



# Land Rights

## NEWS



Records - Files



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

Vol 4 No 3 September 2002



**INSIDE : Gurindji Freedom Day,  
Larrakia remains returned, football finals  
action and more. . .**

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Passion and pride were in plentiful supply at this year's NAIDOC 2002 March and Rally on 12 July, which drew hundreds of Indigenous and non-Indigenous marchers onto the streets of downtown Darwin in a celebration of Aboriginal culture. The march was a highlight of Darwin's NAIDOC Week, with Northern Land Council staffers out in force as usual.

## Land Rights NEWS

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**COVER PHOTO**  
WARLPIRI WOMEN SINGING AND DANCING ON THEIR COUNTRY AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE NEWHAVEN BIRD SANCTUARY ABOUT 300 KM NORTHWEST OF ALICE SPRINGS. THE PASTORAL PROPERTY WAS BOUGHT BY BIRDS AUSTRALIA WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR THE CREATION OF THE SANCTUARY. TRADITIONAL OWNERS WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE CLC ARE WORKING ON A JOINT MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT WITH BIRDS AUSTRALIA. SEE ALSO THE WARLPIRI RANGERS STORY IN THIS ISSUE.

# Tears greet return of Larrakia remains

The day was bright but the mood was sombre as the Larrakia people finally brought the remains of their 87 long-lost countrymen back from exile to the tropical land of their birth.



Larrakia women dance in front of the cartons holding the remains

In a small but moving ceremony held in the early afternoon of 12 August at the southern end of Darwin's Mindil Beach, a part of Larrakia country traditionally associated with burials, about 120 people gathered to watch Larrakia men and women dance the remains back home.

Under the shade of a flame tree Larrakia man Eric Fejo, who had accompanied the remains by plane all the way from Canberra, said that while he was happy to have the old people back after so long, "still I want to know why they were removed in the first place".

"They tell us they were taken away 100 years ago by just one man, the South Australian coroner William Smith, but it's convenient to blame just one man ... I believe there were more involved," Mr Fejo told the audience, most of them Larrakia and their relatives and many of them weeping openly.

"There are still more of our people out there and I want them back too."

The illegal removal of bones and artefacts from Indigenous grave sites all over the world was commonplace in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as European scientists attempted to find evidence for then-prevalent racist evolutionary theories.

However, even in this climate Smith's antics provoked controversy, given that he abused his position to sell the remains of Indigenous people who had died in hospital or prison without notifying their relatives.

The push for the return of the stolen Larrakia remains began in earnest in 1993.

It is the largest group of Aboriginal remains yet to be returned by the National Museum of Australia's Repatriation Unit, which is the only institution in Australia

able to receive Indigenous remains from overseas.

All the repatriated remains came from the former Institute of Anatomy in Canberra and Edinburgh University in Scotland.

A smoking ceremony to cleanse the remains was held outside the National Museum before they were flown back to Darwin.

The remains will be stored by the Aboriginal Area Protection Authority at a secret location while Larrakia elders decide on their final resting place.

It is thought the remains of another 6,400 Australian Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders remain in the hands of museums around the world as well as in Australian institutions.

While there will be no rest for Aboriginal people around Australia until all the remains are returned to their home country, Larrakia elder Victor Williams said the repatriation of the Larrakia was "a very important step towards reconciliation which should not be forgotten".



Belyuen men dance the remains home



## Barrow back to Kaytetye

Governor General Dr Peter Hollingworth, returning title of the old Barrow Creek Telegraph Station Reserve to Kaytetye people in August, spoke of the violence and oppression that accompanied the taking of their land.



He said: "For this and other tragic events and deaths that took place in these parts, I want to express a deep sense of sorrow and regret over things done in times past."

The Telegraph Station was built in 1872 and clashes between the Kaytetye and Europeans over the next few years left two telegraph workers dead and unknown numbers of Kaytetye killed in reprisals.

With most of their land taken for pastoral

Thommy Thompson, speaking in Kaytetye on behalf of the Thangkenharengge group and translated to English by Emily Hayes, said: "I'm really sad about what happened a long time ago to our people. Other people have got their land back. Today's the day that we are going to get land back – the people like Patsy and cousins – so we can stay on our own land. That's good."

The Governor General, Dr Hollingworth, said: "I hereby hand over

**“When I was a kid I lived in the creek here too, drinking water out of the soakage. We grew up on the water from the soakage and they are still doing it today. It should be better now. I'm happy for Patsy mob today and my cousins. All I want to see now is for them to get their house now and running water.”**

EMILY HAYES

leases, the small parcels of land won back by the Kaytetye are precious.

One of the members of the Land Trust, Kym Brown, said: "My grandfather used to tell me stories about this land and say you might get it back one day. It took a while, talking to those lawyers and anthropologists, but they did a good job. I'm really proud to get my land back. All my family are here today from all over. They were all born here. All their grandfathers were born here and I'm proud they brought all their grandkids here today. They might take over when it's their time."

Speaking to the large gathering inside the old Telegraph Station, CLC Director David Ross said: "There are many sites sacred to the Kaytetye and the Thangkenharengge people on the pastoral leases that surround us here. But today, while they regain title to just over 12 square kilometres of their land, it contains the site of the birthplace of the Kaytetye language. It is ironic that the Telegraph Station reserve being returned today was the first land taken from the Kaytetye and will now be one of the few places they have title to."

these title deeds to you to hold in trust for future generations who will follow in your footsteps across this country and who will continue to learn and prosper from your knowledge and love of this land."

The Hon John Ah Kit, representing the NT Government, said: "The survival of the Kaytetye to this historic day is evidence of the fighting spirit of the Kaytetye people, which we are all honouring today. As a minister of the NT Government it is great to be the first Indigenous minister to be at a hand back – a first and a historic day. I like to think this is evidence of a major change in the way we work on Aboriginal land management. We believe that land and native title rights are not a threat but an opportunity to create a unique society within the Australian nation."

Emily Hayes said: "I'm happy for Patsy mob today and my cousins. All I want to see now is for them to get their house now and running water. When I was a kid I lived in the creek here too, drinking water out of the soakage. We grew up on the water from the soakage and they are still doing it today. It should be better now."

# Larrakia in the spotlight

It's been a busy few months for the Larrakia people, with the first court hearings on their native title claim over greater Darwin, the announcement of funding for the Itinerants Strategy and the launch of a new advisory body for Darwin Harbour.



Chief Minister Clare Martin receives a warm welcome from the Kenbi dancers



After three years of meetings, reports and representations to the NT Government, funding of \$500,000 for the Itinerants Project was finally announced by the Minister

Assisting the Chief Minister on Indigenous Affairs, the Hon John Ah Kit, on 30 July.

The announcement was welcomed by Larrakia Nation and the NLC, both members of the Itinerants Working Group, who will now be able to move forward with a four-pronged strategy aimed at solving the social problems associated with the itinerants' lifestyle.

The work program includes an education and regional information campaign, an accommodation strategy, a patrolling strategy and an alcohol strategy.

Already the Larrakia have drafted a Cultural Protocol document intended for distribution throughout Aboriginal communities in the Top End, and a

'Goodwill Ambassadors' program was due to start operating in Darwin by the end of September.

"We see the Protocol as being important," a Larrakia spokesperson said. "It not only identifies Darwin as being Larrakia land, it also outlines a level of behaviour that is expected of visitors."

"It is in line with traditional lores and customs, and merely asks the visitor to respect Larrakia country."

A Project Coordinator has been employed and is due to relocate from the Larrakia Nation office to a new Information and Referrals office based in Darwin's northern suburbs by November. The Coordinator has already prepared a range of initiatives to accompany the Itinerants Strategy roll-out.

One of the first was a two-month cultural and tourism program at the NT Museum and Art Gallery, showcasing Larrakia culture through exhibitions, story telling, dance and music, as well as demonstrations

of spear making, weaving and canoe-building.

Chief Minister Clare Martin made a guest appearance at the program on 30 August, acknowledging in her speech the importance of Larrakia custodianship of their country before being honoured with a dance by the Kenbi dance group.

However, Larrakia custodianship of Darwin is currently being questioned in the Federal Court by the NT, Darwin City Council and others as the court seeks to determine the Larrakia people's native title claim rights over the greater Darwin area.

In his opening address, counsel for the Larrakia Robert Blowes quoted from statements by former Chief Minister Paul Everingham in August 1979 at the time of the handback of Kulaluk to traditional Larrakia owners:

"The land on which Darwin is situated belonged to the Larrakia before the white man came to the Northern Territory and now (traditional owner) Bobby Secretary is to receive the title to part of their land."

The Larrakia native title case is expected to stretch well into next year, with a judgment not expected until early 2004.

In the meantime the Larrakia continue to extend their involvement in management issues concerning the Darwin region, with representatives from Larrakia Nation and the NLC joining the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee launched by the Lands, Planning and Environment Minister, the Hon Kon Vatskalis, on 17 September.

The Committee will meet over the next year to guide the development of a management plan for Darwin Harbour and its catchment.

## Court backs up intertidal land rights

Traditional Owners have had their rights over sea country reinforced by a Federal Court ruling supporting a string of positive recommendations on land claims stretching from the Marra Aboriginal Land Trust to the Robinson River in the Top End's Gulf Country.

In three separate land claim hearings earlier this year, the Land Commissioner recommended that intertidal land situated between the high and low water marks, as well as the beds and banks of various rivers flowing into the Gulf, be handed back to the traditional owners.

The first recommendation was made in regard to the McArthur River Region Land Claim and part of the Manangoora Region Land Claim; the second was made in regard to the Maria Island and Limmen Bight River Land Claim and the Maria Island Region Land Claim; and the third was made in regard to the Lorella Region Land Claim and the Maria Island Land Claim.

The NT appealed against all of the recommendations. It argued that the Aboriginal Land Commissioner should not have recommended that the land be handed back because the traditional owners do not want to live on the land. The NT also argued that the intertidal zone "could not be granted under the Act" — except where it adjoins an Aboriginal land trust.

On 3 September the Full Bench of the Federal Court ruled against the NT Government by upholding the Land Commissioner's prior recommendations. The Court did not accept that land should only be granted to an Aboriginal land trust in circumstances where traditional owners want to live on the land. The Court held that such a narrow interpretation of land rights is "inconsistent with the recognition by the (Aboriginal Land Rights) Act ... of the spiritual dimensions of traditional ownership".

"It is a concept which runs much wider than physical occupancy of a particular location," the Court found.

## First excision native title meetings

The first of a series of meetings in the CLC region to kickstart the grant of community living area titles were held at Aputula (Finke) and Imanpa (Mt Ebenezer) in September.

The previous CLP Government had refused to issue any titles under the Territory's community living areas (excisions) legislation since the High Court's Wik decision in 1996.

The previous NT Government claimed that excisions extinguished native title despite the Full Federal Court's finding in the Ward (Miriuwung-Gajerrong) case.

The Central and Northern Land Councils have always maintained that excision titles could be granted in a way that preserves native title.

The new NT government agrees and the Indigenous Land Use Agreements

(ILUAs) are now being negotiated on that basis.

The Aputula meeting, 170 km south east of Alice Springs, considered the applications of Richard Doolan's family over the Irlentye (Halfway Camp) area on the former Goyder Stock Route south west of Aputula, and of Alex Stuart and Darrel Allen over the Akapertatyke area (Boundary Bore) area on Andado Station. The Irlentye application dates back to 1993.

The Imanpa meeting, 260 km south of Alice, considered the applications of Elsie Luckey over the Karu Mutu (Kalamurta) area of Ertlunda station, of Paul ("Tiger")

Staines over the Umalka Tjintjira (Mulga swamp) area of Lyndavale station, and of Leslie White (Moonlight) over the Pulkurru area also of Lyndavale station.

At the meeting, the native title holders of those areas approved ILUAs for all five areas. This will enable the CLC to sign the ILUAs on behalf of native title holders.

The ILUAs are due to be submitted for Cabinet approval shortly.

Following registration of the ILUAs with the National Native Title Tribunal, the Territory Lands Minister will grant the titles.

# Rio Tinto confirms: no mining at Jabiluka without Mirrar consent



The head of global mining giant Rio Tinto, Sir Robert Wilson, has reaffirmed that his company will never approve uranium mining at Jabiluka by its subsidiary ERA Ltd without the consent of the Mirrar traditional owners.

Speaking in a BBC Radio interview ahead of last month's World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, Sir Robert also committed himself to rehabilitating the mine site although he gave no indication as to when or how this might happen.

Nor did Sir Robert express any willingness to surrender the Jabiluka mining lease, suggesting ERA still holds out hope of one day winning approval from the Mirrar to develop the mine which sits on a lease in the middle of Kakadu National Park.

Meanwhile, two separate inquiries into the adequacy of environmental monitoring arrangements at both Jabiluka and the nearby Ranger uranium mine continue to make progress.

The Northern Territory Government's review being conducted by Independent Expert David Lea – a former head of Minerals and Petroleum in Victoria's Department of Natural Resources and Environment – was completed and a report submitted to NT Resource Development Minister Paul Henderson in September.

The NT Government has since released the report publicly, and the Northern Land Council is now in the process of reviewing the main findings.

A broader Federal Senate Inquiry into the operations of all Australian uranium mines is currently taking submissions but is not due to report back to Federal Parliament until December.

The NLC made its submission regarding the Ranger and Jabiluka mine sites to the Inquiry on 30 September, citing a number of problems including:

- the lack of objective, external

environmental standards, which has led to a lack of consistent regulation;

- an ambiguity and overlap of roles between Commonwealth and NT agencies;
- the lack of an independent monitoring authority; and
- the lack of constructive enforcement powers available to regulators.

Although the NLC's submission noted that "the new Northern Territory *Mining Management Act* goes some way to addressing some of the structural problems within the regimes", it called for the Commonwealth to take further action regarding enforcement of international best practice standards.

The NLC's submission included four key recommendations to improve the environmental regulation at Ranger and Jabiluka. These were:

- that the Commonwealth ensure a full and proper Environmental Management Plan is prepared for the two mine sites and that, as part of this, the Commonwealth establish whether the provisions of the *Mining Management Act 2001* are adequate to ensure the preparation of such a plan;
- that both mines achieve compliance with international environmental management standard ISO 14001 by 2003 and full certification by 2005;
- that the Commonwealth require and enforce the extension of ISO 14001 to the entire uranium production industry; and
- that the regulators re-establish a more active physical presence in the Jabiru area rather than totally withdrawing to Darwin.



# Warumungu Gold



Warumungu traditional Aboriginal land owners and Giants Reef Mining Company representatives signed agreements for the development of the Chariot Mine at a ceremony in July.

The ceremony was held at the gold mine site on the Warumungu Aboriginal Land Trust, 9 km west of Tennant Creek.

In a speech at the ceremony, Dianne Stokes, the regional CLC Executive delegate, said:

"We are happy to have the Giants Reef Executive Director Nick Byrne here today who many of us have worked with over the years and trust.

"Giants Reef is a Tennant Creek company with a history of working in our region with traditional owners, respecting our culture and sacred sites.

"The Chariot Mine will be a much needed boost to the Tennant Creek economy with around 80 people being

employed at the mine and the re-opened Warrego Ore Processing Plant. It will also provide opportunities for training and employment for Warumungu people and royalties that will be spent locally.

"It is an exciting time to be living in Tennant Creek with the railway under way and – something close to my heart – the building of the Warumungu Cultural Centre, which will be completed next year.

"Let us all work together, black and white, to ensure a harmonious and prosperous future for our region."

The mine is the ninth new mining lease approved under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act in the Central Land Council area.

The first mining lease was the Granites in 1984.



## Mobile polling booths for ATSIIC elections

With just under two weeks to go before the ATSIIC 2002 elections on 19 October, the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) is set to take its mobile polling booths to remote communities throughout the Northern Territory.

Eligible voters who will not be able to vote at a registered polling booth on voting day can instead vote beforehand at one of these mobile booths.

Bill Shephard, whose role as the Australian Electoral Officer for the NT is to oversee the election, said he expected 250 mobile polling booths to visit remote

areas in the two weeks leading up to the election.

"There will be posters put up in council offices and around remote communities advising voters of when polling booths will be visiting particular areas," Mr Shephard said.

Alternatively, he said voters could call

the AEC on 13 23 26 to obtain this information.

Mobile polling booths will also visit hospitals, nursing homes, and prisons just before voting day to ensure all voters are catered for.

For details of candidates for specific regions, contact ATSIIC on 8944 5566. ●

**ATSIIC  
Regional  
Council  
Elections  
19 October  
2002**

*Being seen:  
Being Heard*

# Sniffing toll: all talk, little action says SA Coroner

A Coroner inquiring into three petrol sniffing deaths on the South Australian Pitjantjatjara lands found that efforts to reduce the problem had some success in the mid 1990s, with the widespread introduction of Avgas on communities, but the number of sniffers had become worse since then.

The inquest concerned three deaths, one in 1999 and two last year, of two men and a woman all in their twenties.

Each had been sniffing petrol for over ten years.

The Coroner, Wayne Chivell, handed down his findings in early September after hearings in Umuwa, South Australia in late May and early June.

He said petrol sniffing "continues to cause devastating harm to the community, including approximately 35 deaths in the last 20 years in a population of between 2,000 and 2,500".

"Serious disability, crime, cultural breakdown and general grief and misery are also consequences."

The inquest resulted from lobbying by the Nyangatjatjara Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council and others desperate to refocus attention on the problem.

The findings relating to petrol sniffing

made by another Coroner's inquest in Alice Springs in 1998 have largely been ignored by governments and some of the mechanisms set up after it to coordinate services have failed.

**"Many of the people in the field complained of the remoteness of bureaucracies, and their incessant demands for written reports on performance outcomes and so forth."**

SA CORONER WAYNE CHIVELL

In 1995 the responsibility for Aboriginal health programs was transferred from ATSIC to the Commonwealth Government which, after a review, established the Central Australian Cross Border Reference Group on Volatile Substances Use.

The Coroner criticised the group for delays which left it stuck in an information-gathering phase.

He said: "There is no need for further

information gathering, and there is a vast untapped pool of professional expertise to be utilised. What is missing is prompt, forthright, properly planned, properly funded action."

"Many of the people in the field complained of the remoteness of bureaucracies, and their incessant demands for written reports on performance outcomes and so forth. It would be better if the bureaucracies appointed trusted representatives who could monitor and evaluate projects and programs for themselves, rather than insisting that dedicated professionals in the field continue to spend valuable time and

resources preparing reports in order to ensure continued funding."

Many witnesses, in a view backed by the Coroner, said there was a desperate need for more police on the lands to deal with emergencies and to back up Community Constables, previously known as Police Aides.

Another constant theme was the difficulty of parents and elders in dealing with the sniffing problem as it was outside traditional law and experience.

The Coroner cited the success of the Northern Territory's Mt Theo outstation in giving sniffers from Yuendumu 170 km to the south-east "time out" to deal with their problems. He said the key to it was community respect and support for the project built up over years.

The full text of the Coroner's findings is available at <http://www.courts.sa.gov.au/courts/coroner/findings/index.html>

# Fresh face for Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations

The Federal Government has at last appointed a new Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations after a two-year gap which followed the departure of the controversial previous Registrar, Noredine Bouhafs.

The Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister, the Hon. Philip Ruddock, announced on 30 July that the new Registrar would be Ms Laura Beacroft, who until her appointment had been working as a senior policy adviser with ATSIC.

In her new role Ms Beacroft will oversee the incorporation of community organisations under the *Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976*.

Key functions are to incorporate Indigenous organisations, provide information, assistance and support as necessary and monitor/regulate against minimal statutory requirements for corporate accountability.

Currently there are 2,783 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bodies incorporated nationwide under the Act. This number has been estimated to represent about half of all Indigenous corporations in Australia.

Mr Ruddock said one of Ms Beacroft's major tasks would be to finalise a review of the Act with the aim of bringing in reforms, which he said would lead to better service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

In an interview with *Land Rights News*, Ms Beacroft revealed she had spent over a decade dealing with issues affecting Indigenous people, first at the Indigenous Law Centre, then at the New South Wales Legal Aid Commission before starting with ATSIC in 1996 to head up an improvement team working with the Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander Legal Services funded by ATSIC.

"The challenge for me in my new role is to deal with the deeper causes of organisations that fall over," she said. "In small Aboriginal communities, when the corporation fails, everybody suffers."

"The question is, what can we do up-river to prevent that happening?"

Ms Beacroft said her office was in the process of expanding its pilot training programs to help large and small Aboriginal corporations improve their governance practices. She said she was confident that funding would become available to allow these programs to be made available "on a rolling basis" right across Australia.

She said that under the two previous acting Registrars, Colin Plowman and Joe Mastrolembo, the office had already taken steps to ensure a rapid response to any early warning signs of potential problems in Aboriginal corporations. Her predecessor, Mr Bouhafs, came under fire from many in the Aboriginal community – including the NLC and CLC – over his perceived strict enforcement of the Act's provisions which allow the winding up of corporations not complying with the legislation.

It was argued at the time that many of the smaller corporations were simply unaware of the need to submit annual reports in a timely manner, and often lacked the resources and skills to do so anyway.



## REMINDER ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations reminds all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations that they should now be planning their Annual General Meeting (AGM) for 2001/2002.

For most corporations, the AGM is due by the end of September.

At the AGM the Governing Committee must give reports to members about what it has done over the past 12 months.

Where it is not possible to hold your AGM by this date, the Registrar may allow an extension of time in which to hold it.

If you require an extension of time please contact the Registrar's office on toll-free 1800 622 431.

# Kakadu Rangers Conference draws delegates from across Australia



Every year during the Dry Season Indigenous rangers from across the Top End gather in one location to share experiences and knowledge and forge action plans for the year ahead.

It is without doubt the major event of the year for the rangers, who live and work in remote and isolated locations.

This year the Top End rangers were joined by ranger groups from central Australia, the Kimberleys, the Gulf and Cape York Peninsula as well as other interested parties from across Australia at a two-day camp held from 6-8 August at Merl Campground in the heart of Kakadu National Park.

There were over 200 participants including approximately 10 staff from the Northern Land Council's Caring for

Country and Media units.

All the participants camped in swags and mozzie nets under the stars and were fed bush tucker - including some freshly caught magpie geese one night - by the excellent camp kitchen laid on by the Djabulukgu Association.

Following the official welcome by Jacob Nayinggul, the senior traditional owner from the Manilagarr clan, the conference focused in on a number of key areas.

These included the management of feral animals and weeds, sea management, enforcement powers for rangers, tourism

and enterprise development and - importantly - the involvement of women and youth in these projects.

During the Conference the 65 women attendees gathered together to discuss issues relating to land management practices and parks management.

Other topics of discussion included feral animals, fire management, changing place names to Aboriginal names, getting children onto country away from grog and drugs and also looking at ways to record and map traditional knowledge.

Beryl Smith, an Indigenous Kakadu ranger, shared her account of how she recently discovered a new species of eel which is now stored at the NT Museum and Art Gallery.

Extra-curricular activities at the Conference included a guided excursion for women to a dry creek bed beside the East Alligator River to inspect large sections of *Salvinia molesta* infestation (a major weed in the NT).

Greg Lyons (Jawoyn Landcare Officer) also presented a practical training session on mapping and geographical information systems.

This was then followed by a real-life exercise whereby participants had to map tracks around the Merl Campground using a GPS.

Resolutions from the Conference included:

- A call for the Northern Territory Government to recognise traditional



Jacob Nayinggul

owners' fire management skills by increasing Aboriginal representation in organisations such as the Bushfire Council and even setting up and funding Aboriginal volunteer fire crews to assist in the process.

- A call to broaden the scope of future Rangers Conferences to include all Indigenous groups from Northern Australia as well as Indigenous groups from neighbouring countries within the Arafura Region.
- A call for government agencies to support more Aboriginal Ranger Programs and also to provide more jobs in mainstream land management agencies for Indigenous people - preferably traditional owners - so that there are better cross-cultural exchanges.

# Warlpiri Rangers visit Kakadu

Samuel Nelson, Shaun Watson, Ethan Robinson and Neville Poulson (below) are the core of the newly established Warlpiri Rangers, a program that aims to improve general land management in the southern Tanami and bring Indigenous skills and knowledge in conservation to the forefront.



One of their first engagements is a month-long collaborative fauna survey of Newhaven Bird Sanctuary Reserve with Birds Australia.

Kakadu was a chance to meet up and share ideas with other Aboriginal rangers from across northern Australia and as far afield as NSW.

Close to two hundred delegates attended the conference and though they represented a great variety of country they had many issues in common.

It seems that fire, weeds, feral animals, passing on traditional knowledge and protecting local resources are problems facing all traditional owners in Northern Australia.

The trip was also an opportunity to see the workings of two of Australia's premier tourist attractions, Aboriginal-owned national parks Kakadu and Nitmiluk.

Being the height of tourist season the rangers could appreciate the way these parks manage their many visitors and provide cultural interpretation.

Neville and the other three Warlpiri rangers returned home with ideas and enthusiasm.

There's a lot going on in the desert: Newhaven; camels; bilbies; mining; outstations - plenty for rangers to do. In a few years, who knows, the Indigenous Rangers Conference might be held on Warlpiri land.



## Perseverance pays off

**Families living at Harry Creek have reason to celebrate after years of living in the path of the railway and waiting for their community to be relocated.**

Since plans were drawn up years ago to put the railway corridor through their community they have been unable to upgrade their housing and had to remain in tin sheds without proper cooking facilities and drink sub standard water.

The small community of Harry Creek

East is about 50 kilometres north of Alice Springs on the Mpweringe-Arnapipe (2) Aboriginal Land Trust.

The land trust is on a section of the old North-South Stock Route, which is bisected by the Stuart Highway.

Where the community is, on the eastern

side of the highway, is too narrow to safely accommodate both the rail corridor and the community. As a result Harry Creek is the only Aboriginal community required to move from the railway corridor.

The previous Northern Territory Government had offered the community

NT freehold title to a new block 12 km to the east.

However, this form of freehold title would have extinguished native title rights so the Harry Creek community initially refused to sign the railway agreement.

Since then the CLC, on behalf of the community, has negotiated for Aboriginal freehold title to the new location which was finally approved by Parliament on 19 September.

Secure title to the land means the community can join with nearby groups to work towards getting essential services in their area, including a health service and a bilingual school to keep their Arrernte language strong.

Construction of seven houses on the new block will begin soon and relocation of the community will start in about six months.

Substantial delays were caused by the Government's misunderstanding of obligations to meet the community's housing requirements.

The Central Land Council is grateful to Minister Assisting the Chief Minister on Indigenous Affairs, John Ah Kit, and the Northern Territory Government for finally reaching a satisfactory agreement on the number of houses and their size. ●

## Galiwin'ku Knowledge Centre

**Imagine having a whole world of Aboriginal language and culture on-line, there to be accessed by Aboriginal people in a culturally appropriate way. Aboriginal knowledge controlled by Aboriginal people, just a finger click away.**

And eventually, this same world living cheek-by-jowl with a Western library in a single building containing living, study and ceremonial areas.

Within the next month there will be no more need to imagine. After a two-year study involving a number of remote Aboriginal communities in the Top End, Galiwin'ku (Elcho Island) has been chosen as the site for the first Indigenous Knowledge Centre.

In July the Northern Territory Government announced \$172,000 in funding to allow stage one of the project to go ahead, which will see the creation of a 'virtual' Knowledge Centre based on an integrated database and website.

A successful outcome to the Knowledge Centre experiment could eventually see libraries servicing remote areas of the NT move away from the print-based Western concept towards an Indigenous model based on oral/visual traditions.

Community Development Consultant Tom Redston, from the NT Library and Information Service's Project Management Team, said the database would contain images, text, film and sound originating from the whole Miwatj area of north-east Arnhem Land.

Access via the website will be strictly controlled to ensure sacred business is not accessed by the uninitiated. However,

much of the material will continue to be available to outsiders.

"What we're saying to museums and libraries and other places where many of these Yolngu resources are currently housed is, you keep the object or the tape or the roll of film, you keep looking after it, but we want to access it in the virtual world," Mr Redston said. "It will be a virtual repatriation."

"All the Yolngu will have easy access to the database and website because we are putting workstations in all of the Galiwin'ku Community Council's buildings. There are many levels of access so certain areas of the database will be out of bounds for certain people."

One of the key forces behind the establishment of the Galiwin'ku Centre is Galiwin'ku elder Richard Gundhuwuy Garrawurra, who described the Centre as a "breeding ground for Aboriginal culture".

"The Galiwin'ku Knowledge Centre is a place that what is past, today and future can be learned," he said. "This thing has to make Aboriginal people come alive."

Mr Garrawurra likened the Centre to a "breathing space".

"This is what I remember the old people talking about. When people are homeless for their land, their culture and their language ... they will have it here."

Mr Garrawurra has already painted a

design for the next stage of the project, which will see the construction of a building incorporating accommodation areas, a dance ground, various restricted areas, a Western-style library and a learning area.

On the outside the building will be surrounded by pools containing water, representing the Yolngu people's all-important sea country. Other community leaders are also sharing their vision of knowledge management, Yolngu way, through paintings.

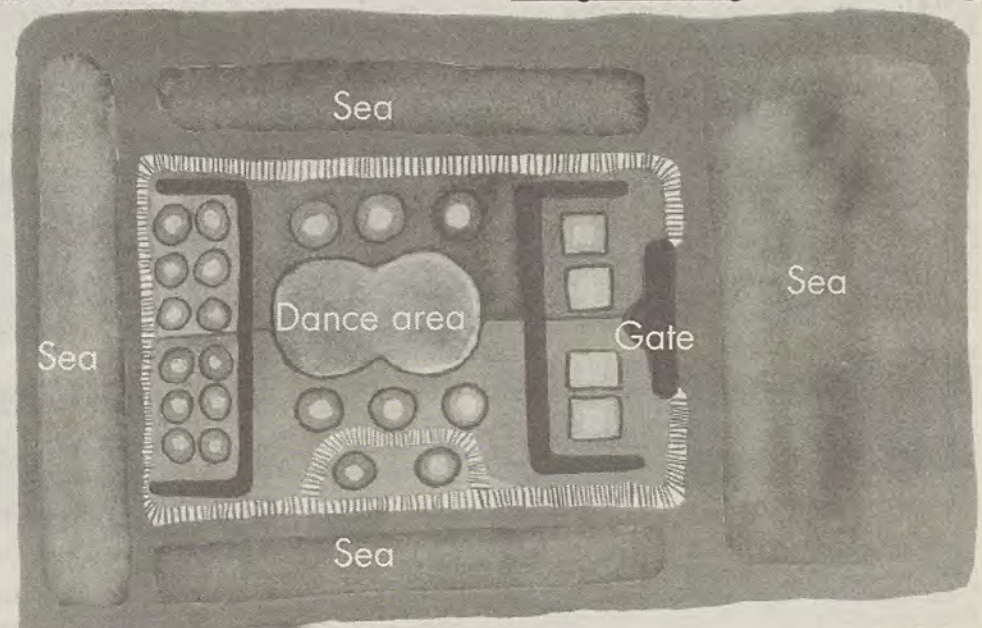
There will be a virtual exhibition of these artworks when the website is launched in late October.

Already the Galiwin'ku community has identified a building site close to other education and administrative precincts, and the hunt for funding sources has begun.

In the meantime a number of other communities, including Ti Tree and the Tiwi Islands, are developing their own plans for Knowledge Centres.

Clearly, much hangs on the outcome of the Galiwin'ku experiment.

When it goes online in October the Galiwin'ku Knowledge Centre will be located at [www.galiwin'ku.com](http://www.galiwin'ku.com) or [www.galiwin'ku.org](http://www.galiwin'ku.org). ●



Richard Garrawurra's building design. The circles represent storage areas



# Gurindji Freedom Day Celebrations

This year the Kalkaringi and Daguragu communities celebrated the 36<sup>th</sup> Gurindji Freedom Day anniversary with a weekend of community activities and sports events, which continued late into the nights.



Above: Tracey, Joanne and Letisha enjoying Gurindji Freedom Day celebrations

Below: Gurindji kids checking out the Norforce army vehicle



Aussie rules and Pigeon Hole stayed the reigning premiers in basketball.

The Aboriginal Norforce soldiers made their presence felt throughout the celebrations, demonstrating their military skills and giving community members the opportunity to check out army vehicles and equipment which was very popular among the youngsters.

Local bands played loud and strong, wrapping up each day's events while young people shared their dancing talents.

The community is now looking forward to next year's celebrations. ●



The celebrations began at the traditional Victoria River spot where kids swam and adults reminisced about the old days, before fishing and feasting on fresh killa.

Community member Billy Bunter walked the crowd through the Mumkurlanginyi-ma Parrngalinyparla "From The Darkness into the Light" Gurindji Freedom Banners.

He spoke of the importance of marking the day with celebrations and that community involvement and support was essential in keeping the day strong.

The day commemorates the historic Gurindji walk off in 1966, when Vincent Lingiari lead the Gurindji in a strike for

better wages and to win their traditional land back.

This historic moment in the north west of central Australia highlighted Aboriginal people's struggles in the Northern Territory and put land rights on the national political agenda.

During this year's celebrations Federal Member for Lingiari Warren Snowdon presented four local students with 'certificates of attainment' as part of their Northern Territory Certificates of Education. All students are well on their way towards completing Years 11 and 12.

The Kalkaringi School is a Project School for Remote Secondary Provision, offering students a full secondary education in their community.

There are 28 students attending secondary classes with seven students in the senior secondary class and 21 in Junior Secondary.

A painting competition was also the talk of the town with community members young and old putting their talents to the test. Ros Frith, Bidy Jimmy and Aileen Roy emerged the winners of the competition.

Lajamanu community members and school groups from Kormilda and Marrara colleges in Darwin also travelled the distance to participate in the weekend celebrations.

Highlights of the weekend included football, softball and basketball. The Daguragu Eagles took out first place in

## Lingiari Lecture: the Wave Hill Walk-off

**"Aborigines were arbitrarily bound to employers by a system of institutionalised poverty." Brian Manning, Lingiari Lecture, Northern Territory University, 23 August 2002**

With that one comment, former trade unionist Brian Manning set the tone of an hour-long lecture that outlined the struggle of the Gurindji people of Wave Hill Station and their fight to be repatriated with their land.

For Aboriginal stockmen, life in the Northern Territory pastoral industry during the 1960s was harsh. They were earning less than a quarter of a white man's wage and were expected to do the same work while existing on meagre rations.

The Gurindji protested against these

conditions and effected what is now known as "The Wave Hill Walk-off." A single act of defiance that, to this day, is regarded by many as the first step towards land rights for Aboriginal people in Australia.

Led by Vincent Lingiari, the Gurindji would continue to defy the demands of the authorities of the day to return to work and station life for many years.

"Vincent made it clear. They were not going back to the station. They experienced a feeling of pride and regained dignity. There was more to this than just increased wages. Over the ensuing months as I talked

to various strikers and understood their indignation and anger I was told quite emphatically, 'We never go back to Vestey.'" *Brian Manning.*

In 1967 - 12 months after the walk-off - they finally settled down on a tract of land that is known today as Daguragu.

By 1970, the strike action had progressed beyond the claims of equal pay to one of land rights. But it wasn't until August 1975, after a change of government in Australia and a ground swell of national support, that the Gurindji finally won back their traditional lands.

The Prime Minister of the day, the Hon. Gough Whitlam, performed a simple act but one that has since become an everlasting image of repatriation, when he poured the red dust of the Gurindji's traditional lands into Vincent Lingiari's hand. And with that one simple act, Vincent Lingiari and his people had won a battle many doubted would ever be achieved.

Now, 36 years after the event, the Gurindji's struggle continues to be acknowledged.

"Vincent's vision of the Gurindji running their own station served to satisfy the aspirations of his contemporaries, many of whom have now passed away. But his legacy is still there in the freehold Gurindji country. It is in the hands of the Gurindji people to decide what they will do in their own time." *Brian Manning.* ●

# Have your say about the Alice Springs Grog

After many years of community meetings and talking about the problems caused by grog, the Licensing Commissioner announced a 12-month trial of restrictions on the supply of alcohol in Alice Springs.

The trial restrictions began on 1 April 2002 and include:

- No grog to be sold in containers over two litres.
- Only light beer sold on premises before 11.30 am on weekdays.
- Takeaway sales between 2pm and 9pm weekdays only.

It was recognised that restricting access to grog was only part of the solution to minimising the harm to the people, families and community affected by grog.

Other measures were adopted to enhance the trial restrictions including:

- A day patrol run by Tangentyere Council.
- Youth Drop in Centre under Central Australian Aboriginal Congress.
- Extending the hours of the DASA Sobering Up Shelter.
- Increased training for alcohol servers and Police.

These complementary measures have been funded by the NT Government and the national Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation.

At the same time the trial restrictions were introduced the Licensing Commissioner established an Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) to monitor and evaluate the trial, as well as take into account the views of the community.

The ERG provides a process through which the community can have a say about how the trial is working. It is also the job of ERG members to keep their communities informed on how the trial is going.

Philip Watkins from the Central Land Council says: "It is important that Aboriginal people in Alice Springs and bush communities have their say on what is happening with the Grog Trials.

"Many of the statistics show that it is people originally from bush communities who are most at risk of harm caused by grog when in Alice Springs. It is important that the ERG take into account the views of Aboriginal people, whether they are good or bad, to ensure the impact of the restrictions can be properly assessed."

A range of different interests are represented on the ERG. The group meets regularly to keep track of the trial and its impact on the community.

Comments can be made via post or the trial website: write to ERG, c/- Dr Crundall, PO Box 721, Alice Springs, 0871; or log onto [www.nt.gov.au/health/casn/liquor.shtml](http://www.nt.gov.au/health/casn/liquor.shtml).

Any comments made to ERG members are confidential. If you want to have a say about the Alice Springs Grog trial please contact one of the ERG members listed here:

- Philip Watkins, Central Land Council.....8951 6210
- Andrew Ross, ATSIC.....89594213
- Stephanie Bell, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress .....89514400
- Geoff Shaw, Tangentyere Council.....89525855
- Michael Griffen, Arrernte Council.....89531533
- Trevor Bell, Police, Fire & Emergency Services .....89518888
- Brycen Brook, Central Australian Alcohol and Other Drug Services.....89517582
- Sami Habib, Alice Springs Town Council...89500525
- Diane Loechel, Liquor Licensees Association .....89521255
- Beth Mildred, NT Chamber of Commerce and Industry .....89524377
- Cate Moodie, Central Australian Tourism Industry Association.....89516212
- Vicki Taylor, Alice In Ten Substance Working Group .....89504806
- Greg Weller, Australian Hotels Association..89813650
- Ian Crundall, Department of Health and Community Services.....89515157 ●

Being Seen: Being Heard

Novak Peris

You don't need to be in the public eye to be seen or heard on October 19

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ATSIC

## Bridge to the future



The Army's new testing and training range at Bradshaw Station in the Victoria River District is drawing ever closer to reality, with an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) between traditional owners and the Defence Department likely to be signed by the end of the year.

While much of the development of Bradshaw will take place after the ILUA has been signed, the Defence Department continues its preparations to transform the huge former pastoral property and has just completed a new bridge over the Victoria River to link Bradshaw with the outside world.

As well as being vital for the Army's purposes, the bridge will also greatly enhance traditional owners' ability to access Bradshaw for hunting, ceremonial and caring for country purposes.

Built under contract by the NT Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment, it is one of the longest bridges in the Northern Territory with a span of 270 metres carried by 13 pylons.

Capable of carrying the weight of tanks and other heavy military equipment, the bridge took 10 months to build at a cost of

\$9 million – including one month where no work was possible due to the Wet Season.

During the Dry the bridge towers up to 10 metres above the river level but during a heavy Wet it could actually be several metres under water.

However, this should pose no problem as the bridge has been built to withstand a one-in-two-thousand-year flood. Its design includes opposing pylons and piles driven up to six metres below the riverbed, well into the bedrock.

So far the bituminised access road across the bridge from the Victoria Highway has reached 2.7 kilometres into Bradshaw Station.

Once the ILUA is signed a further \$56 million is due to be spent over three years building 300 kilometres of roads, two permanent barracks, airstrips and other facilities.

## Alcoota Claimants win

Traditional owners wanting to proceed with the land claim on Alcoota Station had a Supreme Court victory in August.



The case arose out of the Alcoota Land Claim lodged in 1993, on the pastoral property about 100 km northeast of Alice Springs.

The property had been purchased in 1993 with \$6 million from ATSIC for the benefit of traditional land owners.

The claim was part heard in 1996 by Justice Gray when it was stopped by legal proceedings on behalf of Arthur Turner and the Alcoota Aboriginal Corporation of which Arthur Turner is Chairman.

Central Land Council Director David Ross said in August the Supreme Court decision was a total victory for traditional owners.

Mr Ross said: "This decision vindicates the position taken by traditional owners

and the Central Land Council in fighting for the right of the land claim to proceed. We now intend to continue the process for the benefit of the claimants after their rights have been frustrated for so long."

Mr Ross has urged the NT Government to hold a commission of inquiry into how the case was allowed to cost the NT taxpayers over \$1 million in legal costs on top of the time of the courts and others involved in the case.

"We'd like to know in whose interest the case was perpetuated and why," he said.

The case was previously financed by the former CLP government.

The land claim on Alcoota Station is now on hold again at least until March next year due to an appeal against the Supreme Court decision.

# Pearling deal comes of age



In recognition of its upcoming harvest Mr Pickett presented a framed photograph of the Elizabeth Bay hatchery to the Northern Land Council's branch operations manager, Edna Barolits, on 1 July

**Northern Australia's warm and pristine waters have made the region a magnet for pearl production over the past 100 years.**

Aboriginal people have made their own contribution to the industry's success over the past century through their often hazardous work as divers and labourers.

Now Indigenous communities are hoping to take their involvement in the industry a step further by obtaining their own pearl quotas from the NT Government.

The NLC has already had a hand in negotiating several agreements with pearling enterprises operating on country either owned or under claim by Aboriginal people. The Arafura Pearls hatchery at Elizabeth Bay in north-east Arnhem Land is a good example of this trend.

Arafura and its joint venture partner, Toomebridge Pty Ltd, signed a 20-year agreement with traditional owners in the region in 1997 allowing the company to build three land bases to service the hatchery.

Negotiations over the agreement, which were brokered by the NLC, also included the grant of a licence to use the seabed in the event of a current land claim over the sea bed proving successful, and the option to purchase an equity stake in the venture.

Five years on, the hatchery is still two years away from full production but already the operation is living up to expectations, with the hatchery likely to return half a million adult shells this year.

Troy Pickett, the general manager of Arafura's pearling operations, said this year would see the company make its first significant harvest and the signs were "looking good". While pearls are the main income earner, mother of pearl from the

oyster shells and oyster meat also provide a revenue stream.

"It's cost us just north of \$10 million to get the hatchery to where it is now – realistically this hatchery on its own could fill all the quota for all the Northern Territory pearl farms currently in operation," Mr Pickett said.

At present Arafura Pearls is limited to seeding 40,000 oysters a year although its joint venture with Toomebridge provides a total annual quota of 80,000. However, both companies are looking to raise their quotas and are examining a proposal involving associated quotas for traditional owners in the region.

Mr Pickett said a bigger pearl harvest would allow his company both to take on more Indigenous workers and to reduce its costs. "We're competing with pearl producers in foreign locations which have operating costs of 15 cents a shell where it costs us \$6-\$7 to operate a shell," he said. "We believe we have the long-term advantage in terms of quality and security of supply but anything to help us improve our competitive position would be welcome."

Mr Pickett said the Elizabeth Bay operation already employed several Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people, including two from Nhulunbuy, out of a total workforce of 15-25 (depending on the season). Most were working as deckhands on the shell-collecting boats but the company intended to take on an Indigenous trainee for the hatchery within the next 12 months.



Left: Culvert cement laying north of Katherine Above: Paddy and Geraldine Huddlestone, Amy Lauder and children with Wagiman Below left: Pharlap Dixon, Jeffrey Dixon and Jimmy Wavehill with Kurra Kurraka



Above: Warumungu Munga Munga dancers welcoming the trains to Tennant Creek Below: Kartti Pujjali male dancers



**Work continues to progress ahead of schedule on the Alice Springs to Darwin rail link with another milestone recently achieved.**

The month of September saw tracks laid across the newly completed Katherine River Bridge, one of two major river crossings the ADrail construction team has had to contend with.

The occasion also marking the completion of almost 400 kilometres of line already laid down by ADrail.

“We’ve been working south from Katherine and north from Tennant Creek, and by the time the track-layer links the corridor between the two towns, later in the year, more than 650 kilometres of track will have been laid,” ADrail Project Director Al Volpe said.

Coinciding with the bridge opening and track laying ceremony, two of the locomotives to be involved in construction work were officially honoured with Aboriginal names at a ceremony in Katherine.

Like the Storm Bird from which it gets its name, the ‘Kurra Kurraka’ will travel the rail in the spirit of the Marlinja people whose traditional country lies south of Katherine.

The ‘Wagiman’, as the name suggests, will honour the

proud people living north of Katherine.

“Considerable thought went into the naming of these locomotives,” NLC Railway Project Coordinator Sean Lange said. “The final choices equally represent the Central Australian and Top End regions.”

Central Land Council members also chose two locomotive names at a Council meeting earlier this year.

‘Aboriginal Stockman’ was chosen by Arrernte members in honour and respect of the enormous contribution Aboriginal stockman have made to the pastoral industry.

Warumungu members chose ‘Purnu’ which means coolomon or carrier in their language.

The Kartti Pujjali male dancers and the Munga Munga women dancers performed at a recent ceremony in Tennant Creek to welcome the trains.

Weighing in at around 138 tonnes, the locomotives will join other locos already being used to haul construction trains out of Katherine and Tennant Creek.

Herbie Laughton singing ‘Aboriginal Stockman’ at the Tennant Creek locomotive naming ceremony



## Concerns in the Centre

**The Central Land Council is concerned with the low level of employment opportunities on the Alice to Darwin railway in the Southern region of the Northern Territory.**

Although the railway construction has benefited the northern region, further south job opportunities are scarce.

To date 35 Aboriginal people recruited through Julalikari Council, Tangentyere Job Shop and the CLC railway employment unit have completed Indigenous Access Courses in hospitality, small plant and machinery and culvert construction. However, of the 35 who completed their courses, only nine have received full time work on the project.

In the centre there were 37 local Indigenous people working on the railway but now there are just 18 locals employed. Currently the CLC railway and employment unit has over 300 Indigenous people on its database waiting to receive positions and training.

Central Land Council Director David Ross said: "We haven't seen the results in our region for employment and training on the railway, which is concerning community members who are seeing positive results elsewhere. We have a railway employment unit dedicated to finding training and employment opportunities for local Indigenous people. They have over 300 people on their books but the job opportunities are not there. The employment spinoffs from the railway are failing to reach central Australian communities and we want to know why."

Although CLC realises there are many specialised jobs within the railway construction project, it is concerned with the lack of opportunities given to the local Indigenous population.

CLC Railway Employment Officer Harold Howard said: "We are concerned for people who put the effort in and train and pass medicals to find out the railway has already reached its quota. What happens to these skilled people who have to wait around for a position when these areas already suffer low employment opportunities?"

"The sleeper factory in Tennant Creek is going really well and has 19 indigenous people working there, which is great, but we still need to find out what opportunities indigenous people closer to Alice Springs and other communities will get from the project," Harold said.

Railway construction group ADrail has not given any clear answers about whether there will be any training and employment opportunities for Indigenous people south of Tennant Creek as railway construction moves onto their land.

Central Land Council Director David Ross said: "We are left wondering if it was just rhetoric about jobs for Aboriginal people in the Centre to get them to sign the railway agreement. Are people just being trained for the sake of it with no work for them at the end of it?"



Above and below: Indigenous trainees attend access training courses in Katherine

## Railway employment steams ahead in the Top End

**With the Alice Springs to Darwin railway project just over halfway complete, the substantial benefits flowing to Aboriginal people in the NLC's area in terms of employment and training opportunities have become abundantly clear.**

During negotiations over an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) leading up to the final sign-off on the \$1.3 billion project in April 2001, both the NLC and CLC fought hard to secure these opportunities for Indigenous people living along the rail corridor.

As a result ADrail, the construction subsidiary of the Asia Pacific Transport Consortium, agreed to provide jobs for 100 Aboriginal people and training places for a further 200.

Additionally, the main subcontractors to ADrail – sleeper manufacturer Austrack, catering company Morris Corp and quarry operator Roche – each agreed to 20 per cent Indigenous employment levels in their operations.

In the NLC's area a dedicated four-strong Railway Unit operating out of the NLC's Katherine office has overseen both the implementation of these agreements and the training-to-employment process with spectacular results.

By the end of August 127 Indigenous people had already been employed on the Top End portion of the rail link, with a further 124 completing a variety of training courses, including pre-employment 'access' training and on-the-job training.

Of those Indigenous people starting access training, about 90% completed their courses – well above the total rail project training retention rate average of 79 per cent.

As a result there is now a solid core of Aboriginal people with accredited skills ranging from culvert construction, welding and rigging to truck driving, forklift and gantry operation.

NLC Chief Executive Norman Fry welcomed the positive training outcomes, saying the NLC was "proud to have worked closely with ADrail" on the project.

"The creation of jobs for local Indigenous people is a key factor in stimulating regional economies, as our people stay and spend in their own region," he said.

"The development of a stronger skills base in the region

is another invaluable benefit in the long run."

Many of the skill sets developed for the railway project will be applicable to future Top End projects such as gas pipeline and mining developments.

The NLC is well-advanced with its plan to use the railway model as a springboard to facilitate the training and employment of Aboriginal people on such projects.

Already the details of 550 Indigenous people have been entered into the NLC's employment and training database, with comprehensive work histories and qualifications listed.

The NLC has also established a Working Group under the direction of Deputy Chief Executive John Berto to advance this initiative and seek the necessary resources from both government and private sector sources.

"Given the number of major infrastructure projects slated for Aboriginal land in the near future, the NLC is confident that it will soon be in a position to provide greater employment opportunities for its constituents," Mr Fry said.



# Sandalwood and olives on trial in the centre

An Aboriginal family at Oak Valley, on the Mpwelarre Aboriginal land trust, 100 km to the south of Alice Springs, is trialing sandalwood and olives as a means to build employment opportunities on their homelands.



Robbie, Mary and Craig Le Rossignol planted 400 olive trees almost two years ago and they haven't looked back since.

The olive trees are growing well and have reached a metre in height.

Two months ago the Le Rossignol family also planted 300 sandalwood seeds in a trial plot and those too are thriving having survived the hard frosts of winter.

The family are trialing ways to provide employment on the homelands to bring family members back to the land from town.

"We are looking for ways to provide an income for our families and our children later on. Our main goal is employment out here," said Craig.

"We started off with 400 olive trees. We roughly got 380 now that's continued growing and growing really well. We're guessing around another five years until they bear fruit," Craig said.

"The type of olives we are growing can be used for a couple of different things like oil, of course, and the flesh of the fruit itself, stuffed with whatever things people like. So eventually we will have to have a full production line going here. Probably with our first harvest of olives we will have to do it ourselves so will tell family to come out on the weekend and bring all the kids and give them a stick each," Craig said.

The seeds on trial are native West Australian sandalwood and were suggested to the family by a Centralian College horticultural lecturer.

"Sandalwood is used for incense, perfumes, fragrances and carvings. The wood is pretty hardy and a lot of the native sandalwood in Asia is what they use for their carvings," Craig said.

The family are tapping into whatever learning resources they can find and are teaching themselves.

"The first time we had to prune the olive trees. I just looked in a book and it said cut here and cut there. So I did and we also get in contact with Olives Australia and they've been really helpful," said Robbie.

Both Craig and Mary also commenced a horticultural apprenticeship through Centralian College earlier this year.

"If they do their apprenticeship in horticulture we will have our own expertise on site with the olives, sandalwood and grapes. And hopefully we will become experts for the whole of central Australia," said Robbie.

The family also run a small tourist business where you can camp on the land and go on day trips to check out a large fossil field located on the land trust, caves with traditional paintings, and learn about the local bush tucker.

"We get a lot of self driven people along the old south road and we offer a camping ground with hot showers and BBQ facilities and sometimes if you arrive at the right times we could be cooking up kangaroo," said Craig.

The land trust was handed back to traditional owners in 1994 and has three living areas which includes Mt Peachy, Walkabout Bore and Oak Valley.

The strong family tie to the land and their respect for their grandfather's country plays an important role in the



Robbie and Craig checking sandalwood seedlings at Oak Valley

way the family runs the homelands today.

"During the early 80's our grandfather started coming back and moving around to this area which is our traditional land through his mother and his grandfather. And he was born just south from here where we live," said Craig.

"We use to cart water from our aunty's place about eight kilometres from here two years ago. We originally carted it to drink until Mary decided to put plants in and then we had to cart water to get her garden going," said Robbie. ●

# Camels ready to market

The Tjuwanpa Resource Centre's new camel enterprise is already generating benefits during the setting up phase.



Workers are constructing steel panels in the engineering workshop for camel yards which are part of the camel enterprise covering 200 square kilometres west of Hermannsburg in central Australia.

This new camel project was initiated in May 2001 by the Haasts Bluff Aboriginal Land Trust and strongly driven by traditional owner Anslam Impu with enterprise planning from the Central Land Council.

Anslam has worked as a stockman mustering cattle, camels and horses all his life and is looking forward to continuing to catch camels for marketing.

"Yeah this camel project is on the other side of my outstation on the missionary plains. We already started, we got fencing started and the yards probably go in next week. I worked as a ringer with cattle horses and camels. I know too much about mustering cattle and camels," Anslam said.

This is the first camel project set up on Aboriginal land and has taken a number of months to get up and running.

Anslam has worked closely with CLC to plan the project which has included getting funding from the Indigenous Land Corporation for fencing, building the yard and fixing bores.

Other funding and assistance has come through the Tjuwanpa Resource Centre, the Australian Camel Industry Association, the Department of Employment and

Workplace Relations and the Department of Employment, Education and Training who have provided money for trainers from the Centralian College Rural Unit for the welding, yard construction and fencing.

The Tjuwanpa Resource Centre steel workshop supervisor Mark Inkamala says the young men have shown a lot of interest in steel work and have made about 80 panels in the last three months.

"It's good to see the young fellas working here so they can go back to their outstations and weld and build fences. There's been a lot of interest from young people to learn welding skills," Mark said.

The resource centre is very busy with 20 young local men in training and work.

Tjuwanpa Outstations Chairperson Roxanne Mary Kenny is really happy with the enthusiasm generated in the community, especially among the young men who are proud of their role in the project.

"It's giving the young fellas something to do instead of running to town. It's involving a lot of young fellas from outstations and going really well," Roxanne said.

The large camel paddock will have a trap system for trapping camels as they come in out of the desert country. Once the camels are trapped inside the paddock they will have plenty of feed and water and will be quickly trained by quiet camels to adapt to living behind barbed wire.

The paddock is designed to hold 200-400 camels.



Anslam Impu

This will enable the enterprise to meet the demands of the camel market the same way cattle are sold.

Australian camels are in demand in many Asian and Middle Eastern countries because of their disease-free status and the high standard of veterinary and husbandry management.

The Central Australian Camel Industry Association (CACIA) is encouraging more Aboriginal landowners and pastoralists to use the potential feral camel problem as an opportunity to secure an income stream. The gross value of camels exported in 2001-02 reached \$2.5 million and this is expected to double in 2002-3. ●

# AQIS recognises Ranger efforts

The NLC's Caring for Country Ranger program has emerged as a key ally in the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service's ongoing battle against exotic pests and diseases across the Top End of Australia.



NLC Deputy CEO John Berto receives the award from AQIS's Meryl Stanton

About 80 rangers from a number of Indigenous ranger groups in coastal areas of the NT, including outlying islands, are involved in the quarantine effort.

Given its proximity to Asia, it has long been recognised that northern Australia is particularly vulnerable to unwanted pests from abroad. An infestation of Darwin

Harbour by the striped mussel several years ago served as a stark reminder of how rapidly feral invaders can take hold.

However, despite its climate the Northern Territory has managed to remain largely free of major tropical diseases affecting both humans and livestock.

In recognition of remote Indigenous

communities' key role on Australia's quarantine front line, AQIS Executive Director Meryl Stanton presented a Quarantine Certificate of Commendation to NLC Deputy Chief Executive John Berto and the Caring for Country unit's Executive Officer Michael Storrs in Darwin on 8 July.

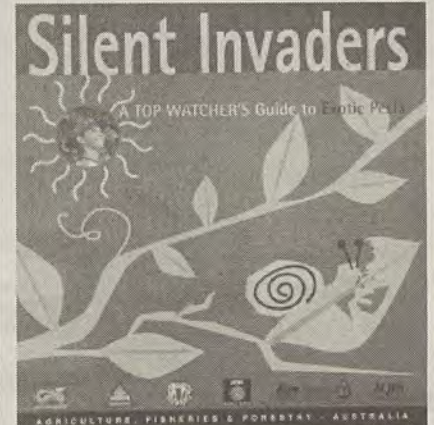
Ms Stanton told the NLC officers that she "wanted to express my admiration for the work you're doing".

"Without you we couldn't have access to these areas of northern Australia - it's tremendous to see the communities getting so involved," she said.

Over the past two years the NLC's Caring for Country unit has joined forces with AQIS to help enhance this surveillance work, with AQIS in return providing funding and other resources - such as training - for Ranger groups.

"There are still some large gaps in our Ranger network but we're building on it all the time," Mr Berto said. ●

## Kids on the quarantine front line



**Children living in Aboriginal communities across the Top End of Australia have been enlisted in the struggle to keep Australia free of animal and plant pests.**

A new book produced by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry - *Silent Invaders: A Top Watcher's Guide to Exotic Pests* - uses pictures, graphics and easily-understood descriptions to inform kids of the 27 worst feral pests lurking on Australia's doorstep.

Chances are that if any of them do make it in, their first landfall will be somewhere in northern Australia. That's because the wind can blow pests and diseases across the ocean, migrating birds can bring pests and diseases with them, and pests can also hitch-hike on fishing boats that come from overseas.

The potential invaders include bird flu, pig fever, rabies, screw worm fly, the mile-a-minute vine, Siam weed, spiked pepper, citrus borers and the giant African snail.

Any one of them could devastate Australia's agricultural production as well as causing severe and permanent damage to our native plants and animals.

The book, a product of consultation with remote communities across the Northern Territory, education authorities, Aboriginal ranger groups and the Northern Land Council, is distributed free to schools, libraries, Indigenous education colleges and community rangers in Australia's north.

For more information, contact the North Australia Quarantine Strategy's Aboriginal Liaison Officer on 08-8999 2048. ●

## Wanga Djakamirr Rangers fencing project



**In a slight twist on the old saying, good fences can make better neighbours. And while the Wanga Djakamirr Rangers don't like pigs and buffalo on their country, they especially don't want them ruining an important patch of rainforest, the bumbaldjarri, where good bush tucker such as wild yams grow.**

To solve the problem, the rangers - based out of Ramingining in Arnhem Land - have just completed a three kilometre stretch of fencing to protect the bumbaldjarri. Alan Mace, the senior ranger, explained that the pigs had been eating the yams and turning over the dirt in the rainforest patch. With the fence finished, the hope is that yams might come back.

Another important task now is to get rid of the pigs and buffalo from inside. The rangers have already built a pig trap at a nearby rainforest patch and plan to put one in this rainforest to catch any pigs lucky enough to escape being shot.

The rangers said they had enjoyed building the fence, which was funded by a Natural Heritage Trust grant. According to Alan Eustace, a ranger who has worked on the fencing project since its inception, the fencing has been good training.

Some of the rangers had done fencing before, and those who hadn't did some fencing training in Ramingining before starting the rainforest fence. Now they are whipping up fences like a professional contracting team - and patiently showing new rangers the ropes. The rangers said some people wonder what they do, but when they come and see the fence they'll realise the rangers do useful work for the community.



Alan Eustace and Douglas Wunungmurra pull another strand tight

Completing the fence is not the end of the job, as the fence needs regular checking and maintenance. Alan Mace explained that the fence has already been broken, probably by buffalo trying to jump over it or bumping it with their horns. Alan Eustace said the rangers would keep the fenceline clear with a slasher and check it each year both before and after the wet season.

Weeds such as sida, hyptis and passion fruit vine are growing along the edges of the rainforest patch. The rangers are hoping to control these weeds in the future by spraying and hand pulling. Inside the

rainforest patch there are many Arenga palms that are being severely damaged by pigs. Debbie Cesari, the ranger coordinator, says rangers will seek advice on how to monitor the rainforest to see if it improves after pigs and buffalo are gone.

Although the gate has only just been hung on this fence, already there is talk of where the next protective fence should be built. Alan Mace is interested in building a fence to protect Damarla waterhole, a freshwater sacred site which is close by the saltwater plain and is being damaged by pigs and buffalo. ●



Arrernte dancers lead the academic procession

## Batchelor Institute celebrates another successful year

**Students, family, friends and teachers gathered at the Batchelor Institute Central Australian Campus in Alice Springs to celebrate the achievements of more than 100 students from across the Territory.**

Traditional dancing by Arrernte women led the procession as Arrernte woman Rosie Riley welcomed everyone onto Arrernte country.

Once formal speeches of congratulations and admiration were complete, family and community members watched with pride as students one by one received their awards.

Students received awards in fields such as health, community studies, community services (aged care), broadcasting and operations, land management, education, sport and recreation, spoken and written English and library and information studies.

During the ceremony Minister John Ah Kit inspired students with a few words about his life experiences.

"Over the years I have been to a number of Batchelor Graduations – and I can truly say that they are real highlights in my life, and that they carry great memories for me. Among those memories is the fact that, like many of you, I did not complete high school," he said.

"I left early and knocked around a few years, playing sport and working all sorts of odd jobs: stockman, labourer and truck driver. I even sold newspapers on the street. But it was here in Alice Springs that this all changed.

"It was here I first heard Kwementyaye Perkins speaking. I listened to him and I was fascinated by the way he spoke, the knowledge he had, the people he had met, the places he had travelled – and to know that he was doing it for all Indigenous people. That triggered a yearning to go back to study. I knew that if I wanted to be somebody, I couldn't do it without a piece of paper that I could say to non-Indigenous people in the bureaucracy: 'I'm not being put into an earmarked Aboriginal specific position. I'm going to be given a job as the best person that can do the job with qualifications.'"

"Education for Indigenous people is of critical importance to the future of our peoples. Without it, we will continue to experience gross disadvantage. Those of you graduating here today understand that – but it is also

a message you must take back to your communities," Mr Ahkit said.

Graduate student Ali Eckermann shared her thoughts on behalf of the students graduating and talked about the hurdles and hardships faced by many of the students and the pride she received hearing her son had returned to studies.

Once the formal proceedings had finished, students relaxed with their families and friends and enjoyed their day with music by Lajamanu Teenage Band and light refreshments.

Students unable to attend the graduation ceremony in Alice Springs will have the opportunity to receive their awards at community ceremonies.



Above: Gibson family from Nyirripi celebrating their family members' achievements at the graduation



## Batchelor to give teachers degree options

**The Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education has broken new ground in its effort to provide local Indigenous teachers for Northern Territory and interstate schools by offering for the first time two four-year degree programs.**

The new degree programs, developed by the Institute's School of Education Studies (SES), include one for primary school teachers and one for early childhood educators. Both programs provide a nationally-recognised qualification for Indigenous students.

Students who wish to work only in NT schools can exit the program with a three-year degree (Bachelor of Teaching) and commence teaching.

Those who wish to gain a fourth-year qualification can continue and complete the Bachelor of Education degree.

"The requirement in the NT is that a teacher must have three years' training in an approved course," Dorothy Morrison, Head of Education Studies said.

"Batchelor Institute has the flexibility to offer both a three-year degree and a fourth year for those who wish to work interstate. Therefore, the courses are four-year degrees with exit points at diploma, advanced diploma and degree level."

Although there are many teacher programs offered throughout Australia, Indigenous students enrolled at the Batchelor Institute enjoy the supportive learning environment it has to offer.

"They find the environment supportive of their needs and learning styles," Ms Morrison said.

"Feedback from students often highlights the importance of small group discussions and using a collaborative approach."

The courses aim to develop a variety of skills such as:

- Using and developing knowledge and values;
- Communicating, interacting and working with students and others;
- Planning and managing the teaching and learning process;
- Monitoring and assessing student progress and learning outcomes;
- Reflecting, evaluating, and planning for continuous improvement; and
- Using new technologies.

"Above all, at Batchelor Institute, the aim is to produce graduates who feel both confident and competent teaching in a diversity of settings, with a highly developed philosophy of Indigenous education and a unique 'Both Ways' ethic," Ms Morrison said.

More information can be obtained by contacting the School of Education on:  
 Freecall: 1800 636 071  
 Facsimile: (08) 8939 7130 or,  
 Email: [ses@batchelor.edu.au](mailto:ses@batchelor.edu.au)



# Lindsay's Bush Tucker Tours

If you like four wheel driving, eating kangaroo and exploring rough and rugged, but beautiful country, this is your chance to jump on board the next Lindsay Bookie Bush Tucker Trip to the Hay River.



Lindsay Bookie is an Eastern Arrernte man whose traditional land lies 400 kilometres to the east of Alice Springs along the banks of the Hay River.

Lindsay's land is part of the North-West Simpson Desert Land Claim which was handed back to the Atnetye Aboriginal Land Trust in August 1994.

Ever since Lindsay wanted to start up a tourism enterprise.

He has recently finished constructing showers and toilets on his camping ground thanks to funding from the Indigenous Land Corporation.

"We have a bore, two tanks and shower and toilet blocks but we are still finishing a couple of bow sheds and a bush kitchen," Lindsay said.

"On our five day trip we show tourists around the country and how to find bush tucker and how to survive and get water and food. For dinner some nights we catch a kangaroo and cook it up. In the evenings we sit around a fire and tell stories and take the group walking with a spot light to check out the native animals."

As part of the five day trek you learn about the Aboriginal history of the area and the early explorers' history in the Simpson Desert.

"We travel the Hay River along faint tracks to Lake Caroline where there's usually camels and a couple of soakages Aboriginal people used when they travelled the country," Lindsay said.

"When we did the land claim we flew to Lake Caroline and other places where rocks were used to make stone knives, and a lot of places where people grinded seeds up and cut trees with stone axes. We still got to find a tree which Charles Winnecke blazed at Lake Caroline. We



Lindsay Bookie at the Yurracuracoo Soak

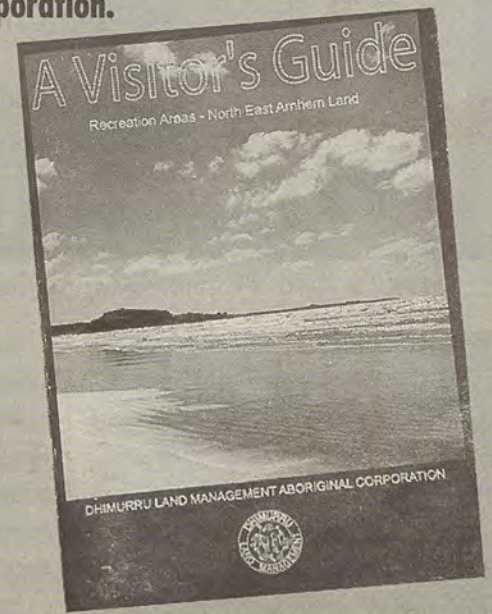
haven't found it yet. Lake Caroline is fairly big with large clay pans big enough to land a plane on, with sand hills. The lake is a dry lake because the soil is too soft," said Lindsay.

"This is a good time to test your four wheel drive skills especially when we get closer near Lake Caroline - it gets rough and you have to travel through sand hills and along faint unused tracks," Lindsay said.

For more information on Lindsay's Bush Tucker tours or to make bookings call Direct Four W.D Awareness or checkout the website [www.direct4wd.com.au](http://www.direct4wd.com.au).

# Dhimurru Visitor Guide launched

Those intending a visit to north-east Arnhem Land should ensure they order themselves a copy of a *Visitor's Guide: Recreation Areas - North-East Arnhem Land*, an information-rich 37-page booklet just published by the Dhimurru Land Management Aboriginal Corporation.



Packed full of pictures, potted histories and insights into Yolngu culture, the *Guide* is a classic of its type, aspiring not just to encourage tourists to visit this beautiful corner of the Top End but to be well-informed about what they find there.

Yolngu landowners formed the Dhimurru Land Management Aboriginal Corporation in 1992 to ensure the conservation and sustainable management of natural and cultural resource values.

It has been a leader in forging 'two-way' links between non-Indigenous research and resource management skills and traditional ecological management regimes.

The *Guide* provides a history of what has been achieved by Dhimurru, which is followed by a well-researched section containing visitor maps and Yolngu stories about some of the more prominent locations and landmarks in the region.

These are accompanied by easy-to-understand graphics showing what visitor facilities are available at each of the locations.

The next section is devoted to walking trails in the Nhulunbuy/Yirrkala areas, including the fascinating Wurrurrwuy trail which leads walkers on a circuit past four clusters of stone pictures constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century by Yolngu elders to commemorate the area's links with the Macassan trepangers.

Each of the trail descriptions comes with a map and there are some great black and white photos to accompany the Wurrurrwuy trail text.

The *Guide* ends with an explanation of traditional uses for local plants and animals, and a beginner's introduction to the pronunciation of Yolngu Matha words.

Copies of the *Guide* cost \$11 each and can be ordered direct from Dhimurru Land Management on 08-8987 3992 or via email at [dhimurru@dhimurru.com.au](mailto:dhimurru@dhimurru.com.au).

# Renowned artist on NT Landcare board

A peak community and industry body has reappointed a prominent Aboriginal personality and artist to its new board.



Current NLC member and Rirratjingu traditional owner Banduk Marika was reappointed to the Landcare Council of the Northern Territory (LCNT) board by Minister Kon Vatskalis in July.

Apart from being a former member and recipient of the NT Individual Landcare Award in 2001, Mrs Marika has also sat on various national boards and committees in relation to arts and natural resource management, and brings with her a host of experience.

Along with 14 other new appointees, Mrs Marika will be joined on the new-look board by NLC officers Peter Cooke and Patrick O'Leary.

Central Land Council Land Management Officer David Alexander has also been appointed as an Indigenous land management representative and will join other appointees for a three-year term on the board.

Announcing the appointments, Minister Vatskalis said the LCNT's core business will include advising the incumbent NT Government on the development and maintaining of a strategic analysis of natural resource management issues affecting the NT.

The Council will also liaise with the Commonwealth on environmental initiatives and funding.

# Telstra Aboriginal Art Award 2002

The 19th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award (NATSIAA) has been won by East Arnhem Land artist Gawirrin Gumana from Yirrkala in the Northern Territory for his work entitled *Birrkuda Ringgitji*.



Telstra Award winner Gawirrin Gumana alongside his winning entry

He said his work told a sacred creation story connected with the Honey Ancestor, and was meant not only for his own clan people but for the wider world as well.

"I've been painting not only for myself and my family but so the white people and the world can know we are still a cultural people and we are still holding our culture. Art is deeper and more powerful in the cultural way," he said.

Mr Gumana remembers his father's tales of escaping a massacre at the hands of white police in 1910 and is determined to let the world know Aboriginal people and their culture have survived.

Although Mr Gumana said he had no desire to be a star, he hoped his family would continue his work after he had gone.

Winning an award of this nature has the potential to enhance an artist's career and profile, according to Ms Ryan and Mr Andrews, especially with the demand for Aboriginal art still very much in fashion.

"Aboriginal art is now much more popular and it hasn't reached its peak. It's becoming fashionable, becoming trendy to have a piece of work," Ms Ryan said. "It's the new stocks and shares!"

Despite the quality and quantity of work presented for judging, Mr Andrews was disappointed with the lack of interstate and Islander participation.

"There were no Torres Strait applicants, none from New South Wales or Tasmania, which was a bit disappointing," he said.

Judith Ryan said she hoped that the trend would not be repeated for next year's award.

"We are hoping all Indigenous artists will be encouraged to submit work in the future," Ms Ryan said.

This year's award attracted more than 350 entrants across a variety of categories including general painting, works on paper, bark painting and 3D imagery.

Other winners included John Mawurndjul, who took out the Bark Painting category; Christopher Pease of WA walked off with the General Painting award; Kitty Kantilla the Works on Paper prize; and Carol Rontji received the Wandjuk Marika Memorial award for her work in the 3D category.

The exhibition will be on display at the Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory in Darwin until 27 October.



Judges Judith Ryan and Brook Andrews selected the piece - a 3.5 metre painted hollow log memorial pole - from some 129 finalists. They described it as "a defiant cultural and political statement".

The diversity of the works presented drew praise from Judith Ryan.

"Indigenous artists are constantly trying new media. They are not strait-jacketed," Ms Ryan said.

Impressed by the high standard and quality of works viewed, both Ms Ryan and Mr Andrews agreed that the task of selecting the overall winner was difficult.

They said the range of the work was a testament to the calibre, talent, strength and cultural diversity of Indigenous artists working in Australia today.

"It was difficult," Ms Ryan said. "There's such a range through different cultures. Certain works wouldn't go away and we kept coming back to them."

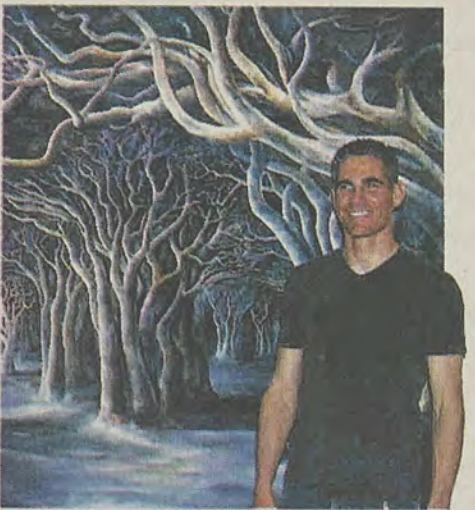
The win was a breakthrough in a number of ways, not only because it was the first time a sculpture had won the award. For Mr Gumana, 66-year-old senior law man from the Dhalwangu clan and a Uniting Church Minister, it was also the first major award in a lifetime of carving despite his works being exhibited around the world.

"This one is the first time for me to win the prize - it's new for me," he said. "That's on the Balanda side."

"But in my home country I am an artist and also a leader because my father was a leader and also an artist, not only that but also a leader for ceremony and cultural things. Not just my father but also my grandfather."


"Myself I'm happy to have this one, been hard work, not just me but my family too. They've been learning through me about the painting and about other things."

Mr Gumana, whose fingers have been shortened by leprosy, said it had taken him three and a half weeks to finish the carving with help from his son Yinimala Gutjipin as well as other family members.



Centre: Christopher Pease with his painting *Wadatji Country - Belief and Disbelief*, winner of the General Painting award

Bottom: the Bangarra Dance Company delighted the audience at the Awards Presentation





## 19th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award

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A W A R D W I N N E R S

<b>\$40,000 Telstra First Prize Awarded to:</b>	<b>Gawirrin Gumana</b>
\$4000 Telstra General Painting Award	Christopher Pease
\$4000 Telstra Bark Painting Award	John Mawurndjul
\$4000 Telstra Work on Paper Award	Kitty Kantilla
\$4000 Wandjuk Marika 3D Memorial Award	Carol Panangka Rontji
<hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0;"/>	
Highly Commended	
Darren Siwes	Naata Nungurrayi
Jennifer Jundruwanda	Timothy Wulunjbir







# Move over, Glenn Miller



**Yirrkala may be a long way from New Orleans but the legends of jazz would feel right at home with the smooth sounds emanating from the Yirrkala Community Education Centre's 29-student Big Band.**

Nowhere else in the country is there a traditional Big Band comprising only Indigenous performers.

What makes this even more noteworthy is that none of the

student musicians in the Big Band have been playing for more than two years.

The first public performance of Yirrkala Big Band was at the Garma Festival in 2001 to an audience of over 300 people

from the local community and visitors from both interstate and overseas.

Now the wider world is beginning to take note of the Big Band's prodigious talent, with a recent tour bringing the band to Darwin for the first time.

The tour included performances at several schools – Ludmilla P.S., Nightcliff P.S., and Darwin High – and culminated in a two-night performance at *The Beat Goes Wild* concert in the Gardens Amphitheatre,

Darwin. This was the first time an Indigenous band had been asked to play at The Beat.

The song the band performed at The Beat, *Yothu Ga Marrtji*, was written by Wirringa Band from Milingimbi. It is sung in Djambarrpuynu, one of the languages from north-east Arnhem Land. It is a song about a young boy walking along a beach looking for fish and describing the feeling of being alone in a beautiful place.

The Darwin performances will give the students credit towards Certificates I and II in Music Industry Skills.

Students are enrolled in these certificates through NTOEC (Northern Territory Open Education Centre). This accreditation gives them a sound footing to pursue a career in the music industry. The music program involves *all* of the secondary students, both boys and girls, who are aged between 13 and 17.

The program has developed three bands – Walu (meaning sun) Band, which is primarily made up of the secondary girls, Baaru (meaning crocodile) Band, which is primarily made up of the secondary boys, and a Combined Big Band.

These bands play reggae, pop, hip-hop, rock and roll plus modern and traditional Yolngu music.

The music program, which began in 2000, came from a partnership forged between the NT School of Music and Yirrkala CEC. As part of the music program, frequent visits to the school by musicians to hold workshops with the students are arranged. The initial funding came from NTETA (Northern Territory Education and Training Authority), Nambara Schools Council and the Yirrkala CEC ASSPA Committee.

The aim of the program was to encourage students to attend school more regularly while developing pride in themselves and their learning of musical skills – aims which have clearly been achieved. ●

## Culture swap

**A new exchange program aims to give life long benefits and experience to Victorian and central Australian Indigenous youth.**

The program was initiated by community members concerned about their younger generation.

For three weeks 20 young people from the Mutitjulu community and another dozen from Docker River and Kut Tjijala went to Melbourne as part of the program to expose them to opportunities and experiences outside their community.

They went sightseeing and visited universities, schools, hospitals, museums and attended AFL matches.

They boarded at Broadmeadows Army Base while in Melbourne and also spent a day at the Navy base HMAS Cerberus.

CLC Executive member Graeme Calma said: "A lot of the kids like the Cats, so we saw them play Essendon at Colonial Stadium, and others like Richmond so we saw them play Collingwood."

He said that the community will be helping young people to attend youth leadership courses to build on their experiences.

"There are lots of positive outcomes – they are the future," Mr Calma said.

In August, about 30 girls from across Victoria made the trek to the Mutitjulu community in central Australia.

Before heading off for their two-week stop over at the community they visited Aboriginal organisations in Alice Spings including Central Land Council.

Mr Calma said a highlight for the interstate girls in Alice was visiting the Congress Alukura women's health and birthing centre.

"They said there was nothing like it in Victoria and they would like to have spent more time there," he said. "They also enjoyed a talk at the Telegraph Station by Rosie Kunoth Monks who helped some of them link up with family. Two of the girls discovered that they were cousins."

"At Mutitjulu they stayed at the Women's Keeping Place where the women elders painted them up and they danced. They also visited Lilla for a few days. They enjoyed it all and took in as much as they could." ●



Above: Mutitjulu young people visiting the Navy Base in Melbourne  
Below: Young women from Melbourne on their way to visit Mutitjulu community



# God and Country - Hermannsburg



Gus Williams (left), receiving a plaque from Minister John Ah Kit MLA as Kenny Windley holds the picture of the handback in 1982.

## Gospel and country music competed at the community of Hermannsburg (Ntaria), 125 km west of Alice Springs, as it held a triple celebration over a weekend in September.

It marked 20 years since traditional owners regained title to their land, 100 years since the birth of Hermannsburg's most famous son, Albert Namatjira and 125 years since the Lutheran missionaries arrived in 1877.

The NT Minister for Local Government John Ah Kit kicked off the celebrations on the Friday night with a rousing speech about land rights and traditional ownership.

He presented the Chair of Ntaria Council Gus Njalka Williams with a plaque from the NT Government to celebrate 20 years

of self-management and a framed photo of the handback in 1982.

The late Albert Namatjira (1902-1959) is also being celebrated this year by a special stamp issue of four of his paintings featuring Mt Hermannsburg, Mt Sonder, Glen Helen and Simpsons Gap.

More importantly, an exhibition of his works "Seeing the Centre" which was recently opened in Alice Springs is now featured at the National Gallery in Canberra.

While his painting has always been popular he is now being taken seriously by the fine art world.

According to the National Gallery: "He is now seen to have reworked the models of the European watercolour tradition to express a personal vision.

"His subjects were not chosen for their beauty in European terms, but as ancestral landscapes though which he expressed his relationship with the country to which he was spiritually bound."

The weekend also featured Lutherans converging on Hermannsburg from across the world, commemorating the church's best known site in Australia.



Sunday morning Lutheran Service

The old whitewashed Hermannsburg mission buildings from last century were the backdrop for church services in Arrernte and English led by Pastor Eli Rubuntja and gospel singing by local choirs.

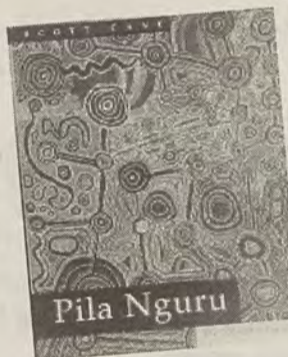
The church runs a store in the community with profits going to bible translations and it took over management of Yirara College in Alice Springs in the early 1990s.

The boarding school for bush kids was previously an NT Government school.

The pottery, the women's centre and even the childcare centre were open over the weekend while people enjoyed footy, basketball and softball.

The ABC also got into the celebrations with Ian (Macca) McNamara broadcasting his show Australia All Over live from Hermannsburg on Sunday morning.

# The Spinifex People



By Scott Cane  
Published by  
Freemantle  
Arts Centre  
Press  
RRP: \$49.95

The lavishly-illustrated 'Pila Nguru' tells the story of the Spinifex people of Western Australia and their fight for native title rights within their homelands, which encompasses a vast region of mostly uninhabitable desert in Western Australia stretching from north east of Kalgoorlie to the South Australian border.

This region of land is more commonly known by the Australian - and indeed the international community - as Maralinga.

The Maralinga area was infamously claimed and utilised by the Federal Government to conduct atomic bomb tests during 1950s.

Until this time the Spinifex people had remained "hidden from European eyes", as author Scott Cane describes it.

They are now justly renowned for being the first Indigenous community to win full native title rights on mainland Australia, a feat they accomplished in 2001.

Scott Cane has spent considerable time studying, learning and living side by side with the Spinifex people.

He originally constructed a report on the Spinifex people which was used as evidence in the Spinifex people's successful native title claim.

It was then further developed and added to, resulting in this beautifully written and extremely well composed book.

While the story of the Spinifex people's struggle for their land rights is fascinating in itself, the book also contains some great examples of Spinifex art.

The Spinifex refer to their artworks as their "native title paintings".

That's because the modern 'acrylic on canvas' paintings are a symbolic testimony to the Spinifex people's association between their country, its spirituality and their ancient traditions.

One drawback for some readers will be that, at times, the language is a little technical and quite complicated.

As such it's not really a book that could be recommended as light reading, being more suited to those who are studying in this area or have a pet interest in the topic.

Having said that, this book provides a great insight into the way of life of the Spinifex people and the trials and tribulations that they faced in order to be recognised in the 'white man's way' as the traditional owners of their country.

Through patience and perseverance they have triumphed and become an inspiration to us all.

## Want to learn more about looking after your country?

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**The Centre for Australian Indigenous Research and Studies**  
**Wilto Yerlo / CASM**  
**The University of Adelaide**

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- Environment
- Farm management

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- Foundation programs (no HECS fees)
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# Dhuwarrwarr's art showcases Yolngu knowledge

The pictures were used as a focus for discussion, revealing the integrated nature of traditional knowledge through the story of a turtle hunt.

The story illustrates traditions concerning the ownership of the land and sea, the kin connections that allow for joint hunting expeditions, the many species and the various Yolngu technologies which are integrated in turtle hunting, details of named places beneath the sea, the laws about sharing and about keeping your distance, and much else.

After the forum Dhuwarrwarr dictated the following story to Michael Christie, Coordinator of Yolngu Studies at the Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Northern Territory University.

The hunt took place between the Yirkkala area and Dhambaliya (or Bremer Island) to the north of Yirkkala, clearly visible from the town of Nhulunbuy.

## Dhambaliyawuy dhaawu

Long time ago, I don't know when, but my father's father or his great-great-great grandfather, it happened really, it's not a dream. These two Yolngu, they prepare everything what they need: paddle, harpoon, rope, float, they used to carry a dilly bag, they used to put the belongings they used to carry all the time in the canoe. Also they carried a paper basket, they used to

**Renowned artist and NLC Executive member Dhuwarrwarr Marika was especially commissioned to produce four paintings for this year's Garma Forum on Yolngu ecological knowledge.**



get it from the paperbark, and they used to carry the paperbark and fill it with water and carry it in a canoe. Whenever they used those implements they said to each other, 'Let's go and try and get some green backed turtle for the family'.

So anyway, when they had their journey, they paddled in places called, Milmilwuy, Mol'nguwuy, Daarra'wuy, Dhuwirriya ga Dhurryurrnguwuy, until they found one green turtle. When they caught it, they

looked back to the mainland and they said to each other, 'We can't go back there, it's too far. It's a bit close here at Bremer Island, we might come and cook the turtle here at Ruwakpuy'.

When they landed there, they got the turtle, and dragged it up to the beach and they made a fire, and when the fire was burning then they got the turtle and put it on the fire. And this little boy was running around on the other side of the creek

his name was Gakarrarr. He smelt the flavour of that turtle and he said to himself, 'Mmm that's delicious. I wonder who is cooking the turtle. I better run down there and find out who are they'. So anyway he ran towards them.

When those two men got the turtle out of the fire, and they threw it on the sand, and this young boy, he ran and sat on the turtle shell and one of the men Djarrungu said, 'Who asked you to come here and sit on the turtle shell? I didn't ask you to come and sit here.' And the other man said to Djarrungu, 'Let's grab him and we'll cook him'. When they done that, they dragged the turtle back to the canoe, and they paddled back to the mainland to a place called Mirrikiwuy.

There was all the wives and children waiting for them, when they cut it and they split it up among the family. Bathirri said to Djarrungu, 'I haven't got enough here. I gave it all away to my family. Can you share some with the other family?' And he turned around and said to him, 'No, this is all mine. I'm not going to share it.' And those two rocks called Bathirri and Djarrungu, they turned into a rock and now, it's still there and it's a wishing rock.

Every time when we go hunting, we pick up a stone and throw it at them and wish for something and it comes true. They're still there, standing near the shore at Mirrikinga.



A dancer at the exhibition opening



# Art the start to new life

**Aboriginal art has captured and held the imagination of the art world for many years and the trend seems set to continue.**

But the pursuit of artistic freedom and serenity is becoming more than just a means of income support. For some, it's become a valuable route towards rehabilitation.

Launched nationally several years ago, the "Ending Offending" program is a nation-wide training and rehabilitation plan that gives offenders the ability to express themselves through art.

And so far, it's playing its part in assisting with the healing of Aboriginal and other inmates in Northern Territory prisons.

Launching the latest exhibition in Darwin recently, NT Justice Minister Dr Peter Toyne said the show highlighted the "Ending Offending" program as a positive training and rehabilitation initiative.

"This program is about giving offenders an avenue to demonstrate an understanding of the offending behaviour and its negative impact on their victims, their families, their communities and themselves," Mr Toyne said.



Entitled "Our message 2002", the exhibition featured works from male, female, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal prisoners.

The program also involves certified study in art and craft that includes elements

of literacy, numeracy and vocational training.

About 100 art works spanning a variety of artistic mediums were placed on display and offered up for sale, with many being snapped up by buyers.



The fifth annual Garma Festival of traditional culture, presented by the Yothu Yindi Foundation at Gulkula in north-east Arnhem Land in August, was the most successful to date.



Gulkula has been a site for welcoming different groups to negotiate, perform and celebrate together, ever since the Garma was first instituted by the ancestral creator

Ganbulapula, when he arrived on the edge of the escarpment.

And it is in this spirit that the Gumatj hosts of the annual forum welcome visitors to their land.

This year 550 visitors from around the world descended on the bush site overlooking Cape Arnhem for the five-day event in which 650 Yolngu from across the Top End participated in daily workshops and performances.

Workshops included painting, carving, weaving, spear-making, bush tucker and a yidaki (didjeridoo) masterclass.

Each year three days of Garma are devoted to a forum with participants from near and far. This year's forum, presented in conjunction with the World Wide Fund for Nature, dealt with "Djakamirri Wangawu" (Caring For Country).

Participants included representatives from the mining industry, eco-tourism operators, conservationists and land management consultants.

Each evening, when Yolngu dancers performed their bunggul, Galarrwuy or Maandawuy Yunupingu would talk about the relation between ancestral song and dance, and Yolngu knowledge of the environment.

Garma was preceded by a three-day ethnomusicology forum at the Yothu Yindi Foundation's Yirrnga Music Development Centre near Gunyangara on Melville Bay.

During the festival itself, contemporary music workshops for bands from across Arnhem Land were conducted in the Yirrnga studio by musicians David Bridie, Paul Mac and past and present members of Yothu Yindi.

In the evenings guests were treated to films set in the region, a performance by Banggarra dance company and, on the final night, a concert starring Yothu Yindi and the bands who'd been working and recording in the Yirrnga studio during the week.

Yirrkala's Buku Larrnggay Arts presented a spectacular open-air exhibition of framed prints which were hung from stringybark trees painted with gapung (white clay) and discreetly lit for evening viewing.

Next year the focus of Garma will be on the visual arts with a three-day forum involving artists, dealers, gallery owners and others involved in the production and promotion of Indigenous art.

Chief Minister Clare Martin has promised to launch the first NT Indigenous Arts policy at Garma 2003.



## NLC hands-on Garma role

**“It's all about people from Aboriginal organisations, Balanda, Yolngu working together, doing what each does best in a complementary way, in a way that articulates and gets thing happening.”**

NLCSPOKESPERSON, GARMA FESTIVAL 2002

As in the previous three festivals, the Northern Land Council's presence at the "Djakamirri Wangawu" (Caring For Country) Forum was very much a hands-on affair, with a delegation on the ground facilitating and contributing to environmental management workshops on issues such as sea country and land management practices.

The Festival presented an ideal opportunity to strengthen existing and initiate new networks.

"Having a forum like that was an opportunity to spread the word, get the word out to an audience you wouldn't normally have contact with.

"There were people there representing

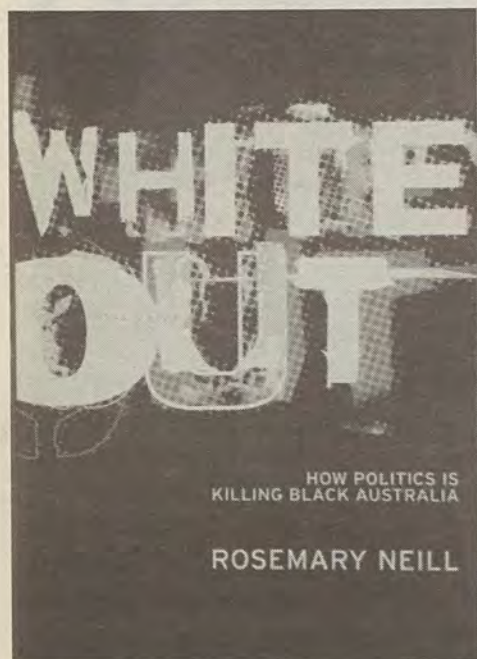
fairly large-scale funding bodies, commercial operations, corporate bodies and, of course, different Indigenous groups from all around the place," an NLC spokesperson said.

"I think people are still learning how to manage that interface between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal knowledge systems.

"It's a real experimental go at using the two tool boxes of Aboriginal cultural knowledge and western science.

"I think Garma is part of getting the process to work. It's not an end in itself. It's part of an ongoing exploration of peoples' cultures and the way in which they want to look at doing things."

# How Politics is Killing Black Australia



Allen & Unwin, 2002

RRP: \$22.95

**Rosemary Neill, columnist for *The Australian*, has written a timely warning to Australian policy makers about the parlous state of Indigenous affairs.**

Not afraid to confront the hard issues, *White Out* aims its blows at both the left and right of Australian politics who have, she says, colluded in distorting and betraying the promise of self-determination.

Health, mortality, education, and domestic violence crises are engulfing Aboriginal communities every day, as Neill rightly points out. Government policy for the past 30 years, including the establishment of ATSIC, have not made any appreciable difference to these problems.

Neill also points out the destructive culture of "political correctness" which has silenced voices which should have been raised in defence of Aboriginal women and children.

Her arguments about the need for bold and open discussion of problems of substance abuse, violence and despair are compelling.

*White Out* argues that such discussions should take place outside of either political camp: neither to "blame the victim" as the right might do, nor to blame everything on colonisation, as the left might. This is timely and constructive advice.

*Land Rights News* readers would be disappointed by one aspect of her analysis, however.

The "land rights" project in the Northern Territory over the past 30 years is presented somewhat out of context, and as a result is too neatly fitted into Neill's category of middle class idealism which disadvantages Aboriginal people.

"The Yolngu secured land rights under the 1976 Aboriginal Land Rights Act. Economic and social empowerment were supposed to follow.

It is an understatement to say they never came." (p. 277)

Land rights supporters and traditional owners would wholeheartedly support this claim, but not for the reason Neill puts. It has never been the case that land rights could or should deliver the social and economic panaceas to the ills of Aboriginal people in the NT.

Neill quotes Galarrwuy Yunupingu's statement: "If we lose our land rights we will end up eating crumbs from the whitefellas' tables. Land rights has given us the only hope we have of keeping our culture and our way of life." However, she misinterprets it to suggest that the NLC believes "that land rights are all that stands between Aboriginal people and poverty." (p. 274)

There are some contradictions in the real world of Aboriginal affairs that perhaps need to be experienced to be believed.

## Continuing connection

In the NT, there are thousands of Aboriginal people who, as a result of their continuing connection with the land, practice their traditional rites and speak in their own languages every day. The ability to do this – to close the road to hold a young boys' ceremony or to undertake traditional mosaic-pattern burning – is protected by land rights.

At the same time, these people are suffering from appalling health, housing, educational and domestic difficulties.

The ownership of traditional land cannot ameliorate these problems.

It's unfortunate that Neill does not appear to have had the opportunity to consider the Commonwealth Grants Commission's recent report on Indigenous funding. Its findings provide documentary proof of the way in which Commonwealth funds intended for services for Aboriginal people have been mismanaged and diverted by State and Territory governments.

The NT Land Councils have been fighting for recognition of this problem since the inception of land rights, for the very reasons that Neill identified: land cannot be the answer to all problems.

That issue aside, Neill's book has some valuable insights. Her analysis of mandatory sentencing and the impact of conservative "law and order" policies is telling and important.

Most of all, it is valuable to have the myriad complex issues which beset Aboriginal people discussed openly with fearlessness and compassion.

# The artist Mr Riley

## 1937-2002

**One of Australia's most celebrated Indigenous artists has lost his fight with cancer.**

Mr Riley, a senior Mara man from the Borroloola region in the Northern Territory, succumbed to lung cancer in Borroloola on 1 September.

His vibrant creations reflecting the life and colour of his homeland grace galleries from Australia to the United Kingdom and China.

Like many of his generation, Mr Riley grew up in the bush and spent his early working life as a stockman and labourer.

Inspired by the works and colour of the great Albert Namitjira, Mr Riley saw in his own homeland the vision so magnificently captured by Namitjira.

A meeting with the celebrated artist only served to forge Mr Riley's idea that the colours of his land could also be portrayed in art - and he set about doing just that.

His work was so well received that in 1992 Mr Riley won The Alice Prize and produced a series of works for the new Australian Embassy in Beijing, China.

The following year he won the First National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Commission Art Award.

Mr Riley's brother, Roy Hammer, says he will be remembered for his joyous paintings of light and colour.

"He loved his country, Limmen Bight region - our country," Mr Hammer said. "He loved it. He loved painting it and he loved going duck shooting on it."

But his work captured more than just the eye of any beholder, because it also contained stories of the dreaming tracts so closely related to his mother's country.

His work contributed to his Mara people's case during the 1994 Native Title hearing over St Vidgeon Station.

In an interview conducted with *Land Rights News* back in October 2000, Mr Riley said that he wouldn't paint someone else's country - he couldn't.

"I'd get into trouble then. I can't do that," he said.



**ATSIC**

## Erratum

*ATSIC NT News*  
June 2002

The story run on page five headed *ATSIC NT reps meet in Katherine* contains a typographic error.

Paragraph five should read:

"The Regional Councillors also pledged that they would not support any amendments to the Aboriginal Land Rights Act that would diminish the power of Traditional Owners under the Act."

*ATSIC NT News* apologises for any distress this error may have caused.

# Central Anmatyere



Above: Western Aranda's Clinton Ngalkin won best player for the season  
 Left: Ngurratjuta Cup Grand Final action

## Ngurratjuta Cup Premiers 2002

It was a hard fought match over four quarters between the season's best teams, Central Anmatyere and reigning premiers Western Aranda.

However Central Anmatyere held off a late challenge by reigning premiers Western Aranda to become premiers for 2002, winning by 11 points, final score CA 13-5-83 defeating WA 11-6-72.

Central Anmatyere had many great players on the day, which were Daniel Stafford, Cliffy Tommy, Wayne McCormack, Norm & Martin Hagen, Geoffrey Lowe and Adrian Dixon.

Western Aranda had stand out players as well in Clinton Ngalkin, Max Fejo, Oliver Wheeler, Edric Coultard and Malcolm Kenny.

Major goal kickers for Central Anmatyere were Geoffrey Lowe 4, Jonathon Cool, Martin Hagen 2 goals each, Daniel Stafford, Adrian Dixon, Richard Morton, Neil White and Norm Hagen with one goal each.

Western Aranda leading goal kickers were Max Fejo 5, Oliver Wheeler 3, Richard Kantawara, Clinton Ngalkin and Steven Booth one goal each.

**Footy fever was high at Traeger park football oval in Alice Springs as two of the top country cup football teams came together for the Ngurratjuta Cup (Seniors) grand final.**



Central Anmatyere coach Ron Hagen accepting the premiership cup from Ngurratjuta Chairperson Gus Williams

Central Anmatyere Coach Ron Hagen was very impressed by his team's effort.

"From the start of the game, I was very nervous. Before my team ran out I told them that we have to be in front of the player that we are standing and in front on the score board, so they have to catch us," he said.

It was the first year that Central Anmatjere competed in the Central Australian Football League competition and full credit must go out to all officials involved in getting Central Anmatyere up to win their first Premiership.

All the travel, training and

competiveness that they have shown during the season and of course in the final series.

We look forward to seeing Central Anmatyere achieve the same level of success next season.

In the Heenan Cup under 17's it was a very skilful game of football.

Southern AP went on to finally win the game 11-7-73 defeating Ti Tree 5-7-37, sadly it was the first time that Ti Tree under 17's lost a game all season.

For Southern AP it was their first premiership.

Manager Alec Henry was very happy with his team's efforts during the grand final.

"It was a great effort for the Club, full credit must go out to the young fellas for their four quarter effort, and their never give up attitude. We were lucky to have had a very good preparation. I told the fellas that they must enjoy the moment," Alec said.

The Southern AP side has players from the following communities: Titjikala, Finke, Indulkana, Mimilli, Fregon, Nyapari and Kanypi.

