

FREE

LAND RIGHTS NEWS

April 2015

VOLUME 5. NUMBER 1.

CENTRAL AUSTRALIA



FERAL CAT ATTACK

PG. 22

IAS CHAOS:
MINISTERS FOR
ABORIGINAL
DESPAIR?



PG. 2

EMPOWERING
COMMUNITIES



PG. 2

CREEK CRICKET
AT IMPARJA
CUP



PG. 33

ISSN 1839-5279

Australia's Longest Running Aboriginal Newspaper proudly published by Central Land Council

EDITORIAL

Land Rights News Central Australia is published by the Central Land Council three times a year.

The Central Land Council
27 Stuart Hwy
Alice Springs
NT 0870
tel: 89516211
www.clc.org.au
email media@clc.org.au
Contributions are welcome

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Land Rights News Central Australia subscriptions are \$20 per year.

LRNCA is distributed free to Aboriginal organisations and communities in Central Australia

To subscribe email:
media@clc.org.au

ADVERTISING

Advertise in the only newspaper to reach Aboriginal people in remote Central Australia.

Publication dates:

August 2015

November 2015

Rates are available online at <http://www.clc.org.au/land-rights-news>

Plan to empower communities

INDIGENOUS leaders from eight remote, rural and urban regions have launched a new plan for managing Aboriginal communities.

The Empowered Communities report aims to end decades of top-down government service delivery and welfare dependency.

The report is a joint policy development effort by a group of 25 leaders brought together by the Jawun Indigenous Partnership Corporation before the last election and supported by both major parties.

Released by leaders from eight regions, including the NPY lands, northeast Arnhemland and the Kimberley, the report champions a new Indigenous governance model based on formal legal agreements between Aboriginal people and government.

The model would support Aboriginal people on the ground to direct pooled government funding towards things they find important.

Stronger social norms such as going to school and work, looking after houses, following the law and keeping the vulnerable safe are at the heart of the Empowered Communities report.

So is winding back top-down government intervention and the widespread sense of powerlessness and despair that goes with that.

Andrea Mason from NPY Women's Council was one of 90 leaders from across Australia who



Aboriginal Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion confronts an angry crowd at the Alice Springs Convention Centre. He said organisations got the funding they deserved.

Photo courtesy CAAMA

IAS chaos sparks protests and probe

THE AUSTRALIAN Senate will inquire into the delayed and chaotic funding round of the new Indigenous advancement scheme (IAS), which has done as much for the PM's reputation in Aboriginal Australia as his way with words.

NT Aboriginal peak organisations are preparing submissions for the inquiry, which will report in mid June.

"The IAS and last year's federal budget cuts have come to mean fears of front line service cuts, remote community job losses and Aboriginal organisations closing down," said CLC director David Ross.

"Funding for successful programs such as the CLC rangers remains uncertain."

When the IAS funding round was announced in March, NT organisations reported having to sack hundreds, many of them Ab-

original workers.

Nearly half of the 33 organisations surveyed by the Alice Springs Chamber of Commerce were offered less funding than they had previously for ongoing projects.

Aboriginal Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion scrambled to repair the damage with a promise of an extra \$20 million for regional youth services after the MacDonnell Regional Council President Sid Anderson said 51 community people would lose their jobs.

The council's IAS offer was for just \$200,000, down from previously more than \$2 million.

"These are the people working with our kids, doing programs about not doing suicide, staying away from drugs, staying away from alcohol," councillor Greg Sharman told the ABC.

Neighbouring Barkly Regional Council reported 26 Aboriginal job losses as a result of a 35% funding cut to community services in a region troubled by petrol sniffing.

President Barb Shaw told the Tennant Times the council had missed out on money for workforce development and animal management and that youth development in five communities was "completely shattered".

Another youth service, Katherine's YMCA, the Institute for Aboriginal Development in Alice Springs which delivers literacy, numeracy and job-ready programs and the Papulu Apparr Kari Language Centre in Tennant Creek all lost so much funding that they face closure.

At the time of writing the minister was still negotiating with organisations about additional funding.

While he could not guarantee that the youth service cuts were the only errors in the first IAS round he gave this promise to CAA-MA Radio: "Any gap in service provision, we'll fill it."

He said some services had not been good enough and that he would audit IAS funded organisations to make sure people received "first class services" in the future.

Legal services, big employers of Aboriginal people in the NT, were told they would not find out until May how many staff they would lose as a result of the 13.4 million dollar funding cut announced in 2013.

The cut was reversed following nationwide protests (see story on page 9).

A combination of uncertain and short term funding, top down decision making and cuts to women's shelters and drug and alcohol services is making the NT's domestic and family violence crisis worse.

Many witnesses at a Senate committee hearing in Darwin in March criticised cutting front line services while there is already a huge unmet need.

The Katherine Women's Legal Service, for example, reported losing half of its funding.

The hearing was told that 73% of all domestic violence victims are Aboriginal women, 80% of domestic violence incidents involve alcohol and half of all homicides in the NT were linked to domestic violence.

Continued p.3.



each region or community is unique and needs to put together its own structures.

"If I have any contribution to make to public policy in Australia this is it," Noel Pearson (pictured), one of driving forces behind the report, told The Australian.

"This is our best shot to chart a future not just for our eight regions. We really have to be a beacon for the rest of Indigenous Australia."

Under the plan other communities would be free to join the eight original Empowered Community regions on a voluntary basis.

Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion said the government will carefully consider the report and consult widely with Aboriginal people and leaders, among others, before it responds.

In the NPY region the NPY Women's Council has involved all relevant Aboriginal organisations and stakeholders to develop a strong regional model. The CLC has attended workshops to discuss the Empowered Communities model in the region, and is part of an interim regional steering committee to guide the project. The CLC will be discussing the model at the April Council meeting, before preparing a response to the national report.

The full report can be found at www.dpmmc.gov.au.

Closing the gap ... not

GOVERNMENT statistics have shown a lack of progress towards 'closing the gap' between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

Prime Minister Tony Abbott described the seventh Closing the Gap report as "in many respects profoundly disappointing."

"Despite the concerted efforts of successive governments since the first report, we are not on track to achieve most of the targets," Mr Abbott said.

The main successes listed in the report were a decrease in infant mortality and an increase in the number of Indigenous school children finishing year 12.

The target to ensure that 95 per cent of Indigenous four-year-olds in remote communities could go to pre-school or get other early childhood education was not met, with only 85 per cent enrolled.

But other things had gone backwards or stayed the same:

The number of Indigenous people employed (47.5 per cent in 2013) was less than in 2008 (53.8 per cent), while the proportion of non-Indigenous people who had jobs increased;

There was no improvement in reading, writing and numeracy among Indigenous students, with the target set to close the gap by 2018.

An increase in suicides (117 in 2012, compared with an average of 100 between 2001 and 2010);

More Indigenous people report-

ed high or very levels of psychological distress (30 per cent in 2012-13 compared with 27 per cent in 2004-5, three times higher than among

non-Indigenous people);

The report showed that Indigenous people are on average living longer.

By 2012, Aboriginal men could expect to live to 69.1 years (1.6 more than in 2007) and women to 73.7 (73.1 in 2007).

But most of the improvement in life expectancy came between 1998 and 2006 and there was "no significant improvement" since 2007.



Prime Minister Tony Abbot was dubbed Minister for Aboriginal Despair as thousands protested on National Close the Gap Day. "All he ever does is budget cuts," said Ray Jackson, president of the Indigenous Social Justice Association, who coined the new title. Cartoon by Alan Moir.

Confusion follows IAS cuts

Continued from p.2

Even the Liberal deputy chair of the committee, Senator Cory Bernardi, admitted "it's very, very difficult when you hear that shelters are operating on a one year funding basis.

"You can't have one year funding and expect to get long term results."

The Aboriginal Peak Organisations of the NT (APO NT) used the hearing to ask the Prime Minister to give up responsibility for Aboriginal drug and mental health services.

APO NT wants Mr Abbott to hand these policy areas back to the federal health department because it believes this is more likely to "achieve outcomes" than leaving them at the mercy of the IAS process.

"Nigel Scullion told the Senate the cuts to Indigenous services wouldn't result in front line services being cut," Labor Senator Penny Wong said. "The evidence today makes very clear he was wrong."

NLC CEO Joe Morrison said Aboriginal communities want a say not only about what funding is needed but about how services are delivered: "We are willing participants but unable to get to the table."

Senator Wong agreed: "If we impose solutions that are generated externally, they are not going to be owned by a community, they are not going to be trusted by a community and they are not going to work."

Last year the Abbott government cut over \$500 million from the federal Indigenous affairs budget and asked organisations around the nation to apply under five new streams that replaced more than 150 programs.

A total of 2345 organisations applied under the streams 'jobs, land and economy', 'children and school-



ing', 'safety and wellbeing', 'culture and capability' and 'remote Australia strategies'. Less than half of the applications were successful and many organisations got far less than they had received previously.

Of the 964 organisations that received a share of the \$860 million on

offer only one third were Aboriginal organisations.

The government's IAS hotline is 1 800 088 323.

BOWLED OUT? Barkly Regional Council youth workers Troy Gillet, Thomas Gillet and Faron James (right), a father of five, feared for their jobs. "We've all put a lot into our work and thought our jobs were long term," Faron said.

Picture courtesy Tennant and District Times

Government's 'big plans'

Work for the dole, forever

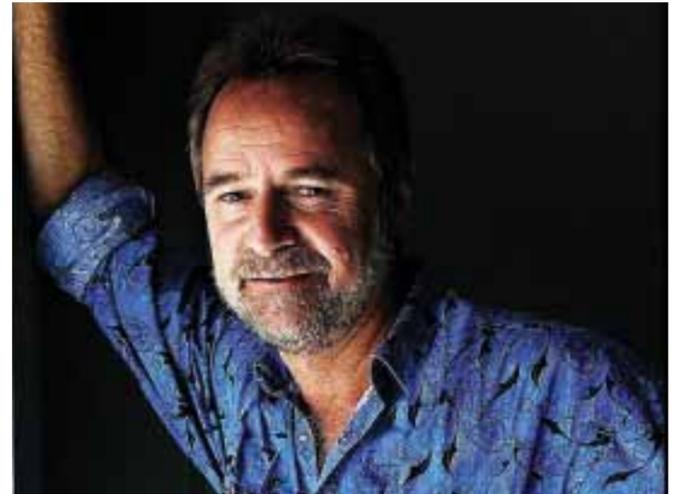
THE Aboriginal Peak Organisations of the NT are disturbed by Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion's comments that it was not "a bad thing" that many remote community residents may spend three decades working for the dole.

"It's just soul destroying for unemployed Aboriginal people to learn that the government is relaxed and comfortable about them serving 'work for the dole' life sentences and never getting a job," Central Land Council director and APO NT spokesman David Ross said.

"How is this going to inspire children to go to school?"

"Not so long ago the government claimed that the CDEP had to go because it did not lead to real jobs. Now it is content with a scheme that really entrenches low expectations of Aboriginal people."

Continued page 26



'Healthy welfare card' trials

THE ABBOTT government wants to push ahead with most of billionaire miner Andrew Forrest's recommendations to change Aboriginal education, training, employment and welfare.

Trials of a 'healthy welfare card' that limits spending on grog and gambling will go ahead around the country before the end of the year.

The government will pick the trial communities, places with high welfare dependency, alcohol and drug problems, after consultations with community leaders.

It said the card would apply to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the trial communities but not, as recommended by Mr Forrest, to every welfare recipient in Australia.

"There's no suggestion at this stage that the card will have mainstream application," said Social Services Minister Scott Morrison.

The card will also not be cashless, as Mr Forrest recommended. The government is still deciding how much cash it will allow people to withdraw.

Labor supports 'targeted' income management while the Greens oppose it.

The Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) said

there is no proof the card would work.

"All the evidence to date highlights the ineffectiveness and high cost of similar income management schemes," said ACOSS CEO Dr Cassandra Goldie.

While opinions about the card are divided, the government has started to put in place some of the recommendations everyone agrees on.

It said it will increase the number of Aboriginal people in the Commonwealth public service until 3 out of every 100 public servants, 3% of the bureaucracy, is Indigenous.

It also lifted the target for contracts for government services that go to Aboriginal businesses from currently less than 1% to 3% by 2020.

Leah Armstrong from the peak Indigenous business group Supply Nation said increasing government contracts for black businesses from \$6.5 million to \$135 million a year is a start.

"We have a vision that we want to see Indigenous businesses get a billion dollars worth of spend across Australia, both in corporate and government," she told the ABC.

Companies agreeing to hire at least 400 Aboriginal job seekers and to keep them on for at least 26 weeks will get

additional rewards of up to \$10,000 per job seeker from the federal government.

The government hopes the initiative will lead to 20,000 more jobs nationwide for Aboriginal people in five years, with more jobs in areas where Aboriginal people make up a large part of the population.

"In places like Cairns and the NT, where there is a higher Indigenous population, I expect employment to reflect the population of those areas," said Aboriginal Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion.

Senator Scullion said it was much cheaper to reward employers than to pay job seekers the dole.

He rejected Mr Forrest's idea to reduce the tax burden of Aboriginal businesses.

Communities are still waiting to hear how the government plans to implement Mr Forrest's recommendations to invest more in education, especially in early childhood programs.

Some of his most controversial recommendations, such as individual ownership of NT Aboriginal land, can only happen with the support of the Senate.

Welfare to be simpler under strict new rules

THE FEDERAL government wants to cut and simplify Australia's welfare system, which costs taxpayers \$150 billion a year.

It says this will get more people off welfare and into paid work.

The government wants to implement a report that recommends cutting the number of Centrelink payments from 20 to five (see table).

The number of supplementary (additional) payments would be reduced from 55 to four.

The report says the payments should be fairer than they have been.

It says the government should give financial rewards to employers to hire people with disabilities and provide training and support to help them find jobs.



Alison Anderson, Namatjira Bess Price, Stuart

One bush electorate likely to disappear

CENTRAL Australia looks set to lose one NT electorate to Darwin, where the population has grown more strongly.

Adam Giles wants to amalgamate Alison Anderson's seat of Namatjira with a neighbouring electorate while his party want to axe Matt Conlan's Alice Springs electorate of Greatorex.

Labor wants to merge Bess Price's electorate of Stuart with another electorate.

Alison Anderson said she would win any bush seat.

All photos on this page courtesy CAAMA.

<p>Working Age Payments</p> 	<p>Unemployed adults will be paid at one of the following levels, depending on how many hours they are able to work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upper level: People with a disability who can work for 8-14 hours a week. Middle level: People with a disability and parents with dependent children who can work for 15-29 hours a week. Bottom level: People who can work or study full time. <p>The more hours people are able to work or study the smaller the payment they will get.</p>
<p>Supported Living Pension</p> 	<p>People older than 22 who cannot work for at least five years because of a disability, illness or mental health condition.</p>
<p>Child and Youth Payment</p> 	<p>Parents with dependent children and young people under the age of 22.</p>
<p>Carer Payment</p> 	<p>People older than 22 who care for someone with a disability or an elderly person all the time.</p>
<p>Age Pension</p> 	<p>People over 65 (the pension age will go up in the future).</p>
<p>Supplementary payments</p>	<p>Rent assistance, child and family assistance, help with living away from home costs of students, carer and disability payments</p>



Youth & welfare: your views

YOUNG people who are not studying or training should not get Centrelink benefits.

That is one of 27 recommendations from the Forrest Review. *Land Rights News* asked CLC delegates and others for their opinions.



Alan Rankin, Uralampe outstation

Agree. "Back when I was younger we had to try get a job any way. Now, they don't worry about that, they go straight to the pub."



Heather Rosas, Tennant Creek

Not sure. "They should get Centrelink to get food but they need support to get work too. A lot of school leavers can't even do work experience and training so they can get certificates to qualify for vacant positions. That's why our mob is on the streets so much."



Sandra Morrison, Tennant Creek

Agree. "Young people in my family humbug the old people for cash. They should get their own job to earn their own money and look after the old people."



Herbie Bloomfield, Huckitta Station

Agree. "We run cattle station and business so we always work. They can work on station and keep out from town, away from grog and trouble."



Cynthia Lauder, Munglawurru outstation

Not sure. "There should be more training for young people. They can do some cattle work skills and they should do that work more, to support their families."



Curtis Haines, Alice Springs

Not Sure. "Sometimes it's hard to get a job and it's hard to set up for getting work, There's work out bush if you really want it."



Agnes Abbott, Alice Springs

Agree. "It's bad because they get up to mischief, stay home all day and walk around at night. If they work or go school it's better that they doing something. I used to work all the time, even when we didn't get paid."



Gilbert Fishook, Alice Springs

Not sure. "Hard to get jobs in town, there's jobs but sometimes things get in the way. If they got criminal record, it's harder to get some jobs."



Barbara Martin, Yuendumu

Not sure. "Government should support more secondary school age people out bush with school and training so young people won't rely on family and Centrelink."



Ethan Jones, Tennant Creek

Agree. "Some dropped out of school and need to get back into training to get the jobs that are there."



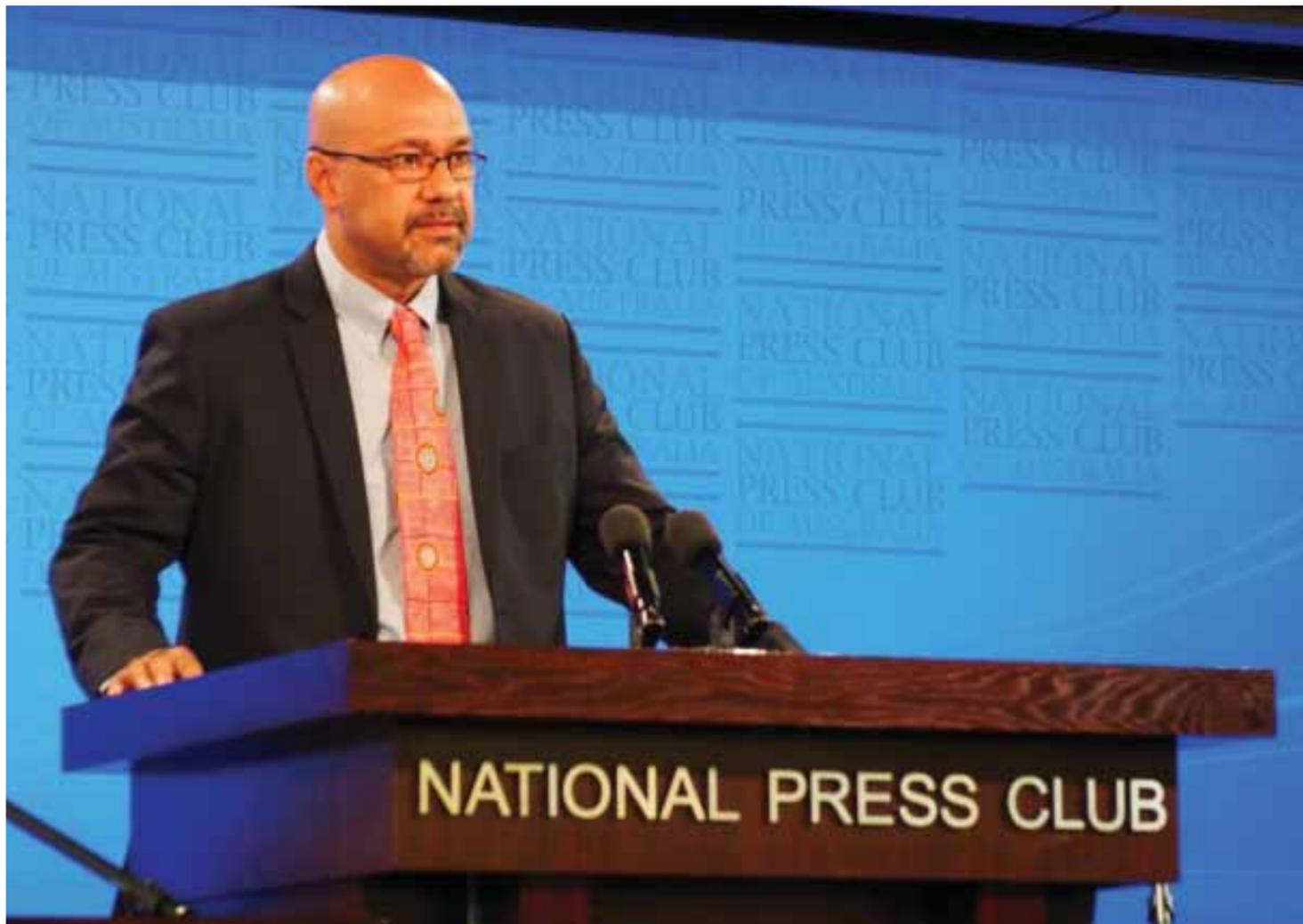
Sylvanna Murphy, Tennant Creek

Not sure. "I'm still at school. I have a sister who would be better off at school but I don't know what to do after I finish school too."



Bayden Williams, Ntaria

Agree. "If young people don't work and still get Centrelink it makes them lazy. When they go to school they make the choice to go there and then to work."



Let us run our lives: Morrison

NORTHERN Land Council chair Joe Morrison (pictured) has accused the Country Liberals of trying to undermine the Aboriginal Land Rights Act and increase government control of Aboriginal people.

Speaking at the National Press Club, Mr Morrison criticised Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion's attempts to get the Senate to pass regulations which would force land councils to hand over important functions to smaller Aboriginal corporations.

"Those as yet unidentified regional corporations would be doing the fundamental work of land councils, yet would be drawing on our scarce resources to do that," he said. "And what, say, if those regional corporations get into difficulty - go belly-up - as we've seen happen with many Indigenous organisations in the recent past? Well, we'd be left to pick up the pieces."

The regulations, which are blocked by the Senate, would create uncertainty that would hamper development of Aboriginal land.

He said mining companies prefer to deal with land councils "because they've long come to respect the pragmatic and professional outcomes we achieve."

Dealing with small corporations would stifle mining development.

Mr Morrison said Senator Scullion's campaign, which had led to an investigation into the administration of Aboriginal land, was in line with the Country Liberals' long record of attacking land rights.

He called the federal land rights law "a beautiful thing - a beacon that marks the high point of recognising dispossession, of customary ownership and enduring practice of an ancient culture rooted in the land and waters of the Northern Territory."

Also in his sights were the 99 year township leases under Commonwealth control.

Mr Morrison said Senator Scullion's efforts to get communities to sign over township leases to the federal government were an attempt to get

control of Aboriginal land forever.

"Perhaps their intention would be to dispose of these lands on the private market," Mr Morrison said.

Mr Morrison quoted former Liberal Party Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and land rights champion Ian Viner, who said 99-year leases "turn traditional ownership upside down."

"They put the Commonwealth back into ownership and control of traditional Aboriginal land like it was before the Land Rights Act," Mr Viner wrote.

Mr Morrison said the NLC already approved "bucketloads" of agreements for enterprises on Aboriginal land - 109 last financial year alone.

He asked governments to get out of the lives of Aboriginal people. "Our people are simply over-governed."

Read the full speech at www.nlc.org.au/media-releases/article/nlc-ceos-national-press-clubs-address/

Where are the experts on NT land rights?

The Central and Northern Land Councils have asked the Abbott government to include Aboriginal Land Rights Act experts in an "Expert Indigenous Working Group" advising a national investigation into Indigenous land administration.

Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion appointed businessman and former Kimberley Land Council chair Wayne Bergmann to chair the group, which also includes Brian Wyatt, Shirley McPherson, Djawa Yunupingu, Valerie Cooms, Craig Cromelin and Murandoo Yanner.

The group will look at the ownership and management of Aboriginal land around the country and advise the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) about changes to native title and land rights.

"Much of this inquiry is about the land councils' area of expertise: the Commonwealth's Aboriginal Land Rights Act that applies only here in the Northern Territory," CLC Director, David Ross, and NLC CEO, Joe Morrison, said in a joint media statement.

"We are very disappointed that the government has not included anyone with technical knowledge of the legislation."

"The Minister has been trying but failing to hollow out our land rights."

Mr Ross and Mr Morrison called on the Abbott government to base the investigation on facts rather than ideology.

"We hope the indigenous working group will challenge the myths being peddled by NT Country Liberal Party ideologues about hard won Aboriginal land rights supposedly holding up development in communities."

"We are certainly keen to work constructively to develop solutions to real barriers to economic development."

The land councils said it was not encouraging that the terms of reference for the investigation were developed without Aboriginal input.

"While we're hearing a lot about the new, more consultative 'Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs' the reality on the ground is more of the same old top down approach."

Both took little comfort from Minister Scullion's assurance that he would not change the Land Rights Act without the agreement of the land councils.

"What the Minister has been trying but failing to do is to hollow out our land rights with the help of Howard era provisions in the Land Rights Act."

"The regulations are ideologically driven, unworkable and would greatly increase uncertainty for traditional owners, third parties and businesses."

SBS to drop Indigenous news

AUSTRALIA will lose its only national Aboriginal television news service as government funding cuts force changes within SBS.

SBS is planning to replace the half hour nightly indigenous news program NITV News with an "undisclosed current affairs program", according to the online news service Crikey.

Staff at NITV News, the flagship of Australia's only indigenous television station, were told in February that the program would be axed by June.

Crikey reported NITV News' 15 or so journalists around the country were told there would be no job losses as a result of the sweeping change.

"This makes NITV the only free to air channel without a daily news bulletin. It's almost as if it's saying to Aboriginal communities that our news doesn't matter," said Amy McQuire from the online news service New Matilda.

Ms McQuire said abolishing the news service after seven short years undermines what Aboriginal media stands for.

"It is not just about presenting stories to our mob, it's about challenging government and other media, and holding them to account. It is about translating bureaucratic doublespeak and political rhetoric to our people so they understand the ramifications of top down government policy. This can't happen without a national news bulletin,

whose reach and impact has greater possibilities than a newspaper or other forms of media."

There are also rumours that SBS' Indigenous current affairs show *Living Black*, presented by Karla Grant, will also be cut in June.

A spokesperson for NITV refused to confirm or deny the reports, saying only that "SBS are currently exploring ways to grow Indigenous news and current affairs."

NITV launched in 2007 on Imparja's channel 31, which broadcasts to remote communities through ICTV.

It started NITV News a year later. What began as five minute bulletins grew to daily 30 minute programs broadcast from the SBS studios in Sydney and featured reports from Indigenous communities across the country.

This year is proving to be a difficult one for the Aboriginal media sector.

In January the National Indigenous Times was fighting against closure when its parent company



was placed into administration, while Imparja TV retrenched 14 staff after outsourcing its broadcast operations to an interstate company.

The NSW Land Council abolished its publication *Tracker*.

Small remote Aboriginal community broadcasters are also struggling in the face of uncertain and reduced funding.



MORE AND more commentators are calling the Northern Territory a 'failed state' and many are wondering whether granting the NT self government four decades ago was a good idea.

What is left to say about the circus that is the NT government? *Land Rights News* reckons nobody could put it better than past and present members of the NT government and their supporters in parliament. NT Chief and Indigenous Affairs Minister, Adam Giles, has the first word:



NT Chief and Indigenous Affairs Minister, Adam Giles. Photo: CAAMA

The team has had a lot of infighting and dysfunction, not just this year but last year and the year before. There's very little policies on what we agree on. There's no Aboriginal affairs policy ... and that's why a lot of times the polties don't know what they stand for. The level of incompetence of these people [his fellow CLP members who tried to overthrow him in the failed February coup] is just madness... absolute madness, mindless stupidity and political immaturity. I don't believe that Willem Westra Van Holthe has the capacity, capability or the tenacity or the professionalism to be chief minister. [Failed coup leader and Attorney General John] Elferink needs to get his arse torn ... he should be in trouble but he's a very good performer and we need him in the team. Tolly [Treasurer Dave Tollner]... will not come to a parliamentary wing meeting. He says, 'you're all a bunch of idiots except for Adam, I'm not going to work with you.'

A nest of vipers.



Treasurer Dave Tollner about his CLP colleagues. Photo: ABC

WHAT A JOKE



Deputy Chief Minister and failed coup leader, Willem Westra van Holthe. Photo: ABC

Discontent with the direction of government has been around for some time amongst a number of my colleagues.

You came along from the Blue Mountains with your little shovel and decided you wanted to be top dog of the NT. It was always about your ego, and your desperate need to overcome everything has destroyed beyond salvage everything and you have achieved nothing... Let's clean this house and get rid of this little boy once and for all.

[Adam Giles lacks] honesty, integrity and respect. I have no faith in a government led by Adam Giles. I have no faith in the Treasurer and nor do I believe he is an appropriate person to be a leader in our community. The community expects more from its leaders than getting drunk at topless bars and telling bald faced lies. I can't support a proposition that leaves these people in leadership positions.



Robyn Lambley, failed coup member and Country Liberals MLA. Photo: ABC



Independent MLA and former CLP member Larisa Lee about Adam Giles.

Just like their counterparts in Canberra, they are out to destroy Aboriginal people. At the next election we've got to show them the strength of the black vote.

We are the laughing stock of the nation. We're the most disunited bunch of amateurs that ever ruled the Territory.



Independent MLA Gerry Wood called for a vote of no confidence in the entire NT parliament. Photo: G. Wood



Alison Anderson, independent MLA and former CLP member. Photo: CAAMA

Who knows if this trouble is over. It could start again tomorrow. It's a little bit like Russian roulette, like having a bit of a gun to the head of all of us because all you need is someone to say, 'I want to be minister' or 'I'm going to resign and become an independent'.



Itching to have your say?

The next election could be just around the corner. Make sure you and your family are enrolled to vote. Call: 1800MYVOTE,

visit MyVote Central at the Yepereny Shopping Centre next to the Alice Springs Commonwealth Bank, or visit www.ntec.nt.gov.au



Adam Giles. Photo: CAAMA

Houses 'falling to pieces'

A FORUM in Darwin has formed a new Aboriginal housing body to tackle the NT's remote housing crisis.

Delegates called for a new Aboriginal run housing system, saying the current system is "falling to pieces."

Tony Jack, the mayor of the Roper Gulf Shire Council, was appointed interim chair of NT Aboriginal Housing.

"Individuals are just a voice in the wilderness and we need a new body to move this issue forward", Mr Jack said.

"We're looking for innovative ways to do repairs and maintenance."

The forum brought together almost 150 people from remote communities, homelands and town camps with housing experts, community housing groups, regional councils and government representatives.

Delegates said remote housing was "in crisis," with millions of dollars disappearing into bureaucracy.

They called on the government, represented at the forum by NT Housing Minister Bess Price, to put Aboriginal people back in control of housing.

Central Land Council director David Ross chaired the forum organised by the Aboriginal Peak Organisations of the NT (APO NT), NT Shelter and the Central Australian Affordable Housing Company.



Forum calls for local control

Mr Ross summed up the problems:

- Design and management of houses unsuitable for the culture and location;
- Poor repairs and maintenance programs;
- Poor construction;
- Limited local employment and reliance on outside contractors;

No accountability for outside contractors working on houses;

No new houses built in many communities, leading to overcrowding

"Since the Howard years governments have removed people from being involved in fixing their problems and whittled down Aboriginal people's ability to find their own solutions," he said.

"Aboriginal people have become bystanders, watching someone else coming in and fix their problems.

"What we really need is governments to get out of their lives and let them get back to doing things for themselves."

Delegates talked about creating new regional housing organisations that worked with local communities, developing low cost building alternatives and ways to finance housing that don't only rely on government.

Tony Jack is looking forward to driving the push for locally controlled, diverse and flexible solutions with the support of APO NT.

"We have so many trained people in these communities," he told the ABC. "If we can look at people on the ground we can get to these issues quicker, rather than waiting, waiting, waiting."

\$62,500 per house - on what?

MANY houses at Papunya are still in a bad way, even though the federal government claims it spent more than \$3 million to fix them last December.

But tenants continued to complain to the Central Land Council that their houses were still in a poor state after the work, with many more repairs still needed.

The CLC visited Papunya to examine the claims, checking at random 12 out of Papunya's 48 houses.

It found houses had been painted inside and out, received new tiles and steel cupboards for bedrooms and stainless steel benches in kitchens.

But the program had overlooked other problems, such as faulty showers and toilets, ovens that didn't work, doors that couldn't be locked and poor pest control.

Six of the twelve tenants the CLC spoke to said they were unhappy with the work and some said their houses didn't get any repairs at all.

Four were satisfied with the work, but said more needed to be done. Complaints included:

- No repairs to damaged windows;
- Broken doors repainted and reused but not replaced; and
- Fittings such as door handles replaced with cheap and breakable fittings.

One resident told the CLC the stainless steel kitchens and mirrors made them feel "like being in prison."

In some houses, the residents couldn't have a shower after the repairs because the showerheads had not been installed.

The federal government told the CLC it didn't know how much money was spent on Papunya's 48 houses, just that the total was at least \$3 million. This would mean it spent an average minimum of \$62,500 on each house and probably more.

Despite the big spend, it seemed that in many cases the work done failed to bring the houses up to a legally required standard.

The CLC is concerned that there may be no way of comparing the houses after the work was done with the way they were before the work started.

Most people said they had not received a report about the condition of their house before the work started and there was no inspection after the work.

All tenants told the CLC their houses



What the tap looked like in one Papunya house ... after the repairs were done.

needed repairs, in most cases at least four. They varied from broken door handles and blocked drains to electrical faults and toilets and showers that didn't work.

The CLC found that seven of the 12 houses required emergency repairs.

Tenants said Territory Housing saves money by waiting until it has a lot of houses with the same problem before it approves repairs.

This summer, for example, Territory Housing sent an airconditioning mechanic to fix 20 airconditioners over two days. Units that break down the day after might have to wait until many more airconditioners have broken down before they are all fixed at once.

Nine of the 12 Papunya houses the CLC inspected endured this summer without airconditioning. Elderly and sick people, as well as mothers with young babies, live in these houses

The CLC has written to Territory Housing, saying the government clearly failed to meet its legal obligation to maintain the houses it rents to Papunya people.

How it's supposed to work:

Tenants in communities in the MacDonnell Regional Council area who need repairs must contact Zodiac Housing Tenancy Services on 1800 963 422.

Zodiac is supposed to pass this on to Ingkerreke Commercial, which is supposed to organise the repairs.

But because many people don't know the Zodiac number they contact Ingkerreke directly. Ingkerreke then pass on the request to Territory Housing.

Any questions about CLC business?

Call your Regional Co-ordinator:

1. ALICE SPRINGS Nigel Lockyer , 8951 6264
2. SOUTH WEST Gordon Williams , 8956 2119
3. NORTH WEST Rob Roy , 8975 0885
4. TANAMI Vacant (Marty Darr) , 8951 6255
5. WEST Robbie Kopp , 8956 8658
6. TENNANT CREEK Darryl "Tiger" Fitz , 8962 2343
7. EASTERN SANDOVER Jared Swan , 8956 9955
8. EASTERN PLENTY Richard Dodd , 8956 9722
9. CENTRAL Lawrie Liddle , 8952 6256





It's getting worse

The Northern Territory continues to have Australia's second highest rate of Aboriginal adults behind bars after Western Australia, and it's getting worse.

The NT's Aboriginal imprisonment rate is more than one third higher than the rest of the nation.

An average of 1500 adults were in NT jails during every day of 2013/2014. Eight six per cent of them were Aboriginal.

Out of 100,000, 2880 Aboriginal people were in jail in the NT, compared with 3602 out of 100,000 Aboriginal people in WA.

The number of Indigenous women in jail in the Territory increased by 72 per cent between 2002 and 2012.

The number of underage Aboriginal Territorians in jail has risen dramatically over the last 10 years – from 18 out of 100,000 Aboriginal young people to 48 out of 100,000 today.

Most young people were jailed for assault related crimes or burglary.



Youth justice failure

AN NT government commissioned review has found that both Labor and Country Liberal governments have failed the rapidly rising number of young people in the Territory's detention centres.

The review was a response to the riots in two juvenile detention centres in Darwin last year that forced them to close.

NSW juvenile justice worker Michael Vita found detention centres were facing higher numbers of detainees, many with "complex and violent behaviours".

But the centres lacked direction and failed to understand the purpose of youth detention.

The vast majority of detainees are Aboriginal Territorians between 15 and 16 years. A growing number are even younger.

The review found that youth workers in the centres received only four days training, compared with 11 weeks for prison officers in adult jails. 90 per cent of these youth workers were casual employees.

Mr Vita's report recommended employing mostly permanent staff and getting rid of casual employees who could not work well with young detainees.

He said staff needed to be educated about Aboriginal cultures and good behaviour management, so that all young people in centres were treated fairly.

They also needed to learn about mediation and negotiation, the appropriate use of force, the symptoms of foetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) and mental health management.

Mr Vita said many young people in the youth justice system came from "homes where poverty, alcohol abuse, violence and dysfunctional relationships are the norm."

"These are young people in greatest need and the ones who are likely to require a higher level of intervention and case management," he said.

He said detention centre staff needed to work well with the young people's case managers, rather than having an "us and them approach".

Nurses, education department staff also needed to become more involved in case management. The report recommended introducing counselling programs aimed at improving the behaviour of very young offenders.

The report also looked at how diversionary programs that kept young people out of the centres could be more cost effective than detention.

Legal aid backflip, but Scullion 'no' to justice targets

NATIONWIDE protests by Aboriginal and justice organisations have forced the Abbott government to back down on planned Aboriginal legal service cuts.

The government promised to keep funding the legal aid sector at current levels for the next two years.

The win for Indigenous legal services comes after some stopped taking new clients and warned that the court systems could grind to a halt.

The government has also been slammed for refusing to set an official target for reducing the rate of Aboriginal people in jail while cutting Aboriginal legal service funding.

Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion said introducing a justice target "achieves nothing" to cut the rate of Aboriginal people behind bars, which has doubled in the past 10 years.

Aboriginal and justice organisations want governments to set measurable targets for lowering these rates – goals to which governments can be held accountable.

The Close the Gap framework, for example, sets a target to close the gap in life expectancy between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians within a generation. The government must report on progress towards this goal every year.

The North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) has proposed that justice targets should include reduced incarceration rates, an increase in alternatives to court and jail and a reduction in domestic violence.

More than one in four of the nation's prisoners is now Aboriginal.

Young Aboriginal people are 24 times more likely to be imprisoned than non-Aboriginal young people, and Aboriginal men are about 15 times more likely to be in jail than non-Aboriginal men.

There has also been a spike in the number of Aboriginal women in prison. The increase in the female imprisonment rate is three times that of men.

Supporters of a national justice target say it would force governments to take responsibility for addressing the reasons why so many Aboriginal people are jailed.

Senator Scullion told ABC Radio there were "practical things" that could be done instead.

He wants the West Australian government to keep fine defaulters out of jail by ensuring they paid the fines back out of their income.

But meanwhile critics say the West has taken another step backwards by extending its laws on mandatory imprisonment and detention.

One of the new laws in WA will mean that children found to have been involved in three or more burglaries will automatically be given three years of mandatory detention.

West Australian Aboriginal Legal Service director Peter Collins said the laws could affect children who stole food or drink because they were hungry.

He said people who believed that mandatory sentences stopped crime were deluding themselves.

Tougher sentences had no obvious effect on crime rates, with WA's home burglary rates the highest in the nation.

He said that 80 per cent of children who were locked up in juvenile detention once would return to jail or detention in the future.

Ruth Barson from the Human Rights Law Centre said Senator Scullion is "failing to see that prison itself is part of the cycle of disadvantage."

"Locking more and more Indigenous people up means more kids in care, more broken families, fewer people in jobs,

fewer teenagers at school and more community upheaval," she said.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS) chairman Shane Duffy said other Close the Gap targets are at risk if over-imprisonment is not addressed.

NATSILS was due to close its doors in June because the government was going to cut its funding. However, overwhelming public support for the coordination, frontline assistance and advocacy organisation led to a reversal of the decision.

\$300,000
cost of keeping
NATSILS going
for a year.

\$100,000
cost of keeping
one person in
jail for a year.

Laws will put more behind bars

THE NORTH Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) is challenging the NT's 'paperless arrest' police powers in the High Court.

The laws aim to get so-called troublemakers off the streets and reduce police paperwork.

The Police Administration Act allows police to detain someone for up to four hours for behaviours such as swearing, making too much noise and having an untidy front yard.

Police can exercise the new arrest power without giving an infringement notice, if the person has committed, or is suspected of having committed, an 'infringement offence'.

The Human Rights Law Centre (HRLC) is helping NAAJA with the case and has described the laws as "unprecedented", "overreach" and lacking transparency.

"At a time when the NT has a crisis in Indigenous imprisonment, these laws are unnecessary and will only make the problem worse," HRLC lawyer Ruth Barson told the ABC.

"It's important that the High Court has the opportunity to determine whether or not it's lawful to give police these types of detention powers, without any involvement of the courts."

NT Attorney General John Elferink stood by the

laws and said high Aboriginal jail rates had more to do with "lifestyles" and "passive welfare".

"Unfortunately because of lifestyles, Aboriginal people are over-represented in our health system, under-represented in our education system, over-represented in our jail system."

Ms Barson agreed that the new laws will hit Aboriginal people harder than other Territorians.

But she said the government should tackle Aboriginal disadvantage through remote community employment programs and boosting school attendance rather than laws that make the problem worse.

Mr Elferink said his role as a former police officer had influenced the drafting of the new laws.

NAAJA hopes the High Court will hear the legal challenge this year.

of paperwork, do affect our police," he said.

NAAJA's John Huynor said the new laws were "outrageous" and would be quite at home in a police state.

Russell Goldflam, president of the Criminal Lawyers Association of the NT, also said in November the new police powers were open to abuse.

Recognition referendum risk

SOME Aboriginal leaders worry the campaign for recognition of Aboriginal people in the Australian constitution is running out of steam or even facing a backlash.

A national Indigenous body has warned the Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples that some black Australians are turning against the referendum, planned for 2017.

The National Congress of Australia's First Peoples' submission to the committee said delays and anger about the current political situation have sparked bad feelings across Aboriginal Australia.

A submission from the NT's peak Aboriginal organisations, APO NT, agrees with much of the committee's 2014 progress report but wants it to go further.

The alliance wants more safeguards against racist laws and called for better protection of the right of Aboriginal peoples to practise their languages and cultures.

It also recommends an ongoing consultation and education process aimed at getting the referendum over the line.

But National Congress co-chairs Kirstie Parker and Les Malezer said they were "receiving messages from our people that they are determined to vote against any referendum."

"For example, the frustration continues over high and escalating rates of removal of



children and of imprisonment including youth detention, the continuing police killings and victimisation of our people without accountability and justice, high rates of unemployment, restrictions and restraint upon economic development, and mining and major developments without consent on Aboriginal lands."

Anger about welfare changes and budget cuts to Aboriginal organisations was not helped by the slow progress towards the referendum and a lack of clarity about the referendum question.

"We are now seeing a developing backlash," they warned.

Frustration in Aboriginal Australia coincides with an Australian National University poll showing overwhelming support for removing race discrimination from the constitution and recognition of Indigenous cultures, language and heritage as a basis of law making. Four out of five people said Aboriginal people should be able to decide their own way of life.

The nation's top health bodies have come out in support of constitutional recognition and NLC CEO Joe Morrison told the National Press Club "we need it."

But the government's chief Indigenous affairs adviser, Warren Mundine, said the government needed to put forward a referendum question. "Without having the discussion about this question, I think the momentum is slowing," he said.

Indigenous leaders plan to meet with government and opposition leaders to discuss the way ahead.

The late former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser and former Aboriginal affairs ministers Ian Viner and Fred Chaney have warned that the "aggressive" push to roll back land rights in the NT would make it impossible for the referendum to succeed.

PICTURED: Referendum supporters in Tweed Heads, NSW

Pool boss had a good heart

THE YUENDUMU community came together as one to mourn the death of the manager of its swimming pool early this year.

Two teenagers, neither from Yuendumu, will face court charged with the murder of Kumanjayi Berry, 53, who had been living in the community since 2010.

After the death, the NT News ran a front page story claiming people were fleeing the community because they were afraid it would create a "new wave of violence."

But Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC) chair Eddie Robertson and police said the reports were false.

"Quite the opposite is happening", the NT Senior Australian of the Year said. "The whole community is gathering around to mourn this wonderful man who knew every child by name."

"All families and agencies are showing their respect in their own ways. The children and young people are very sad and have placed flowers, cards and letters at the swimming pool."

WYDAC manager Susie Low said the pool had been closed for two weeks after the death in honour of Mr Berry. After a smoking ceremony, the pool was reopened with a swimming carnival that Mr Berry had helped to organise.

Children from Nyirripi and Yuelamu also attended the carnival.

Ms Low said WYDAC had recruited a short term pool manager until the school holidays, and a friend of Mr Berry's had also helped out.

She said people understood that the death was an isolated incident and there had been no problems with job recruitment.

CLC and PAW Media chair Francis Kelly sent his condolences to Mr Berry's family and the WYDAC team.

"Jupurrula had a good heart and was good with yapa. He listened and understood our culture. He was learning from us, as well as teaching us and our children," he said.

"I feel proud of my community for looking after each other during this sad and stressful time. We are all family and work any problems out together."

Ms Low said Mr Berry was the first non-Aboriginal person the Yuendumu football team had honoured with a moving ceremony of appreciation known locally as a "memory game".

The CLC's community development



program worked with the community and WYDAC to build and run the pool Mr Berry managed.



Wham bam, thank you pram



Travellers in the Western MacDonnells have been enjoying an unscheduled public art display a few kilometres from Ntaria in recent months. Prams and strollers are displayed at the side of the road in ever changing arrangements, complete with dolls and stuffed toys. Gordon Lucky, from 'Labo' outstation explained the origins of the installation: "People from Kwayle outstation push their prams to the roadside and get lifts so sometimes they leave the prams." The local artists take it from there.

Royalties for positive change

PEOPLE in the Central Land Council region are using their mining royalties to drive empowerment and positive social change in their communities.

That's the message Francis Kelly and David Ross have taken to the mining industry.

The annual sustainable development conference of the Minerals Council of Australia (MCA) is the leading mining industry forum to debate good development and how to achieve it.

"Our community development work supports Aboriginal people to build skills so they can take responsibility and be self determining," Mr Ross told the conference delegates.

He explained that Aboriginal control and informed decision making processes are critical for the program's success, but that this work needs to be properly resourced.

"There's a price to self-determination and you have to be involved," he said.

"We think there's a bigger role for corporate Australia in supporting Aboriginal organisations to do this work, and for governments as well."

The MCA had invited the CLC's chair and director and the manager of the CLC's community development unit, Danielle Campbell, to explain the difference the community development program is making on the ground.

They were joined for a panel discussion by James Ensor from the independent team of experts that recently reviewed the CLC's community development program.

The government funded review found that the community development program "played a crucial role in empowering traditional owners and community residents across Central Australia within a context of broader disempowerment."

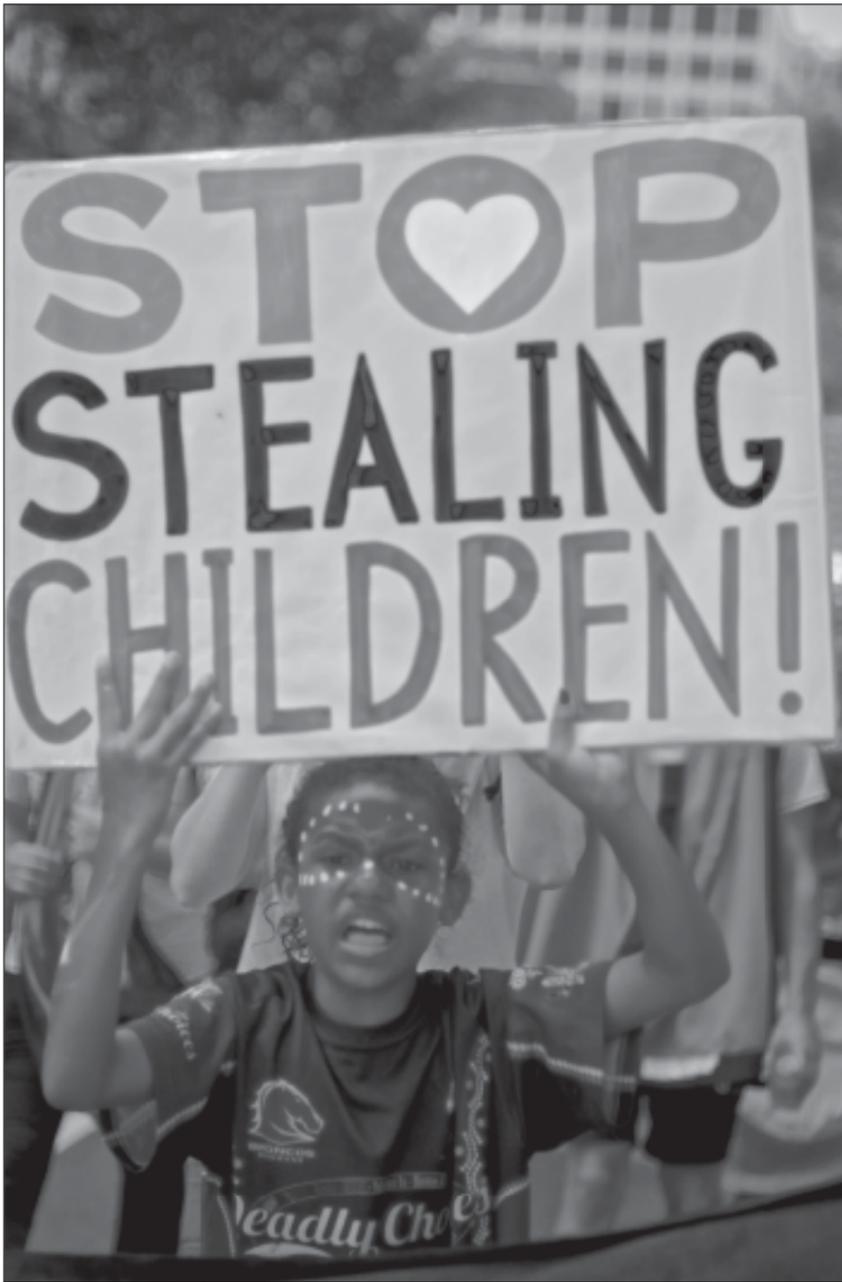
Delegates at the MCA conference last November in Adelaide included



mining industry representatives, community and environmental practitioners, non government organisations, Indigenous representative bodies and industry partners.

ABOVE: The CLC's Janelle Trotman helps Elizabeth Ross to plan a community development project in Lajamanu. RIGHT: Francis Kelly, David Ross and Dan Campbell at the conference.

New foster laws under attack



NEW NT laws allowing 'permanent care orders' (PCO) mean foster carers can apply to the court to have foster children live with them for good.

If the court grants the permanent care order the foster carer becomes the legal guardian of the child, similar to adoptions.

Once the order is final the birth family cannot have it overturned.

Under the new law the new family cannot be forced to make sure the child remains connected to their Aboriginal community and culture.

The birth family does not need to be present when orders are made, or even know that proceedings are taking place.

The NT government says PCO will provide a more stable upbringing for children who can't be reunited with their family.

"There are many foster parents out there who have a long term relationship with the kids who would like to confirm that relationship at law," said NT Minister for Child Protection Reform, John Elferink.

But critics say the laws were rushed through the parliament without proper consultation.

Priscilla Collins of the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency told CAAMA Radio the law lets the NT government off the hook.

"It's hands off from the government," she said.

"There is no more monitoring, there's no cultural plan and they don't have to pay the carer anymore."

Once a PCO is granted the carer gets a random one off sum of \$5000 and no longer receives a fortnightly allowance.

Ann Owen, Executive Director of Foster Carers NT, told the ABC that carers who have given up work to care for foster kids

are worried about the orders, too.

"If they are approached by DCF [Department of Children and Families] and say 'no, I can't afford it', they're afraid that their children will be removed from them and put in another placement," she said.

"A great deal of our children in care come with quite extensive health issues.

"Some of these health issues don't actually present until later. Are these kids going to be

cause they were Aboriginal.

"In many other cases there are very real dangers to the children's wellbeing, such as alcohol dependency or domestic violence," he said.

"What is needed is support and opportunity for the parents, along with serious resources for the extended family to play a caring role, rather than forced removal from kin and culture that just continues the cycle of oppression and hopelessness, currently costing the NT government more than \$100,000 per child per year keeping children in out of home care."

Mr Gibson said focus group research by James Cook University shows Aboriginal people still lack legal representation.

"We found that only half of the Aboriginal women having issues with child removal in the Northern Territory had accessed any legal support at all, and even for those who did it was often inadequate," he said.

"Many families who have had children removed simply lose their children into the system – and with permanent care orders will have no chance at getting them back."

Many more Aboriginal children are removed today than at any other time in the NT's history.

According to the Productivity Commission there were approximately 250 NT Aboriginal children in care before the 'Intervention' of 2007 - more than 66% of children in the Territory's care system.

Today more than 900 Aboriginal children live in care. That's more than 90% of all children in care.

Member for Arnhem, Larisa Lee, called current child protection practices "another stolen generation. When I sit down and talk to Indigenous people, it is exactly how they see this."

New law can give custody to foster families forever

able to be supported appropriately?"

Groups such as the Grandmothers Against Removals (below) oppose the changes and are pushing for Aboriginal control of Aboriginal child welfare, an urgent national 'child restoration' program and an end to the government neglect of community they say underlies so many of the removals.

Paddy Gibson, who has researched forced child removals from Aboriginal families in the NT for the past three years, told *The Guardian* that some families were being persecuted and had their children removed be-

Audrey's story

Grandmother fought for fostered children

IMAGINE caring for your two grandkids, one of them orphaned, and having them taken from school without your knowledge and put in foster homes.

This is what happened to Audrey Martin. She was living in Alice Springs with the kids when allegations were made that she had neglected them.

Neglect is the most common reason for removal of Aboriginal children. Ms Martin said grandchildren were shifted between non-Indigenous foster households and disconnected from their Warlpiri language.

Aboriginal legal aid could not represent the grandmother because they were already acting for her imprisoned daughter.

Ms Martin said she was falsely accused in court of being a drinker. The children were said to have chronic school attendance problems. A look at the roll showed they had a great attendance record. Extended family members regularly staying at the house were said to be a disruption to the children's lives, when they were actually a source of love and strength.

But Ms Martin refused to give up. A friend helped her to hire a private lawyer and the grandkids are now living back with her.



ABOVE: Doreen Dixon, Audrey Martin and Barbara Williams marched from the Aboriginal Tent Embassy to Parliament House on the anniversary of the apology to the Stolen Generations in February.



Fracking gets the green light

FRACKING has been given the go ahead by a Northern Territory government inquiry.

Fracking, also known as hydraulic fracturing, involves cracking underground rocks by injecting them with chemicals and water under high pressure to release oil and gas.

Many people here and around the world oppose fracking because they worry it will pollute their water sources.

The inquiry recommended fracking should be allowed in the NT, but with strong regulations.

It said fracking could go ahead while a "robust regulatory regime," was still being put in place.

Environment groups want fracking to wait until the new regulations are in place.

The NT Environmental Defenders Office described the current fracking regulations as "Australia's weakest".

The office said NT laws clearly put economic interests ahead of environmental interests.

"There is no specific requirement for the [mining] minister to consider the need to preserve and protect the environment at all," said the office's David Moore.

"There is no defined code or policy for the protection of groundwater resources or fugitive emissions, and air quality and review rights are heavily restricted. The process is pretty well shrouded in secrecy."

But mining companies are keen to start fracking.

"This is too critical an opportunity for the Territory for there to be protracted delays," Matt Doman from mining company Santos told the ABC.

A number of traditional owner groups in Central Australia have approved exploration licenses that allow fracking.

The CLC had asked the inquiry to change the laws so that community water supplies can be kept safe.

It said the federal government and an independent watchdog should check up on the NT Mines Department.

The CLC said all information about fracking operations, including the chemicals being used, should be made public.

Meanwhile, the federal government has cut funding to both the Environmental Defender's Office (EDO) and the Northern Territory Environment Centre (ECNT).

The EDO lost \$450,000 and the ECNT \$185,000, leaving both organisations in danger of collapse. EDO senior lawyer David Morris said the funding cuts were an attempt by the Government to avoid scrutiny. The ECNT is seeking support from the public to continue.



One of many anti-fracking demonstrations held across the NT this year, this one on the Katherine River Bridge

Owners keen to keep people in touch

TRADITIONAL owners have used their Finke Gorge National Park rent money to put two mobile phone hotspots along the notorious Boggy Hole access track to the park.

After they told the CLC that they felt unprepared to rescue bogged visitors the CLC's community development unit helped them to plan for emergency phone access.

The Centre for Appropriate Technology's hotspots capture and amplify signals from mobile phone towers, extending mobile coverage into areas where previously there was none.

"It helps tourists and other people phone for help when they get bogged," outstation resident Kunmanara Ungwanaka said.

"It's keeping them safe and giving us privacy and less worry. Not knocking on our door calling for help at night in languages we don't know."

"Of all the things the traditional owners could have spent their collective rent money on they decided to prioritise a project that helps the wider community. It's a win-win," CLC Director David Ross said.

Mr Ross said community development staff asked CAT to test its mobile hotspot technology along the Boggy Hole 4WD track.

"The key with the hotspot is knowing where to locate it. In some places there is a mobile phone signal but it is too tiny for a hand held phone to work and this is where the mobile hotspot comes in," said CAT's new CEO Dr Steve Rogers.

After traditional owners helped CAT to choose suitable sites they decided to



Kumanara Ungwanaka testing one of the hot spots with her mobile phone

spend some of their rent money on the hotspots, a shade structure and signs about the hotspot locations.

"The hotspot is rugged, reliable and needs no power, no solar panels and no maintenance. Aboriginal people in the CAT Enterprise workshop fabricate and install it," Dr Rogers said.

"This is appropriate technology at its best, developed in partnership with Aboriginal people to meet an identified

need."

Ms Ungwanaka said while the hotspots are already being used by visitors they will also help to promote the Red Sand Hill Arts Centre, where one hotspot is located.

"We can call anywhere, Germany, anywhere with this one," she said. "We want tourists going to Boggy Hole to visit the Red Sand Hill Arts Centre that our community is starting up."

**2015
CLC COUNCIL
MEETINGS:**

25-27 August

10-12 November

Act on alcohol damage: report

A NEW report calls on the NT government to deal with the devastating effects of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD).

FASD is a condition that affects the minds and bodies of many children and adults whose mothers have drunk alcohol while they were pregnant.

It can be mild or very severe.

The report by NT parliamentarians says the government needs to raise awareness among women of the dangers of drinking while pregnant and screen pregnant women for alcohol use.

It says the health department should help alcohol dependent pregnant women get off the grog in safe, alcohol free accommodation for them and their families.

The report says health professionals and doctors also need to be taught more about FASD.

Other recommendations in the included:

- * More support for young mothers caring for babies
- * Promoting and expanding early childhood education programs
- * A service to diagnose children and adults suspected of having FASD
- * More funding for care of people damaged by FASD
- * Setting targets for reducing the amount of alcohol people drink
- * Restricting alcohol trading hours and introducing a minimum price (floor price) for alcohol of \$1.30 per standard drink
- * Examining the effectiveness of policing of bottle stations (Temporary Beat Locations) and other "point of sale" restrictions such as the Banned Drinkers Register



TRISTAN

HOPES, DREAMS AND CHALLENGES OF A YOUNG BOY LIVING WITH FASD



What is FASD?

Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder covers a range of conditions caused by drinking grog during pregnancy. The condition is difficult to test for, diagnose or even define. Signs and symptoms are:

- Low birth weight
- Small head circumference
- Failure to thrive
- Feeding problems
- Sensitivity to noise, touch and/or light
- Developmental delay
- Learning difficulties
- Developmental delays
- Attention deficit or hyperactivity
- Memory problems
- Difficulties with social relationships
- Impulsiveness
- Inappropriate behaviour
- Poor understanding of consequences
- Major organ damage.

Source: NT Centre for Disease Control, April 2014

Grog: 'Don't go backwards'

FEWER police outside Alice Springs bottle shops has meant more assaults and drunken behaviour, according to the People's Alcohol Action Coalition (PAAC).

PAAC's John Boffa said emergency services had been "stretched to the limit" since 'cops at shops' was wound back.

PAAC says the NT government needed to reintroduce the banned drinkers register and photo ID scanning if it wasn't prepared to fully fund the 'cops at shops' initiative.

The government dropped scanning of grog customer IDs when it came to power in 2013.

Dr Boffa said 'cops at shops', also known as temporary beat locations, had achieved a six per cent reduction of pure alcohol in take away sales and the number of assaults had dropped by one quarter.

In Tennant Creek assaults dropped by more than half.

"Compare Darwin, with an increase in assaults of more than eight per cent, where there were no temporary beat locations in 2013, and where just a couple of outlets currently have them," Dr Boffa said.

He said reintroducing compulsory photo ID scanning would free up police for other duties, rather than act as security guards.

"We can't go back to where we used to be with alcohol consumption levels, especially as we now know how easy it is to prevent a large amount of harm, particularly to women and children," he said.

Last year the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress backed 'cops at shops', while acknowledging the initiative discriminated against Aboriginal people.

Congress said the reintroduction of the Banned Drinkers Register would be fairer.

TRISTAN, now 15, was 12 years old when he appeared in a video about Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) in the Kimberley, including his town of Fitzroy Crossing.

Tristan was diagnosed with FASD as a baby, along with his brother and sister. He and his mother talked in the video to warn other people about the dangers of mothers' drinking while they were pregnant.

The film also showed how people who suffer from FASD can be helped when their condition is recognised and treated.

Tristan goes to the 'yellow class' at the Fitzroy Valley District High School, where he gets help with his learning difficulties.

A research project this year revealed that one in eight school age children — 120 out of 1000 — in the Fitzroy Valley has FASD.

This is thought to be one of the world's highest rates of disability caused by mothers drinking alcohol while pregnant.

But researchers believe that many communities around Australia would have similar rates.

The project was started by grandmothers and mothers who were concerned about the effects of alcohol on pregnant women and their babies.

Many FASD youngsters got in trouble with the police, said Marninwarntikura Fitzroy Women's Resource Centre CEO June Oscar, who pushed hard for the study.

"Yet FASD is not recognised by disability services, so families can't apply for assistance," she told The Australian.

Ms Oscar and other community leaders have created an early childhood centre that looks after the needs of FASD children, a therapeutic program, and a mobile team to spread the message

Fitzroy makes a stand against FASD

about FASD.

The community has also banded together to ban the sale of takeaway alcohol, and there are signs that already fewer children in the Fitzroy Valley are being born with FASD.

Half of all Australian women report drinking during pregnancy. Aboriginal women are less likely than non-Aboriginal women to drink during pregnancy, but those who do drink tend to do so at more dangerous levels.

Chief investigator Jane Latimer, of the George Institute for Global Health and the University of Sydney, told the Fairfax media the people of the Fitzroy Valley were "courageous and brave for taking responsibility for the past and working towards a better future".

"These women did not know they were harming their babies by drinking when they were pregnant," she said.

"They live in very remote, disadvantaged communities and 10 years ago, when their children were born, they had no information about the dangers of alcohol."





New hope for bush dialysis

A \$10 MILLION Commonwealth grant could see more Central Australian kidney patients get dialysis treatment in their own communities.

The number of dialysis patients in Central Australia has grown from 200 to 300 since 2011, when the federal government first offered the money to the NT.

The NT government rejected the offer several times, arguing kidney patients were the responsibility of the federal government. Recently the NT appeared to have had a change of heart.

The Senate Estimates Committee revealed the NT had asked the federal government for the funds so it could build accommodation for dialysis patients in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek.

But now the Purple House is trying to persuade the government to spend the money on dialysis units in remote communities instead.

Since the Purple House set up the first dialysis machine in Kintore in 2004, other units have been installed in Yuendumu, Hermannsburg, Lajamanu, Kiwirrkurra, Santa Teresa, and most recently at Yirrkala in the Top End. But the number of people having to travel to Alice Springs or Tennant Creek for dialysis has continued to grow.

The Purple House wants to build dialysis units in another seven communities, as well as extend two existing units.

"We've chosen places to put units where people have been asking for help, and looked at factors such as numbers and distance from centres," said Purple House CEO Sarah Brown.

She said her organisation has already shown it can provide dialysis on communities at less than the "national efficient price".

Ms Brown said she can prove it will cost the NT the same amount of money to run dialysis in communities as it would in Alice Springs.

The Purple House has long stressed that people have better health outcomes when they can stay in their own homes without the stress of travelling to town for dialysis.

"We know that people who have dialysis out bush are healthier, in hospital less, are an important part of communities," Ms Brown said.



Transplant brought Matthew's old life back

IN 2012 Matthew Gibson was given some devastating news. At the age of 27 he was diagnosed with renal failure and told he would need to move to Alice Springs with his wife and young child to access dialysis treatment.

Many of the good things dropped out of Matthew's life: being out bush with family, playing footy, recording songs with the Lander River Band and being a fulltime dad for his young daughter.

His wife Veronah said: "Matthew was always tired and getting up really early in the morning to go on the machine. He couldn't go home to Nyirripi much to see family."

As soon as he was diagnosed with renal failure, Matthew decided to go on the kidney transplant list.

Veronah said support from family and the Purple House were really important during this time.

"Our daughter Quanita and I helped him stay well," she said. "We made sure he did all the right things and didn't miss dialysis or forget to take his medicine."

After two years the call came from the hospital to say a kidney was available. Matthew had to drop everything and go to Adelaide straight away. Two earlier attempts at transplant had not worked out but finally, in September 2014, Matthew had a successful transplant.

He says life is much better now, "Transplant is good. I can drink lots of water now. I can go hunting, play football and play in the band."

Matthew and Veronah (pictured above, at right, with extended family) are very thankful for the help they have received from Uli and Debbie at the Purple House and doctors and nurses at the renal unit.

Report shows need for healthier foods

LEADING national health organisations have called for greater efforts to overcome food shortages and hunger among Aboriginal Australians.

More than one in five Indigenous people live in households that had run out of food and couldn't afford to buy more, according to a new report from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

This is six times the rate of other Australians.

The report shows that Aboriginal people in remote communities were more likely than those living in towns and cities to run out of food and be unable to buy more.

Australia's Red Cross, Public Health Association and Dieticians Association have joined forces to raise alarm about the data.

"These findings are troubling," said Melissa Gibson of Australian Red Cross. "It's a complex issue we must face together for any chance to close the gap."

Claire Hewat, CEO of the Dieticians Association of Australia, said while Aboriginal people eat about the same number of kilojoules (food energy) as other Australians, the quality of their diet is a real worry.

"For instance, this data shows that fruit and vegetable intake is lower in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and foods and drinks with very little nutritional value make up 41 per cent of total energy intake," she said.



CLC ranger Irene Reiff cooks a healthy rainbow curry with plenty of veggies

"We know that food costs more in rural, regional and remote communities, and healthy food – such as fresh fruit and vegetables – is particularly expensive," said Michael Moore from the Public Health Association.

He said Aboriginal Australians had less food security than other groups.

"Australians who are most likely to suffer food insecurity are low income earners, the underemployed, less educated and people living in remote areas. In a country as rich as Australia these results are unacceptable."

A message from:

Congress' Alukura Women's Clinic



Congress' Alukura Women's Clinic has introduced an **appointment system** to improve its service.

To make an appointment or for more information call Alukura on **8953 2727**.

Alukura is located on Percy Court in Alice Springs.





These kids are going places



ABOVE: Lawrence Brown, Maureen Wheeler, Lydia Willy and Selma Sampson at the National Gallery in Canberra.

LAST year Kintore's community lease money working group again put \$5,000 towards an interstate trip for Year 6 children.

Twelve students who had achieved at least 85 per cent attendance travelled to Sydney and Canberra. They visited Taronga Zoo, Centrepoint Tower and saw Pintupi paintings at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. They also went to the botanic gardens and learnt about bush tucker of saltwater people.

Former Kintore teacher, Peter Thorley, gave them a guided tour of the National Museum in Canberra.

In the capital the students also visited the National Gallery, the Questacon Science and Technology Centre and the Institute of Sport and Parliament House. They dropped in on their local member, MP Warren Snowden, and ate all his food.

Other highlights were staying on the 12th floor of a Canberra hotel and catching an underground train from the airport in Sydney.

"All the children were very happy seeing so many different places. They were really good kids. Palya lingku!" teacher Mimila Wheeler said.

Walungurru school principal Nick Richardson thanked the community for its help.

"This extra money allowed us to do things we wouldn't otherwise do," he said. It was a good way to finish school for the kids leaving Year 6. The school would like to thank [working group member] Monica for helping us get the money."



Slam dunk for Freedom Day

DAGURAGU young people have played some great basketball since their upgraded court was launched at the Freedom Day Festival.

Community members planned and oversaw the resurfacing of the court, installation of lights and the construction of a grandstand and band stage - their first community lease money project.

The Freedom Day Festival celebrates the strike by Gurindji stockmen in the 1960s, which started land rights.

Daguragu was proud to be able to offer good quality facilities for the festival.

"Every visitor that came to community enjoyed the lights and the equipment, the stage, what the traditional owners did," says Damien Palasco King.

"They are looking forward to coming back."

CLC community development workers discussed possible problems with residents and suggested solutions to finish their project plan in time for the festival.

Daguragu community also developed an \$18,000 plan to buy and manage band equipment with their community lease money.

The basketball court and stage cost \$95,500, with an extra \$30,000 to secure an ongoing power supply.

"Everything's been right," said Marjorie King. "Now we want to do the oval up properly."

Elmore Anzac added: "Put up lights, grandstand."

As their elders before them, Daguragu residents continue to put their ideas and energy into improving Gurindji lives.

Ntaria and Kintore reward best students efforts

THE CLC is helping Ntaria traditional owners to engage the community's kids in their school.

Thirteen Ntaria students flew to Sydney late last year to learn about career pathways, science, kick the footy with the Sydney Swans and go surfing.

The community's lease money working group gave the Ntaria school \$43,000 for the excursion.

Students had to earn their place by working hard at school and showing strong leadership skills.

"The level of school work leading up to the excursion improved big time," said deputy principal Mark

Goonan.

"The students not only got to see the world differently but got to better understand themselves."

Mark said the traditional owners had made an important decision: "TOs are demonstrating to young people just how highly they value learning."

Community leader Conrad Ratara said the improved school engagement before and after the excursion was a great outcome.

Conrad and his fellow working group members used their community lease money to fund school excursions for the next two years.



Local solution to local problem



WETT reveals the big picture

AS THE sun went down Warlpiri women unrolled a large painting in the Lajamanu basketball court and told the locals about the latest news of the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT).

The WETT Advisory Committee and the CLC wanted to let the community know how the work they and the Kurra Aboriginal Corporation have been doing supports education and training in the region.

While young people from the WYDAC youth program prepared the barbeque and local bands set up on stage, WETT committee members asked for feedback and answered questions from the 200 strong crowd.

Warlpiri women from Lajamanu, Yuendumu, Willowra and Nyirrpri used the painting to explain WETT's journey and achievements since it started in 2005.

Fiona Gibson, one of the hard working members of the WETT Advisory Committee, felt terrific about the evening.

"Sharing the story of the WETT painting was really good," she said. "We told people we're spending money the right way."

Resident Doris Lewis said what she heard made her feel proud.

"Everything you WETT mob are doing is really good. Other people don't come back and tell us what they've done, but it's good that WETT mob have," said Doris.

Locals told the women they were excited about WETT and thought about holding more community events. There was even a suggestion to set up a WETT office in the old clinic building.

WETT plans information events in Yuendumu in the first half of 2015, and in Nyirrpri and Willowra in the second half.



WILLOWRA women have taken action to stop school kids vandalising their early childhood centre.

When local primary school kids threw rocks and rubbish into the WETT funded centre's playground, workers and playgroup reference group members gave them a hard talk about respecting the little kids' space.

"We got sick of coming to work and seeing that mess. I asked those kids how they would feel if the little kids went to the school and threw rocks and rubbish in their playground?" said playgroup worker Adriane Haines.

"After school that day some of the kids came down to the playgroup to help clean up," said reference group member Julie Kitson. "They weren't all the ones who made the mess but they got the message and came anyway."

The local reference group decided to go further. "We talked about getting a new fence that the kids can't climb," Adriane said.

"We told the builder how the new



fence should look. The WETT mob understood the problem and agreed to fund it."

After the Kurra Aboriginal Corporation approved \$38,995 for the fence now surrounding the centre, the women put their minds to the long term solutions.

"We know it's also about education. We've gotta teach those kids to respect the playground for the little kids and use their own play equipment. They're good kids, but sometimes they just get bored," said Adri-

ana.

Julie, who is also involved in the WETT funded Youth Development Program, called a meeting with the WYDAC youth team to talk about keeping the older kids busy and happy, especially during the school holidays.

The Central Desert Regional Council chucked in money for a playground and Willowra's community lease money working group agreed to contribute five year lease money for additional playground equipment.

Helping Willowra kids keep their cool



Willowra kids kept nice and cool this summer after refrigerated cooling units were put on two of the school's water bubblers. The local GMAAAC Committee, which funded the bubblers in 2011, has given an extra \$11,000 for cooling units. Committee members are pleased that the kids can now drink more water during the summer months.

Map of many colours tells country's story

A VERY large and colourful map is taking shape in the Willowra Learning Community Centre.

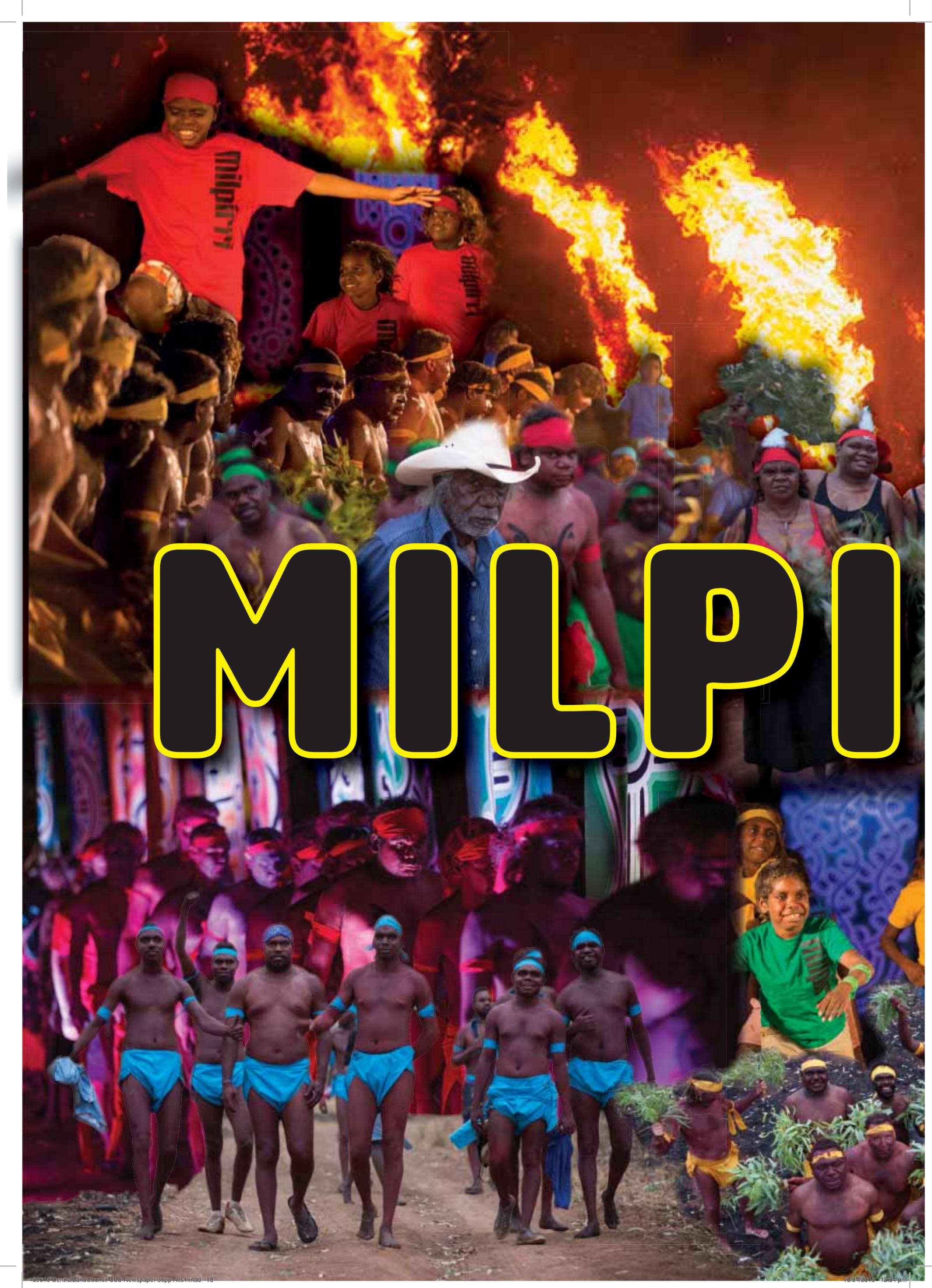
Local families are busy putting layers of information together to teach their young people about country and culture. The second stage of the WETT funded project has started and has brought in senior people from outside communities to share their knowledge and verify information with local people.

Family trees are depicting kinship connections and the transmission of traditional knowledge. Senior people are guiding younger residents through the design and painting of the map.

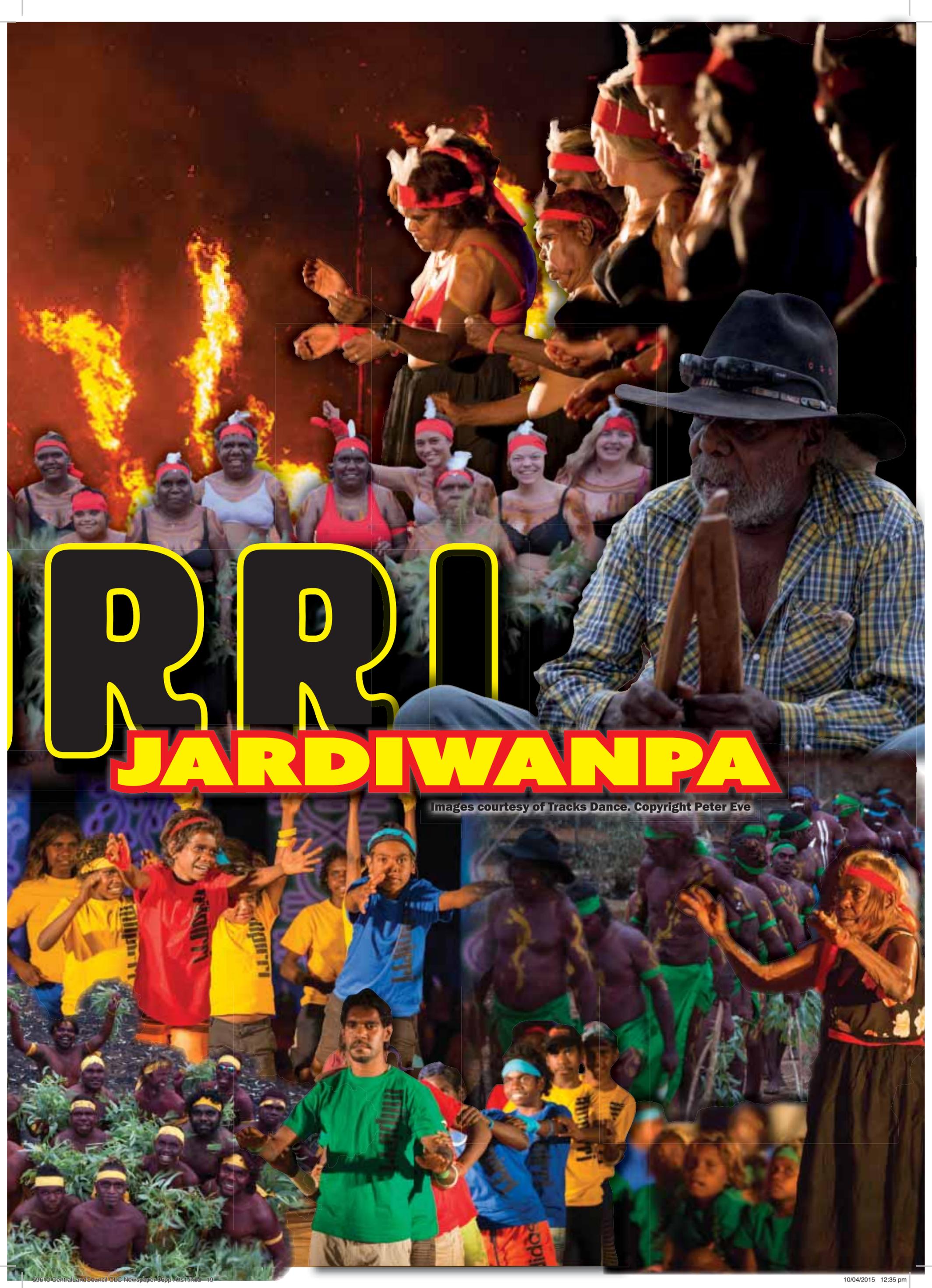
The finished map will show important cultural sites along the Lander River, from Mt Denison and Coniston in the south to Lake Surprise in the north.

The WETT funded Lander River mapping project is a great opportunity for the community to work together on an important resource for future generations.

LEFT: Willowra girls apply the finishing touches to their special sites.



MILPINTI



RRRI JARDIWANPA

Images courtesy of Tracks Dance. Copyright Peter Eve

WATARRKA Ranger Camp 2015



MORE THAN 130 rangers from across the Central Land Council region and beyond enjoyed three action packed days at their annual ranger camp in Watarrrka National Park.

The camp is the main networking and professional development opportunity of the CLC's 11 ranger groups. Rangers got to know each other, exchanged ideas and learned new skills.

For the first time one third of the camp were women rangers.

Five Warlpiri Rangers interviewed each other about the event and helped to put this page together. Here's what they said:

"It's really good country and the camp brings all different people together; language groups, men, women, old and young rangers learning and working to care for our country." *Jimmy Kitson.*

"I liked the opening ceremony. Different people giving good talks and warm welcome from the traditional owners." *Nelson Tex.*

"There are new activities such as multimedia, aerial burning and tour guiding. I went to the multimedia workshop to learn other ways of taking pictures with the iPad, doing voiceovers and slide-shows. It was really good. When we do surveys out bush I want to capture it on camera." *Madeleine Dixon.*

"Snake handling was scary because they're very poisonous and can move fast but it's good to know how to pick them up safely." *Preston Kelly.*

"My favourite was learning about how to

use the aerial burning machine. It puts chemicals into capsules which catch fire after one minute. We use the machine to drop them out of the helicopter. I want to light fires out bush. All the old people tell me where to burn to bring out more bush tucker and regrow the plants." *Christine Michaels-Ellis.*

"I like the warlu (fire) training. It's important for us to know about that for caring for our grandfathers country and helping protect the walpajirri (bilby) and mala." *Jimmy Kitson.*

"It's good that we have more women now. We need friends. We work separately from the men sometimes but we also share

work together. Ladies encourage each other and make each other confident. In the past there were fewer women and we were shy. Now we have more self esteem." *Madeleine Dixon.*

"Town is not as good as being out bush because it feels like there's more to do out bush; go hunting and teaching kids, learning and sharing knowledge from old people before they pass away. Being a ranger, I can do it kardiya and yapa way together." *Jimmy Kitson.*

"We want to make new and young rangers feel part of our group. We want to get young people to join us and keep them away from problems, to get involved with the old people and rangers out on country. In communities they are just wandering around. What's their future? Are they just going to walk around the streets? They are starting to get interested. We need to get into schools and teach them in language." *Madeleine Dixon.*

"I teach my kids how to track, clean rock holes and burn country. We start them when they're little ones." *Christine Michaels-Ellis.*

More about Christine on p.22.



Tjuwanpa rangers Cleveland Kantawarra and Jeremy Kenny pin an angry mulga snake under the watchful eye of trainer Rex Neindorf.



Lyentye Apurte ranger Farron Gorey gets friendly with a woma python.



North Tanami ranger Titus White practises on the aerial burning machine.



Josephine Grant, Ursula Cubb and Lekisha Palmer get their tablets ready to shoot a short film in Watarrrka Gorge



A new generation of rangers



Father and daughter team Samara Morris and Terence Abbott at the Watarrka Ranger Camp

SAMARA Morris' dad promised that her first week in her first job would be a blast.

As she awaits her turn for a spin on a quad bike the graceful 17 year old Anangu Luritjiku ranger reckons he has kept his word.

"We're having a lot of fun. It's been really cool," is Samara's verdict on the Central Land Council's annual ranger camp in Watarrka National Park. "I get to meet all the other rangers and make friends."

Her auntie Loretta Morton, seated on the next bike, takes off her helmet to pose for Samara's camera.

The women are two of more than a hundred Aboriginal rangers from across Central Australia and beyond who are camping together for a week of professional development and networking.

That they are also the first female rangers in Papunya fills Samara's dad, senior ranger Terence Abbott, with considerable pride. "She wants to work on country, too. Maybe I was a good ranger, doing good stuff," he smiles.

Terence says it's alright that these days a third of the CLC's rangers are women. "We always had men's side of the story but not the women's side."

"So now they can tell both sides of the story," his eldest child finishes his sentence.

In the 80s the family lived at Ilpili outstation west of Papunya. The site and its spring on Terence's grandmother's country copped a hammering from feral camels. "My turn to look after it now," he says.

Growing up, Samara loved listening to tales of his team protecting special places.

"They work really hard," she says. "My dad used to come back and show me his photos of camels messing up the spring at Ilpili. He went out to muster the camels to get rid of animals that ruin the place. I thought I could help dad."

Samara's career choice surprised him a bit, but the former Yirara student insists that following in Terence's footsteps as a CLC ranger was her first preference.

With her quad bike certificate under her belt, Samara is content to watch Rex Neindorf's very hands-on venomous snake catching workshop from a safe distance.

During a guided walk through Watarrka Gorge the next afternoon she listens intently to Parks and Wildlife Service ranger Mid Merry's yarns of saving tourists from themselves.

"They're CRAZY!" North Tanami ranger Jeffrey Matthews Junior from Lajamanu shakes his head about the hair raising antics of some visitors, but Samara seems undaunted.

"It made me think about Ilpili," she says. "Maybe one day we can have tourists at Ilpili."



ABOVE: A story handed down: Terence Abbott (fourth from left) and other CLC rangers prepare for a camel muster at Ilpili. BELOW: Samara and her aunt Loretta Morton enjoyed the quad bike training.



Trackers on the feral front line



Feral cats, like this one killed by CLC ranger Christine Michaels-Ellis, are the main threat to Australia's remaining native animals. Photo: Desert Wildlife Services

Blame it on the boat people!



THE FIRST feral cats invaded the continent in the 1800s, along with the British.

A lot of native animals disappeared very early in the history of the colonisation of Australia.

Until recently scientists thought that this first wave of extinctions stopped sometime in the 1960s and didn't reach the tropical north. We now know that this is wrong.

Scientists blame Australia's 15 - 23 million

feral cats for a second great wave of extinctions that has been sweeping the continent for the past couple of decades.

Not even the last refuges of native animals, such as the remote Kimberley, Kakadu and Arnhemland, are safe. Some scientists think that dingos may be part of the solution. Others call for laws that fine people who don't de-sex their domestic cats.

Federal Environment Minister Greg Hunt wants all states and territories to sign up to a 10 year plan to eradicate feral cats. CLC ranger groups and Indigenous Protected Area programs will be vital in achieving the goal.

ABOVE: Extinction machine: a feral cat near a bait trap.
Photo: Desert Wildlife Services.

Cover: Yukultji (Nolia) Napangarti from Kiwirrkurra with feral cat.
Photo: Kate Crossing



IT'S official: when it comes to taking out feral cats the tracking skills of the Central Land Council rangers win hands down over less traditional methods.

A research program at Newhaven near Nyirripi also found that tracking also beats poison bait, which can kill the main enemy of the feral cat, the dingo.

Expert tracker and CLC ranger Christine Michaels-Ellis from Nyirripi and scientist Rachel Paltridge from Desert Wildlife Services told a conference late last year the program used baiting, trapping and tracking to kill feral cats, the main predators of native animals.

Scientists estimate that, right around the country, feral cats kill 75 million native animals every single night. That adds up to 20 billion mammals, reptiles, birds and insects every year.

Newhaven, a former cattle station 350 kilometres north-west of Alice Springs, has one of the largest populations of the Great Desert Skink, which is threatened by feral cats.

The skinks are nocturnal reptiles about the size of blue tongue lizards which live in networks of burrows with their extended families and even build their own toilets.

Newhaven, which is managed by the Australian Wildlife Conservancy, also has a healthy population of dingos and practices good fire management.

Scientists and rangers working on the Newhaven program found that while dingos occasionally eat the endangered skinks they also have a huge appetite for feral cats.

So now the program makes sure the dingos are not harmed.



It's a family affair

FOR Christine Michaels-Ellis, pictured here showing her son Ringo the difference between dingo and cat tracks, tracking is a family business.

Christine and her mum Alice Henwood track in the middle of the day when the cats are sheltering from the heat.

"When we find tracks we follow them and when the cat sees us it runs away," Christine said.

"We keep going in the heat and find the pussy cat hiding in the spinifex. When it runs away again, we follow it until it gets tired, then we hit it with a crow bar. It is finished in one hit."

"We then take it back to the shed and cut its guts out and open them to see what it has eaten, like little mice baby, snake, bird, lizard or mulgara. It is really hot work. We use our camelback to drink water so we don't get dehydrated and sick."

Christine's skills are in high demand.

"These trackers are so good they can find the specific cats going around the [skink] burrows and they can run them down. It's pretty much 100 per cent effective," says feral cat expert Rachel Paltridge.

"We are lucky to have some of the last great cat trackers in the Northern Territory living next door to Newhaven."

Christine is keen to pass on her skills to the next generation of CLC rangers.

"Yapa used to always hunt pussy cat. Now there are only a few people hunting pussy cat. If people start to think about the poor little animals getting eaten they might start going out hunting pussy cat again," she said.



How to change with the climate

The Central Land Council's Ltyentye Apurte Rangers have helped to develop a new resource book for communities about climate change.

What is happening with the weather in Central Australia? is one of the main outcomes of a climate adaptation project that saw the rangers work with Tangentyere and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO).

The rangers got expert advice and training from environmental scientists and shared what they'd learned in a slideshow at the book launch at the Ltyentye Apurte Recreation Centre in December.

Local ranger Richard Furber hopes the book will help community members to better understand erosion and other ways climate change affects country.

"I didn't think about what was going on with the weather, people thought it was natural but it's something serious, not only us talking about it, other people around the world."

Rangers assessed climate data to evaluate the potential impacts on their region.

"We looked at the data since the 1970s, which clearly shows that there are more days over 40 degrees, as well as more storms and variability in rainfall", said Ltyentye Apurte ranger co-ordinator Shannon Lander.

"It's going to affect our people and country, so it was good to get the scientist's view. It's something we see on the news and even notice how it's changing, it is on our minds. The work that all rangers are doing is affected by climate so that makes it really important."

One of the main problems around Santa Teresa is erosion. With climate change predicted to result in heavier rainfall soil erosion will get worse in the future.

At Woodgreen Station the rangers saw the results of four decades of gully and sheet erosion restoration work.

Sheet erosion can happen where water flows spread out over an area instead of in a gully or creek. Long low levee banks can slow the water down and reduce erosion.

Rangers trialed the new ideas during a sheet erosion control treatment on the Ltyentye Apurte land trust.

After building three laser levelled levee banks they feel more confident to plan future erosion control projects with traditional



ABOVE: Ltyentye Apurte ranger Gibson John inspects erosion around his community, predicted to get worse with more rain. BELOW: The rangers of tomorrow at the book launch.

owners.

The CSIRO's Dr Ro Hill said policy makers should involve local communities in decisions about how to adapt to the changing weather. "We really need partnerships with people on the ground to build a better future for everyone. It can't be done by decision-making that's remote from local conditions."

Ltyentye Apurte ranger co-ordinator Shannon Lander wants the other CLC ranger groups to use the book to learn about climate change in their area and plan projects that help their communities.

"We would like to visit other ranger groups and run workshops about changing climate, and to have those groups visit us to see our erosion work," he said.

The rangers will co-present a paper about the project at the Rangelands Conference in Alice Springs in April.

Download the book from www.clc.org.au/publications/. For hard copies call 8951 0506 or email michael.carmody@clc.org.au.



Jeffery Matthews shows off the new North Tanami Ranger badge

Same rangers, new name

North Tanami Rangers: that's the name by which Lajamanu's Wulaign Rangers will be known from now on.

The Northern Tanami Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) Committee decided the new name better reflects both Gurindji and Warlpiri country in their region.

The old name dates back to 2005 when the group began to work out of the Wulaign Outstation Resource Centre. Wulaign is the Gurindji word for the wallaby resting place that became Lajamanu community.

The North Tanami Rangers have helped to place signs around culturally sensitive areas in Lajamanu and to eradicate the weed *Parkinsonia* along Hooker Creek. They also organised a ranger school camp at Tjiwaranpa where junior rangers from the Lajamanu



school helped with animal surveys. Two historic bush graves near Lajamanu are now safe from wandering cattle thanks to the rangers' fencing skills. They also planned burning activities with the other ranger groups at the annual Warlu Committee meeting at Mt Theo.

Freedom rides were a good start



Fifty year anniversary celebration reveals things have improved

FIFTY years after the Freedom Riders toured outback NSW towns to campaign against racial segregation and spotlight the plight of Aboriginal people they have re-staged their famous journey.

In February, 13 of the original Freedom Riders and film maker Rachel Perkins retraced the route of the Freedom Ride on a commemorative bus trip.

Ms Perkins is the daughter of the first CLC chair, the late Charlie Perkins.

Inspired by the Freedom Rides in America, Mr Perkins led students from Sydney University on a bus journey to protest racism and poor Aboriginal health and housing.

In Moree, where a council by-law stopped Aboriginal people from using the local pool, the Freedom Riders came under attack from some locals. The protesters adopted Martin Luther King's approach of non-violent resistance and won out when Moree Council scrapped the by-law.

The Freedom Riders helped to shift public opinion before the 1967 referendum to remove discrimination against Aboriginal Australians from the Australian Constitution.

LEFT: Charlie Perkins at Moree Pool in 1965, RIGHT: daughter Rachel at Moree Pool in 2015.



Buckpassing leaves hundreds in limbo

The fate of up to 150 Western Australian remote communities remains uncertain after warnings by WA Premier Colin Barnett that they could face 'closure'.

The warnings sparked national protests and another political storm when Prime Minister Tony Abbott backed the premier, saying governments could not support the "lifestyle choices" of Aboriginal people in remote Australia.

Mr Barnett made the original statement after the federal government transferred the responsibility for funding power, water and services to remote communities to state governments from July this year.

He said that between 100 and 150 communities were "unviable" and referred to "high rates of suicide, poor education, poor health (and) no jobs," as well as the abuse and neglect of children.

But community groups representing people in 36 communities around Fitzroy Crossing described the claims as "nonsense".

They were followed by dozens of statements of support and concern from Indigenous leaders around Australia.

The Fitzroy groups acknowledged "serious social and health issues in our communities, but ... on balance the people in the smaller bush communities are healthier and happier," they said.

Following Australia wide protests Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullions said communities had "absolutely no chance of being shut down."

That's because governments can't 'close' communities and tell people where to live. But they can cut basic services.

Kimberley Land Council chair Anthony Watson told the ABC that the communities targeted for service cuts by a WA government report did not know against which criteria they were being assessed.

"They've done the study without the consultation," he said.



Continued opposite page



Native title holders fight big mine

AN ABORIGINAL group in central Queensland is asking the Queensland government to stop a massive \$16 billion coal mine from being constructed on its ancestral land.

Wangan and Jagalingou native title holders rejected an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) with Indian coal mining giant Adani because they believe the Carmichael mine will irreparably damage the environment and culture of the Galilee Basin.

Adani has appealed to the Native Title Tribunal against the native title claimants who have only negotiating rights.

"We have never given our consent to Adani's massive mine and never will," said traditional owner Adrian Burragubba (pictured).

"It will destroy our ancestral land and waters, our totemic animals and plants and our dreaming. We are putting the government on notice that we will do everything it takes to stop it."

Adani said Mr Burragubba did not speak for all the native title claimants. If the company wins the government will be able to compulsorily acquire their land and issue a mining lease.

"Adani is a multimillion dollar bully with support at the highest level of the Australian and Indian governments," Mr Burragubba said.

"It's used its power to ruthlessly trample traditional communities in India. It's trashed the environments they lived in and worked for generations."

The 60 million tonne per year coal mine would be the biggest in Australian history and in the southern half of the world.

The mine is the reason why Adani wants to build one of the world's largest coal ports next to the endangered Great Barrier Reef.

Green groups have warned that burning the coal beneath the Galilee Basin would accelerate dangerous climate change.



ABOVE: Coal mining operation in Queensland. AT LEFT: Adrian Burragubba and other native title holders protesting in Brisbane against the Carmichael mine proposal.



WA communities in limbo

(Continued)

Senator Scullion said: "The West Australian government plans to sit down with every single community and talk about the long term viability ... and where they need to make more investments (and) in what communities."

The previous federal Labor government in 2010 identified 192 of 287 remote WA settlements as "unsustainable."

The South Australian government meanwhile is still negotiating with the Commonwealth to "secure important funding for South Australia's remote Aboriginal communities," according to SA Aboriginal

Affairs Minister Kyle Maher.

The SA government has been accused of abandoning Watarru, 550km south west of Alice Springs.

One of Australia's most remote communities, Watarru has become a ghost town since the SA government turned off its power in 2012.

The community lost most of its population of 75 when its store closed a year earlier.

While community leaders say people will not return because of the lack of electricity taxpayer funded buildings and other assets worth an estimated \$20 million are going to waste.

Record native title deal not approved by all

A MAJORITY of claimants in Western Australia have backed the nation's biggest native title settlement.

Noongar native title claimants in six claim areas have voted in favour of an agreement over 200,000 square kilometres between Perth and the Goldfields/Esperance region.

In exchange for surrendering native title the WA government has

promised \$1.3 billion worth of land, finance and benefits over 12 years.

The WA government will transfer ownership of 320,000 hectares of crown land and pay \$50 million each year into a trust account to support Noongar economic and cultural development.

Not all Noongar people approve of the deal, with some accusing the claimants of being "sell outs".

Learning a new way

REMOTE community schools in the East Pilbara are trying out a new teaching method said to improve reading and writing.

Direct Instruction is a teaching method that uses tightly scripted lesson plans and involves students reciting answers to the teacher as a group.

Community leaders turned to the method because they were unhappy about the low literacy levels of their children.

Jigalong leader Brian Samson told The Australian he had not visited a classroom in Martu country for 20 years because the poor standards upset him.

"In the last mining boom we had talks with big mining companies and they were going to employ our young people but they came back and said, 'Sorry, their literacy and numeracy is not up to standard'. It was so disappointing and a wake up for a lot of us."

In their search for a solution the leaders heard about Direct Instruction and asked the government if they could try it out.

In Australia the method has only been tested and assessed by education experts in Cape York schools.

Dr Stewart Riddle from the University of Southern Queensland said its long term results are not yet known.

"What they couldn't say for certain was, was the actual Direct Instruction itself making any meaningful difference to the learning of those particular kids," Dr Riddle said.

But the chair of the Martu Education Advisory Group, Alannah Mac-Tiernan, said that there was plenty of overseas evidence to show that the method works.

"Whether it's Indigenous people, whether it's working class people, whether it's middle class kids, they



Western Desert education now and then. ABOVE: Noel Pearson visits Martu children who are learning under Direct Instruction at Rawa Community School at Punmu. BELOW: Irene Naganala teaching at the Windbreak School at Kintore in the early 80s. Photo Barbara Robertson.



learn better under this system," she said.

In the five trial classrooms in Martu country the method has only been used for a few months but Aboriginal education officers report that children responded well and attendance had gone up.

Noel Pearson, who introduced

the method in Cape York and visited Martu communities recently, said "School is the heart and the future of these communities, more important than the economy there because kids can go to where the economy is or they can create one."

"But they can't if they don't have an education."

Work for the dole 'punishes people'

The federal government is under growing pressure to drop its new Work For The Dole scheme.

Under the new scheme, people on remote communities would be required to work five hours a day, five days a week, 52 weeks a year in order to receive their unemployment benefit (see story page 4).

WFD would also replace the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP), which paid the minimum wage plus 'top up' for extra hours worked.

Come July, almost 2,400 Aboriginal people, mostly in the NT and WA, would be moved onto the new scheme.

The government has promised rewards for employers who create jobs for them.

Hairdressers, butchers and bakers setting up in remote communities would be able to apply for grants to help pay their workers.

People who still can't get jobs would need to help around the community under WFD, for example grow vegetables or collect rubbish.

Jon Altman, a professor with the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Research Policy, said it seemed Aboriginal people "are to be punished for living differently and remotely on their ancestral lands, where there are few mainstream opportunities."

He said CDEP, which had its faults, was much better than WFD. It created many working opportunities, supported Aboriginal organisations and rewarded extra effort.

Professor Altman called on the government to drop the WFD plan and reintroduce CDEP as "a mid way between welfare and full time employment."

He said the flexible part time work created by CDEP would allow people to meet not only their economic needs but also their cultural obligations and look after country.

Union leader Ged Kearney agreed: "Having fulfilling work opportunities are a vital part of closing the gap for Indigenous health outcomes – not work for the dole schemes that do not provide a pathway to ongoing jobs."

Life with hard labour not that bad: Scullion

Continued from page 4

Following an outcry from Aboriginal leaders, including from his own side of politics, the minister pleaded: "What's the alternative?"

APO NT recommends the minister replace 'work for the dole' with a community development approach to job and business creation.

"When APO NT sought bipartisan support for our comprehensive remote employment and enterprise development proposal four years ago we were ignored, as are most solutions that are informed by on the ground evidence and experience," Mr Ross said.

"Our proposal keeps the successful features of the CDEP while overcoming its limitations," he said. "Yet it continues to languish while the minister resigns himself to eternal unemployment out bush."

"We warned four years ago that the removal of the CDEP would kill local community initiatives, such as the successful tourism enterprise at Titjikala."

Mr Ross said the destruction of CDEP has led to an entirely predictable, dramatic loss of community participation, morale and resilience.

"It worked for a long time," Senator Scullion recently admitted to the ABC. "All people in those communities have said that when we took CDEP away [they] were disconnected. When we went from CDEP to RJCP 60% of participants went into passive welfare and the sickness that goes with that."

While the APO NT proposal from 2011 offers the minister an improved version of the CDEP Mr Ross is not holding his breath.

"Instead of exploring constructive ap

The APO NT proposal

- Find and support opportunities for local enterprises using community based service providers;
- Help people progress from basic skill development and work experience to jobs based on available opportunities, as well as their wants, needs and abilities;
- Offer 'top up' to encourage people to take part;
- Implement 'no work, no pay' rules; and
- Give preference to 'social enterprises' that put money back into community benefits such as housing and employment.

More at <http://www.clc.org.au/publications/content/creating-and-supporting-sustainable-livelihoods-Oct-2011/>

proaches the government is hell-bent on wasting tax dollars on an unfair and punitive agenda that will see Australians in remote communities work more hours for their welfare benefits than those in towns," Mr Ross said.

"Without a plan to stimulate local economies and build sustainable enterprises the new 'work for the dole' scheme will see many Aboriginal people fall through the cracks, creating a permanent burden on their already stressed and struggling families."



All Bobby needs is a workforce

BOBBY ABBOTT is a western Arrernte man on a mission.

The owner and manager of a fledgling welding and metal fabrication company hopes to build an Aboriginal workforce that can hire out their services to remote communities.

After working for an Alice Springs company and completing a series of workshops with Indigenous Business Australia (IBA), Bobby feels prepared for going it alone.

"I've worked for a fabrication company in town so I want to focus on on-the-job training," Bobby said.

"There's so much talk now about Aboriginal employment, people want action but I want to start doing it and lead by example.

"We all have our families to provide for so we do need help but it's not smart to go out trying to do too much at once. I'm just hoping to make connections now and then go strength to strength."

Bobby recently presented his plans to the CLC Executive and asked for advice about securing contracts in communities.

He says he gets his drive and ambition from his family, including his dad Leo, and from the determination they showed in setting up Wallace Rockhole, where he grew up.

"Wallace Rockhole was a very strong little community when we were kids. Our parents and family were involved with building the place so we respected it," Bobby said.

He says Aboriginal people in central Australia are ready to work in their communities given the right chance.

"Some uncles grew up out on communities but they've fallen into peer pressure. They've gotten into trouble and gone to jail, wasted so much time in their life. Once they mature and reflect, they know they can do better and they are looking for an opening or opportunity to grow. Aboriginal people do want the opportunity to work on country but there's not much (enterprise) there so they are stuck in town a lot."

Jobseekers want more than money

THERE are plenty of jobs in or near remote communities – but it's not the work locals want.

A study by the Cooperative Research Centre for Remote Economic Participation (CRC REP) found that people in remote communities want to work in land care and the arts.

"Aboriginal people in remote communities are attracted to jobs where the motivation is directed at looking after their family, their land, their culture and their communities," the centre's John Guenther told ABC radio.

"Many of those jobs involve working in schools, working in clinics, ranger programs (and) programs that promote culture, like the art industry."

Mr Guenther is trying to find out how to make mining, cattle station and tourism jobs more attractive and accessible to Aboriginal people in remote communities.

He said governments and employers were wrong to think community residents were mainly motivated by money.



Support needed for small business

INDIGENOUS people trying to set up businesses need special government support, says Aboriginal company director Joe Ross.

Mr Ross (pictured) is the director of Muway Constructions, a company that provides housing and employment in the Kimberly region of Western Australia.

Speaking at the Indigenous Business, Enterprise and Corporations Conference at the University of WA, Mr Ross said Indigenous businesses need "very specific support from government and external organisations."



"We've got to start thinking about intervention and a government role in the creation of economic development in these communities," Mr Ross said.

"Basically, people have got to be helped to start a business, to get a leg up, to be able to understand that they've got performance measures that they've got to achieve."

Mr Ross said small and medium enterprises faced a funding gap.

They could get grants to start businesses, but banks would sometimes not back them because they didn't have a strong credit history or a background of making money.

He said Indigenous Business Australia should be able to back a small business through service delivery agreements or trust built on mentorships and other support systems.

Owners plan for welcome to Watarrka



ABOVE: Bruce Breaden, Bessie Liddle and Julie Clyne inspect the old NT Emergency Services building they hope will become a welcome centre for Watarrka.

THE traditional owners of Watarrka National Park would like to turn the vacant old ranger station and NT Emergency Services building on the Luritja Road into a welcome centre for visitors.

The idea is a response to last year's call for new business proposals by the Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS).

Traditional owners want to use the centre to share the local history of contact between Europeans and Aboriginal people.

The CLC has helped traditional owners develop

a business plan.

Visitors would have a chance to meet local artists and perhaps even have a go at painting.

A café could sell snacks and soft drinks, art, crafts and souvenirs, as well as take bookings for Aboriginal tourism businesses in nearby outstations and beyond.

Traditional owners hope an Aboriginal run centre would make it easier for other families to develop businesses on country.

"This place is for the young ones for the future,

to help keep passing our cultural knowledge on," said Bessie Liddle. "Some of our children may already have the skills to run a place."

On her wish list is a training space where young people can learn about computers and the internet, customer service, hospitality and tour guiding, as well as site maintenance and horticulture.

Dianne Impu is keen to take the next steps. "We need to get this business started, to get quotes to see how much it will cost to get it running."

Raising of the raisin

ABORIGINAL people who gather desert raisins on their country may soon be able to harvest and sell more fruit by planting in the wild.

Desert raisins and bush tomatoes are among the most popular traditional foods of Central Australia.

About half of the crop grows wild in the bush. Women from remote communities pick and sell their produce to agents, who market the dried raisin interstate and in Alice Springs.

Desert raisins have also been successfully grown in gardens, including an Aboriginal-owned and run business near Rainbow Valley.

They are also being raised interstate in commercial market gardens, and used as an ingredient in sauces.

The Plant Business Project of the Co-operative Research Centre for Remote Economic Participation has been looking at ways Aboriginal people can benefit more

from the popularity of the desert raisin.

One technique is called "enrichment planting" - growing seedlings amongst existing wild plants.

Researchers say the plants grown from local seeds need "a little care and attention" at the start, but unlike market garden plants, "they pretty much look after themselves when established."

The project works with Aboriginal people to identify which bush raisins grow best in enrichment plantings.

These could be developed from existing plants or bred to be improved.

The project keeps tabs of where the plants came from and who owns the country they grow in.

The researchers are looking at how to ensure traditional owners benefit from the development of plant varieties that come from



their country.

ABOVE: Wild desert raisin.

BELOW: Desert Knowledge's bush tomato trial site.



Mundine calls for more development

ONLY jobs and education will get Aboriginal people out of poverty, according to the federal government's Aboriginal affairs advisor Warren Mundine.

Mr Mundine said there was "not enough work" in remote Australia and most of the work that was there was being done by non-Aboriginal contractors.

He said that handing over the work from government to Aboriginal organisations would not necessarily solve the problem.

Unless there were local people who had been trained for the job, these organisations too would give the work of plumbers, electricians and builders to outside contractors.

"Indigenous communities will not be truly empowered until the people of those communities are skilled and trained enough to do those jobs themselves," Mr Mundine said.



"Indigenous people don't need government's permission to gain the skills and training necessary to win these contracts. They can do it now."

"Many already are, often partnering with established service providers to build business experience and skills."

NT employment quotas

CONSTRUCTION companies working on projects worth more than \$500,000 will be forced to employ Indigenous people under a new NT government policy.

"The policy will make it mandatory for 10 per cent of the estimated value of each construction project over \$500,000 to go towards contracting Indigenous organisations," said Infrastructure Minister Peter Styles. "It will support the training and education of Aboriginal employees on each project."

The Alice Springs Chamber of Commerce has opposed the changes, saying there are not enough local Aboriginal people who have the skills to do the work.

Tracker's vision splendid

TRACKER TILMOUTH was an Aboriginal leader, political thinker and statigist of the highest order.

He knew the spiritual, cultural, geographical and political landscapes of this country inside out.

The country is a better place from his presence, intellect, tireless work, actions, his legacy of original ideas, his pushing and shoving and many outstanding accomplishments.

As the big brother to William and Patrick, he stepped into the protective role as the head of the family as a small child when they were taken away from Central Australia by government policies of the time, policies that forced three little boys to spend their childhood on a mission on Croker Island, well over 1000 km away from their family.

Tracks was read stories by his cottage mother, Lois Bartram. They included Cry the Beloved Country, the classic novel about a racially divided South Africa, which Tracks said had a lasting impact on him.

He remained close to people from Croker Island, his cottage family, and larger family of children he grew up with there, and he was forever grateful for the care that Lois Bartram gave.

On Croker, he also found a way to survive containment by becoming the spoilt kid in the mission - but he also learnt about creating vision, which is the kingdom of the unrestrained.

When he returned to Central Australia it was very difficult for Tracker to find acceptance, but he did gradually find his way, initially through the support of the Liddle family, particularly Arthur and especially Bessie Liddle at Angas Downs who took him hunting with her.

In all the work he continued to do to help people to gain, keep and live on their country in Central Australia, he knew that everyone really loved him for that.

Tracker knew everyone, and was deeply respected and admired by people across the length and breadth of this country.

Tracker deeply loved and adored his wife Kathy and together they built their wonderful family and life together with their daughters Shaneen, Cathryn, and Amanda.

He was a dear friend to our family. He was like my brother. He was my husband Toly's brother and long-time mate, and he was the best uncle to our daughter Lily from when she was a small child.

But we are not the only ones. There are lots of people across the country who had this kind of close family relationship with Tracker, which was as much as being our friend, adviser, colleague.

He knew how to make people



Tracker Tilmouth, CLC director 1994 -1999.

laugh. His humor was like a great force of life that would keep hitting you constantly - bang, bang, bang, if you were anywhere near him. You would never forget it - such as the time he told a meeting of land councils in Adelaide discussing Howard's Ten point plan to amend the Native Title Act in 1995, that Native Title was not going to be the big black stallion they all thought it was, it was just a donkey.

Tracks always knew you could waste your time arguing about things that are really not worth arguing about. He thought Aboriginal people today had no philosophy to create peace within ourselves. He thought you had to put everything into perspective.

Why rush? he said. Why run up and down the fence like a friggin mad dog? Relax. Sit back under the gum tree and have a sleep because nothing is changing overnight and it is going to take a long time to change.

But what Tracks also said: Don't telegraph your punches. Keep it all nice and quiet and low and those people who you are dealing with will say, Oh! I didn't know you knew about this space. His advice was: Do your homework. Don't become a target.

If you spent any time with Tracker you struggled to keep up with him, with his capacity to visualize enormous projects. Sometimes he would smile and call it, 'the vision splendid.'

He could read complex documents and absorb the important contents very quickly, and act on it.

Tracker was all about getting a story straight. Cutting through the bullshit. Interpreting what was really going on and calling it for what it was. This was why it was easy for him to keep building and coming up with one outstanding idea after another - all workable, all achievable, it only took the will to do it, even if it was at an enormous scale. And this was only because he understood that the situation in the Aboriginal world absolutely required it.

Tracks was never lazy. Time was there to be used. If he said we were leaving at five in the morning to drive to a meeting five hundred or a thousand kilometres away, he would arrive at 5am on the dot.

He loved nothing better than being in the bush, long drives in the bush, knew and valued the stories of his country and right across Central Australia and the NT, and he had a real way with animals.

He loved the Timor ponies he used to ride at Croker as a boy, and he loved taming and riding camels when he was a young man, and even winning the Camel Cup a number of times. Dogs. Cats. Chooks. A kangaroo that demolished everything in his back yard. That was Tracks.

And I think he was quite a strategic and fearless footballer when he was young, and he definitely liked

speedy cars as a young man.

His idea of gardening was citrus plantations, vineyards, date farms, growing melons and vegetables on a large scale throughout Aboriginal land in Central Australia where there was groundwater, as well as establishing fisheries and forestry throughout the Top End, across Northern Australia.

He had an absolute intuitive intelligence and was able to endlessly pour out these big ideas one after the other.

He would say sometimes, what could you do if you only have blunt tools to work with? For him it was an endless task of trying to sharpen the tools, the people around him, his mates, colleagues, and politicians mostly.

He pushed, cajoled and confronted everyone and without reservation or favor, to think more, to do their job to help Aboriginal people to construct an Aboriginal economy, Aboriginal self-reliance and sufficiency.

He had this incredible ability of knowing how to communicate what he was thinking by putting it in simple words, in a simple story so that the idea or issue could be understood.

He described the NT Land Rights Act as making sure that there was one gate to go through for people who wanted to deal with traditional owners, and the Land Council's job was being the boundary rider closing any holes in the fence to safeguard

the world of Aboriginal people, the land, the culture, the future. He actually had a cattle prod in his office to demonstrate what he meant. This theory evolved into his most recent thinking about testing Aboriginal property rights, and simply out of necessity, building a segregated Aboriginal economy.

His work created millions of dollars in the Aboriginal economy through the major mining and native title agreements he negotiated such as in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

He was a strong mentor and guide to my brother Murradoo and to all of our people in the Gulf country.

He set national benchmarks that still stand, acquiring thousands of hectares of land to return to the traditional owners, setting up successful management plans on properties such as Mistake Creek, and saving hard won land rights laws and land from destruction.

He created economies on Aboriginal land so that traditional landowners could actually enjoy their land rights by constantly developing industry and economic opportunities throughout the country.

He created Aboriginal self determination opportunities such as his work on Aboriginal rights in the United Nations. And by creating Aboriginal law forums where senior Aboriginal law men and women in Central Australia could talk about the future they wanted to work towards. They led to the 1998 Kalkaringi Convention, and subsequent work to defeat the NT government's referendum to achieve NT statehood with a flawed constitution.

He has now left us with a mountain of ideas, big and urgent ideas for this century, and I hope that the Northern Territory will truly honor this true Territorian by establishing at the very least, an annual Tracker Tilmouth Ideas Conference - to discuss his ideas, immerse ourselves in the vision splendid, give young people his guidance, show them his way of getting things done, how to think on their feet, how to sit back and think deeply, to more fully understand the immensity of the ideas and the kind of Aboriginal economy and future Northern Territory he was talking about

We will miss you mate and you will always be in our hearts. You will still always be visiting us in our thoughts and we will be glad to think of you. Rest easy. Rest in peace.

Alexis Wright

(excerpt from eulogy)



Adrian drew his strength

ADRIAN Winwood-Smith, who died late last year, will be remembered for the devoted support to Aboriginal people who aspired to success in the pastoral industry.

Born in Grafton in 1955, Adrian's work with Aboriginal people in the Centre began when he was employed as a mechanic in Yuendumu between 1981 and 1984.

He formed long-lasting relationship with many Yuendumu families, particularly the Simms and Granites families.

In Yuendumu he met his wife Lucy, then a teacher.

The pair travelled around the world before returning to Yuendumu.

Adrian did a lot of exploration work for the Yuendumu Mining Company.

Adrian's knowledge of the Tanami region from his many trips out bush with senior Yuendumu men was vast.

They took him to visit many sites they had not been able to visit for years.

In his exploration work he put in hundreds of kilometres of bush tracks and survey lines and he

has been called by some the "Len Beadall of the Tanami". Adrian even co-wrote a book (yet to be published) about an expedition by explorer Michael Terry across the Tanami region in the 1920's.

He began work with the CLC more than 11 years ago as Indigenous Pastoral Development Officer.

A year later he took over the position of Co-ordinator of the Rural Enterprise Unit, and continued to lead a small team until May this year when he took much-deserved and much-needed long service



His fight is as urgent as ever

KWEMENTYAYE STUART, who passed away in November, was a true land rights champion.

Born in 1932 at Jay Creek, west of Alice Springs, Kwementyaye worked as a stockman and drover from his early teens and excelled as a boxer before becoming a CLC field officer.

He went on to represent the Alice Springs region as a CLC delegate for 20 years and chaired the land council between 1997 and 2001.

Kwementyaye was a strong and astute leader who saw education as the key to a better future for his people and never let his own lack of schooling stand in his way.

He led the CLC during a time when hard won Aboriginal land rights were under attack from governments just like they are again today.

His words from 16 years ago, when the federal government used a review to weaken the land rights act and the NT government was pushing for control of the legislation, could have been written today.

"Land rights are the most important thing to us. Land is our life and without it we have nothing. So it makes me really sad that over the past year, governments have again been trying to take away our rights," Mr Stuart wrote in 1998.

"We want the government in Canberra to look after the act, not the NT government".

Kwementyaye understood well that land rights give Aboriginal people some control over their lives. He described them as "giving us freedom and justice".

He knew a bit about justice, having served 14 years in prison, including on death row, for a murder in South Australia over half a century ago he said he did not commit.

His court case was the subject of a book, a film, a royal commission and attracted international attention.

Kwementyaye credited his late wife, whom he met after his release on parole, for turning his life around.

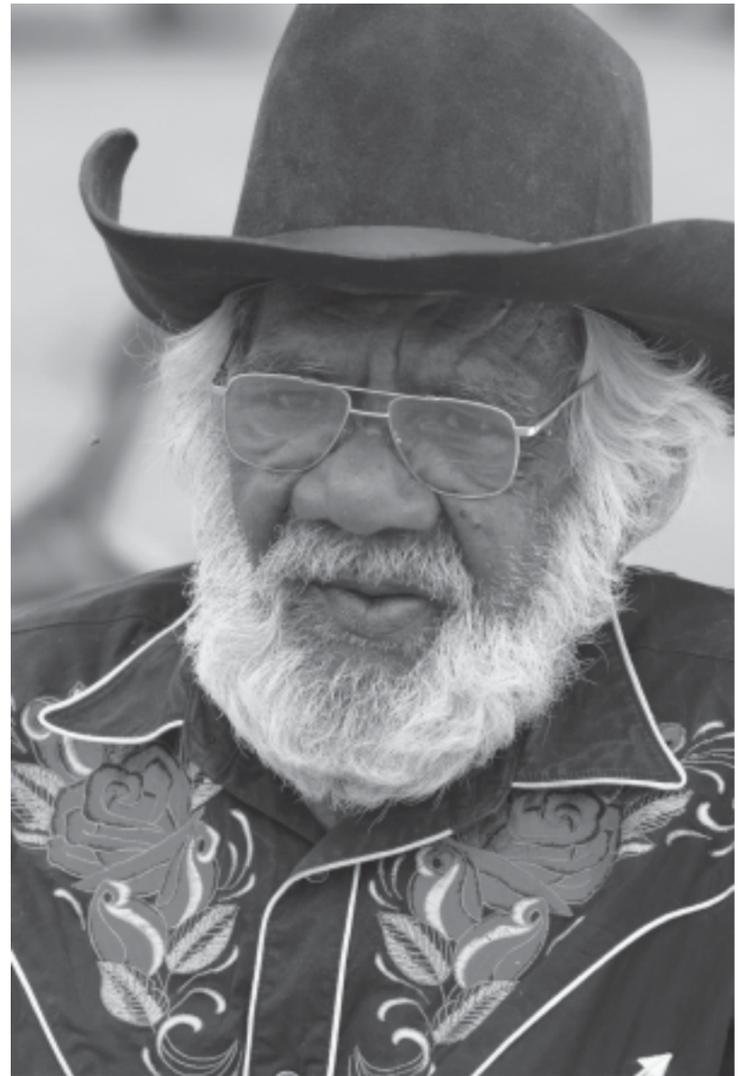
"I married a good woman. She put a ring in my nose, and pulled me around, but that was good," he recalled in our forthcoming oral history book *Every hill got a story*.

As CLC chair he oversaw the successful Alice Springs native title claim, the first such claim over an Australian town.

When he welcomed the Queen to his home town, in 2000, he praised her as being "really like a bush woman. It seems the Queen has less trouble acknowledging native title holders than the Northern Territory government", he commented at the time.

A senior law man and respected teacher and mentor of leaders from all backgrounds, Kwementyaye wanted "to walk around as brothers – both black and white."

David Ross



A larrikin spirit kept him going

KWEMENTYAYE Stuart could come across as a bit of a larrikin but he was smart, dedicated to land rights, and a respected law man.

Pat Dodson gave him a job at the Central Land Council in the 80s and in due course Kwementyaye became a council delegate.

He enlivened council debates and in 1997 was elected chairman. This brought with it a level of respectability as well as the means to exploit it by socialising with the lunchtime lowlifes at Scotty's Bar in the Todd Mall.

This lifestyle choice combined alcohol consumption with erratic driving. More than once Kwementyaye lost his licence and received a hefty fine.

Two large policemen once turned up at the land council with a warrant. Fortunately we could honestly say Kwementyaye wasn't in.

Driving down Parsons Street a little later I noticed him walking right past the police station, his large black hat cocked at a jaunty angle.

Back at the office not long af-

terwards I suggested it was risky to be strolling past the front door of the police station. "Didn't you see my disguise?" he asked. "What disguise?" "I had my hat pulled down that side, they couldn't see my face!"

He continued to drive unlicensed for many years because he wouldn't do the compulsory driver training to get it back.

He wasn't particularly contemptuous of the law. More likely, after being sentenced to death and serving a life sentence, the prospect of a spell inside had no real meaning for him.

Kwementyaye was sentenced to death for murder in 1959 after a police investigation and a trial which, even by the standards of the day, were almost farcical.

Much has been written and broadcast about those events and I don't wish to rake them over, but after studying the investigation, the evidence, the trial and what followed, I believe that there would be no chance of a modern court convicting him for that crime. There are good reasons to conclude not only that he was not

guilty, but that another known person was the likely perpetrator.

Kwementyaye had gone through the law and held profound traditional knowledge. No one who heard him sing the yeperenye dreaming song during the Yeperenye Festival in Alice Springs could forget his haunting voice resonating around Blatherskite Park.

It was my good fortune to have had his company on long drives during which he would point out the features marking various dreamings and sing a few verses.

His larrikin spirit sustained him through those long, dark years of trial, appeals and imprisonment.

One evening after work I spotted the black hat in the Yulara Tavern. There was Kwementyaye drinking wine with a well dressed non-Aboriginal woman of a certain age, clearly about to have dinner.

His friend had her back to me. With just the slightest flick of his finger and a certain look, Kwementyaye signalled me not to say anything before introducing me.

She had an American accent

and appeared to be in awe of him. She let on that they were staying in a room far more expensive than my camping allowance would run to.

Camping at 16 Mile north of Alice Springs, he had flagged down a lift to replenish his supply of refreshments. The American lady had stopped, no doubt attracted by the iconic black hat.

During the short trip to town Kwementyaye convinced her that he was the paramount 'chief' in central Australia, bestowed a skin name which happened to make her an appropriate marriage partner, and continued on to Uluru where he seemed to be thoroughly enjoying himself.

He accompanied me to Canberra for the Lake Amadeus land claim appeal. On a good behaviour bond following another drink driving charge, he had to abstain from drink and I agreed to take responsibility for his compliance.

Near our accommodation was

a very large sign advertising liquor for sale in the shop beneath but I had no reason to worry – he kept his word.

As we entered the High Court I said "You had another case here a few years ago." "Yeah, but they wouldn't let me out for that one," he shot back. During a break in proceedings I lost him in a Rover Thomas exhibition at the National Gallery.

Just as court was due to start again I heard animated chatter from the stairs. The black hat had attracted two ladies, one hanging off each arm, glancing affectionately at Kwementyaye while he spun some yarn.

When he met the Queen many of us were struck by the irony of someone who served so much time at Her Majesty's Prison Yatala surviving to welcome her with such grace to his country.

The last times we talked were at Hetti Perkins. They cared for him wonderfully, but he'd had

enough of institutions and wanted out. He recited for me the names of sacred sites on his country, saying he wanted to go home.

I noticed that his watch showed the wrong time and he reminded me that he had bought it in Tenant Creek. Even with the onset of disability he had managed to drive his unregistered car there for a land council meeting.

As I set his watch I thought of the arguments at the Royal Commission into his trial, about whether he could tell the time by the clock.

The man beneath the black hat with the gravel voice and the quick wit was a steadfast man. Kwementyaye knew what he stood for and didn't waver.

David Avery

from the land and its people

leave.

Adrian contributed strongly to the operational foundations of the ILC-sponsored Indigenous Pastoral Program, now a multi-agency program that continues to provide the framework for growing Aboriginal participation in the industry.

He remained a member of the IPP Steering Committee throughout this time.

Adrian brought "determination and passion to all aspects of his role, whether it be responding to yet another unforeseen man-

agement crisis or relishing the opportunity to assist new initiatives to get off on a firm footing," remembers CLC Land Management Section Manager David Alexander.

"Adrian also drew inspiration from what he would call the 'the little bloke', usually an individual or small group of traditional owners with a persistent determination to provide activity and opportunity for their families from doing what they knew how to do best," David said.

"Some of these, such as Man-

galawurru, Bluebush and Alaty-eye, now feature as IPP success stories. Others, such as Ngyar-rmini and Hatches Creek, hopefully will follow."

Adrian struggled with cancer for more than eight years. With every reprieve along the way he would come back to work and pick up where he had left off.

"He was very much driven by the strong affinity he had accumulated with the Aboriginal people that he worked for, the aspirations they held for their families and his own ambition to see Aboriginal

people duly recognised as significant contributors to the Northern Territory cattle industry," David said at Adrian's funeral.

"Adrian had a big agenda but of course never enough time and resources to get there.

"We and many more have been robbed by his passing but he and his family can be very proud of his achievements and the legacy he has left behind for other staff to now carry forward."

Adrian is survived by his wife Lucy, daughter Sabrina, and son Kevin and family.

From all those hills, a mountain of stories

CLC chair Francis Kelly is one of the many storytellers who have checked drafts of the CLC's long awaited oral history book before it went off to the printer.

He chose a quote from his predecessor Kwementyaye Stuart for the title.

Every hill got a story is packed with heartbreaking and funny yarns by 127 well known men and women from across the CLC region and hundreds of photos, many of them never published before.

CLC director David Ross said the idea for the book took shape when one of the sons of the late former CLC chair David Long asked for a photo of his dad so he could teach his children about their grandfather.

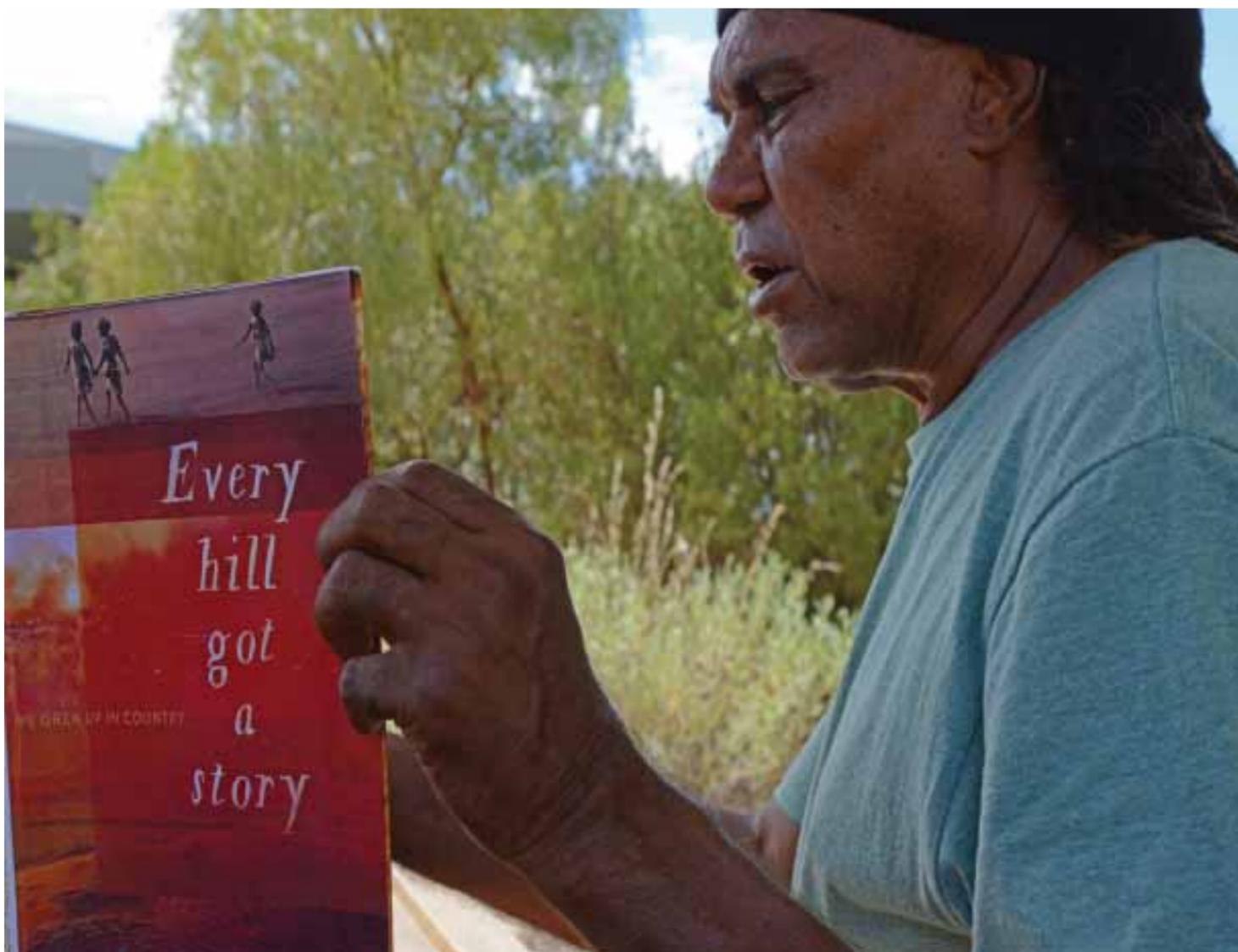
"These are the people we look up to. All have been our leaders in different ways," film maker Rachel Perkins wrote in her foreword.

"The overwhelming feeling I am left with is an admiration for their triumph over adversity."

Their stories are bringing history alive in their own words and our many languages.

They paint an unflinchingly honest picture of life and work on the missions, the cattle stations and the fringes of towns. The storytellers describe everything from first contact and massacres to the struggle for self determination, land and basic citizen rights.

Started by Kwementyaye Hodson more than five years ago, *Every hill got a story* will finally be published in August.



Milpirri celebrates reconciliation

LAJAMANU'S sixth Milpirri festival celebrated Jardiwampa, the Warlpiri reconciliation ceremony.

More than 250 residents of all ages performed traditional and contemporary dances for an audience of nearly 500 people.

The festival also featured visual arts exhibitions and community forums.

Milpirri creative director Steve Jampijinpa Patrick wanted the festival to explore people's connections to country and to each other.

"Milpirri is about people getting to know each other yapa way, which means polite way, softly – rather than the rough way that sometimes happens between groups," said Steve.

Begun in 2005, the festival is a team effort involving the community, its school and Darwin's Tracks Dance Company.

Tracks work closely with Steve and other senior community members to develop themes, and to design and produce the performance.

School attendance increased during the six weeks of workshops. After 87 hours of dance practice the students were fitter and challenged themselves with harder dance routines.

More than 90 locals were employed during the festival.

Lajamanu elder Peter Jigili says Milpirri supports community relationships.

"It's about bringing people together; about learning about kardiya and yapa, so we are not separate from each other," Peter said.

"We don't walk on a separate road. We would rather walk on the same road together."

Community development unit staff from the CLC worked with Lajamanu's Granites Mine Affected Areas Aboriginal Corporation (GMAAAC) Committee to plan, prioritise and fund community benefit projects such as Milpirri.

The committee has supported the festival since 2008, and in 2014 gave \$50,000 in GMAAAC funds.

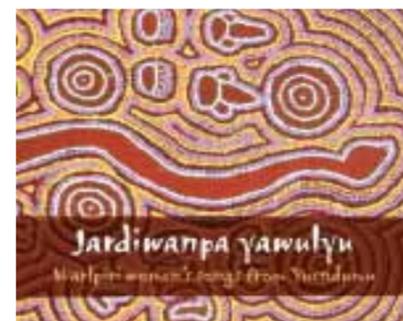
Former committee member Andrew Japanangka Johnson wants to see Milpirri continue to grow.

"We are going to see how strong our culture is, how strong we can be," said Andrew.

Milpirri happens every two years. For 11 year old dancer Leland Jangala that just isn't enough. "Can we have Milpirri every night?" she asked.

More info at www.tracksdance.com.au, more pics p.18

This book sings



THE new book *Jardiwampa Yawulyu* presents 38 songs from the Jardiwampa song line, which crosses Warlpiri country from south to north.

The songline passes through three major dreamings – yarripiri (snake), yankirri (emu) and ngurlu (seed) – and owners from each of these ritual groups spoke at the launch of the new book late last year at Yuendumu.

The launch of the book, which was published by the Batchelor Institute For Indigenous Tertiary Education, celebrated the efforts of Warlpiri women in keeping and recording their traditional songs.

The women worked with anthropologist Georgia Curran to make the book, and also with linguist Mary Laughren, who shared her memories of ceremonial performances by Warlpiri women.

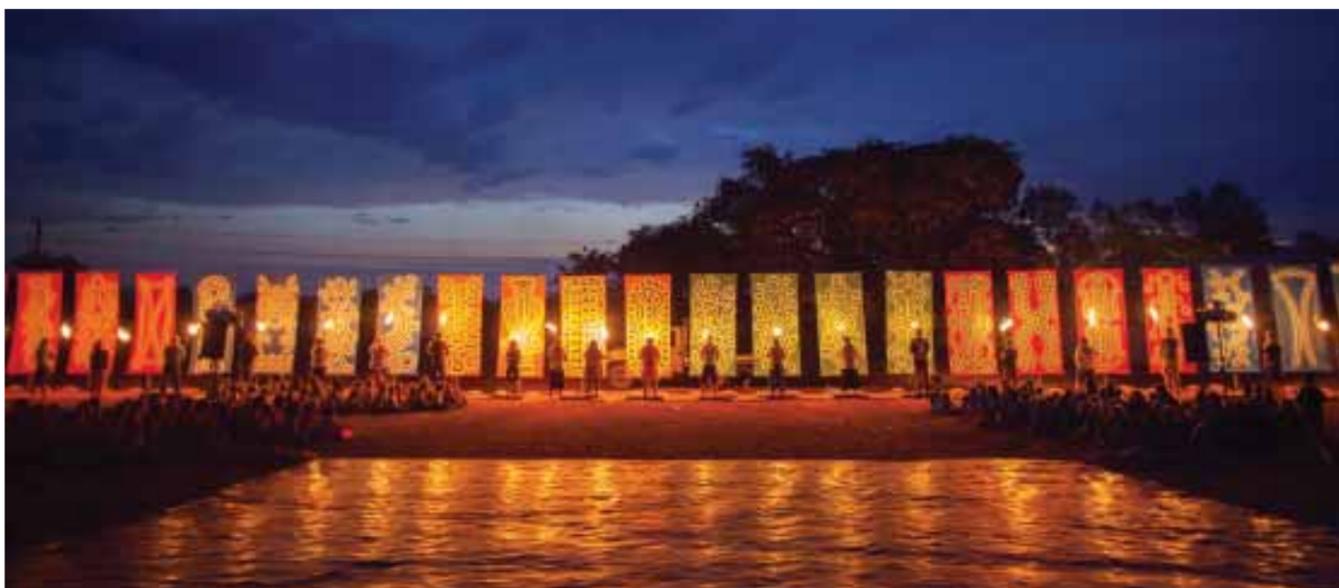
The Jardiwampa ceremony celebrates the journey of yarripiri, an ancestral taipan, on a journey northwards through Warlpiri country.

Two senior women, Peggy Nampijinpa Brown and Coral Napangardi Gallagher, tell the stories associated with the songs, so younger Warlpiri speakers can learn them.

The book includes the rhythmic structures, words and interpretations for each song, with photos of women performing and images of plants, animals, places and artefacts that are part of the story.

The book was published with a new technology called sound printing, so people can listen to the songs as they read the book.

To order the book go to www.batchelorpress.com or call 8939 7352.





New label fast track to success

ABOVE: Running Water Band show where they get their name from. Photo: Oliver Eclipse.

CAAMA Music has launched a new music label to support 'grass-roots' recordings by Aboriginal bands in remote communities.

Therrka (the Arrernte word for grass) promises a fast-track route for bands to hear and sell their music within one month of the initial recording.

"There are so many amazing bands here in Central Australia that deserve to be heard, so we want to make their music accessible to fans as soon as possible, as well as pricing them to suit the current market demand" says Michael 'Miko' Smith, Manager of CAAMA Music.

CAAMA celebrated the launch *Therrka* with two album releases in Central Australia.

Desert Mulga introduced their debut album *Tangapa Yanu* at a concert at the Alice Springs Memo Club, broadcast live across the CAAMA radio network.

From Nyirripi and Yuendumu, Desert Mulga combine Warlpiri lyrics with their own take on desert reggae, incorporating acoustic guitar, ska beats, calypso soundscapes and Shannon Gallagher's strong lead vocals.

They have featured on the soundtrack of the movie *Sam-*

son & Delilah and on previous Snapshot compilations by CAAMA Music. *Tangapa Yanu* is their first album.

One day later, Running Water launched their long awaited album with a concert at Kintore.

Running Water were the standout band of 2013 Bush Bands Bash, rallying the crowd to dance and sing along to their Luritja lyrics.

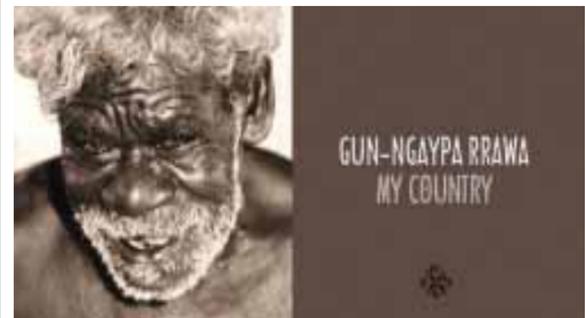
On the back of their success they were selected to tour as the support band for Blekbala Mujik on a tri-state tour of the western deserts, the annual 'Sand Tracks tour' which is organised by Country Arts WA.

North Tanami Band's album 'Proud to be Warlpiri' has been launched and there are still upcoming albums soon to be released on the *Therrka* label include those by Eastern Reggae, Black Shadows, Utju Band and Imanpa.

A monthly music series at the Memo Club, programmed by CAAMA Music and *Therrka*, will give community bands a regular opportunity to perform in Alice Springs.

Therrka CDs are great value at \$15 per CD and are available from CAAMA Music in Alice Springs or online at www.caamamusic.com.au

Tales from around the campfire



GUN-NGAYPA Rrawa My Country, launched at Maningrida in March presents stories from the Gun-nartpa people who live in North-Central Arnhem Land.

An-nguliny clan leader and celebrated artist England Banggala tells of ancestral spirits who created the country around Gochan Jiny-jirra on the Cadell River, and who are celebrated in ceremonies and visual arts.

Banggala and other elders also tell stories from the old days, when hunting, bush foods, warfare and sorcery were part of everyday life.

They describe the Second World War, the coming of the Welfare Time and the settlement of Maningrida and outstations.

The book celebrates the diversity of languages in the region by presenting the stories in both Gun-nartpa and English.

The book is printed with the technology of sound printing - you can listen to the songs using a 'speaking pen'.

For more information about sound printing and for access to pens and sound files, visit

<http://soundprinting.batchelor.edu.au>

To order go to www.batchelorpress.com.

BELOW: Desert Mulga take a photo break after working on their debut album.





Dion puts Canteen Creek on the world map

DION Beasley is telling the whole world about what life is like in his home town of Canteen Creek.

The remote community 230 km south east of Tennant Creek is the star of the Digital Mapping Exhibition, which opened last week in Tennant as well as on the internet.

In 2014, the creator of the Cheeky Dog label spent a week in Canteen Creek working with Barkly Regional Arts' Media Mob. Media Mob trained Dion in photography and video so he could capture the houses, dogs and residents of the community.

With his uncanny memory for landmarks, dogs and direction, Dion created a whopping 3.5m x 3.5m map of the community showing numbered houses, roads, landmarks and the dogs that live in each home.

After digitising the map, Media Mob and Dion worked with Melbourne based company Spatial Vision to create on-line interactive map. Here the user is invited to experience Canteen Creek by clicking on landmarks that bring up the videos, photographs and soundscapes that Dion captured.

The exhibition at Barkly Arts features printed photographs by Dion and Media Mob and a computer station where people can connect with the on-line exhibition.

The Artist with Disability program by the Australia Council for the Arts.

Visit the exhibition at www.barklyarts.com.au.

TOP: Dion and his original Canteen Creek map.

RIGHT: Dion and friends at home.

Photo: Media Mob





Having a ball... ...at the Imparja Cup



ABOVE: The Miwatj Dolphins from Gapuwiyak test the pitch of the dry Todd River at the Telegraph Station.
BELOW LEFT: Gene Norman of the Northern Territory bowling against Queensland. BELOW RIGHT: Bernie Lamont from Tasmania gets some advice on throwing a spear from ranger Dale Campbell.
Photos: Getty Images/Cricket Australia



THE BEST male and female Indigenous cricketers from across Australia converged to the centre of the country in February for the annual all-Indigenous cricket carnival, the Imparja Cup. Western Australia once again reigned supreme, now having won the cup two years in a row, while the NSW women's team made it eight straight titles.

The Imparja Cup is Australian Cricket's national Indigenous tournament and has grown from a two-team local competition between Alice Springs and Tennant Creek 22 years ago into a week long national event that brings together more than 500 players representing states and territories, major centres, communities and schools. The Cup is set to have a name

change next year, becoming the National Indigenous Cricket Championships. Cricket Australia (CA) will consider proposals to move part of the Cup interstate. Supporters of the proposal want to create a better pathway to the national teams for Aboriginal players. CA will announce its decision on next year's location in May.

Footy star taken early

CENTRAL AUSTRALIA has honoured Geoffrey Jack Miller, a young central Australian Redtails and Pioneer Eagles FC premiership Australian Rules footballer who passed away in March.

Mr Miller had only recently moved to Cairns with his young family. The ruck specialist collapsed in the change rooms after his second training session with Centrals Trinity FC.

The 20 year old is remembered by close family friends as a determined and complete

athlete with a generous nature and kind heart.

Pioneer head coach William Foster told the Centralian Advocate that Miller was a talented basketballer and singer.

"He was good at everything he did, a talented young fella," said Pioneer president Owen Cole.

Miller had continued in the footsteps of his father, a stalwart of the Pioneers Football Club in Alice Springs.



Cool Runnings

Australian marathon legend Rob DeCastella and Adrian Dodson-Shaw before they headed off to the North Pole.

Adrian Dodson-Shaw has become the first Aboriginal Australian to not only land at the North Pole, but also to take part in the world's coldest marathon. The Indigenous Marathon Project (IMP) took Adrian from the white beaches of Broome to the ice of the Arctic to compete in the North Pole Marathon.

The unique location posed special challenges. Just before the start of the marathon a bulldozer was flown to the start line to

plough the track. As soon as the track was safe Adrian and his fellow competitors were flown in to begin the race.

The son of Aboriginal rights campaigner and former CLC director Patrick Dodson said he was extremely grateful to the IMP for the chance to compete in such an event.

"What an incredible opportunity I have been offered. I take great pride in representing IMP and being an inspirational role model

to my friends, family, community, and Australia, as well as future generations of IMP runners."

Adrian said the program has changed his life and may help others to realise that anything is achievable.

"Work hard, stick to your goals and understand that you are the only person standing in the way of what you want to achieve," is his advice.

"My kids think I'll be running with Santa!"

BELOW: Players, supporters and officials from South Alice and Pioneer football clubs honour one of their own as the Alice Springs footy community came together to pay tribute to Geoffrey Jack Miller.
PHOTO: Charlie Lowson.





CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Shelley Campbell and Kevin Dixon welcomed Kane Dixon, born on 1st March 2015, a little brother for Annalise. Tangentyere Family Safety project graduate Rosemary Rubuntja enjoys the International Womens Day festivities with her grandson Hudson. Eileen John with her daughters Shara (12) and Natalie (9 months) at the climate change book launch at Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa). Baby Caleb Smith, born on the 27th of February and weighing 4 kg with proud mother Hollie.



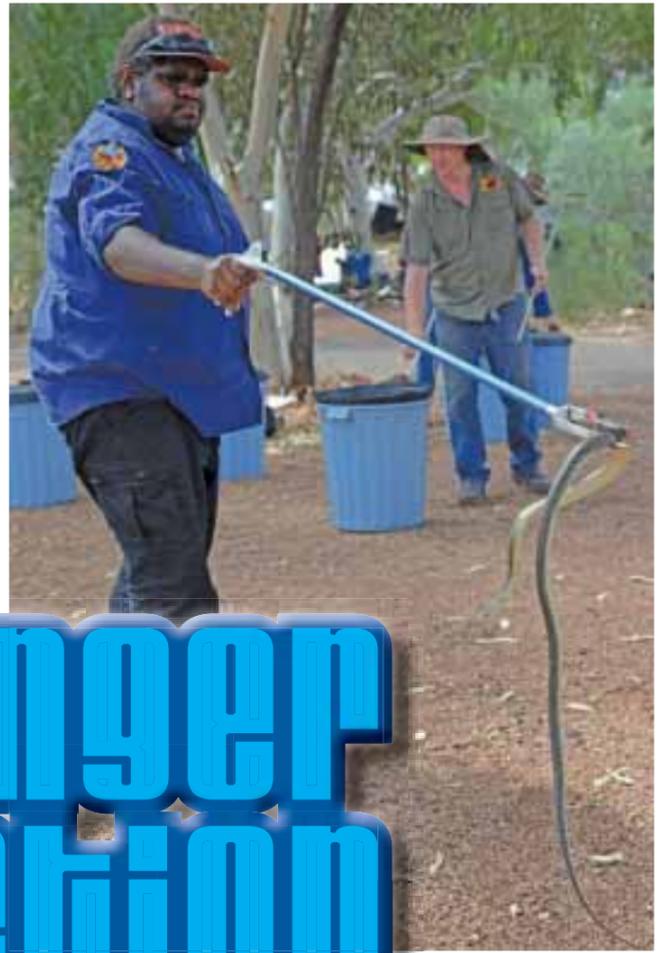
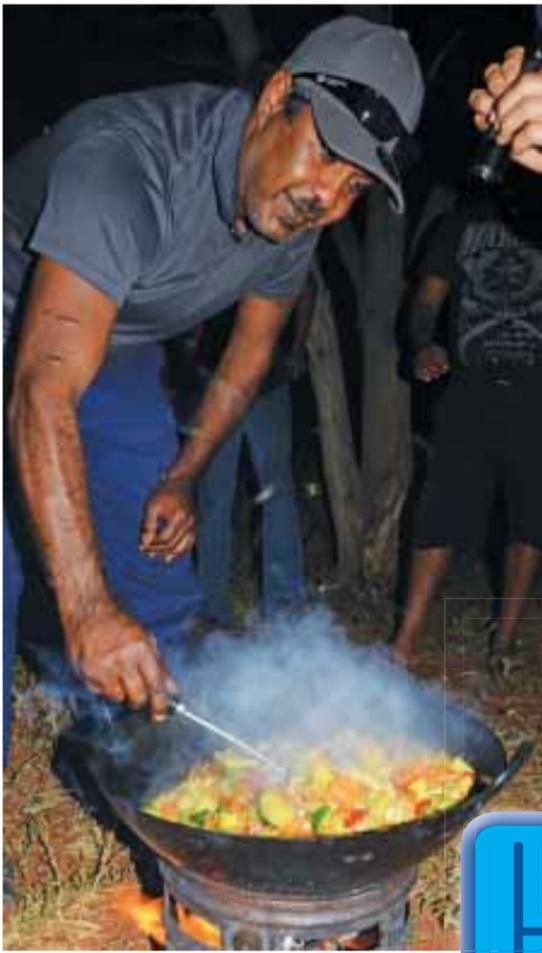
Bubs & CENTRAL Babies



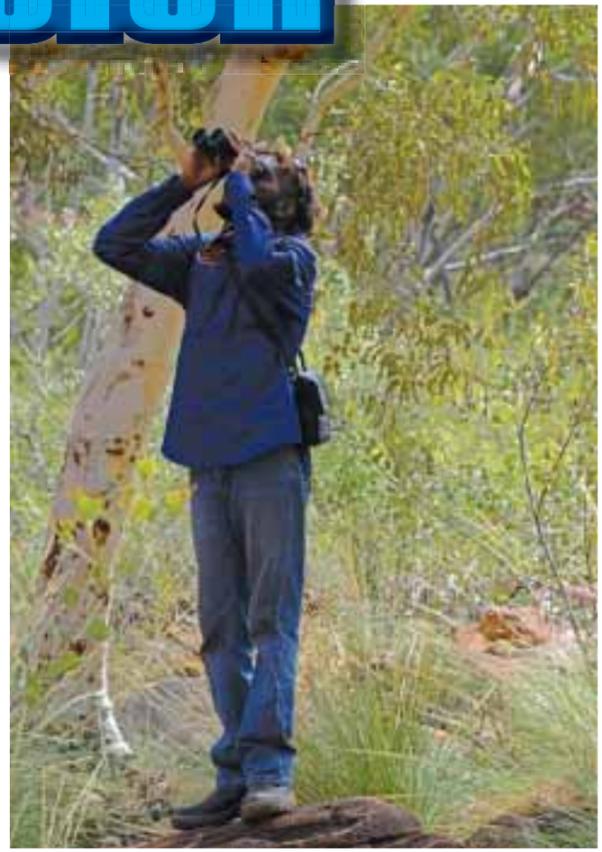
BELOW: The Murnkurru Murnkurru (Daguragu) ranger group are the Territory's most outstanding rangers. Serena Donald (with trophy), Elise Cox, Ursula Cubb and Helma Sambo collected the award at the Darwin Convention Centre in November. "It has made not only us but the whole Gurindji community proud," they said.

BELOW: Family Safety Project trainers and trainees at International Women's Day event in Alice Springs. Back Row Left: Maree Corbo, Louise Abbott, Rosemary Rubuntja, Barbara Shaw, Marlene Hodder, Marlene Hayes. Front Row Right to Left: Liz Olle from Department of Children & Families, Doris O'Brien, Shirleen Campbell, Helen Gillen, Eliza Arbaci, Gwen Gillen. Logo painting by Gwen and Helen Gillen representing the Tangentyere Women's Committee's Family Safety Project.





RANGER CAMP ACTION



Some of the action from the CLC Ranger Camp in Watarrka National Park.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Rangers from up the Tanami road enjoy some downtime at the Kings Canyon campgrounds. Anmatyerre and Warlpiri rangers joined forces to whip up a rainbow chicken curry for the bush wok competition. Malcolm Kenny from the Tjuwanpa Rangers stirs up the winning dish.

IPA assistant co-ordinator Katie Stoker looks a bit stoked with that Woma python at the snake catching workshop. Tjuwanpa ranger Gary Meneri keeps his distance from the deadly mulga snake. Kaltukatjara ranger Max Brumby gets eyes to the sky during the bird survey.



"I bin come from Yuendumu, looking for job. First one Welfare and Native Affairs bin push us around, wrong way around. And I bin go, get him all the blankets - cold weather time this one - and we come to Alice Springs. Alice Springs we bin sleep there. We bin wait for bus next day. We bin start going from Bungalow, Alice Springs. From there we bin going up north. We bin pass him Aileron, Ti Tree, Stirling, to Barrow Creek, all the way along. Cold weather. Too many, might be twenty people bin travelling, all young boys. I bin the older one, me. Sleeping. Me last one. Travel in the bus. Tennant Creek - police station - we bin sleep there. Murray [station manager] coming up from Alexandria [Station]. We bin have him breakfast, then that truck is there now. Wide open truck, raintime, raintime. 'Righto, get your swag.' We gotta get to Alexandria. Bin make a big camp there now.

Next morning - tinkle, tinkle, tinkle - ring up for breakfast now. Bell, for tucker, tinkle, tinkle. Manager say - was couple of managers there - from Gallipoli [Station], Alexandria, 'What are we going to do?' ... 'You cut him.' Might be ten there Alexandria, nine people langa Soudan, another nine people going to Gallipoli, east. 'Aaah, goodbye, goodbye, goodbye, goodbye.' Scattered him people! Scattered everywhere ... We [feeling] no good now. Sorry about one another."

Henry Cook Jakamarra, better known as Parri-parri, remembering life in government settlements last century.

You can read more oral history accounts in the CLC's *Every hill got a story* (see p. 30) when it comes out in August.

Photo: Gary Scott