editor Chris Graham with first issue

## Headline complaint upheld

The Australian Press Council has upheld a complaint against *The Australian* newspaper about a headline "Scheming blacks behind fires: farmers".

The story in September last year was about fires on pastoral properties around Tennant Creek.

It had comments from three unnamed pastoralists blaming Aboriginal people for an outbreak of fires on pastoral properties.

It was suggested the fires were part of a campaign to drive the leaseholders off the properties so they could be claimed. "It's orchestrated Aboriginal terrorism," one pastoralist was reported saying.

CLC Director David Ross was also quoted suggesting the fires were the result of two good rainy seasons that had left stations with heavy fuel loads. "I've heard of some bent and twisted people, but this is a new twist to me," Mr Ross said.

"I'll admit Aboriginal people do light fires, and do it for good reason, but to do it to claim native title is something I find absolutely ridiculous." A firefighter was quoted saying the fires were deliberately lit by "twisted white people".

Two women from Northern NSW gathered 29 signatures on a letter complaining mainly about the headline and sent it to *The Australian* newspaper and the Press Council.

The letter said in part that: "Terms like 'scheming blacks' discriminate and dehumanise Aboriginal people" and later that, "this language contributes to the continuation of racism."

The Press Council ruling said: "Given the nature of the headline compelling evidence could have been expected to support the assertion made in it. In fact, the only evidence offered was the opinion of an unnamed leaseholder, and the views of an unnamed worker and a firefighter."

"The headline, the paper said, 'was a reflection of the main points of this particular story and quite legitimate'.

"The Council does not agree. In the context of this case, the phrase 'scheming blacks' was not only insensitive but perpetuated the racist notions of 'them' against 'us'."

The Press Council has no powers but newspapers or magazines are expected to voluntarily publish its findings.

*The Australian* did publish the finding but said it "completely rejects" the decision. It said: "The paper was not creating an 'us and them' situation, we were legitimately reporting on an 'us and them' situation which already existed."

If *The Australian* had published the original letter of complaint the Press Council would probably not have become involved.

However it seems the letters editor didn't see the letter because it was just addressed to the editor. It should be noted that a sub-editor wrote the headline, not the Darwin-based journalist who wrote the story.

If you have a complaint about a media story the Press Council prefers you to take it up with the media outlet concerned within three months.

It is generally only if you are dissatisfied with the media's response that the Press Council will get involved.

Go to the Press Council's website [www.presscouncil.org.au](http://www.presscouncil.org.au) for details of how to make a complaint or to read its findings.

One of the Council's statements of principles is: "Where individuals or groups are singled out for criticism, the publication should ensure fairness and balance in the original article."

"Failing that, it should provide a reasonable and swift opportunity for a balancing response in the appropriate section of the publication."

## New magazine targets indigenous entrepreneurs

The flood of new indigenous media publications shows no sign of abating with the launch on 12 March of Australia's first ever national business magazine aimed at Aboriginal readers – *Black Business*.

The magazine is published by Western Australian-based and Indigenous-owned company Black in Business, which until now has mainly organised and

hosted seminars and conferences for Indigenous entrepreneurs.

Editor Lera Bennell said the full-colour magazine would cater for the

special needs of indigenous business, many of which operated at the grass roots level.

"I believe, and hope others agree, that *Black Business* will fill that gap by providing an avenue for enterprises across this country to freely share their stories of success and triumph, as well as the heart ache and hard lessons they have experienced along the way," she said in the opening issue.

To contact *Black Business*, call 08-97218331 or email [lera@blackbiz.com.au](mailto:lera@blackbiz.com.au)

### NAIDOC Art Award

National Indigenous NAIDOC Art Award 2002 \$5000 cash prize

The winning artwork will be seen around Australia in the form of a NAIDOC poster.

For information contact ATSIIC on 02 6121 4951 or visit their website at

[www.atsic.gov.au](http://www.atsic.gov.au)

Entries close on Friday 17 May, 2002.



Richard Cole got a start in the opening round

## Territory's AFL young guns make their mark

The Northern Territory's reputation as a footballing nursery was further enhanced during the Australian Football League's (AFL) opening round of the 2002 season when Territorian Richard Cole made his AFL debut for the Collingwood Football Club.

Originally from Alice Springs, the 18-year-old Cole is the latest in what's steadily becoming a long line of Territorians to make their mark on Australia's premier football competition.

Though limited in game time and possessions, Cole showed he has what it takes to succeed in the top flight, even managing to draw praise from one experienced commentator on the night, who liked what he saw in the youngster.

Selected as Collingwood's number one draft pick and 11<sup>th</sup> overall in last year's national draft, Cole's efforts to take the field for the first game of the season are an indication of the high regard the Magpies have for the robust utility.

An off-season elbow operation threatened to sideline the youngster for several weeks. But hard work and dedication to a rehabilitation program has brought its own rewards.

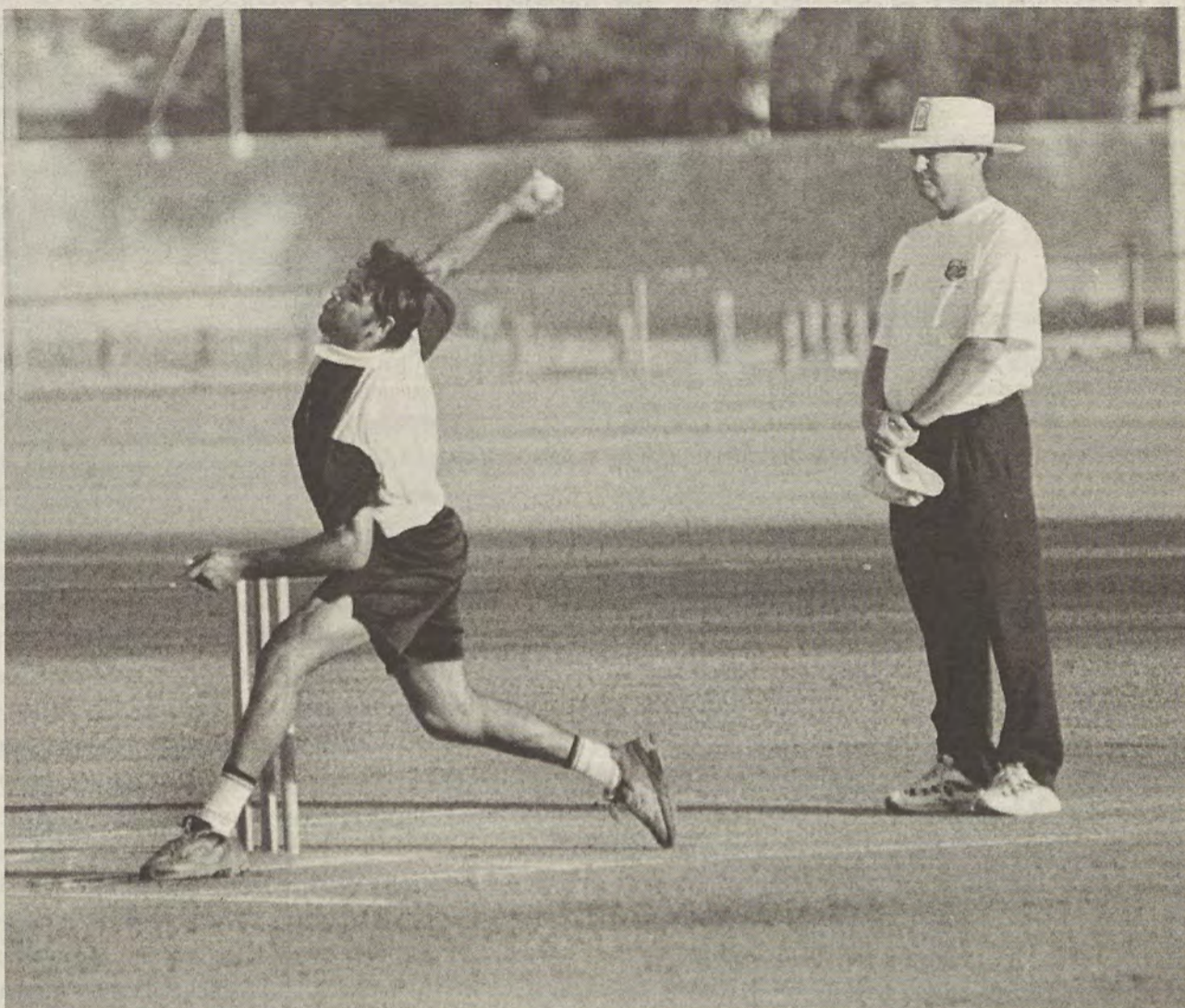
Recruited for his aggression and desire to win the ball, Richard is also well skilled, possessing the ability to dispose of the football equally as well from both sides of his body.

At just over six foot in the old scale and tipping the scales at 75 kilograms, Richard's development as an AFL footballer is just beginning.

His debut for the Magpies now takes the number of Territorians listed at AFL clubs to 19.

For the record, the Magpies lost by 37 points. ●

# Imparja Cup – Indigenous cricket growing strong



Action from the recent Imparja Cup Cricket Challenge Photo: Centralian Advocate

**It's the classic Australian story. A group of friends get together and discuss an idea involving some form of camaraderie or competition. From that discussion a major event develops - well, the story of the Imparja Cup is no different.**

What initially began as an opportunity for two communities to get together for an annual cricket challenge has now developed into a national tournament. And the Australian Cricket Board (ACB), along with the Northern Territory Cricket Association (NTCA) believe they've backed a winner.

A three-day all-Indigenous cricket carnival, the Imparja Cup has grown significantly since its introduction as a shield match between two Territory centres in 1994, to now be a major fixture on the Australian cricket calendar contested by 12 teams from across the country.

One individual who's been a major player in the tournament's expansion is NTCA Cricket Officer Greg Aldam.

"From originally having two teams, then growing to six, to finally seeing 12 teams take the field was excellent," Greg said.

Played during the four-day Easter break, the format for the tournament is simple. Teams are split into two competitions based on a Super 8's format, with eight players per side and 14-over innings. The result – some very entertaining cricket.

"The overall standard was excellent," Greg said. "And

the level of power hitting from some of the players was exceptional. There were a lot of boundaries hit."

Keen to develop a profile in remote communities, the ACB regards the Imparja Cup as an ideal vehicle to achieve this goal.

"The Board has significantly increased its investment into Indigenous cricket to help establish new structures, increase participation and improve facilities," ACB Chief Executive Officer James Sutherland said. "The ACB is

**“From originally having two teams, then growing to six, to finally seeing 12 teams take the field was excellent.”**  
GREG ALDAM

dedicated to ensuring cricket is increasingly accessible to Indigenous Australians and with the support of the NTCA, this carnival helps develop a profile for the

game in these communities."

As the Imparja Cup grows, it's hoped the event will continue to encourage more Indigenous cricketers to pick up a bat and ball and become involved with the game at some level.

With backing from Australia's peak cricketing body and their NT flag bearer, who knows? Perhaps names such as Purantutameri or Kerianua will one day be just as difficult for cricket commentators to pronounce as those of the Indians or Sri Lankans. ●



The ATSIC XI struggled against the PM's XI's fierce bowling attack and strong batting line-up

## ATSIC XI bowled out but unbowed

**The Prime Minister's men may have won last month's cricket match with the ATSIC Chairman's XI, but Indigenous cricketer Ken Vowles – one of two players in the ATSIC team who started their careers in Darwin – reckons the feeling of superiority may prove short-lived.**

Ken, a Gurindji man who has played for Australia at the under 19 level and currently captains the Wests Club in Alice Springs, said the level of interest in cricket in remote communities was "simply amazing".

The NT Cricketer of the Year for 2000 said his role on the Australian Cricket Board's Indigenous Working Party had opened his eyes to the potential of Aboriginal cricketers. When Ken isn't playing cricket he spends much of his time travelling to remote communities to promote the game.

"Historically it's been far easier for these kids to play footy than cricket because of all the equipment you need for cricket, but with help from the NT Cricket Association the game is really picking up out there," he said. "There are some enormously gifted natural talents around."

The match – only the second annual outing between the two teams – was played on 8 March at Canberra's Manuka Oval with the PM's XI taking home the trophy, a multi-coloured cricket bat in a glass case commemorating the first tour of England by an Aboriginal cricket team in 1868.



The ATSIC XI, with ATSIC Chairman Geoff Clarke and Prime Minister John Howard at centre

"Realistically we were up against first class players, the sorts of guys who are up-and-coming Test players," he said. "We also lost the toss, which on that wicket was a good one to win."

For the record, the ATSIC Chairman's XI made a meagre 144 for the loss of nine wickets in their allotted 40 overs, the highlight being an undefeated knock of 74

by New South Wales State player Matthew Bradley.

Ian Redpath, the other Darwin player in the ATSIC XI, bowled five overs but was unsuccessful against the PM's XI's strong batting line up. The PM's XI cruised comfortably to victory, winning by eight wickets inside 24 overs despite the loss of opener Chris Simmons for just six off the bowling of Glen Martin.



From left to right: Kylie Parfitt , Inawantji Scales , Cheryl Wilson - holding daughter Shania - and Jodie Campbell

## Young Aboriginal women take steps towards a career in nursing

**Four young inspiring Aboriginal women are taking steps towards furthering their careers in health.**

The four students have begun their tertiary studies in nursing and have moved to Alice Springs from communities as far as Pipalyatjara and Santa Teresa.

Cheryl Wilson from Santa Teresa has been a health worker in her community for seven years and decided to take the next step into studying nursing.

She says her role models were her aunts who were health workers and teachers in the community.

"Anyone can do it no matter where they are from, I mean it's hard enough being Aboriginal but when you start people start to respect you," she said.

"It would be good to see more Aboriginal nurses at the hospital," said Cheryl.

Cheryl hopes to gain experience and work in different areas of the Alice Springs hospital and then go back to her community.

The four women are studying a Bachelor of Nursing with the Centre for Remote Health in Alice Springs through the Northern Territory University.

Cheryl says that the community nurses, lecturers and other students provide strong support to the women in their studies.

The students believe it's an important step in their careers which more young Aboriginal people should get involved in if they are interested in a career in health.

The students are studying a mixture of full time and part time studies and find the work load hard but are happy with their studying progress.

The students are looking forward to work placement at the hospital later this year as part of their course. ●

## High-speed link for Bush

**High-speed internet access is rapidly becoming a reality for remote Indigenous communities throughout the Northern Territory as Telstra continues to roll out its Big Pond two-way satellite service.**

Communities across Arnhem Land are currently being connected and over the next six months people living in the Ngukurr, Borroloola and the Victoria River districts, Tiwi Islands, Bulman and Central Australian regions will also have their chance to sign up.

Those choosing to take up the offer receive a \$4,000 installation package free of charge, comprising a satellite dish and all cabling, which is theirs to keep. In return Telstra requires subscribers to have a Telstra phone line, a reliable power supply and a computer which meets the Big Pond specifications.

Subscribers also have to sign up for an 18-month

contract with prices ranging from \$18 per month for individual users to \$60/month for business enterprises. There will be no line rental fees as all information is sent and received by satellite.

Blue booklets containing the Big Pond information, including details on when installations are due to take place in the various regions, should already have been delivered to community centres.

However, businesses and community organisations that may have missed out in areas where installations have already taken place can apply for installations by the end of May. For details, call 1800 772 346. ●

## Congress clinic awarded full accreditation



The Central Australian Aboriginal Congress' Medical Clinic in Alice Springs has recently been endorsed by the Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited (AGPAL).

After an exhaustive examination of all aspects of the clinic's services by AGPAL surveyors it has been awarded full accreditation using the standards of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. Congress is one of 26 NT clinics with full accreditation out of 43 public clinics registered with AGPAL.

The award in February gives the clinic accreditation for the next three years. Clinical Services Manager Trish Hall said: "We are always on the look out for ways to improve our services, being assessed against the AGPAL system gave us a good opportunity to do a top to toe review of our practices."

For the review staff re-examined the clinic's physical environment, reception and clinical procedures, the handling of patient and medical records, confidentiality protocols, patient feedback and systems for quality improvement. ●



# Bush tucker heads south

Local bush tucker grown in town camps around Alice Springs will head to markets down south thanks to a new exciting Indigenous Food Farm initiative involving Tangentyere Council.



Indigenous Food Farm Supervisor Glen Oliver with the first lot of bush tomatoes

Tangentyere Council has been working closely with a South Australian nursery to establish a commercial enterprise in bush foods.

It could also create economic opportunities for many regional communities.

The trial bush tucker plots mainly have bush tomatoes growing in them as well as a number of other bush tucker foods being trialled such as wild passionfruit, wild cucumber, bush bananas, yams and bush potatoes.

The first crop of bush tomatoes has been harvested and sent south to be distributed by Reedy Creek Nursery to restaurants and Coles Myer agencies.

Tangentyere CDEP Coordinator, Peter Cowhan says the project is still at the research and development stage but he is overwhelmed by the demand from potential markets.

"We are already starting to expand plots and are working on a major commercial block at one of the town camps due to the high demand," Peter said.

The project is offering local communities the opportunity to be involved in a commercial enterprise and revenue generated from this will be put back into the town camps.

The bush tucker project is already bearing more than fruit with Indigenous Food Farm supervisor Glen Oliver gaining national recognition at the ATSI CDEP awards last month.

Glen won the ATSI CDEP Individual

Participant Award (male) in recognition of his dedication and leadership qualities.

The wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm Glen Oliver displays is a clear indication of the benefits this commercial enterprise will have for the local community.

Glen Oliver has worked with the Tangentyere Council CDEP program since 1997 and has commenced his certificate III course in horticulture at Centralian College.

As the Indigenous Food Farm supervisor, Glen ensures other CDEP participants are involved in the project and he supports them with their horticulture studies.

"I get other CDEP participants twice a week to help with the bush tucker blocks. We maintain the growth of the plants and make sure there are no weeds," Mr Oliver said.

Glen's expertise in bush tucker is continually growing with assistance from Reedy Creek Nursery, the partners in the project.

"If it looks like any insects are eating the fruits I take photo's of it and email them to the nursery down south.

The bloke there, Mike, then contacts me about what pesticides to use to kill them off and the organic way to kill them off," Glen said.

The bush food project has attracted the attention of other communities throughout Central Australia with places such as Tennant Creek wanting to know more about the initiative.

# Larrakia begin to build the dream



Members of the Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation (LNAC) are not standing by and waiting for something to happen.

They've taken the initiative and the wheels of progress are now well and truly turning as they pursue development opportunities in the new suburb of Rosebery in Darwin's Palmerston region.

The nearly 50 hectares of land was acquired by the LNAC following a landmark commercial lease agreement with the NT Government last year. LNAC Coordinator Kelvin Costello says the organisation is on the fringe of announcing some major capital works programs.

"There are a few details still to be worked out, but the tendering process to commence work is expected to be finalised in the next month," Mr Costello said.

While work is also being done to secure employment and training opportunities for Larrakia and other indigenous peoples,

negotiations are also taking place with a prominent real estate firm for the packaging and promotion of early land sales.

Meanwhile, Larrakia members have already begun the task of considering names for streets and parkland.

"It will be the only suburb in the Greater Darwin area that will have reference to traditional Larrakia names," Mr Costello said. With so much activity happening in and around them, the mood of the Larrakia is positive.

"People are keen and anxious to get on with developing their economic and cultural futures," Mr Costello said. "With the success of Rosebery, portions of the East Arm Port Facility, a Cultural Centre planned for Bullocky Point and the favourable outcome with the Kenbi Land Claim, the Larrakia people are feeling positive about the future."

A ground-breaking ceremony at Rosebery has been tentatively scheduled for August. Total development of the suburb isn't expected to be complete until 2007.

# Railway work, training builds a head of steam



With the Dry season almost upon us it's full steam ahead on the Alice Springs to Darwin railway project, with work and training flowing through to Indigenous people in the Katherine and Adelaide River areas.

The NLC is beginning to close in on its target of 50 employment and 100 training positions which it negotiated with main contractor AdRail, with 37 workers already placed in labouring and plant operation roles stretching from Adelaide River in the north to south of Katherine.

A further 62 trainees had either completed or were in the process of completing their courses as at 22 March.

And the good news doesn't end there. Katherine sleeper factory operator Austrack entered full production in February and has now employed 28 Aboriginal people out of its total workforce of 52 – an Indigenous employment rate of greater than 50 per cent.

Subcontractors Morris and Roche are also doing their bit with 12 Indigenous workers employed in a variety of service roles at Morris, while quarry operator Roche has taken on four Indigenous staff out of its total workforce of 20.

Earthworks along the railway corridor

are due to be completed by the end of this year, while the first track was laid at Katherine in a ceremony on 8 April.

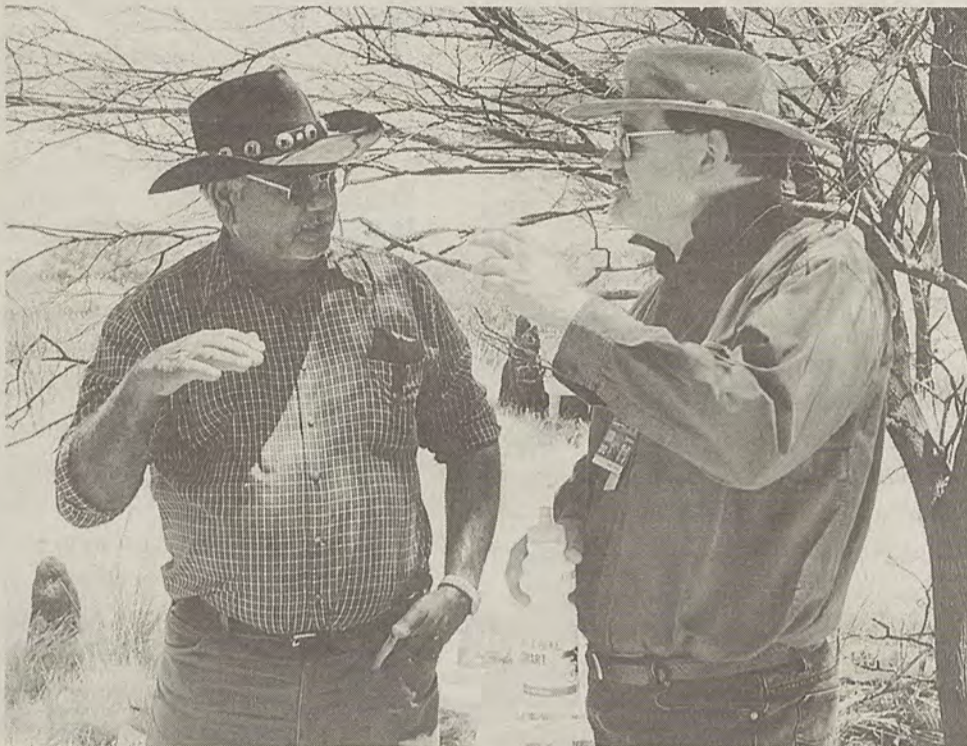
Meanwhile the NLC's employment database now has more than 300 names registered.

NLC Railway Project Coordinator Sean Lange said more registrations were still needed, as the database is intended to have a life beyond the railway project with projects such as new mines and gas pipelines on the horizon.



Railway workers celebrate first track  
Photo: Katherine Times

# Telephones - a lifesaver



Kumanarra Breaden (left) discusses phone problems with a Telstra representative

**"Our phones always not working, always playing up, no dial tone you got to wait for five or ten minutes sometimes, keep waiting and waiting and the phones always cut out, we always had problems with our phones at Wunmara," CLC Chairman, Kumanarra Breaden talking about phone problems at his homelands, south of Alice Springs.**



Mr Breaden is just one of many community members who is fed up with constant phone problems, while many other communities are still waiting to even get a basic telephone service.

The Central Land Council has been talking with Telstra to improve the basic telephone services in remote Aboriginal communities and outstations throughout Central Australia.

CLC council member and Tangentyere Executive Officer, William Tilmouth, says a basic phone service like a pay phone is critical to many Indigenous people's lives.

"In many cases a payphone is truly a lifesaver. There is often violence and many accidents that are life-threatening occurring on the camps. In these circumstances assistance is required from police, ambulance, fire brigade and night patrol. Without access to a basic phone service people's lives are at risk," said Mr Tilmouth.

CLC Policy Officer, Philip Watkins says that for far too long delegates have been saying how essential a basic telephone service is for their community or outstation during police and medical emergencies.

"Having no access to a basic phone service limits people's ability to maintain cultural and family ties, and compounds the inadequate delivery of essential services to remote communities," said Mr Watkins.

Problems faced in remote Aboriginal

communities include having no basic phone access, public phones not working, long waiting times for repairs and difficulties contacting Telstra.

The CLC has been participating in a number of Telstra forums and is involved with Telstra as an advocate for consumer rights.

CLC assists people to access Telstra services and deals with land access matters such as site clearances and leases of portions of Aboriginal Land Trusts for telecommunications infrastructure.

Telstra representatives at the CLC meeting in March said they were aware of the problems faced in remote areas but needed help in fixing the problems.

Stewart Lines, Commercial Manager Countrywide, said Telstra was concerned with problems faced by remote community customers and would like to work closely with CLC to identify and rectify problems faced in these communities.

"We can not do it by ourselves, we do need help in getting out to some of these places and finding out what's actually needed and the best product for it," he said.

"We're working with the CLC, the Outback Digital Network and various communities on various trials to basically get infrastructure and, at the very least, a basic phone service to keep in touch with those emergencies services."

Currently there are two separate reviews being conducted on improving telecommunications in regional, rural and remote Indigenous communities by the Commonwealth and Northern Territory Governments.

# Tanami takes Warlpiri to the World



Tanami Network Chairman Robin Japanangka Granites with his grandson and Dolly Nampijinpa Daniels, Chair of the Warlukulangu Arts, talking to students in the USA.



**In March the Tanami Network at Yuendumu hosted a successful videoconference and webcast between Warlpiri elders and folklore students in the USA.**

The link to students in Pennsylvania was the first international broadcast by the network since 1999. Chairman of Tanami Network, Robin Japanangka Granites chaired the Yuendumu end of the webcast with a range of elders including the Chair of the Warlukulangu Artists Aboriginal Association, Dolly Nampijinpa Daniels.

The broadcast began with the men singing a welcoming song, then people showed local paintings and explained their meaning. The elders gave a lesson in hand signals and discussed aspects of Warlpiri culture with the students in America.

The audience, which included people receiving a webcast, also viewed one of the few original painted Yuendumu Doors that remain in the community (visit <http://www.warlu.com/doors/default.htm> for the story of the doors).

"The link up went very well. Everyone seemed to be very happy both in Yuendumu and in the United States," Mr Granites said.

The Tanami Network based in Yuendumu was set up in 1989 and in the early 1990s began to provide satellite videoconference links to the western desert communities of Lajamanu, Kintore and Willowra. The communities could then also link to Alice Springs and anywhere else in the world.

The links between communities were used for meetings or arranging events. The Alice Springs link users included Correctional Services, so prisoners could talk to relatives in their community, and even driving instructors taking students through the road rules before travelling out bush for practical lessons. International uses included artists talking about their works to audiences at auctions in London.

In 1999 the cost of using satellite delivery of the network proved too expensive to continue. The network had to switch to using an ISDN telephone line for connections. However the video-conference equipment had to be modified to use ISDN and some communities don't have ISDN access so they cannot be linked up. As a result only the Yuendumu and Alice Springs links are operating at present.

Correctional Services is now the main user of the Yuendumu - Alice Springs link with a videoconference suite located in the Alice Springs Jail. Another videoconference unit is in the NT Government's Office of Central Australia in Alice Springs. The casual rate for videoconferencing between Yuendumu and Alice Springs is \$165 per hour but rates are negotiable.

The Tanami Network is now a member of the Outback Digital Network (ODN), which is installing videoconferencing and other telecommunications services on 16 Cape York communities. ODN hopes to extend the model across the Northern Territory and the Kimberley/Pilbara region in Western Australia.



# New-found wealth a shock to Gapuwiyak

**It came as a shock to the citizens of Gapuwiyak when they discovered a postcode-by-postcode affluence survey released in February had labelled them the second wealthiest postcode in the Northern Territory.**

According to the survey by the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (NCSEM), which used five years of Australian Taxation Office data, the average adult in Gapuwiyak has a taxable income of \$48,741.

However, a spokesperson for the small indigenous community in East Arnhem Land said the only employment in town was either with the local council or the community's work-for-the-dole scheme.

"I wish we were that rich – sounds like some silly business from Canberra," said Bobby Wunungmurra, CDEP Coordinator

for Gapuwiyak. "We got nothing like that here. Tell the Chief Minister too."

Red-faced officers from the NCSEM admitted they had "mislabelled" the postcode, 0880, which also covers the wealthy bauxite mining town of Nhulunbuy. Gapuwiyak is 280km east of Nhulunbuy.

"We should have named the postcode after the largest community within the area, which is Nhulunbuy," said NCSEM's Senior Researcher Harry Greenwell. "Instead we've used the name in the postcode area that came first alphabetically."

He said residents of Nhulunbuy were "obviously driving" the survey result. ●

# Let's talk work

**The Federal Government is examining setting up a series of Indigenous employment centres, with the first flagged for Darwin, as one of the initiatives from its welfare reform package.**

The centres will mainly aim to assist people on the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) to find permanent employment.

It was one of the items discussed at a meeting of Indigenous employment services in March hosted by Tangentyere Council's Job Shop in Alice Springs.

Robert Tickner, former Labor government Aboriginal Affairs Minister, now working for Job Futures – a federation of not-for-profit job organisations – chaired the meeting.

Tangentyere Job Shop is one of 11 employment services specifically aimed at Indigenous people.

These, as well as employment services with a large Indigenous clientele, meet every four months to discuss initiatives.

Other items discussed in March included approaches by the Federal Government to national companies with the aim of influencing them to employ more Aboriginal people, and the results of a survey of Indigenous people's experiences as clients of employment services. ●

# Alice Alcohol Trial

**The Northern Territory Licensing Commission has introduced a year-long trial of alcohol restrictions in Alice Springs lasting until March 31 2003.**

This follows similar trials in Tennant Creek in 1995 and in Katherine in 2000 that led to permanent changes to how alcohol is sold in those towns. The current trial restrictions in Nhulunbuy will be reviewed in April.

The restrictions for the Alice Springs trial are different from previous trials and do not include a grog free day or "thirsty Thursday".

The main features of the Alice Springs trial are:

- Take-away sales will start two hours later at 2:00 pm on weekdays but still finish at 9 pm as before. Weekend take-away trading hours stay the same.
- No alcohol can be sold in containers, such as wine casks, larger than two litres.
- Only light beer can be served in pubs and clubs before 11:30 am on any weekday unless it is a Public Holiday.

The trial restrictions apply to all licences including clubs in Alice Springs unless the Commission grants an exemption.

Exemptions include the Alice Springs Airport, "mini-bars" in licensed accommodation, specific tourist activities, such as ballooning trips, and genuine "bush orders" once guidelines are established.

Week day take-away sales in the

Southern Region of the NT have begun at noon and finished at 9 pm since a Territory-wide trial of restrictions brought in by the NT Government in the early 1990s.

The restrictions were abolished in the Top End after the trial.

The current trial in Alice Springs was to start on New Year's Day this year but was delayed due to the need to hear objections lodged by licensees.

An Evaluation Reference Group made up of industry and community representatives will monitor the success of the trial and make recommendations at the end of it.

A separate study of the trial including data collection will be supervised by the Department of Health and Community Services.

The NT Minister for Central Australia, Peter Toyne said, "This decision is a significant step in the Alice Springs community's battle to address the huge social and economic cost of alcohol abuse in the town.

"We have provided \$250,000 for a Community Day Patrol, the extension of Sobering Up Shelter hours and an evaluation of the impact of the 'trial restrictions' and complementary measures." ●

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# Council meeting kicks off for 2002



Central Land Council members gathered at Karlinjarinyi, 110 kilometres south east of Tennant Creek for the first 2002 council meeting. Traditional owners Michael Jones, Jimmy Jones and Sandra Jones welcomed everyone to their father's and grandfathers country.

During the two-day meeting council members talked about a range of significant issues, and welcomed presentations by Minister John Ah Kit, ATSI Commissioner Kim Hill, Telstra, and visitors from Indigenous communities overseas.

In addition to normal land council business, including updates on outstanding land claims, mining and other land use agreements, the meeting also discussed progressing community living areas, management of national parks, work on the Alice Springs to Darwin railway, and Telstra servicing issues.

Delegates were particularly concerned with the proposed changes to the ABA community grants funding program, and resolved to further discuss this issue with Minister Ruddock.

The Minister Assisting the Chief Minister on Aboriginal Affairs, John Ah Kit, attended his first ever CLC meeting, and told members about his strong speech in NT

Parliament, including NT Government plans to encourage new regional governance models.

Council members were heartened by the Minister's firm commitment that the NT Government would not support any changes to the Land Rights Act without the support of the Land Councils and Traditional Owners.



CLC Delegates at Karlinjarinyi meeting



Topsy Dodds and Sophie Dodds from Daguragu

## Cultural Centre for Warumungu



Twelve Warumungu men and women examined cultural objects held in interstate museums recently as part of the development of a new cultural centre at Jurnkurraku / Tennant Creek.

The Nyinka Nyunyu Kari Centre will show Warramungu culture through various displays including dioramas, featuring figures made of sticks and mud, showing hunting stories and traditional life.

The centre may also house cultural objects currently held in museums. The trip in February to examine and identify objects held in museums was the first step in arranging for their return.

Dianne Stokes, the Tennant Creek member of the CLC Executive, said: "The things I saw at the museums in Adelaide and Melbourne bring back memories of when I was young. It refreshed my mind and I kept on telling my stories of what I learnt in the past. Talking to Liz, Alison and Chisuk about the Nyinka Nyunyu was a good idea because it woke my mind up then. I told Alison if she's looking around for someone to give her a hand on some diorama to be done, she can pick me up."

"Going on this trip was excellent because an important part of my life was sharing my stories and histories of my old people spirits, what I was told back in the 60s."

"I was asked to make a speech in Melbourne at the Sinclair Knight Merz Architects firm. I've thanked those people who are working closely with us as a team to build up the Warramungu Nyinka Nyunyu Kari Centre."

The centre will be built between the Tennant Creek ATSI office and the Primary School. An idea for the entrance to the centre is to have a large statue of a woman holding a baby in a coolamon. Construction of the kiosk has begun with the other building to be completed next year.



Warumungu women Dillian Williams, Heather Rosa, Dianne Stokes with coolomons held by the Melbourne Museum



Above: Brian Crafter, Mark Graham, Norman Frank and Day Day Frank in the archive of the Museum

## Learners Guide to Warumungu

It's taken eight years in the making and now Warumungu speakers are proud to launch the 'Learners Guide to Warumungu' book.

Thanks to the dedication of the Warumungu speakers, linguist Jane Simpson was able to compile the book in collaboration with Warumungu people, Papulu Apparr-Kari Language Centre and IAD Press.

This long awaited publication gave Papulu Apparr-Kari language centre in Tennant Creek the chance to be involved in such a detailed production which has overwhelmed many in the community.

The importance of the Warumungu learners guide stems from Warumungu elders wanting to see their language stay strong for younger generations.

The publication is a guide to the sounds, words and structure of the Warumungu language for self-learning.

For copies or further information about the Warumungu Learners Guide please contact the Papulu Apparr-Kari Language Centre on 08 8962 3270.



Dora Dawson cutting the cake at the launch with Noeleen Nelson, Jane Simpson, Kenny Williams, Michael Jones and Ross Williams

# NLC re-establishes Tennant office



Members of the Borroloola/Barkly Regional Council outside the new Tennant Creek office

**People of the Barkly Region in the Northern Territory now have direct access to Northern Land Council (NLC) services with the official opening of a new office facility in Tennant Creek.**

The new facility was brought online by the NLC's Executive Member, Max Finlay, and Regional Development Manager, Edna Barolits, on 21 February.

An official smoking ceremony performed by members of the Pujjali Dance Troupe helped to ward off bad spirits – a big help for Kerry Jan, the single officer staffing the

facility for now. Together with its sister organisation the Central Land Council, the NLC office provides a presence in the district and directly benefits Aboriginal groups in the region who might seek advice on a variety of issues relating to Native Title and Indigenous Land Use Agreements as well as providing access to anthropological research.



Above: Pujjali Dance Troupe Below: Kathleen Fitz and Connie Lovegrove



# WARC makes stand for Land Rights Act

**Land use agreements, the ongoing performance audit of land councils and changes to the ABA grants program were just some of the key topics covered in the West Arnhem Regional Council meeting held in Darwin on 20-21 March.**

The meeting also heard that, to date, the NLC has received no information about changes the Federal Government wishes to make to the Aboriginal Land Rights Act via amendments likely to be introduced in this year's Spring session of Federal Parliament.

It appears that the Federal Government is still pressing the widely discredited Reeve recommendations which includes breaking up the NT Land Councils.

After some discussion WARC resolved "that no change can be made to the Land Rights Act without the informed consent of traditional Aboriginal owners and affected Aboriginal people".

Councillors further resolved that "the WARC will ensure full consultation with its constituents to protect their traditions and inherent rights and their lives".

WARC also heard that although Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister Philip Ruddock had approved the Land Councils' annual budget last September and authorised the first funding rise in seven years, the rise had come with strings attached in the form of a performance audit and changes to the ABA funds distribution process.

As part of the performance audit, the Australian National Audit Office has scheduled several visits to Land Councils to check on financial and procedural performance.



WARC regional councillors at their meeting in Darwin, with Chairman Bunug Galaminda at left

In terms of changes to the ABA distributions, WARC was advised the changes would only affect the 30 per cent of mining royalty equivalents currently distributed "for the benefit of Aboriginal people" under section 64 (4) of the ALRA. The other 70 per cent, which flows directly to traditional owners and land councils, would be unaffected.

Following extensive debate the NLC Full Council has endorsed the NLC ABA members and Executive Council's recommendation for the management of its s.64 (4) funds – worth almost \$5 million – between the three areas of land and sea management, major economic projects and the ceremonial fund. Sixteen fully costed

and planned demonstration land and sea management projects were presented to Minister Ruddock in December.

The meeting heard that in spite of many subsequent requests the NLC had heard nothing back from the Minister, with some projects in danger of losing other opportunities for funding. WARC called on the Minister to endorse the NLC's land/sea management scheme and release money for the demonstration projects.

Since then the Minister has approved the release of \$652,400 for the 16 projects, a decision welcomed by the NLC although it is not known how long it will take for the funds to filter through to communities.



Kids playing in the soccer semi-final during the sports carnival

## Community School sports carnival at Yirara College

Some 280 school kids from 11 communities in central Australia travelled from far and wide to participate in a variety of sports at the Yirara College bush sports carnival in March.

Yirara College says the bush sports carnival is held every two years and aims to bring kids together to have fun with family and friends from other communities.

Yirara College says it is also important for young kids to see that Yirara College is a safe and fun place to come and learn once

you finish primary and enter high school.

The main sports played during the three-day carnival included volleyball, soccer, basketball and softball.

Other games included egg and spoon races, sack races, three legged races, sprints, relays, high jump and long jump. ●



# Hetti Perkins Fair



The Red Centre Dancers performing in Alice Springs at the Hetti Perkins Home for the Aged fundraising Fair

The Fair, which will be held annually, was to raise money for lounge chairs for the residents.

As part of the fundraising weekend proceeds of special screening of the film *One Night the Moon* directed by Hetti Perkins' grand daughter, Rachel Perkins, were also donated to the home.

The home, run by Aboriginal Hostels Limited, has been operating for over 20 years and moved to a new building in 1999 south of the Heavitree Gap in Percy Court opposite Congress Alukura. The oldest resident is 105.

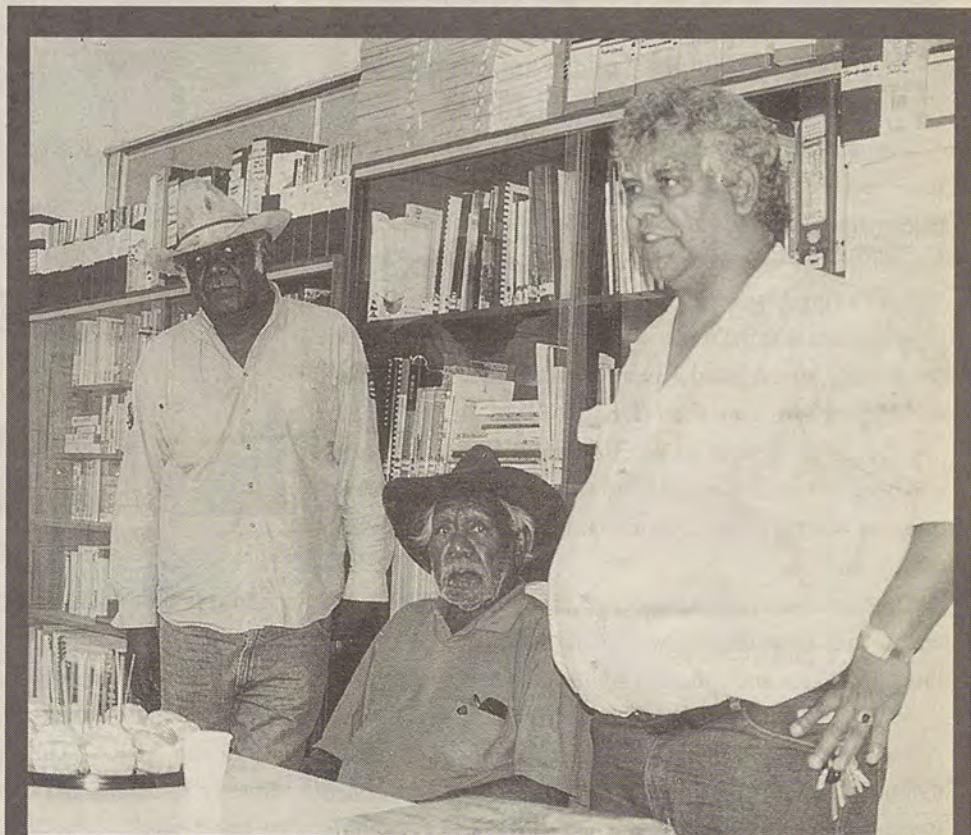
Hetti Perkins administrator Christine McDougall said: "The home has accommodation for 40 residents, with 20 male and 20 female beds, in single and

double rooms. We have permanent accommodation and some beds for respite care - when carers need to take a break or go away, we can look after their relative here for a while."

"We take people from all over, including from across the border in the Pitjantjatjara lands and places like Kintore, Yuendumu and Hermannsburg."

The home assists residents to visit relatives in Alice Springs or nearby communities and welcomes visits from residents' families.

The Central Australian Advocacy Service has recently made a video about the home for distribution to communities. A version has been made in Western Arrernte with other languages to follow soon. ●



Tangentyere Warden Martin Campbell, left, with Eli Rubuntja, centre, President of Tangentyere Council in Alice Springs celebrating his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in March. Tangentyere Council General Manager William Tilmouth, right, thanked Mr Rubuntja for his "very wise counsel over many years serving on the Tangentyere Executive".

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## Bush Fruits exhibition starts its NT tour



Susan Nakamara Nelson, Jessica Nangala Jones, Peggy Napangardi Jones, Louie Nakamara Martin, Peggy Napaljarri Kelly.



**An Anyingini Arts and Crafts Touring Exhibition celebrating the strength and vibrancy of women's art from the Barkly region is on display at the Araluen Centre in Alice Springs.**

The exhibition theme is bush fruits, a distinctive artistic theme and dreaming of the six artists from the area.

The artists use provocative colour and textures in their works evoking the sights and smells of Barkly habitats – foods,

flowers, the flood-outs, swamps, soakages, creek beds and grasslands.

Each of the artists involved in the exhibition have developed their own personal style with the use of vibrant colours, not normally associated with 'traditional' Aboriginal art.

The exhibition has been coordinated by Anyingini Arts in Tennant Creek to give the Barkly women artists wider recognition in the art world.

The exhibition will tour communities throughout the Northern Territory over the next 12 months thanks to Artback NT Arts Touring. ●

## Jalajirra Band



Cameron Plummer, Alvin Jones, Desmond Plummer, Darren Anderson, Lenora Plummer



**The sounds of country, reggae and rock can be found sweeping the Barkly as the Jalajirra Band takes steps towards releasing their debut album.**

Three of their sound tracks can be heard on the "Band's from the Barkly" album later this month.

The main themes echoing in their songs include land rights and the struggle for Warumungu country and social problems faced in their community. ●

## Journey of healing

**It seems sometimes that art is the only way to make a difficult point.**

Years of lobbying by advocates and survivors of the Stolen Generations and a multi-million dollar National Inquiry failed to do what the film *Rabbit Proof Fence* achieves in less than two hours for the cost of about \$13 per head.

This film would make even the most hard-hearted opponent of saying sorry understand the inhumanity and tragedy of the child removal policies that produced the Stolen Generations.

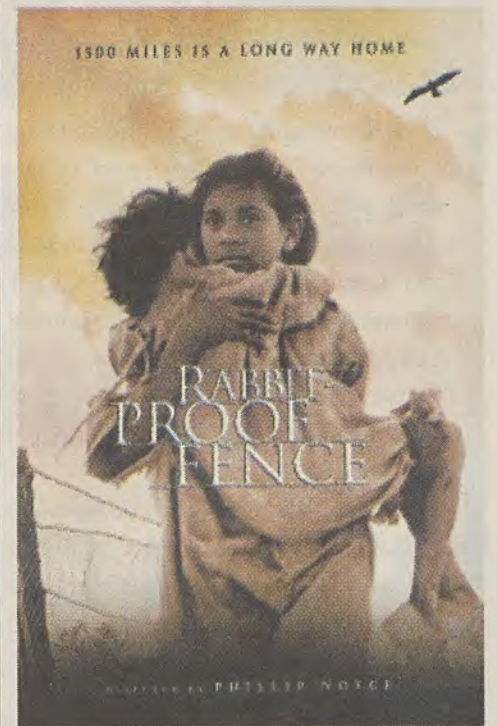
It does this by humanising both the victims and perpetrators.

Philip Noyce's first Australian film for 12 years has brought together a cast of newcomers and seasoned professionals who have made this story real and compelling.

Well-known and highly acclaimed Aboriginal women actors Ningali Lawford and Deborah Mailman work alongside the three young girls who play "stolen children", and who embark on a remarkable journey to "follow the rabbit proof fence" home to Jigalong.

Everlyn Sampi (aged 11), along with Laura Monaghan (9) and Tianna Sansbury (6) were not only very young, but totally inexperienced. However, each of them conveyed – more through action and bearing than words – a fierce and moving portrait of a stolen child. As the oldest and the leader, Everlyn (who plays Molly) is stunning but all three performances are intensely affecting.

Kenneth Branagh also gives a standout performance as A.O. Neville, the man who administered Aboriginal policy in Western Australia for almost 40 years. Branagh manages to simultaneously convey the righteousness of the man and the horror of the policies he administered. There is no doubt that Neville – known as Devil by WA



Aboriginal people – believed that what he was doing was right and necessary, and ultimately for "the good" of Aboriginal people.

However, the film also portrays the Nazi-like level of efficiency and control that characterised the Chief Protector's role. Neville had to give permission even for a new pair of shoes for an Aboriginal person under his "protection."

*Rabbit Proof Fence* is a visually stunning film as well as having a range of remarkable actors and a great story. But perhaps the most powerful parts of the film are those which are almost incidental to the girls' odyssey back to Jigalong.

Ultimately, it is the children who are left behind who leave the greatest mark. A room full of babies crying alone in a dormitory of cots is a heart-rending sight.

"Where are their mothers?" asks Molly.

"They have no mothers," she is told.

Sadly, for most of the children who did not or could not escape the child removal policies, this was the truth. ●



Valerie Day, Audrey Ronan, Hilda Muir, Lorna Cubillo, Laura Monaghan, Barbara Cummings, Phillip Noyce, Maria Tomlins and John Ah Kit at the Premiere of *Rabbit Proof Fence* in Darwin

# Art stages a jailbreak

When Anthony Sullivan was locked away in a Northern Territory jail, the last thing it felt like was an opportunity to set a new direction in his life.

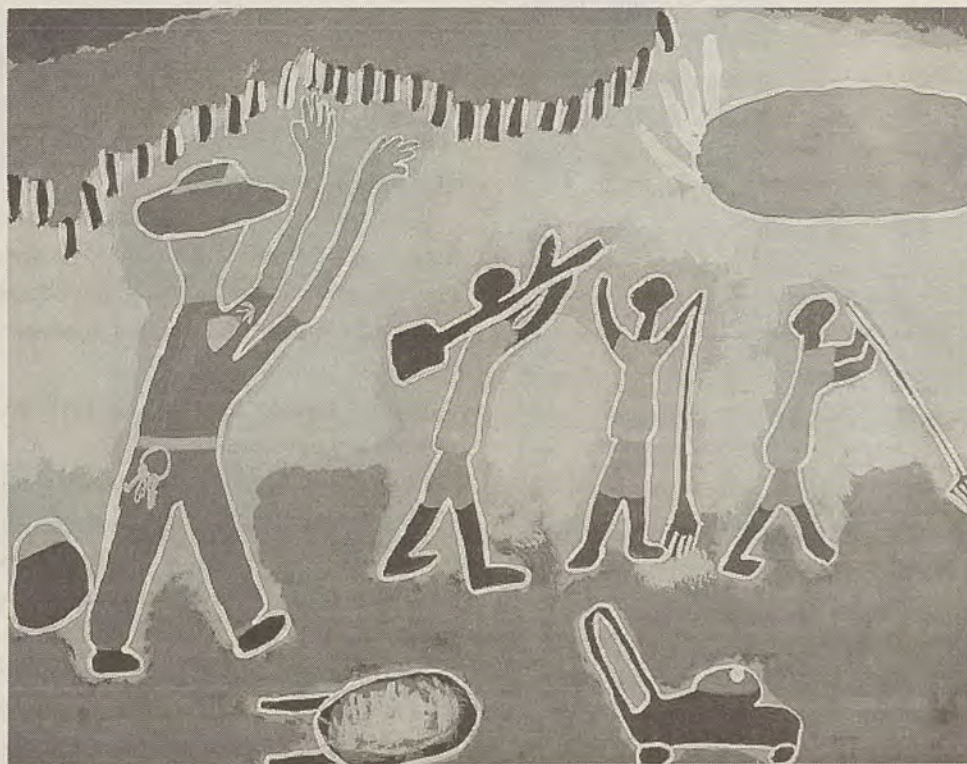
Now his art works are set to tour all over the Northern Territory as part of the Artback NT Arts Touring exhibition *Our Place: Our Message*, which features 22 artists hailing from over 20 regional NT communities, including Oenpelli, Tennant Creek, Galawin'ku, Port Keats and Ltyentye Apurte. All the artists are current or former inmates of NT Correctional Centres.

The exhibition itself is part of the wider NT Correctional Services' Ending Offending program, which aims to address the criminal consequences of alcohol and drug use through a process of education, training, art and music. It also aims to reach the families of inmates, their communities and future generations.

"A lot of people do art in jail. It helps people to express themselves," Anthony said. "They can get a lot off their shoulders through their art."

Some of the male and female artists in the program have never painted before in their lives, and with assistance from Berrimah Prison art instructor Jacqueline Stockdale, a few have even experimented with portraiture.

Overall the exhibition covers a wide range of themes, from reminiscences about everyday life back home to life in jail and even political commentary, as epitomised



by Lazarus Nababbob's *Unfair Justice* and Tony Gamarow and George Djandjomerr's *Justice For All*.

The exhibition, which opened at the Coomalie Cultural Centre in Batchelor on 6 March and closed on 12 April, is due to travel to Gunbulunya on 25 April where it will show until 12 May. From there it will move to Maningrida before visiting Tennant Creek from 24 June to 19 July, with further shows currently being organised in other NT communities.



## People of the Rivermouth

The Joborr texts of Frank Gurrmanamana" 2002



"Here is a land with stories that flow back and forth between the present and a past beyond any records, much as its river moves with each tide. These stories are the great song-cycles. They are sung around campfires, and they have to do with the totemic spirits of the land."

KIM MCKENZIE

Love, marriage, life and death: they sound like all the necessary ingredients for a television soap opera – but it's not.

"*People of the Rivermouth: The Joborr texts of Frank Gurrmanamana*" is a must read for those with an active interest in the workings of traditional Aboriginal life.

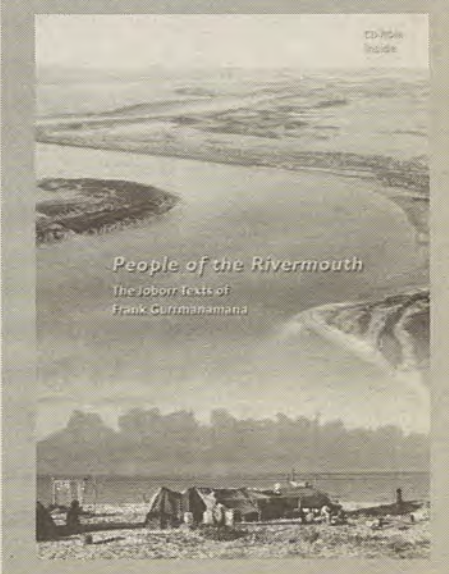
Consisting of 20 different texts presented to the reader in a scripted manner with fictitious characters, the benefit of the book is its detailed explanation of how interaction occurs within an Aboriginal society.

The sorts of interaction familiar in any society.

Translated by anthropologist Les Hiatt and documenting the social interaction and structure of the Anbarra people of North East Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, *People of the Rivermouth* is regarded as "the" most comprehensive work ever produced on a single Australian Aboriginal group.

*People of the Rivermouth* is jointly published by the National Museum and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

For further details on the book and accompanying CD-ROM, contact [sales@aiatsis.gov.au](mailto:sales@aiatsis.gov.au) or phone (02) 6246 1186.



## "Saltwater People" - Darwin history told through Larrakia eyes



"At long last, we have our very own Larrakia history book."

PAULINE BABAN, 2002



Pauline Baban

The events which have shaped the lives of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people living on Larrakia country are told in a new book called *"Saltwater People: Larrakia Stories from around Darwin."*

The result is an insight, from a Larrakia perspective, into the changing face of Darwin from a tiny township into a thriving multicultural city.

This book is the first compilation of stories and experiences from many Larrakia families and redresses the lack of information in the public arena about the traditional Aboriginal owners of land in and around Darwin.

"*Saltwater People*" will help non-Larrakia people gain some understanding of the hurt and frustration of various events that have affected Larrakia people since non-Aboriginal settlement began in the 1880s.

The book provides a wonderful vehicle for cultural retention and ensures that grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Larrakia people can read stories about their ancestors.

Today the Larrakia people number about 1500, made up primarily of eight major family groups, composed of numerous

interrelated individual families. Larrakia lands take in the greater Darwin area including Darwin Harbour, Cox Peninsula, Gunn Point and much of Darwin's rural area.

Funding for the book was received from the Centenary of Federation Grants program and administered by the Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation (LNAC), a body established in 1998 to serve and protect the interest of Larrakia people.

"The Larrakia people have shown amazing survival skills to come through the last 200 years of invasion, occupancy and forced integration," LNAC Coordinator Kelvin Costello said. "This book is a celebration of that survival."

Invited to launch the book, NT Member of the Legislative Assembly John Ah Kit said *Saltwater People* brought back memories of his childhood.

"The book makes great reading, particularly for me as someone who grew up at Parap camp. It certainly helps to give an understanding of the struggles for Larrakia people in those early days," Mr Ah Kit said.

Copies of the book can be purchased by contacting the LNAC on (08) 8948 2277.●

# A farewell to John

**The Northern Territory has lost a champion of Indigenous rights following the death of John Singh, a Northern Land Council member since 1982 who rose to the position of Deputy Chair.**

Chairman of the Northern Land Council Mr Galarrwuy Yunupingu praised the commitment and dedication that the late John Singh demonstrated over many years in relation to Aboriginal land rights.

"John was a constant contributor and participant in the land rights movement since he was first elected as the Belyuen Member of the NLC Full Council in September 1982, and he continued to represent his community until his passing," Mr Yunupingu said.

Mr Singh served on the NLC Executive Committee from 1983-1995 and held the position of Deputy Chair in the 1992-1995 term. In 1994, he filled the position of Acting Chair while the Chairman took long service leave.

"As Deputy Chairman of the NLC Full Council, he worked tirelessly for Aboriginal people on a number of

issues and served the organisation so well," Mr Yunupingu said.

"John was very strong, determined and dedicated in his struggle for Land Rights and filled the position of Acting Chair with pride and dignity."

In particular, Mr Singh played an instrumental role in participating and contributing to the NLC's Strategic Plan. He attended many consultation meetings with community members throughout the NLC's region.

He also attended conferences locally and interstate to address and improve public awareness of Aboriginal Land Rights, especially in relation to the Northern Territory and the work of the Northern Land Council.

"His kind, generous and humorous presence will be sadly missed at the Northern Land Council," Mr Yunupingu said. ●

**"John was very strong, determined and dedicated in his struggle for Land Rights and filled the position of Acting Chair with pride and dignity."**

**GALARRWUY YUNUPINGU**



OFFICE OF THE  
**REGISTRAR OF  
ABORIGINAL  
CORPORATIONS**

## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

### REVIEW OF THE ABORIGINAL COUNCILS AND ASSOCIATIONS ACT 1976 (Cth)

In November 2000, the Acting Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations commissioned a major review of the *Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976 (Cth)* ("the ACA Act"), to see how well the ACA Act meets the current needs of Indigenous people, and to identify areas for reform.

Reform proposals have now been developed, and the Office of the Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations (ORAC) is now in the process of consulting with Indigenous corporations and key stakeholders. If you are an ACA Act corporation, you will soon receive background papers and a questionnaire.

If you are an Indigenous corporation not incorporated under the ACA Act, or are an individual interested in the proposed reforms, we are keen to hear from you. You can get copies of background information papers plus blank questionnaires from the ORAC web site at: <http://www.orac.gov.au>. If you do not have access to the internet, please call us on free-call 1800 622 431, and we will send them to you.

The closing date for submissions is 26 April 2002.

Starcom14

# Kumantjayi Lechleitner Japanangka

## The Centre loses a fighter for Aboriginal rights

**Kumantjayi Lechleitner Japanangka, who passed away in February was involved in many important Aboriginal organisations and was elected many times to represent his community on bodies such as Central Land Council, ATSIC Regional Council and Papunya Community Council.**

Mr Lechleitner was born in the 1930s and grew up on Coniston Station. In the book celebrating 20 years of land rights, *Take Power - like this old man here*, he spoke of his life:

"All my life has been cattle. I started off after the war. Old time my father worked at Turner Crossing and from there he took me back to Coniston [Station] ... My stepfather grew me up then. Teach me how to dig well, put fence up, put yard up. He was a real hard worker my old step father. He could do anything teach me to ride horses anything like that..."

"I am political minded because I don't sit down dumb in town. It is because that English jumps to me here in the memory. Clicks straight away so I can answer you. You got to see the wrong and you got to see the right. And you got to answer people. Which way people want."

He spoke many local languages, was respected in ceremonial matters and was a talented artist. In the 1970s he

worked for the Congress Medical Service in Alice Springs. With researcher Pam Nathan he co-authored two books, *Settle Down Country* and *Health Business* which showed the need for community-controlled health services. He was also an executive

member of Tangentyere Council during its early days fighting for better living conditions for Aboriginal people in Alice Springs.

He later lived at Arrkilku (Town Bore), an outstation of Papunya, and worked as a Central Land Council Field Officer. He was a member of the Haasts Bluff Aboriginal Land Trust and served as Deputy Chair of the Papunya Regional Council, as an Executive member of the Central Land Council and as Vice-President of the

Ngurratjuta Resource Centre Committee.

Both before and after he was employed by the CLC he was a very active member and great supporter of the CLC. He will be sadly missed by

**"I am political minded because I don't sit down dumb in town.**

**It is because that English jumps to me here in the memory. Clicks straight away so I can answer you.**

**You got to see the wrong and you got to see the right. And you got to answer people. Which way people want"**

**KUMANTJAYI  
LECHLEITNER  
JAPANANGKA**



Left to right: Robynne Quiggan, Angelina Hurley (both from Terri Janke & Co), Australia Council ceo Jenny Bott, Banduk Marika, Federal Arts Minister Senator Rod Kemp, NSW Governor Dr Maree Bashair, ATSIAB chair Dr Richard Walley, ATSIAB director Cathy Craigie and nominator Terri Janke

# The 9<sup>th</sup> Red Ochre Award



Banduk Marika speaks at the Award ceremony. Photos: Wayne Quilliam

**Land rights activist, visual artist, environmentalist, clan elder and East Arnhem Regional Council member – Banduk Marika has packed a lot into her life since being born at Yirrkala Mission in North East Arnhem Land in 1954.**

Now she has been honoured with the \$50,000 Red Ochre Award for 2001, which since 1993 has been given to one Indigenous artist each year in recognition of outstanding contributions to the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture.

“She maintains a high profile nationally and internationally, as well as sustaining a strong role in her local community, mentoring those who aspire to make the same contribution through their own work.”

Ms Marika was taught to paint by her father Mamalan Marika, a noted

**“She maintains a high profile nationally and internationally, as well as sustaining a strong role in her local community, mentoring those who aspire to make the same contribution through their own work.”**

**DR RICHARD WALLEY**

Ms Marika received her award on 11 December from Dr Richard Walley, chair of the Council’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board (ATSIAB), who described her as an obvious choice for the award.

“Banduk was one of the first Yolngu women from Yirrkala to make an impact on the art world with a series of linocuts based on sacred subjects in the mid-1980s,” Dr Walley said.

artist, but only won recognition outside her community in the early 1980s when she moved to Sydney and made her first prints. Since then her works have been exhibited across Australia and overseas in the United States, Canada, India, Egypt, Noumea and Singapore.

She also collaborated with Stephen Page as cultural adviser to the 2000 Olympic Games Opening Ceremony, which proved an outstanding success.