

Hard work makes art centre concept reality

The Arplwe Art Centre and Gallery at Ali Curung south of Tennant Creek has opened with a celebration of culture and stories.

The centre was opened on the 27th of June with the event attended by large crowds from neighbouring communities, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs and holiday makers.

Arplwe Art Centre Chairperson, Alison Nelson, opened the centre, announcing the importance of the new facility for maintaining traditional culture and stories.

In her speech, Ms Nelson said, "Arplwe Art Centre helps us to keep our stories strong. We use this place for painting, teaching the young ones and telling our old stories".

Ms Nelson's speech was supported and endorsed by traditional owners for the Ali Curung area.

Art Centre workers, Jennifer Nelson, Valerie Nelson and Maureen O'Keefe then made the opening official by accepting a mat inscribed with the words 'Arplwe Art and Cultural Centre'.

The workers were kept busy during the event selling art works, cooking kangaroo tails, displaying bush tucker and organising dancing groups from nearby communities.

Visitors browse through the newly opened Arplwe Art Centre and Gallery at Alekerange (top) shortly after its opening. Dancers who performed at the art centre opening (middle and right). Traditional owners enjoy the new facility (bottom).

The art centre was funded through a shared responsibility agreement with the Australian and Northern Territory governments.

The event climaxed with a display of traditional dancing in the centre of the Ali Curung community.

Dancers and singers from the Ampilwatja, Willowra and Tennant Creek communities joined Ali Curung men and women in an afternoon-long event of dancing and singing.

The evening was filled with performances by contemporary bands such as Desert Eagle, Tableland Drifters and the Winanjikkarri All Stars late into the night.

The event was a reminder to all attendees of the value of art centres in building community harmony and spirit. Lorna Martin, Art Centre Co-ordinator, said the day was made possible because of a lot of hard work from volunteers and people in Ali Curung community. Arplwe Art Centre workers should be congratulated for their efforts, enthusiasm and co-ordination on the day.



Mining boom on display at Kalinjarri

In July, the mining boom was fully evident at the small outstation of Kalinjarri, south of Tennant Creek.

The ability of traditional owners of Aboriginal land to be the masters of their own destiny was also played out over a two-day period.

On the 16th of July a series of mining companies walked up to a meeting of traditional owners from the Karlantijpa South, Warumungu, Mungkarta and Mungkarta 2 Aboriginal land trusts and presented their cases for mineral exploration.

Each presentation emphasised the value of the Land Rights Act to Aboriginal people as it provided them with the ability to carefully consider each company's proposal to explore their land and to either give approval or not.

In each case, approval to explore their land for minerals would automatically have meant approval to mine on their land.

Five companies presented their cases at Kalinjarri, including Imperial Granite and Minerals, Westgold (Navarre Resources/Castille Resources), TNG Ltd, Sammy Resources and Kettle Rose.

They were hoping to be granted permission to explore for a wide range of minerals including uranium, gold, tungsten and base metals.

Nine exploration license applications were considered with five-and-a-half refused by traditional owners and subsequently refused consent by the CLC. The remainder are under further consideration.

The decisions followed seriously considered discussions among the traditional owner groups.