

# LANDRIGHTS NEWS

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## CENTRAL AUSTRALIA



### GRACE ROBINYA WINS VINCENT LINGIARI ART AWARD

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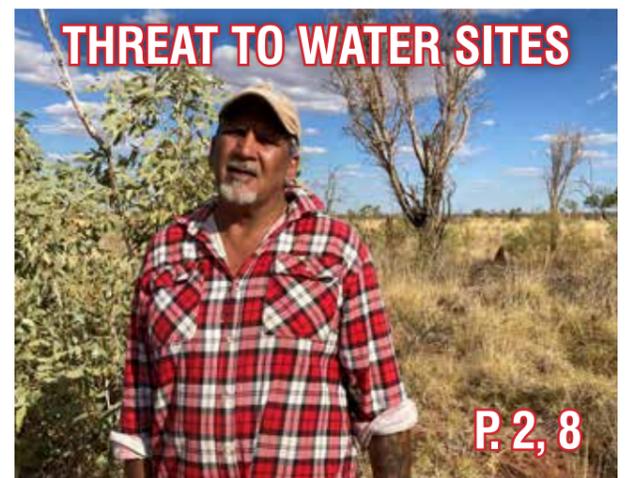
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EDITORIAL

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COVER



Grace Robinya and her Vincent Lingiari Art Award-winning painting *Raining at Laramba*. Photo: Oliver Eclipse.

CLC MEETINGS

**4-5 October 2021**  
Executive  
Alice Springs

**2-4 November 2021**  
Council  
Alpurrurulam

**8-9 December 2021**  
Executive  
Alice Springs

# Singleton water licence: 40 sacred sites under threat

THE SURVIVAL of 40 groundwater-dependent sacred sites south of Tennant Creek hangs on the outcome of a secretive government review of the controversial Singleton Station water licence.

An anthropological survey has revealed that the country around the station, where the NT Government plans to give Fortune Agribusiness 40,000 mega litres of water per year for 30 years to grow export crops, is rich in songlines and cultural sites that depend on underground water.

“There is a lot of *Ngappa Wirnkarna* (Rain Dreaming) around the Singleton area,” traditional owner and survey participant Michael Jones said.

“Karlukarlu (the Devils Marbles), Wakurlpu, Warlaparnpa - all these places were made by *Ngappa Wirnkarna*, all these places will be affected if there is no water.”



Maureen O'Keefe collected bloodwood sap during a sacred water site survey near Singleton Station.

**“The government is clearly only paying lip service to the rights and interests of remote community residents and traditional owners.”**

“The story will be there, still alive, the song will be there and still be sung, but we will be sad when we go to that

place all dead. The story will be weaker for younger people because the places will be ruined.

**Continued p.8**



David Curtis senior and junior visited Alyerernye, a threatened sacred site, with the ABC.

## Will we be sitting ducks when COVID goes bush?

about what we are facing when COVID escapes in the Northern Territory.

The virus may come tomorrow, it may come when much of the country is fully vaccinated, but it will come.

How many of us will still be unvaccinated when that happens?

How many people will be locked down in their communities?

How many deaths will we have to mourn when sick, unvaccinated patients overrun our hospitals?

What agonising decisions about who to treat and who to let die will our doctors and nurses be forced to make?

Make no mistake: COVID is a disease of the unvaccinated.

Fully vaccinated people can still get sick and transmit the virus, but they are very unlikely to get so sick that they need to go to hospital or die.

Our land councils and health services have been spreading this simple message since before the Territory began to receive plenty of doses of the Pfizer vaccine for everyone.

The vaccine is a life saver, it's our best hope.

If we can believe the NT Government's figures, little more than half of remote community residents across the Territory had one vaccine dose by mid-September.

More than a third - 38 per cent - had received two doses and are fully protected against getting very sick or dying.

It means that, unless we act quickly, around half of remote community residents will be sitting ducks when the virus comes to the NT.

Average figures like these hide the truth story, which is much worse in Central Australia than in the Top End, where more Aboriginal people have rolled up their sleeves.

In some of our communities only one in every 20 people (or 5 per cent) have been vaccinated.

How could this happen?

It is true that it was the Australian Government's job to ensure Aboriginal people were among the first groups to get vaccinated, and to communicate with them in a targeted, meaningful way.

Instead, it has allowed misinformation to take hold and our communities to lag behind the rest of the country.

It took until mid-September for the government to embark on a six-week 'vaccine blitz' to lift vaccination rates in 30 communities around the country where vaccine rates were low.



Warren Williams got his second Pfizer jab at Kalkaringi.

Even though many communities in our region have very low vaccination rates, only some Barkly communities are part of the blitz.

**Continued p.11**



# Does voting matter to you?



**Juanita Rogers**  
Bamboo Springs

“It’s important but I haven’t voted for a long time. I didn’t know about it or the people didn’t come out to us and tell us. When they [electoral commission] come to the community they land at the airstrip and if we are not there they go on to the next community. We just hear a plane landing and keep going. Even at the station, they don’t go there for people to vote. They should tell us when they are coming and where to meet up. We don’t have computers or the internet to enrol online. It’s an hour’s drive to the station where we do our business.”



**Leah Leaman**  
Kalkaringi

“It’s very important for our people to vote, especially in the bush, then your voice is heard. You might say: “why should I vote? Nothing changes”, but every voice is heard through your voting. Your voice goes to the right people that you want to vote for and ensures the right people are in there that represent your views, what’s important to you. Something DOES come of it. The only way to get your voice heard is through voting. That is the only way.”



**Alistair Jigili**  
Lajamanu

“It is very, very important for making my community stronger and bigger because in our houses there is no space for people. We need more houses. It will be a hard decision which party to choose. Some of our people don’t vote because they don’t like [the candidates] but I advise them to vote for somebody else. I reckon people should vote.”



**Craig Woods**  
Mutitjulu

“It’s very important! If you want to have your input into what’s happening in the community you need to have your voice heard. You need to get enrolled so you can vote and make a difference in your community and your region. If you don’t say something you can’t see the changes coming towards you and your family. You won’t see support for your community or outstation. You need to have your voice heard so the right person represents you and us and our concerns out bush.”



**Jeffrey Zimran**  
Ikuntji

I’d like to send a message to all the young ones out there: it’s really important to vote and to understand how we are working together with the government because the government is making changes and that’s why we need to vote and make the right choices about the future. Some of our people are missing out on information about elections. Maybe the information hasn’t been shared the right way. We should get someone to come to our communities before the election, sit down, do it the right way.”



**Dianne Stokes**  
Manglawarra

“I think voting is really important. It’s a way for our people to have our voices heard, especially out bush. Young people should enrol and vote, they’re the future. I decided to run for council as a Greens candidate, but I never tell anyone who to vote for, just that they should vote for someone.”

# Winning Laramba painting illustrates water rights battle



Lingiari family representatives Rosie and Trisha Smiler with the winner of 2021 Vincent Lingiari Art Award, Grace Kemarre Robinya (centre).

*RAINING at Laramba*, Grace Kemarre Robinya's Vincent Lingiari Art Award-winning painting, speaks of a simple truth: water is life.

At first glance, her celebration of the heavens bursting open over Napperby Station, where she worked and raised a family, is pure joy.

"It's always raining, summertime, when stockmen mustering. Makes those hills look blue in the north. Raining, raining, all the time raining," she said.

To this year's award judge, Hetti Perkins, it "stood out as an unequivocal, elegant and profound statement about *kwatye*. It captures the dramatic vistas of rain in desert country and conveys the transformative and life-giving power of water".

Yet for the residents of Laramba, a remote community excised from the pastoral lease, the rain that slowly replenishes their bores has long been a deep source of worry.

To this day, the neighbours of the 79-year-old artist are forced to drink water that contains three times the level of uranium considered safe.

Ms Robinya's painting was one of a shortlist of 26 artworks that responded powerfully to the award's theme *Ngawa, Ngapa, Kapi, Kwatja, Water*.

Born in Ntaria in 1942, she is an accomplished figurative painter whose works also evoke important life events, locations and contemporary life in the Alice Springs town camps, where she lives today.

Her work has been included in 55 exhibitions, and she has been a finalist in five significant awards, including the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award, but the \$10,000 Vincent Lingiari Art Award prize was her first major win.

The award exhibition opening at the Tangentyere Artists Gallery in Alice Springs in September, the third such collaboration between Desart, the Central Land Council and Tangentyere Artists, again drew a unique crowd of art lovers from the town, the bush and the cities.

Almost 50 Aboriginal artists from across Central Australia reflected on the significance of water for their collective survival on their country (for a selection of artworks, go to page 14).

The scandalous situation in Laramba illustrates perfectly why the response to this year's theme has been so strong.

"We wanted to send an urgent message not to take water for granted here in the Territory, where water rights are shaping up as the new

frontier," the Central Land Council's executive manager policy and governance, Dr Josie Douglas told the opening night crowd.

"Indigenous water rights around the world, and by extension our land rights, are threatened wherever we look.

"They are in peril because of greed and short-term thinking, shady deals and abject policy failure."

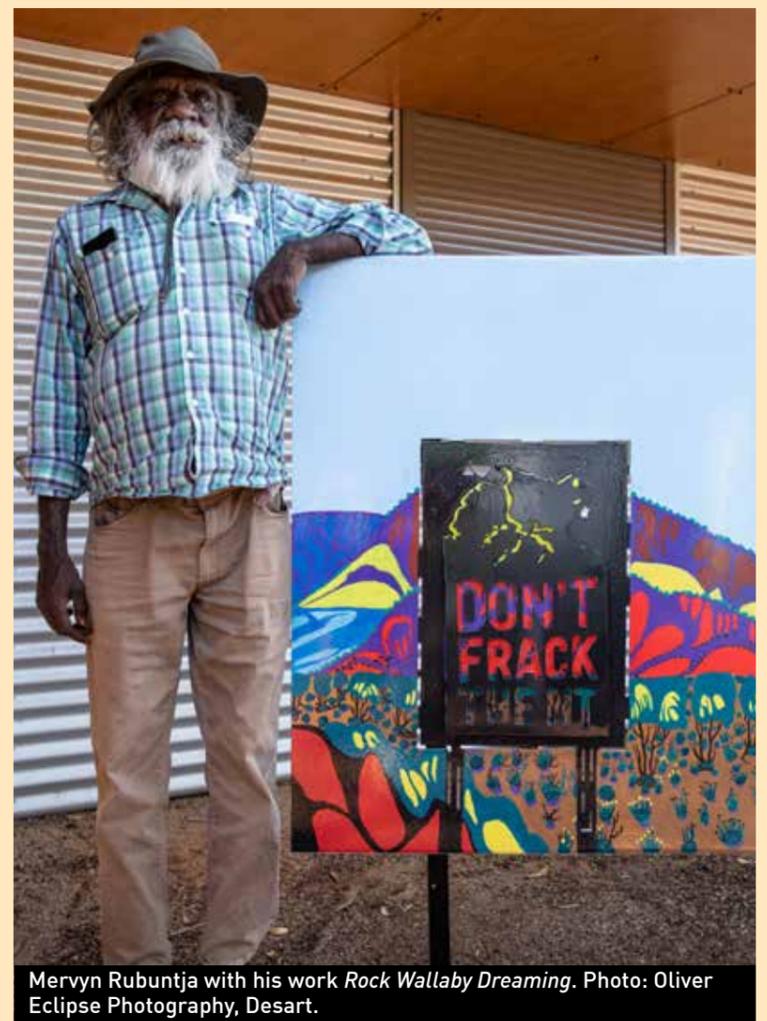
Desart chief executive Philip Watkins said "safe, clean water is a fundamental right, yet many communities continue to struggle for this", before reading a statement by Ms Perkins.

The curator, writer and daughter of the CLC's first director Charlie Perkins was locked down in Sydney, but co-curated the exhibition with local curator and assistant manager at the Iltja Ntjarra Many Hands Art Centre, Marisa Maher.

Ms Perkins said the artists' responses to the theme included works that were overtly political, with their calls to stop fracking and memories of now destroyed landscapes and important sites.

"The water underground and overhead, in soaks, rockholes and creeks is our lifeblood, an essential part of the ancient ecology that we are part of.

"This delicate balance



Mervyn Rubuntja with his work *Rock Wallaby Dreaming*. Photo: Oliver Eclipse Photography, Desart.

cannot be tampered with and the NT and Australian governments need to sit up and take notice of the truth our people are telling them, and nowhere more clearly than in our art," she said.

Dr Douglas addressed

a similar message for the sole politician at the event, the Territory's minister for remote essential services and the arts, Chansey Paech.

**Continued p. 19**

# Traditional owners gift Yeperenye trail to the public

THE TRADITIONAL owners of the Yeperenye Nature Park near Alice Springs have launched a walking and cycling trail between Anthwerrke (Emily Gap) and Atherrke (Jessie Gap) that they financed, built and gifted to the public.

After six years of planning and design and more than six months of construction, around 100 people gathered at Anthwerrke on July 27 to celebrate the official opening of the trail with a smoking ceremony and a kangaroo tail lunch.

The traditional owners used \$365,000 of the rent income they get for the jointly managed national park to fund the trail - the largest sum any Central Australian Aboriginal group has ever invested in public infrastructure.

"It makes me really proud that we did that — putting our money from the government back to the trail here,"

traditional owner Lynette Ellis said.

"We did this trail for all of us here, for our young kids now and for our future generations."

**"It makes me really proud that we did that — putting our money from the government back to the trail here."**

At a time when the industry needs it most, this new public trail will open up another section of the East MacDonnell Ranges to tourism and local employment.

"Not many tourists come to Jessie Gap, they are always going to the West Macs, so we thought it would be something good to do to attract them out this way," Ms Ellis said.

"There might be some sort of tour around here with tour

guides. We will be doing more projects."

More than 30 Aboriginal workers built the 7.2 kilometre trail by hand, trained in sustainable trail construction

by local company Tricky Tracks.

Central Land Council chief executive Lesley Turner read out their names and congratulated them.

"It has been good learning new skills and being able to work hard and share this sacred place with everyone," Grant Wallace, a traditional owner and worker on the trail said.

"I'm looking forward to

using these skills for future trail work around here."

"This on-the-job, one-on-one training will allow these workers to build and maintain trails across the region," Mr Turner said.

Cultural supervisors were on site during the construction to ensure important sites were respected and protected.

The trail follows the contours of the East MacDonnell Ranges and has interpretive signage at the trail heads.

There are rest stops along the trail and it is wheelchair accessible at both ends to ensure visitors of all abilities

can enjoy it.

Mr Turner said the trail shows what can be achieved when traditional owners work together to realise their ambitions for the benefit of all.

"I want to thank the owners of the Yeperenye Nature Park for their generosity, inclusivity and forward-thinking," he said.

"You have left a legacy that's making us all very proud. Of course you were not only thinking of us visitors.

"You had your families and young people foremost in your minds and you spread the word around."



Derek Davis and Gerrard Davis were among more than 30 Aboriginal people who built the trail.



Traditional owner Lynette Ellis spoke at the launch of the Yeperenye Trail.



The traditional owners marked the trail opening with a smoking ceremony.

# Regional services team gets ready for CLC elections

NEXT year will be a big year of elections in the Central Land Council region, with an Australian Government election following hot on the heels of the election of new CLC delegates.

While nobody knows yet when the government will go to the polls, the CLC elections will be rolling out between March and April.

CLC chief executive Lesley Turner said.

“At the last election more women and young people ran for council and voters elected a good mix of new and experienced CLC delegates, men and women,” he said.

“Most people in our communities are young and half of them are women, so it would be great to see

communities and make sure the elections are free and fair.

One regional officer described his role as one of encouraging candidates to ask themselves important questions such as: “Am I well enough to be on council? Are there young people that could step up and shadow me or who could I mentor and support?”

The regional officers kicked off their election preparations with a meeting with the Aboriginal Governance and Management Program in the middle of the year, where they talked about the importance of the elections.

“The delegates and their families are so proud of their role. We see families who have old documents from three generations ago, who hold onto them as evidence that they were part of the CLC, part of setting it up and fighting for the community,” one regional officer said. “Our role in running the elections is to help continue the fight.”

## “Our role in running the elections is to help continue the fight.”

It’s not too early for women and men of all ages to start thinking about representing their communities and running for one of the 90 positions on the council.

“Councils make better decisions for everybody if they have a wide range of members who all bring different life experiences and world views,”

even more young people and women stand for election this time around.”

The CLC’s regional services team will again organise election meetings in all communities.

Regional officers don’t take sides but are neutral helpers who use their strong local networks to inform their



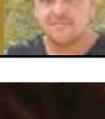


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Our Decisions | Our Actions | Our Future

**Any questions about CLC business?**  
 Call your regional officers

 <b>2. SOUTH WEST</b> Wayne Clarke, 89 51 0577	 <b>1. ALICE SPRINGS</b> Aaron Kopp, 89 51 6264
 <b>3. NORTH WEST</b> Charlie Hodgson, 89 51 0627	 <b>6. TENNANT CREEK</b> Darryl "Tiger" Fitz, 89 62 2343
 <b>4. TANAMI</b> Amos Egan, 89 51 0581	 <b>7. EASTERN SANDOVER</b> Jesy James Carr, 8951 0606
 <b>5. WEST</b> Dale Satour, 8951 0591	 <b>8. EASTERN PLENTY</b> Richard Dodd, 8951 0622
	 <b>9. CENTRAL</b> Michael Turner, 8951 6250



# CLC ELECTIONS 2022

## WHO DO YOU WANT TO REPRESENT YOUR REGION?

Thinking about running for election?  
 Call: **8951 6212** or **8951 6255**



**CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL**

# Aboriginal voices to speak up strongly for better housing

ABORIGINAL voices will be heard loud and clear in the Northern Territory's housing reform discussion, thanks to a memorandum of understanding between NT Shelter and Aboriginal Housing NT.

The agreement is the first between an Aboriginal and a mainstream peak body in Australia and was signed in mid-July.

It aims to help both organisations to work well together as they tackle the Northern Territory's housing crisis.

Aboriginal Housing NT (AHNT) is the Territory's first Aboriginal housing peak body. Its members are Aboriginal organisations that represent town camps, outstations, homelands and remote communities, such as Ingkerreke Services in Alice Springs.

"It's an exciting time for Ingkerreke Services to be a member of Aboriginal Housing NT," Maria Thompson, a director of both AHNT and Ingkerreke Services, said.

"With the recent launch of the AHNT strategic plan and the signing of a memorandum of understanding with NT Shelter, real progress toward



Lawson Broad from NT Shelter and Leeanne Caton from Aboriginal Housing NT signed the memorandum of understanding in July at Parliament House in Darwin. Centre: Minister Chansey Paech.

better housing for Aboriginal people is underway."

NT Shelter Executive Officer, Peter McMillan, said together the two organisations are stronger than if they worked separately.

"In signing this memorandum we formally

recognise and confirm our support for AHNT. We wish them every success and rest assured we will be there with you for the journey."

He said NT Shelter wants "to grow strong, lasting partnerships that result in effective advocacy and the

identification of solutions that can address housing need".

The challenge is enormous, with one out of every five Aboriginal Territorians homeless and eight out of every 10 living in severely overcrowded houses.

A recent inquiry into

homelessness in Australia by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs recommended to include Aboriginal views more strongly in the development of solutions to the housing crisis.

## Been in youth detention in the NT any time between August 2006 and November 2017?

Speak to Maurice Blackburn Lawyers to get compensation money.

**Call 1800 226 211**



**From p.2**

"We take them to soakages that are gone and to country that is sick," Mr Jones said.

"We have lost other soakages when they put in bores."

The Central Land Council presented the findings of the survey by consultant anthropologist Susan Dale Donaldson to a secretive water licence review hearing in Darwin on 3 September.

CLC lawyers had just 45 minutes to make their case and were not allowed to listen to the evidence other parties presented.

The government is expected to keep the report of the review panel secret, despite strong opposition from the CLC, Aboriginal business, and environment groups and remote community residents.

CLC delegate Peter Corbett was so angry at being excluded that he led a protest in his home community of Alekarenge on the day before the hearing.

Mr Corbett and other protestors were among more than 80 traditional owners, native title holders and remote community residents who spent much of June on the Singleton and Neutral Junction stations and the Warrabri and Iliyarne Aboriginal land trusts with Ms Dale Donaldson.



"There is about to be a water crisis. We have to stop it before it happens": Maureen O'Keefe near Singleton Station.

up in the drawdown area, added.

"There is about to be a water crisis. We have to stop it before it happens."

Ms O'Keefe returned to one of the sites in August with a group of other survey participants to show the ABC what is at stake.

Sonny Curtis explained to

## "We thought we had land rights but what good is land without water?"

They showed her waterholes, soakages, springs, and sacred trees they fear will be threatened if the water table drops even just a little bit as a result of the massive amount of water Fortune Agribusiness plans to take.

David Curtis senior worries that Wakurlpu, his outstation near Singleton Station, could run out of water because the station takes too much.

"The water levels under the surrounding communities will get pulled to Singleton and reduce the water in the communities," he told Ms Dale Donaldson.

"If the water level drops our water goes salty, and if that happens we will not be able to live there and wouldn't be able to grow anything."

Mr Curtis trials water-smart crops to see what his family can grow sustainably - without harming his country.

He said pumping up large amounts of underground water from the desert "makes no sense. We can't be certain it can be recharged and rain is not as reliable as it used to be".

"We all need water, the animals, the insects and the land itself and the people," Maureen O'Keefe, who grew

reporter Samantha Jonscher that the water at Alyerernye, a soakage west of Wycliffe Well, kept people alive when they fled the massacres in the "killing times" of the 1930s.

Today Alyerernye is bone dry, surrounded by dead and struggling yininti (bean) trees.

Ms O'Keefe could not find any of the bright red seeds, but Mr Jones spotted an old grinding stone that was used to make damper long ago.

He watched young CLC staff from Tennant Creek excavate the lowest point of the soakage.

When the hole was about two meters deep they gave up, and when they left, a few hours later, there was still no sign of moisture.

A tiny lizard darted past and spurred David Curtis senior and his son to search the sand for signs of other native animals, but all they found were some very old camel tracks.

The group is concerned about the impacts of global heating on their water sites.

CLC executive member Michael Liddle told the ABC he was surprised to see the country so dry so soon after the good rains at Christmas time.



Paul Janama, Roderick Tracker, Michael Wilson and Bobby Tracker took part in the sacred water site survey.



CLC delegate Michael Jones said the Singleton license threatens groundwater-dependent sites.

"The amount of water that the business is going to be granted will have drastic impacts on this country that is already suffering from the effects of climate change," Mr

Liddle said.

"The days are becoming hotter and the winters are becoming shorter. It could all play a role in what's happening out here."

## "A fundamental betrayal of the interests of all Territorians - and Aboriginal Territorians in particular."

The CLC doesn't trust the government to protect sites such as Alyerernye.

One of the reasons is because the government approved the Singleton water licence even though it doesn't know about the Aboriginal cultural values in the drawdown area.

This lack of knowledge poses an "extreme" risk, according to the region's water allocation plan which the government is supposed to follow.

# MEET OUR RANGERS



**Nelson Tex**

## How long have you been a Warlpiri Ranger?

Thirteen years. I started working at Nyirrpri, then I went to Yuendumu to get a permanent job.

My long service leave is coming up, three months holidays, and the plan is to go to Broome in Western Australia. Time to go fishing, relax, no more work. Come back in the New Year. I could try to pull out and retire but I don't think they'll let me!

## Best thing you've done?

Burning! It's good to burn country and get new grass and seeds for animals and bush food for us. I knew how to burn before I was a ranger, especially in the hot weather.

## What is your personal highlight?

I saw a night parrot that lives in the spinifex. I was driving along in 2011 from Alice Springs, I got to Nyirrpri at

midnight. I could see something was sitting on the side of the road, a little green bird, sort of like a budgie but bigger, sitting on the sand. I thought maybe it was sleeping, but as I got closer it flew away.

## What would you like to say to young people about becoming a ranger?

It's really great to work as a ranger. You go and see country where nobody has been, only the old people back then. And it makes me really happy to see somebody else's country, as well as mine.

Once we take the traditional owners to see country it's really to travel where they were born and learn what the dreaming is, the *Jukurra*. From my point of view, it's being able to work with the old people, especially the old ladies.



"We had absolutely no confidence that this critically important survey work would be done in time and to a rigorous standard because the government is clearly only paying lip service to the rights and interests of remote community residents and traditional owners," CLC chief executive Les Turner said.

Another reason for the distrust is that the decision to grant the licence is based on guesswork, and if that turns out to be even slightly wrong the sites are in mortal danger.

"If there is even a small drop in the water table, our soakages will disappear for good, our springs will dry up and our animals will die along with our trees," Mr Turner said.

"By the time we see any warning signs, by the time stands of sacred trees begin to look sick, it is already too late because the changes are irreversible."

The elders who took part in the sacred sites survey feel disempowered by the water licence decision.

"I can't believe the government did this," Mr Curtis senior said.

"Aboriginal people should have control over water, it is part of our country. We thought we had land rights but what good is land without water?"

This growing distrust deepened when the government rushed through a raft of controversial changes to the NT Water Act before the licence review hearing.

The NT land councils believe the changes are designed to fast-track record water licences for developers and speculators.

They allow faceless public



CLC delegate Peter Corbett led a protest in his home community Alekarengge on the day before the Singleton water license review hearing.

**"The story will be there, still alive, the song will be there and still be sung, but we will be sad when we go to that place all dead. The story will be weaker for younger people because the places will be ruined."**

and has called for "a comprehensive water reform strategy for public scrutiny".

He urged reforms that protect remote community drinking water, create a genuinely independent water regulator and overhaul water planning processes to make them more transparent.

He also wrote to Chief Minister Michael Gunner to protest about the lack of information and public consultation about the

changes.

"Having failed to properly inform traditional landowners and invite public comment, the government now seems intent on preventing us all from considering the wide-ranging implications of the proposed legislation," Mr Turner said.

"What happened to the chief minister's commitment to transparent government?"

NLC chair Samuel Bush-Blanas also wants more

transparency.

"The government should be telling our mob more about what they are doing to our water. If we aren't careful we'll end up like the Murray-Darling river systems in New South Wales.

"We need to hold them to account and make sure they do the right thing by Aboriginal and other Territorians, and not just big developers who want big mobs of our water for free," he said.

# Yitaki mani: master trackers turn teachers

ENID Gallagher leaned forward over the spinifex and clutched her chest in fear.

Suddenly, she wasn't just showing the three young men from Nyirripi how to track brush-tailed mulgara, she had become the frightened animal.

The animal in question is a small, threatened marsupial Yapa call *jajina*.

"*Jajina* wake at night when the lightning strikes," she said, and pointed to the burrow beneath the spinifex.

Her teenage students learn the difference between fresh and old *kuna* (poo) left by the small marsupial, and read the tiny footprints around their burrows.

They listened carefully to their *kuyu pungu* (master tracker), and filled out their work sheets.

Reading and learning the country (*yitaki mani*) is part of a workshop by eight senior Yapa knowledge holders, educators, Central Land Council rangers from Yuendumu, Nyirripi and Willowra and other staff.

The week-long workshop at the Newhaven Wildlife Sanctuary, 363 kilometres northwest of Alice Springs, included Nyirripi high school students so they could road-test new learning materials developed by the *Yitaki Mani* project working group.

The workshop is part of a new CLC project that aims to find out how senior Yapa knowledge holders pass on a lifetime of learning and caring for country to Yapa who grew up in settlements.

Unlike young people today, *kuyu pungu* and Warlpiri Ranger Alice Henwood was born out bush, west of Nyirripi, and learned to live off the land.

"I'm one of the last bush ladies," Ms Henwood said proudly. Now in her sixties, she learned to track as soon as she could walk and follow her parents and aunties on the hunt.

Ms Henwood's journey took many years, but she feels a sense of urgency to teach her young colleagues.

"I am worried that when I pass away that knowledge will



Christine Michaels and her daughter saved a dingo pup from an eagle.



Enid Gallagher mentored students from Nyirripi.



Master tracker Alice Henwood at the Newhaven Wildlife Sanctuary.

just disappear. That's why we have to pass the knowledge to the young rangers now, as well as the young people, so they can pass on to their kids," she said.

Yapa and the CLC want to fast-track that learning process so that young rangers have access to *yitaki maningjaku* - everything you need to know to track.

The project working group developed teaching and learning materials that young people can relate to, but that still foreground Yapa knowledge systems.

*Kardiya* (non-Aboriginal people) typically trap animals to identify what species live in an area, but this only works if something falls into the trap. A skilled *kuyu pungu*,

however, can tell you the size, diet, territory and hunting patterns, as well as the speed of travel, age and sex of all the animals, reptiles and insects that left tracks around the trap overnight.

"We teach whitefellas, and we also learn from them too," said Ms Henwood's daughter and fellow Warlpiri Ranger Christine Michaels.

"Like with the tablets CLC showed us how to store information about endangered animals."

Yapa knowledge is not just about identifying the animal, it's also about the *purda nyanyi* (sensory awareness) of the expert tracker, which is traditionally stored in their head.

Thanks to funding from the

10 Deserts Project, the *Yitaki Mani* team is developing tools and resources to maintain and promote this knowledge for generations to come.

"I'm getting a little bit sick now, so I really need to pass my knowledge to the younger rangers and the kids. I've been working for a very long time," Christine Michaels said.

"Today the kids from Nyirripi were really excited to go tracking for *jajina* and *warrarna* (great desert skink) and count the burrows. I was really happy with that.

"If young people want to become a ranger they have to work to know their country, spend time with elders on country, and not go into town drinking," she said.



**From p.2**

I don't know how the government chose these 30 communities, but the head of the government's COVID vaccination task force, Lieutenant General John Frewen, has said they are just the beginning.

Let's hope the government expands the initiative to all our communities before it is too late.

Lieutenant General Frewen also admitted that there had been some setbacks in the roll out in our communities and "that's just allowed the gap to sort of grow".

We welcome this admission but we now need the government to throw everything at closing the vaccine gap and delivering information to our communities in their languages.

But it's also up to every one of us to prevent the nightmare

that has been inflicted on our brothers and sisters in Wilcannia.

Here at the CLC we are going out of our way to tell our members and staff that the vaccines are safe and will protect the community.

We even reward them when they get vaccinated.

It was great to see delegates line up for the jab when the wonderful team from the Katherine West Health Board came to our council meeting at Kalkaringi in August.

Our regional services team has hit the road with the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress and the NT Health Department to support vaccinations in town camps and bush communities.

Before the next council meeting at Alpururulam our team will host BBQs in dozens of communities, armed with myth-busting information for those who are still worried

about the vaccine.

There is no time to loose. This is a race, always was.

Our health services are right to call for much higher vaccination rates for our communities than the 70-80 per cent governments are aiming for before they will relax restrictions and open borders.

The Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance of the NT said we should accept nothing less than 90-95 per cent of Aboriginal Territorians over the age of 12 to be vaccinated.

The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation doesn't want restrictions to be lifted until vaccination rates in Aboriginal communities hit 100 per cent.

This is necessary because our communities have many more young people and people with chronic diseases than the rest of Australia.

Donna Ah Chee and Dr John Boffa from the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress and others warn that once restrictions are lifted everyone unvaccinated will be exposed to the virus.

# Ready to lock down our communities: Gunner



*"If, when we are ready to take the next steps as part of the national plan, there are a handful of communities where the vaccination rate remains low, despite all the efforts of government, land councils and health services – that will not stop the Territory's progress. We cannot wait forever to move forward. If there are some communities who don't reach a high enough coverage of vaccination – we may need to look at other options to restrict movement in and out of those communities."*

They say what we could see then may "resemble the early effects of British colonialism, when a high proportion of the population died from introduced infections".

We fear governments will not wait for every community to be fully vaccinated before they open up.

Our organisations have kept our communities safe until now, but we can't do it all by ourselves.

We now need you – every single one of you - to get vaccinated, so we are not sitting ducks when COVID takes aim at the bush.



Peter Palmer, was one of the delegates who got his Pfizer vaccine at council.



Raymond Maxwell got vaccinated.



Tommy Conway got the jab too.



A Katherine West Health Board nurse vaccinated Teddy Long.



## Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) Grant Funding Round



### ROUND OPEN

Funding for one off projects that benefit Aboriginal people in the NT. ABA supports projects not covered by other government funding. ABA grant funding is now available through an open grants process with applications being accepted all year round.

**Aboriginal controlled organisations based in the NT are encouraged to apply.**

Opens: **30 August 2021**

**For more information:**

Contact **1800 354 612** or email [aba@official.niaa.gov.au](mailto:aba@official.niaa.gov.au)

Or visit [www.niaa.gov.au/aba-grants](http://www.niaa.gov.au/aba-grants)

# New Yuendumu enterprise takes everyone the extra mile

ROBERT Jampijinpa Robertson's vision for a Yuendumu-owned and operated transport and vehicle recovery service is one step closer to reality.

Xtra Mile, the social enterprise he started, began running chartered bus services in June.

The milestone followed two years of planning with the Central Land Council's community development team and volunteers of Community First Development, a community development and research organisation.

"Members were coming and asking if we can take them to Lajamanu, Papunya and all those places, and that's when I started to think we need to start a bus service or something for our people to get to places they want to go," Mr Robertson said.

Yuendumu residents have long endured expensive and infrequent transport services, and people traveling to Alice Springs are often stranded for days, missing work and school.

Mr Robertson successfully pitched the social and employment benefits of his bright idea to the community committee of the Granites Mine Affected Area Aboriginal Corporation in May 2019.

Later that year, the committee allocated almost \$98,000 to set up a social enterprise and buy two Toyota coaster buses, and almost \$27,000 for two remote transport services consultants.

In 2020 it contributed just over \$164,000 towards the company's first year of operations, enabling it to

run a charter bus service and establish trust with its customers.

Xtra Mile aims to offer a regular and reliable bus service to the whole community, with return trips between Yuendumu and Alice Springs costing around \$160.

Mr Robertson named the company in memory of the travel his family used to undertake by foot.

"In the logo is a little boy being carried by his father," he said.

"My father used to carry me on his shoulder when I used to get tired, so he had extra load on. He would carry a spear and me on top of all the stuff he was carrying. Extra mile."

Mr Robertson sourced an additional \$250,000 from the Aboriginals Benefit Account, allowing Xtra Mile to employ a social enterprise worker for two years.

Xtra Mile set up shop in an office rented from the Yuendumu Women's Centre.

The centre also provided secure parking for the buses, and the Wanta Aboriginal Corporation is helping with human resources, governance and financial systems.

Xtra Mile aims to generate enough income to cover a third of its operating costs in its first year.

It is also training and employing locals.

Four Yapa drivers completed commercial passenger vehicle training in Yuendumu, passed their theory exam, medical assessment and got a police certificate.

Two more drivers will undertake the driver knowledge test and a medical



**"One of the things in the logo is a little boy being carried by his father. My father used to carry me on his shoulder when I used to get tired, so he had extra load on. He would carry a spear and me on top of all the stuff he was carrying, you know. Extra mile."**

assessment in Alice Springs before attending the second Drive Safe NT training in Yuendumu in September.

The company hopes four more drivers will upgrade to a

light rigid vehicle license class.

Mr Robertson is proud of what he and the community have achieved so far.

"I think the whole thing is great training and jobs for

our mob in the desert, and to strengthen your own business and help people understand what things are possible," he said.



Robert Jampijinpa Robertson started the new Xtra Mile charter service in Yuendumu with GMAAAC funding.



# Yapa school kids learn songs and stories on country

THE ANNUAL country visit in June took school kids out bush with elders and family members.

They honed their Warlpiri language skills as they visited important sites and learned their dreaming stories.

They camped at three different sites deep in the Tanami Desert and used them as bases for visits to important sacred sites.

At Jila Well, they visited Yumurrpa, a sacred site and excellent spot for digging up *yarla* (bush potato).

They continued to Mala Bore outstation, where they heard the *kalangu* (digging stick) dreaming story, a women's story that runs from Mina Mina to Coniston.

At Piyruu, Tommy Watson told a water dreaming story

of the *kirrkilANJI* (hawk) who collected water from the water hole and took it north.

Students camped at Nyinyirripalangu visited the nearby waterholes that had filled up since the last rain and had attracted thousands of finches.

From there they visited the *wardapi* (goanna) dreaming site, and the *kuwana* dreaming site at Pirlinyanu, where CLC ranger Alice Henwood and Angeline Hargreaves performed the song and dance for that site.

The students camped at the Newhaven Conservation Reserve and heard the *wanayarra* (rainbow serpent) dreaming story at Lake Bennet from Ms Henwood.

After visiting the *yarripirri* songline sites and learning

about the *jardiwampa* ceremony, PAW Media treated the students and families to an outdoor movie night.

At the end of the week, all students had practiced their *yawulyu* (women's ceremonial dance, songs and designs), and *purlapa* (public ceremony).

"This country visit was really great," Yamurna Oldfield, the Yuendumu school's assistant principal and WETT advisory committee member, said.

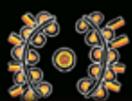
"There were lots of opportunities for kids to see their country, their own place. They are really happy when country visit is happening. It is really good to know where they came from, because their parents can't always take them, she said."



Cynthia Wheeler showed students and their families how to dig up *yarla* (bush potato) at Jila Well.



Alice Nampijimpa Henwood told Nyirripi students the dreaming story of Pirlinyanu.



CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL

## LOOKING FOR WORK?



The CLC's employment support team helps job seekers to write resumes and job applications and to prepare for interviews.

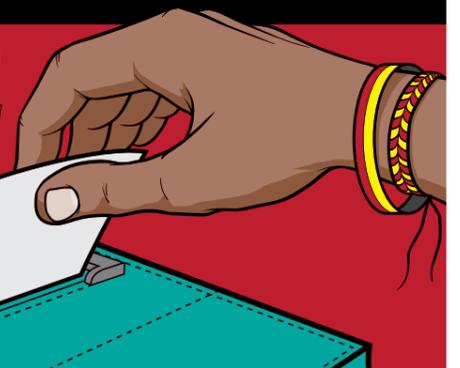
We support employers to develop strategies to find and keep Aboriginal workers.

Contact the CLC on 8951 6211 or [employmentunit@clc.org.au](mailto:employmentunit@clc.org.au)

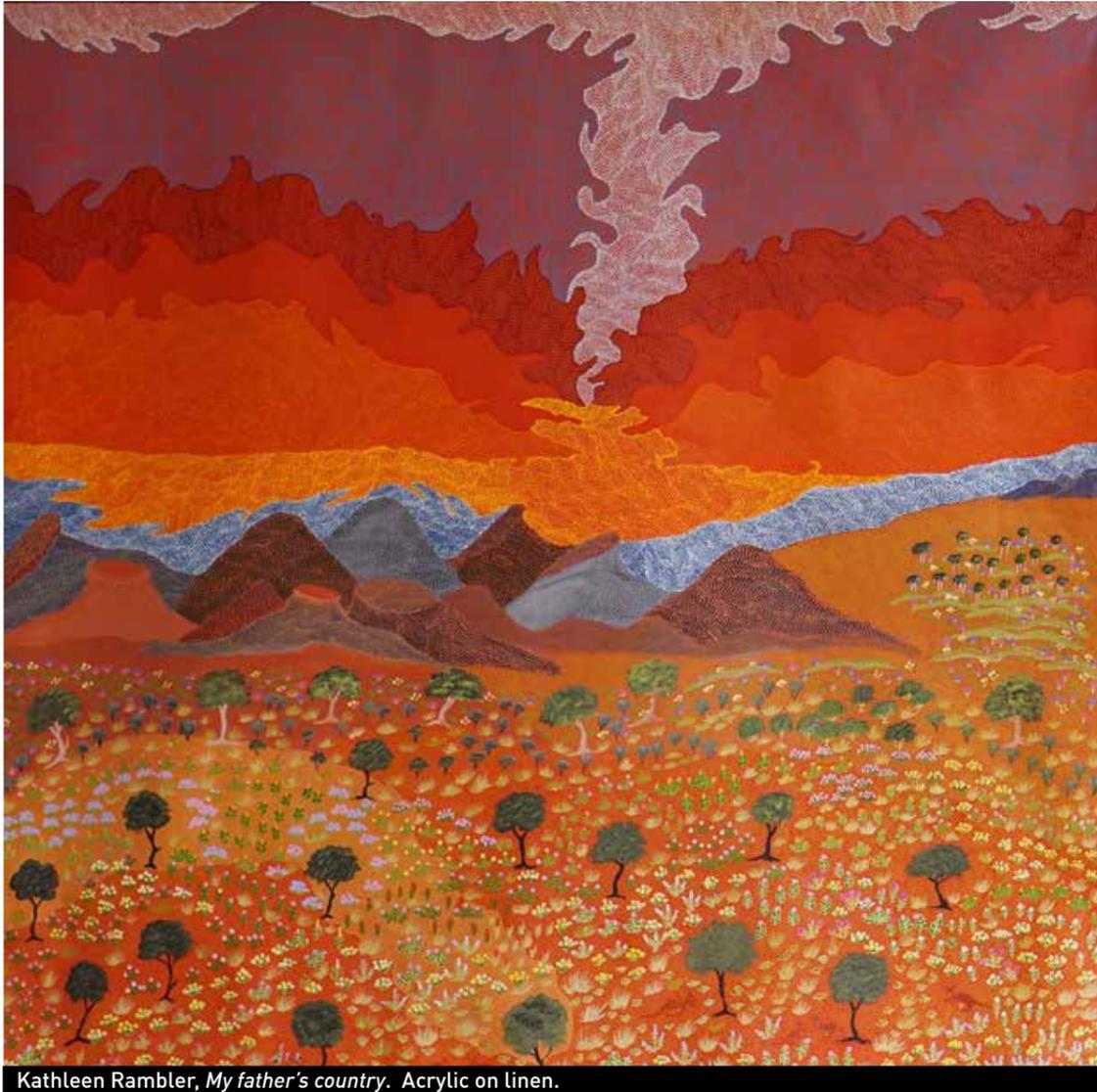
We also talk to schools and community groups about job opportunities.

## USE YOUR POWER

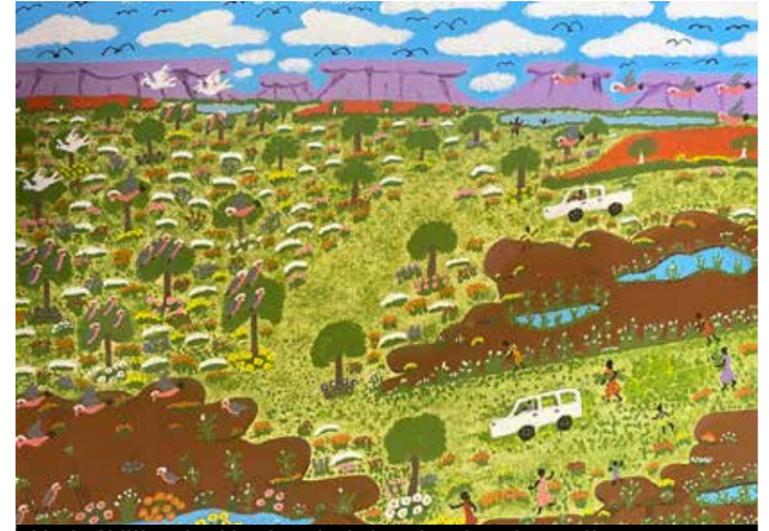
VOTE IN THE FEDERAL ELECTION EARLY NEXT YEAR



call NTEC 1800 698 683 or visit [www.ntec.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntec.nt.gov.au)



Kathleen Rambler, *My father's country*. Acrylic on linen.



Marie Shilling, *Looking for mingkulpa after the rain*, acrylic on canvas.



Nita Ferguson, *Tjintjira (Salt Pan)*. Acrylic on canvas.



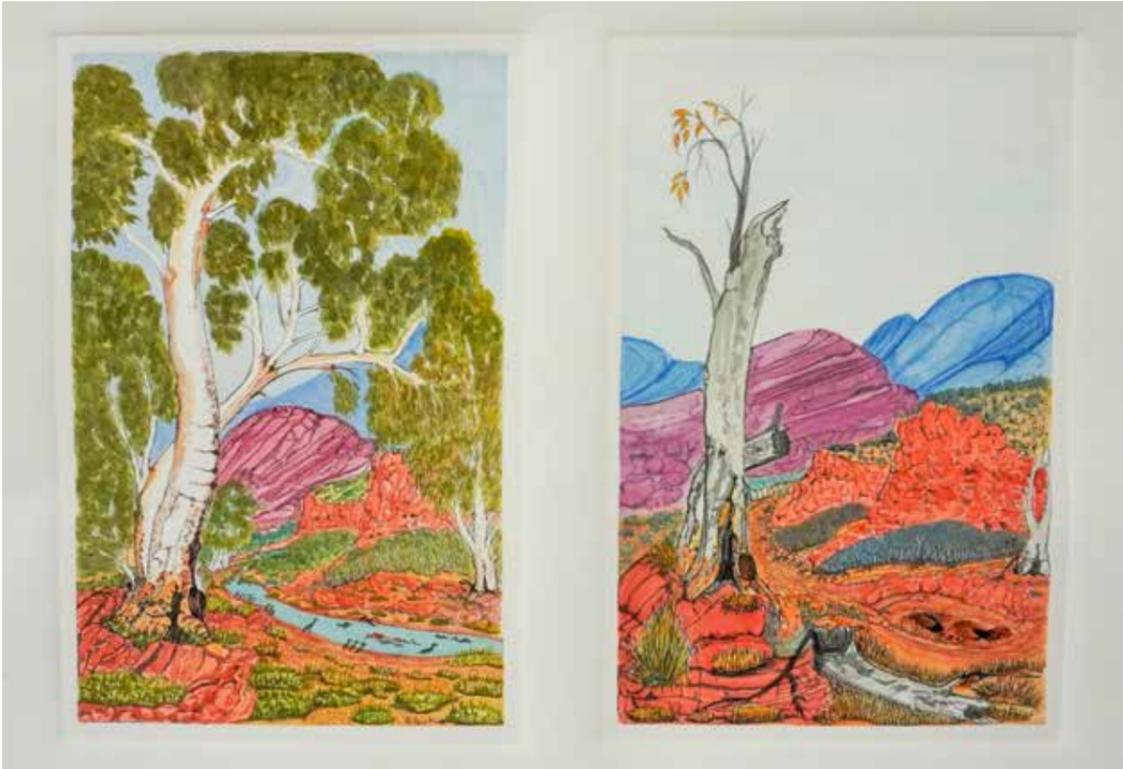
Lindy Brodie, *First trip to grandfather's country with ranger mob*. Acrylic on canvas.



Hayley Coulthard, *Kuprilya, kwatja kumia inthurra (Kuprilya, the water is so sweet)*, earthenware and underglazes.



Charles Jangala Inkamala, *Alice Springs (Mparntwe), the Gap, going south. Road and train road*, Acrylic on canvas.



Selma Coulthard, *Window of Time*, 2021, Watercolour on Arches watercolour paper, 43 x 62cm



Sabrina Nangala Robertson, *Jukurrpa (Water Dreaming)*, Acrylic on Belgian linen.

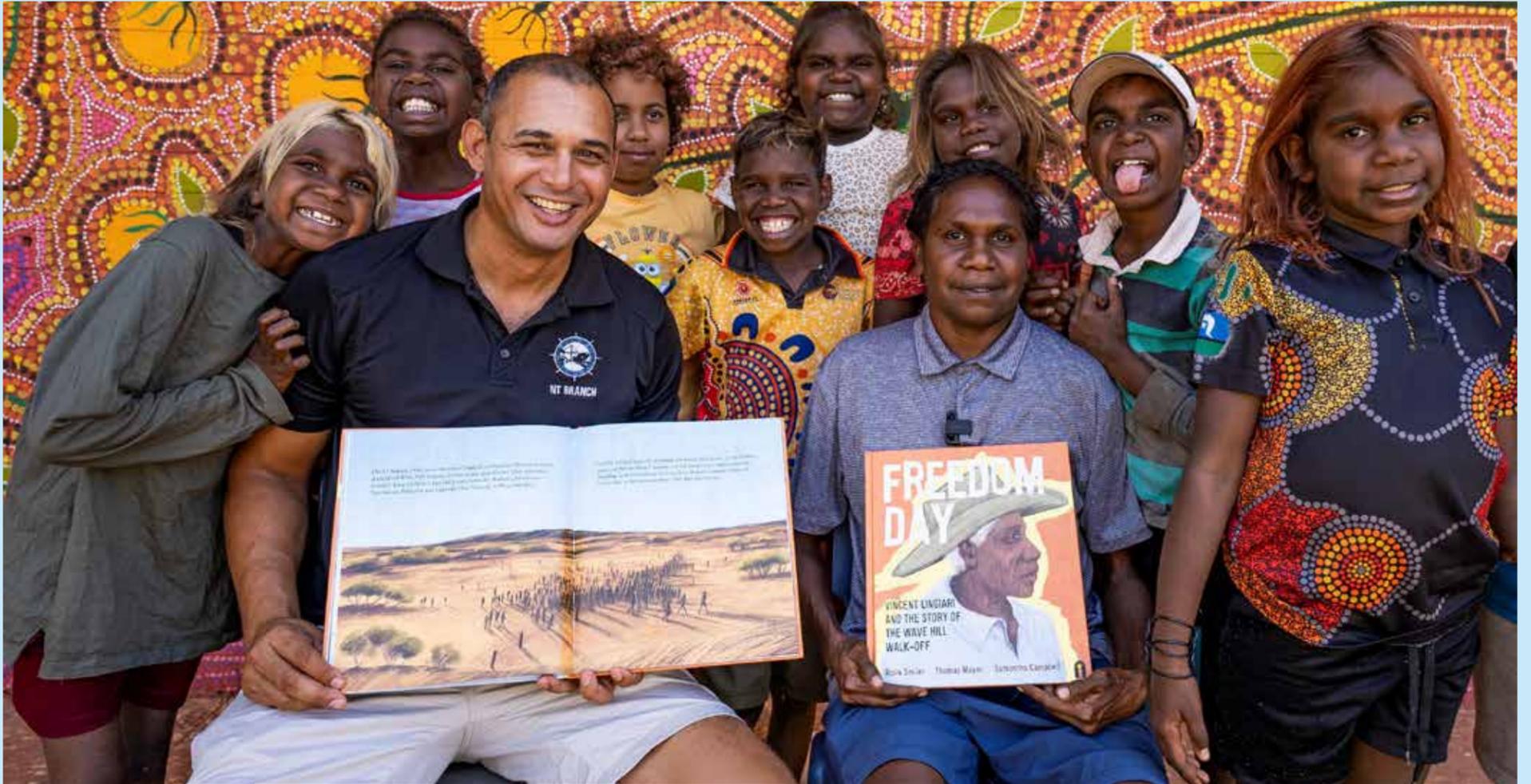


Marlene Rubuntja, *Water gives us life*. Soft sculpture made with bush dyed recycled woolen blanket, embellished with wool and cotton.



Leah Leaman, *Following the waterways*, Acrylic on Belgian linen.

# Kids book tells how land rights started with a donkey kick



Rosie Smiler and Thomas Mayor read the book to the school children in Kalkaringi.

ROSIE Smiler's grandfather Vincent Lingiari led more than 200 Aboriginal stockmen and domestic workers as they walked off Wave Hill cattle station in the Northern Territory.

It's well-known that the families' fight for equal pay and land became a symbol for national change and marks the start of the land rights movement.

Less well-known, however, is the role a donkey played in literally kicking off that movement.

Ms Smiler has always thought it would make a great story for children.

Now she has co-written a kids book with unionist and Uluru Statement advocate Thomas Mayor.

*Freedom Day* tells how her grandfather was in hospital in Darwin with a broken leg after a donkey had kicked him.

There he met two Aboriginal union organisers and a union leader.

He told them how the families on the station were being treated like slaves and had had enough.

"They said, 'If you walk off Wave Hill Station we promise we will be there

in full support, and I think that helped to inspire the walk-off", Mr Mayor told the *Awaye* program on Radio National.

The rest, as they say, is history.

Ms Smiler said the Lingiari family wants every child to know her grandfather's story.

**"That's how we're going to keep it alive for the younger generation."**

"For the kids to learn the culture and what our elders did long ago, and about the walk-off - that's how we're going to keep it alive for the younger generation," she said.

For Thomas Mayor, it's a matter of telling the truth about Australia's history.

"This country was built on slavery as much as the United States," he said.

"It's something Australia still hasn't come to terms with. It still avoids the word slavery, as we saw the Prime Minister Morrison do a while back, denying that there was slavery in this country.

"How else do you describe it? People working for only enough sustenance to keep them working? That's slavery."

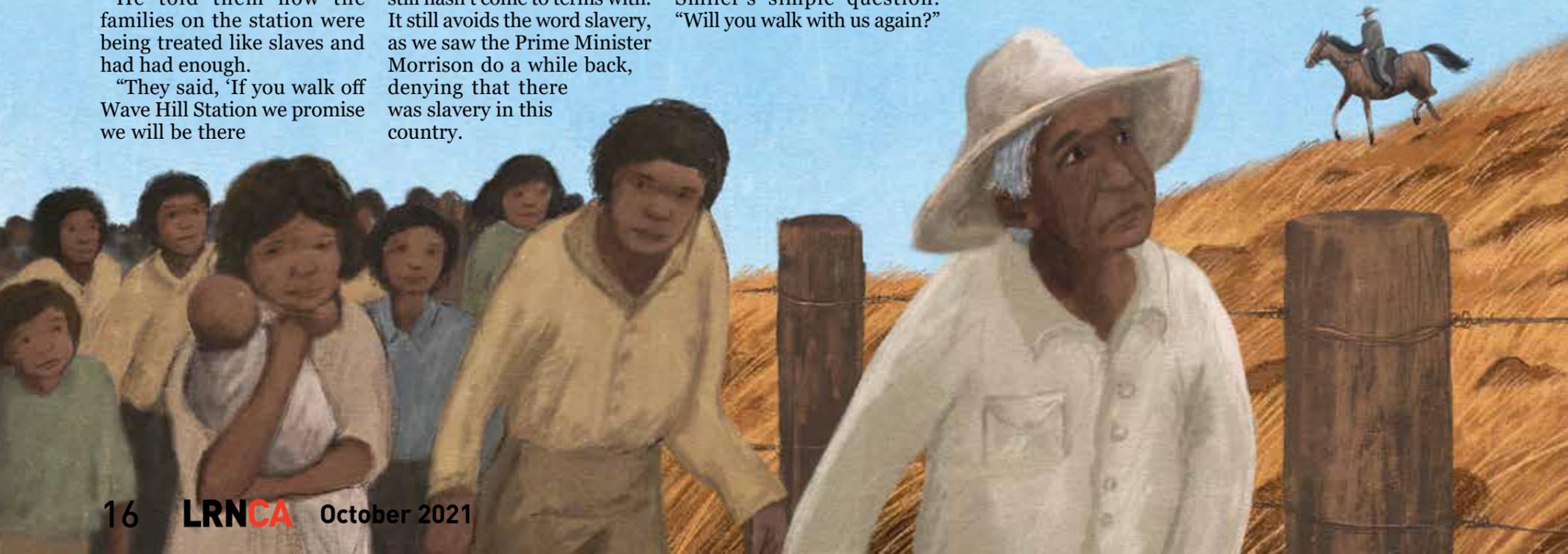
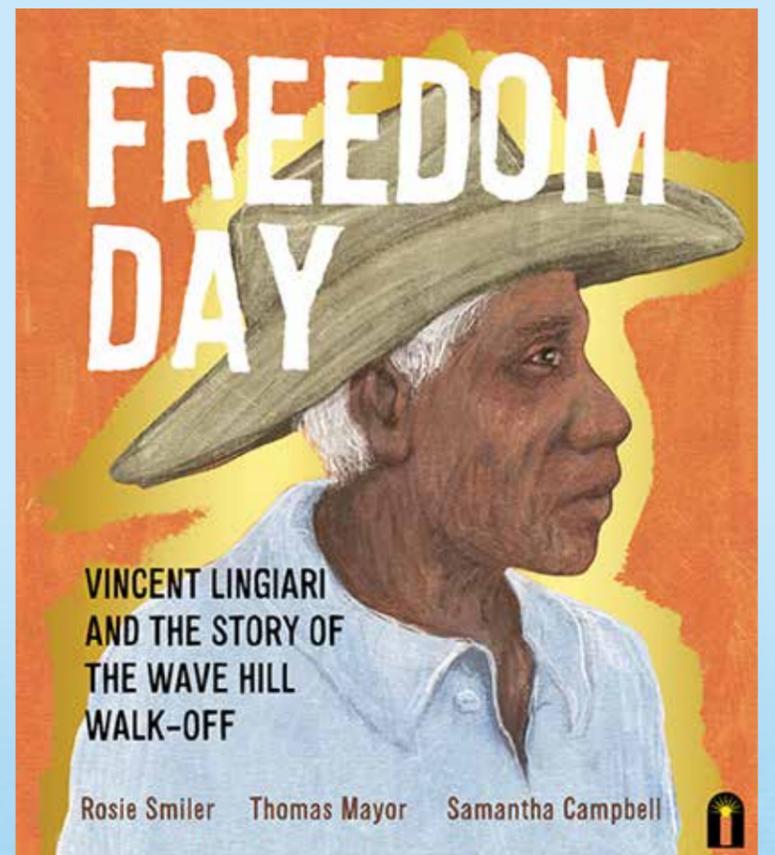
But even though the families withstood enormous pressure in the years following the walk-off, their hopes for self-determination remain to be

realised.

Mr Mayor said that's why Aboriginal people want a constitutionally-enshrined voice to the parliament.

"We have unfinished business. We need a voice to affect the laws and policies. Otherwise hostile governments come along and we can't hold them to account."

The book ends with Ms Smiler's simple question: "Will you walk with us again?"



# Banjo's bravery broadcast by walk-off web site

EVERYONE knows about Vincent Lingiari and the 1966 Wave Hill Walk-Off, but who has heard about Banjo Morton and the Lake Nash Walk-Off some 20 years earlier?

Or the Ampilatwatja Walk-Off he led some decades after Wave Hill?

A new interactive website is making sure these stories of resilience and bravery are not forgotten.

*Banjo Morton - the untold story* ([www.banjomorton.com.au](http://www.banjomorton.com.au)) uses the tales of the two lesser-known strikes to teach the world about the strength of Alyawarre culture.

In 1949, long before land rights were a household name, station worker Banjo Morton decided to leave Lake Nash Station because he wasn't being paid proper wages and worked only for rations.

The creator of the site, Adelaide-based director Lara Damiani, first read about the walk off in *The Age* newspaper and wanted to know more.

"It was a really big article just after Banjo had done the Ampilatwatja Walk-Off in 2009," she said.

Residents left the community in response to the Northern Territory Emergency Response, better known as 'the Intervention'.

People set up camp at Honeymoon Bore, an outstation outside the government's prescribed area.

Ms Damiani contacted Mr Morton's nephew Richard Downs who was also a part of the walk-off, and met with Banjo Morton and his family.

Many trips between Adelaide and Ampilatwatja followed

over the next 11 years, stories were recorded and filmed, and the site went live in July.

"This interactive website shows the truth," Mr Downs said.

"Indigenous people in the early days were just paid with flour, tea and sugar, there were no wages.

"It's what happened in the past and we do have to move on, but we also need to learn from the past so that it doesn't happen again."

Described as a "strong, gentle and kind man" by Mr Downs, Mr Morton's story is set to inspire people everywhere.

"We are giving this story to the younger generations to get them to understand the picture and the hardship that the older generations went through to benefit from what they have now," Mr Downs said.

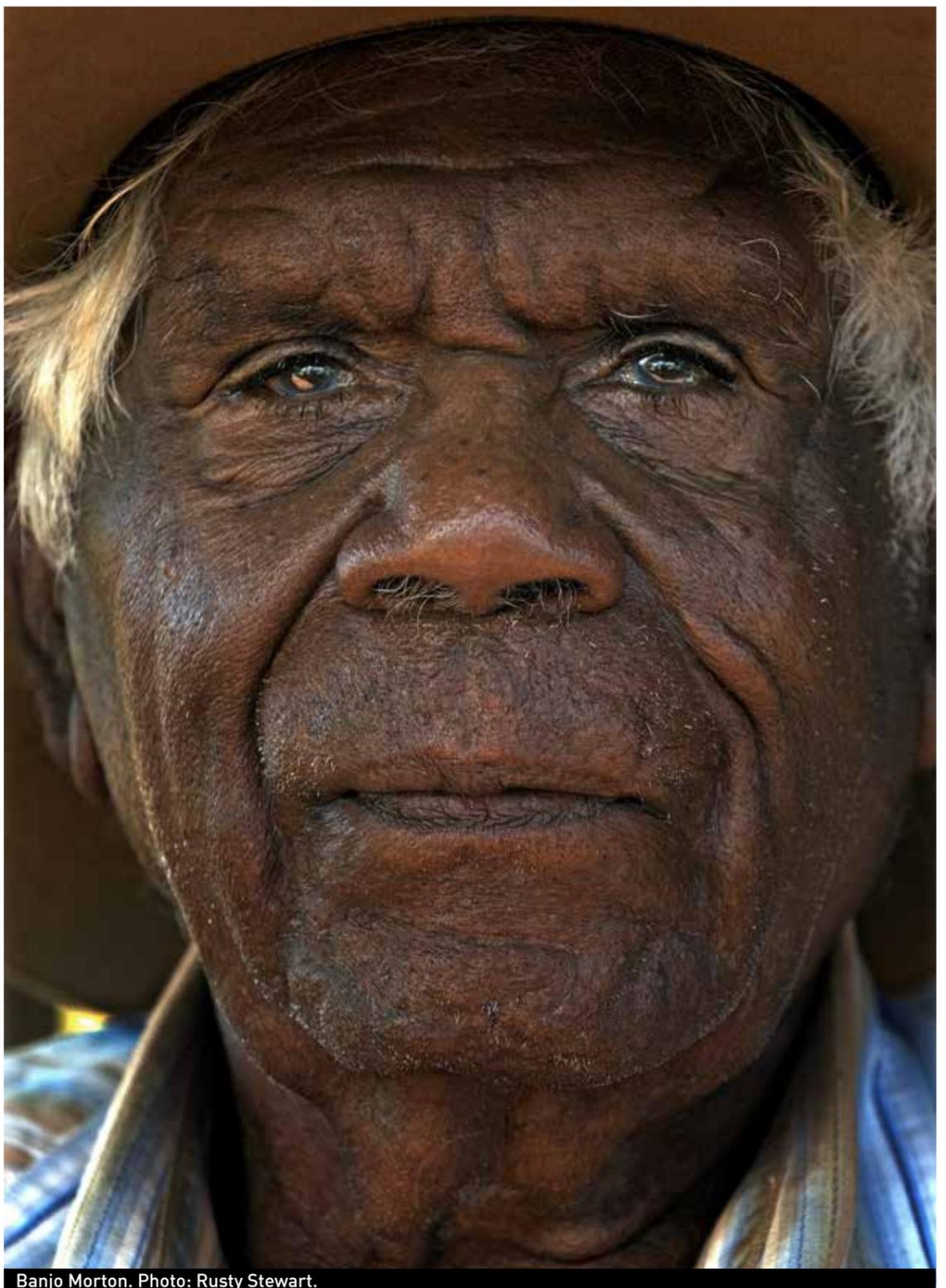
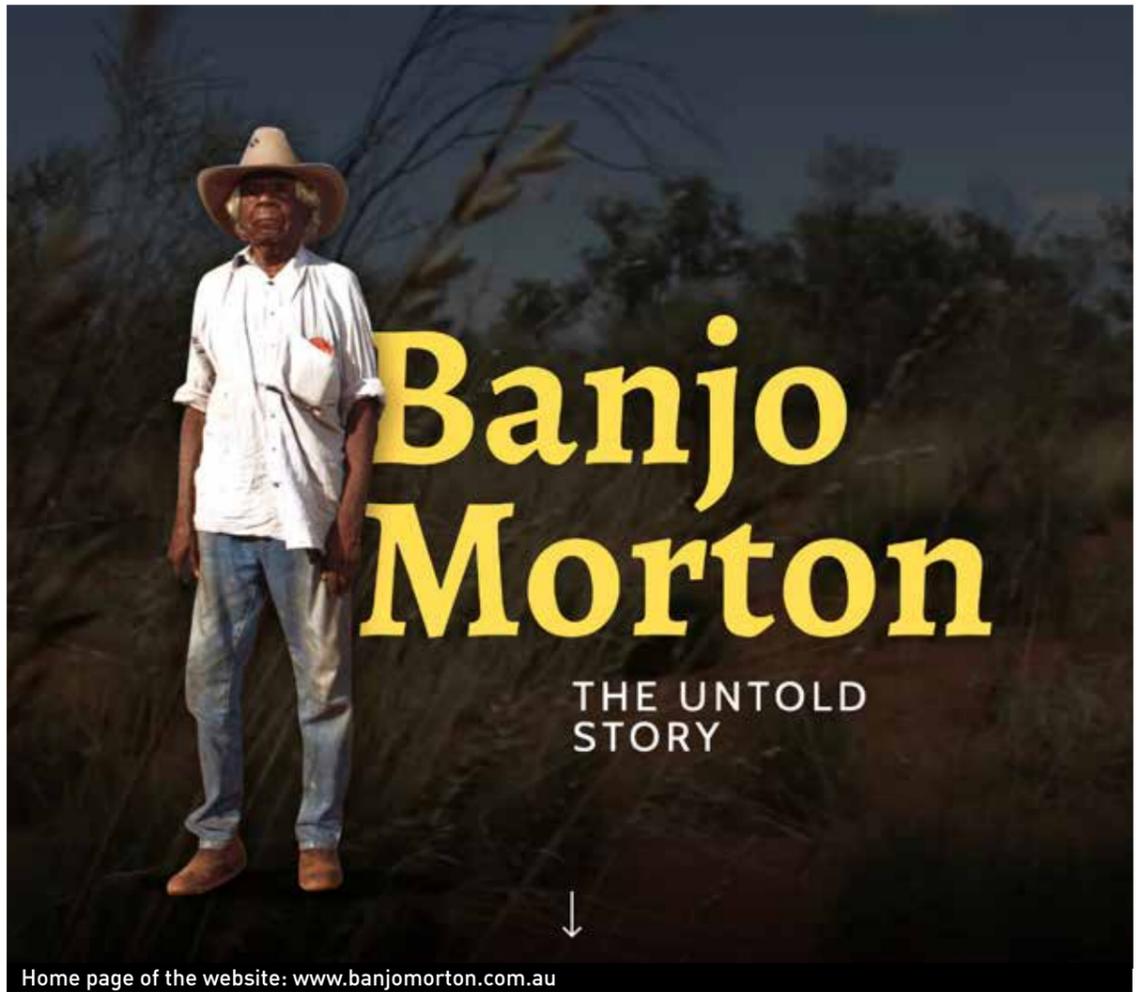
Ms Damiani has created teaching and learning guides so the website can be used as an education tool in classrooms.

"What was really important to me was to get this story to a wide audience, and students are a big audience," she said.

"I thought this could be a great way to tell Banjo's story with a focus on creating an education resource."

Ms Damiani hopes to launch the website in Ampilatwatja with a community celebration in October.

The Central Land Council has provided support for spreading the word about the site.



A young Banjo working out at the Lake Nash Cattle Station. Photo: Deidre Pyle.

Banjo Morton. Photo: Rusty Stewart.

# Second coming of Tennant Creek mural is talk of the town

A MURAL that began as a community arts project has been resurrected for the second time, after it almost faded away under the harsh Barkly sun.

The 15 metre tableau on the Central Land Council's Tennant Creek office wall, painted in the summer of 1989 by local Aboriginal artists and Melbourne muralist Bob Clutterbuck, is back to its former glory.

"The restored mural has been the talk of the town," CLC Tennant Creek office manager Darryl Fitz said.

"It depicts the two main dreaming places of Tennant Creek, Kunjarra (Devils Pebbles) on the left and Jurnkurakurr on the right, and our history."

Rosemary Plummer, who explained these stories in Warrumungu at the launch of the original mural and

whose brother was one of the painters, said the paint was peeling off and the wall "didn't look good anymore".

She said the refurbished mural seems much brighter than the original and has restored a bit of pride in the town.

"A lot of people sit in front of the land council and I think they like it. My family like it because it's lifted up the main street again. Everyone is happy."

"It gives us that feeling that we've got our dreaming. It tells us where we come from, our identity, really. Where people belong."

The mural references stories about the flying fox, the white cockatoo lightning rain, and the crow.

Bush foods, traditional bush lifestyle and struggles to protect sacred sites against mining companies, such as the battle for Kunjarra and Mount Samuel, are also depicted.

The CLC restored the original mural in 2009 after it had become very faded.

Alice Springs signwriter Adam Levot used a tiny photo of the mural taken when it was just finished, blew it up more than a thousand times and enhanced it digitally so it matched the original.

He then transferred the art work to metal panels and screwed them to battens on the wall, but the vibrant colours of his first restoration effort were no match for another 12 years

of local sunlight.

This year the CLC spent \$50,000 to give the much-loved piece of street art a third lease of life.

The Julalikari Council co-ordinated the original painting, working with 10 organisations and discussing it with more than 50 people before the project began.

Four local painters, T. Nelson Naparurla, P. Dickenson Naparurla, Ronald Plummer Jupururla, and D Williams Jupururla, assisted by a number of others, laboured through the hot summer and over Christmas and finished the mural in

project's completion.

Some of the painters were very elderly and unwell and most have now passed away.

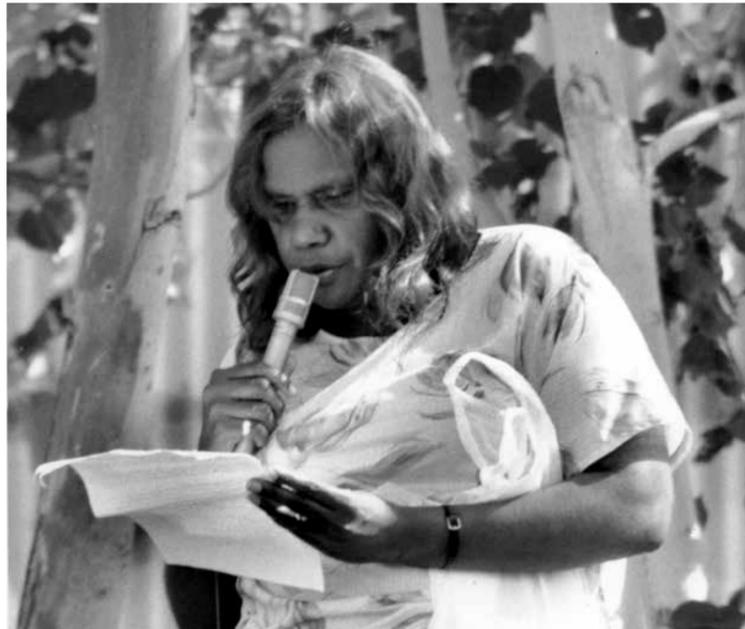
Two years after they launched their mural someone vandalised it.

"One morning we woke up and found that somebody had graffitied 'Abos Go home - KKK' all over it," former CLC lawyer Virginia Newell recalled.

"It was a terribly sad chapter in the mural's history and in the history of Tennant Creek. We had to go around and explain to people what had happened.

"They didn't even know what

**"It tells us where we come from, our identity, really. Where people belong."**



Rosemary Plummer OAM, the sister of one of the eight artists who painted the mural on the wall of the Tennant Creek office, spoke at the mural's launch in 1992.

**"One morning we woke up and found that somebody had graffitied 'Abos Go home - KKK' all over it."**

January 1990.

Mr Clutterbuck said it was the most difficult project he had ever done.

Some of the artists were accomplished in the traditional style but "everything from basic brush control to complex artistic requirements were totally new, and predictably they were often over-awed by the task. A comparison would be trying to teach someone a new language in three months," he wrote in a report on the

KKK was and I had to show them pictures of those guys in pointy hats," she recalled.

"Of course they were very worried that there really were KKK in town and it took a lot of reassurance to convince them that there probably weren't. It was also kind of funny because it was a migration slogan - Abos go home - well they were home."

"Anyway, we repainted the mural and refreshed the colours and everybody was happy," Ms Newell said.



The refreshed mural takes up the wall of the CLC's Tennant Creek office on the corner of Windley Street and the Stuart Highway.

**From p.4**  
 “As we launch this exhibition, dozens of sacred water sites around Singleton Station are under threat from the biggest water licence the Territory has ever given away – for free,” she said.

“Sites that are connected by songs and stories that we are duty-bound to keep alive and pass on.

“A staggering 40 gigalitres a year for 30 years - and for what? To grow thirsty export crops like avocados in the desert?

“Those avocados won’t feed our growing communities that are fast running out of water, that are drinking water poisoned with uranium and that can’t build new houses to relieve overcrowding because there just isn’t enough drinking water.”

She said CLC delegates had also voted for their favourite award entry during their August council meeting near Vincent Lingiari’s home community of Daguragu.

Mr Lingiari’s granddaughter, Rosie Smiler, presented the Delegates Choice Award to Timothea Palmer, the daughter of winner Leah Leaman, from Kalkaringi.

Ms Leaman’s painting *Following the Waterways* reveals her love of fishing in rivers and waterholes, of wetland broilgas and bush flowers.

It tells the story of a couple, “the last of their kind”, who “followed the waterways by foot all the way from here to the coast ... with their beloved dogs, billycan, hook spear and rolled-up little calico swag, never getting lost.”

The exhibition can be viewed online at <https://desart.com.au/vincent-lingiari-art-award/> and is supported by the Peter Kittle Motor Company and Newmont Australia.



Vincent Lingiari Art Award 2021 winner Grace Kemarre Robinya at the Tangentyere Artists Gallery.



Joseph Williams and Baraba Shaw standing with his work *Speaking to Country*.



Robert Fielding with his work *Kupi Kupi (whirlwind)*, Photo: Oliver Eclipse Photography, Desart

# Goodbye to a gentleman of the land rights struggle

“AN EXTRAORDINARY man, who lived an extraordinary life.”

Summing up the huge legacy of one of the most loved figures of the land rights movement in a single speech in Federal Parliament is not easy, but it is hard to disagree with Member for Lingiari Warren Snowdon’s attempt.

Cullum Wavehill, who passed away aged 85, just two days after the 55th anniversary of the Wave Hill Walk-Off, helped to bring about extraordinary change.

Walking off from the Wave Hill Station and celebrating the big anniversary of the strike that kicked off the land rights movement framed his life’s journey.

He was there for many of the movement’s milestones.

He was at Wattie Creek when Gough Whitlam poured red sand into Vincent Lingiari’s palm.

He saw Wenten Rubuntja and Galarrwuy Yunupingu present Bob Hawke with the Barunga Statement in 1988 and witnessed the former prime minister promise a national treaty.

Mr Wavehill was a Central Land Council delegate three decades later, when the Northern Territory land councils and the NT Government met at the site of the broken promise to embark on a Territory treaty. He also worked for the CLC in the 1990s.

The CLC delegates who had gathered at Kalkaringi in August when he passed away were heartbroken at the news.

“He represented his community on our council for decades and came to greet us all at our meeting only yesterday,” CLC chair Sammy Wilson said.

“We all looked up to him and were hoping he would join us again this afternoon.”

Mr Wavehill’s extraordinary journey began at Katherine around 1941.

He was born at Low Level to Little Minnie and Left-hand Charlie, as his station worker parents were known.

He picked up Mudbura, Jingili, Alawa and English. He never went to school or learned to read or write.

“When I was a little boy I used to hear the elders, you know, just talking. That used to go into my brain when I was growing up. Those stories came into my brain then,” he told Northern Land Council lawyer Bob Gosford in 2012.

Moving around the stock camps he learned early to stand up for himself and others.

Take that time he played with the blue heelers of a head stockman.

“He came out from the yard



and smacked me hard on the bum. I was crying and crying. My father was in the bronco yard and my father saw what that bloke done to me.

“Hey, why you done that to my son?” That head stockman said, “I told you I didn’t want that kid to play with my dogs.” He said, “What, you taking the place for your son?”

My dad said, “Yeah, that’s the only son I’ve got.”

That head stockman and my father had a good go in the yard. He wanted to beat my father, but my father been too good for him.

After my father knocked that bloke out he got a rope and jammed that bloke in the bronco panel. He made that head stockman squeal. My father and I pulled out from there. Got his swag, put me in the saddle-bags and we went walking towards Larrimah way.”

Cullum’s father got him

his first job as a stockman at Delamere, a station that was part of the Vestey cattle empire and where he worked for nine years.

“That Vestey mob, they was real tough people. They didn’t like we in those days. They could be cheeky bastards, they used to fight with us and we used to fight back. That Vestey’s mob used to be run amok for Aboriginal girl – all them white fellas – stockmen, ringers and all.”

At Wave Hill, another Vestey station, he met and married Bidy, the love of his life.

“My wife was going to marry one half-caste bloke from Queensland, but she left that old fella. Me and her used to love each other, you know, real friends. After that I went to that half-caste bloke and we been arguing and arguing. I pulled that girl off that bloke and me and that bloke had a big rip. I grabbed that girl and

came into the bush. Her family had heard that story and they came and told me and my wife “You two can go – she can go with you and live with you.” Her father and mother said that to me and my wife.”

The couple, who would go on to raise 10 children, soon had enough of working for the Vestey’s.

“We bin work, work, work until Vincent Lingiari came back from Darwin.

Old Vincent, my brother-in-law, get us and have a meeting in camp and Vincent said, ‘I got a good news. Tomorrow we going to walk up to the manager and tell that manager, “We finished from Wave Hill Station, we walk off from Wave Hill Station”’.

Because kartiya [whitefellas] never give us fair go, that’s why we bin walk off from Wave Hill Station.

Then next morning they bin load up and get all the swag and everything and follow the fence line right up to Gordy Creek.

Little bit of water was there, and then we came from there right to Victoria River Downs.

And when we get on that old crossing out there, then a lot of bloke come up and ask us to go back and work on the station, but old Vincent said to them, ‘No, we had enough with all you mob now, we bin working real hard with all you mob, but never get pay. We only bin work for tea, flour and sugar, and sick of tobacco, that’s all’.

The families had to wait another 54 years until the Federal Court finally recognised their native title rights over the pastoral lease.

Last October at Jinbarak, the station’s old homestead, Cullum welcomed the court to his country and paid his respects to those who didn’t live to see the celebration.

His life touched so many because he put others first, and most of all his loved ones.

“Family is just about the most important thing for me,” he said.

“The other thing that is important is country. I have been in a lot of land claims and native title claims.”

When it came to protecting his country he would stand his ground.

During a joint land councils meeting at Kalkaringi in 2016, Cullum, the CLC’s Barbara Shaw and the NLC’s John Christopherson implored their fellow delegates to take a stand against fracking.

He would also join the CLC’s Murnkurrumurnkurru Rangers, including his son Phillip Jimmy, to teach the school kids and the junior Kunpulu Rangers on country.

His greatest joy was to share his culture.

“I teach a lot of other people, about the right way to behave and all that.

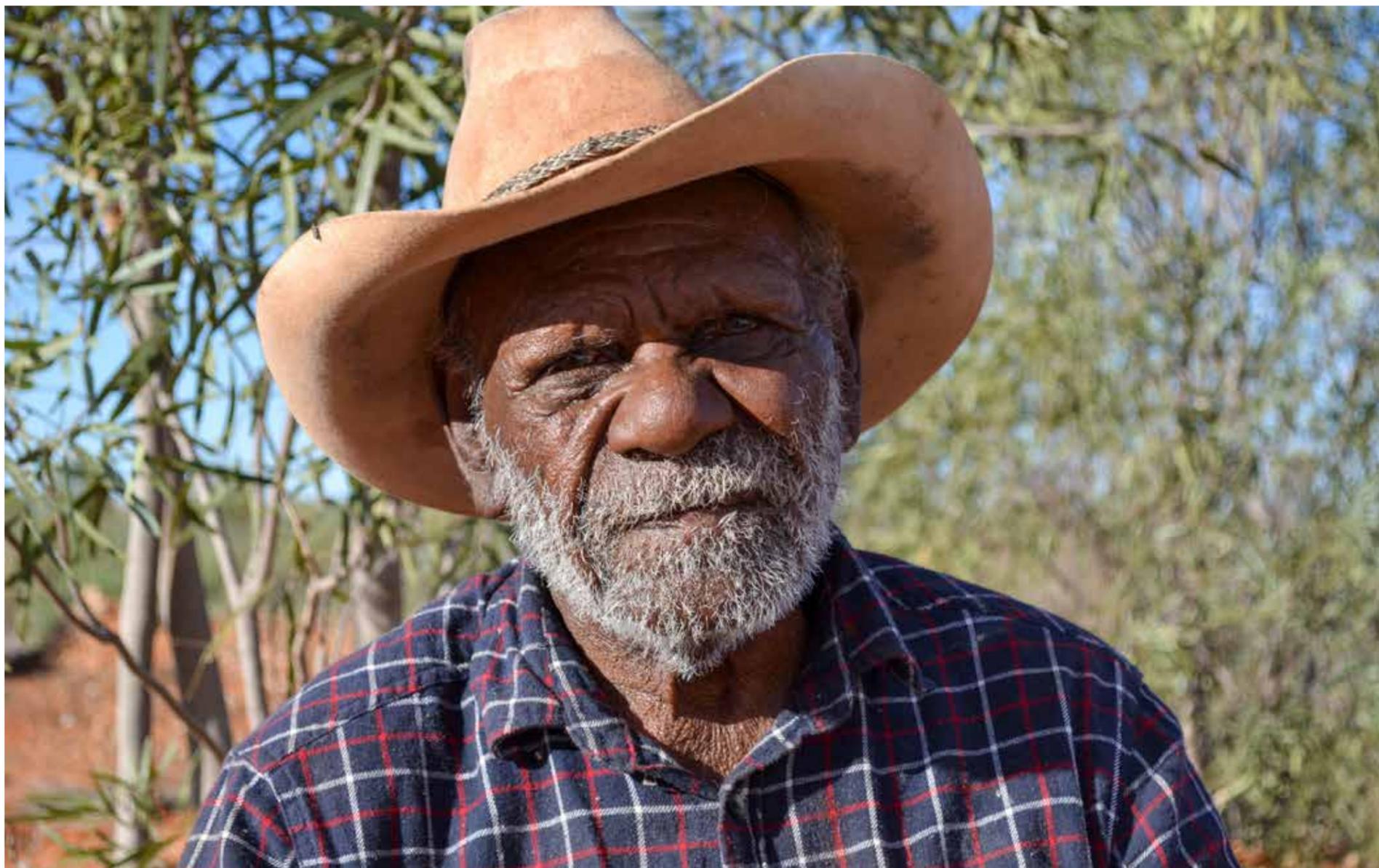
I want to put them through the same school that I been through with my old people – I’m passing on all that knowledge. That makes me feel happy.”

Famous for his radiant smile, classic stock hat and riding boots, Mr Wavehill looked every bit the stockman, but with an authenticity reflected in his character as, back in parliament, Mr Snowdon acknowledged.

“He was a man of stature, grace and humour. He was a gentleman.”

**Listen to Mr Wavehill’s testimony for the CLC’s oral history collection at <https://www.clc.org.au/every-hill-got-a-story/>**

# Charismatic Mr Cook's century of change



GRADUALLY, as Jangala approached his 100th birthday, his peers passed away. Now, with his own passing, the world has lost a senior Anmatyerr law man, a family man and a true gentleman, but thanks to his tireless efforts in life, his legacy lives on.

Although he has gone his knowledge, stories and songs survive through the stories he told and published and the relationships he forged.

Few people have lived through such turmoil and change with Jangala's level of grace.

A traditional owner of Ngarliyakurlangu, he was born on what is now known as Napperby Station, near Yuendumu.

As a child he roamed the country with his family, learning from his elders, at times trading dingo scalps for rations. It was a time of change and Jangala's people would not escape it.

Their country was being taken over by settlers whose horses and cattle drank from and trashed sacred waterholes and soaks in a time of prolonged drought.

The conflicts between the Aboriginal land owners and the pastoralists came to a head during the Coniston Massacre, actually a series of massacres in which hundreds of Aboriginal men, women and children were killed,

according to survivors.

It was against this backdrop that a young Jangala started to work on cattle stations such as Napperby, Pine Hill, Coniston and Aileron.

His charismatic personality, work ethic and horsemanship saw him progress to the position of head stockman.

At one of these early stock camps Jangala met and married his first wife Anne and had one child, Lisa. This partnership lasted for the best part of half a century. Later in life he married Rowenna Larry, and the couple had

**“I'm leaving these words so that the next generation can learn, like we learnt from our grandparents.”**

five children: Ronnie, Andy, Shane, Catherine and Jessiah.

Jangala undertook epic droving adventures across the length and breadth of the Northern Territory, taking hundreds of head of cattle east to the border towns of Dajarra, Boulia and Urandangi. At the time he thought of them as “like a big city”. He and his kin did not just work the stock, they cut fence posts from mulga trees, built windmills and maintained bores.

The work could be thankless and unappreciated by the pastoralists, but when D.D.

Smith took up the lease of Mount Allen Station after the Second World War, Jangala returned to work for him. The men built a relationship that made Jangala feel respected and valued. He also learnt English from Mr Smith.

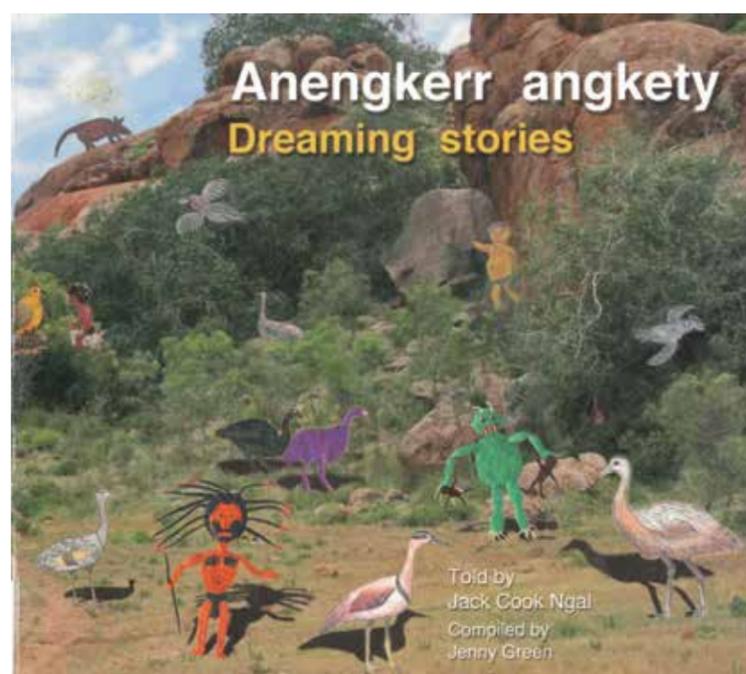
The Aboriginal Land Fund Commission bought the station from DD Smith in 1976, with Jangala's knowledge instrumental in the purchase.

After retiring from station work his focus turned to passing on his vast cultural knowledge.

He painted Jukurrpa stories on canvas, took part in oral history projects such as the Central Land Council's *Every hill got a story* and contributed to books on the history of Mount Allen, life on cattle stations, a book on the Dreamings and the Anmatyerr dictionary.

He persevered until the last decade of his long life, working with PAW Media and linguists to record his stories on film. The media organisation even animated some of them using Claymation.

He chose his eldest grandson



Jangala Cook and Jenny Green collaborated on this unique bilingual book - a great resource for Anmatyerr speakers and their friends.

Kieran as the main recipient of his stories.

Of the vast body of work Jangala left behind, he told linguist Jenny Green, “I'm leaving these words so that the next generation can learn, like we learnt from our grandparents”.

He was always looking for opportunities to visit sacred places of his ancestors, navigating and living off the land as his family had for tens of thousands of years. Around the camp fire he brought the country to life through songs, ceremonies and stories.

Despite, or perhaps because, his family lived through

the ‘killing times’, worked for rations, saw their land occupied and fought for its return, Jangala was driven to protect and preserve the Anmatyerr language and culture for future generations. He used every means he had available and never tired.

After committing such energy and dedication for so long, it is only fair that he now rests in peace.

**With thanks to Yarran Japaljarri, who delivered a eulogy at Mr Cook's funeral in July.**



Kunpulu Junior Rangers Leon Smiler and Anika King met the CLC delegates.



Some of the more than 30 local workers who were trained and employed to construct the Yeperenye Trail.



Debra Victor and Rosie Smiler with Leah Leaman's winning painting *Following the Waterways* at the CLC council meeting.



Grant Wallace worked on the trail.



Primary school kids from Amoonguna couldn't wait to try the *yeperenye* (caterpillar) cake at the trail launch.



Centralian Senior College Stars Foundation students joined traditional owners Roseanne and Lynette Ellis at the trail launch.



The CLC's Alesha Braun interviewed Lynette Ellis at the Yeperenye Trail launch.



Grace Robinya with Desart's Philip Watkins and the CLC's Dr Josie Douglas, Photo: Oliver Eclipse Photography, Desart.



Lajamanu and Gurindji Rangers Helen Wilson, Lionel Mick, Clifford McGuiness, Helma Bernard and assistant teacher Pamela Morris introduced the Kunpulu Junior Rangers to the CLC members at Kalkaringi.



Deputy chair Barbara Shaw and Minister Chansey Paech reflected on Aboriginal water rights at the Vincent Lingiari Art Award opening night.

# People might get jealous

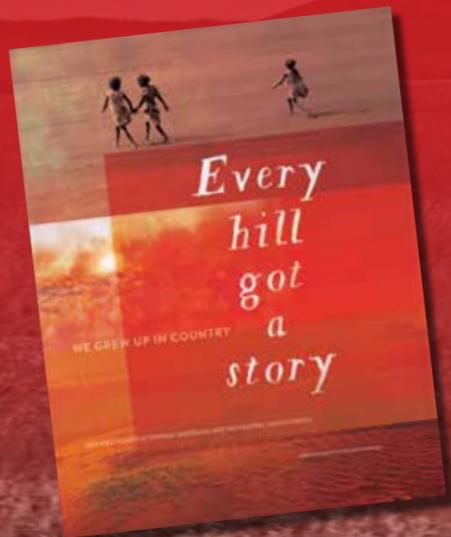


We made batik and tie-dye [at Ankerrapw - Utopia Station homestead]. We were myall [inexperienced] at first. Kwementyay Green came and taught us [in 1977]. We got material for tie - dye. We tied rocks with string, little rocks and marbles and then we dyed the material different colours. We might dye something in three different colours.

We would hang out the fabric - it was really good. We'd untie the string and remove the marbles and see the really lovely colours. Then we learnt how to burn patterns with the wire [woodblock printing]. Kwementyay Green taught us batik, and sewing. We had a treadle

sewing machine - you used your feet to work it.

Then after that we learnt to use wax and cantings [canting is a pen - like batik tool to apply hot liquid wax to fabric]. We painted bushtucker, goannas and things on the batik. Desert raisins, bush tomatoes. Bush medicines, grass seeds, different sorts of grass seeds. We paint bush banana designs onto batik and use them in paintings. And sometimes we paint Dreamings and awely - the designs from the women's ceremonies - onto canvas. I don't copy anyone else's. I just paint my own designs. Other people might get jealous.



**Violet Petyarr**

Excerpt from *Every hill got a story*

For more information go to [clc.org.au/every-hill-got-a-story](http://clc.org.au/every-hill-got-a-story)



Photo: National Archives of Australia NAA: A1200/18, 7913408.

**LISTEN TO THE STORYTELLERS OF  
EVERY HILL GOT A STORY  
AT**

[WWW.CLC.ORG.AU/ARTICLES/INFO/593](http://WWW.CLC.ORG.AU/ARTICLES/INFO/593)

**Central Land Council**

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## STOP TRACHOMA & OTHER INFECTIONS



**6** STEPS  
for good  
hygiene



**1: BLOW YOUR NOSE  
UNTIL ITS EMPTY**



**2: WASH HANDS WITH  
SOAP & WATER**



**3: WASH FACES  
WITH WATER  
WHENEVER DIRTY**



**4: DON'T SHARE TOWELS,  
WASH TOWELS OFTEN**



**5: BRUSH TEETH  
TWICE A DAY  
WITH TOOTHPASTE**



**6: WASH WITH SOAP  
IN THE SHOWER  
EVERYDAY**