The Central Land Council's community development work in Central Australia

WINTER 2013

LOTS OF NEW COMMUNITY PROJECTS

NEW WILLOWRA COMMUNITY CENTRE

FINDING NEMO

A TASTE OF LIFE OUTSIDE THE TERRITORY

GMAAAC ELECTIONS

MUTITJULU TJURPINYTJAKU CENTRE

MICRO BUSINESS PLANNING AT ULPANYALI
Willowra community has a new centre for education and training, built with $625,000 of mine royalties, $2.6 million of ABA funding, an Aboriginal building company and 1,400 hours of hard work by Willowra men.

Willowra elder and educator Maisie Kitson says the recently finished Willowra Learning Centre makes her “happy and proud.” She says: “We were talking about this for seven years. I nearly gave up.” But all the careful planning and preparation has paid off.

Wetu energy and training (WETT) is managed by the Central Land Council’s Community Development Unit. The rest of the money came from the Aboriginal Benefit Account (ABA). Alice Springs firm Sue Dugdale and Associates designed the buildings with lots of input from the community, then watched over the building work.

Against strong competition, Tangentyere Constructions won the job of actually building the centre and employed Willowra men Gary White, Malcolm Fry, Nathaniel Brown and Rowan Long on award wages. They worked so well, Tangentyere Constructions has now offered them more building work. Gary hopes the four men were role models to other young people, “to get the idea of hard work and follow us.”

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Wetu quick facts

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Gary says Tangentyere Constructions “were a good mob to work with. The white builders made us feel happy and welcome.”

He adds that having a number of locals on the job is important. “When you’re working by yourself, it’s a bit harder,” he says. “We could talk our own language when we got tired.”

Maisie says this sort of local employment is so important

“BECAUSE WE DON’T WANT TO RELY ON KARDIYA. WE WANT OUR OWN PEOPLE WORKING.”

The centre has men’s and women’s training and meeting rooms. It includes a brand new playgroup place for little kids. “All those years they had playgroup next door in the Shire,” says Maisie, “now they have their own space, there’s more room, it’s cooler and there’s little toilets!”

There is a new house for the centre coordinator, and one for visiting trainers or an early childhood worker. Batchelor Institute runs the centre and playgroup with support from World Vision Australia.

Back when all the building work started, Maisie says “I nearly cried with the good news.” Now she’s all smiles. So why is education such a big deal in Willowra?

“It’s important for young people to have education so they can get better jobs,” says Gary White.

The Willowra Learning Centre officially opens on 23rd April.

Supported by the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs through the Aboriginals Benefit Account

INVITATION

You are invited to celebrate the opening of the WIRLIYATJARRAYI ADULT LEARNING AND EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE at Willowra at 11 am, 23 April, 2013

All enquiries contact Koy @ the Central Land Council 08 8951 6367

Rowan Long and Nathaniel Brown Willowra learning centre construction

Willowra artists have created 16 magnificent Jukurrpa panels to decorate the outside of the community’s new Learning Centre and playgroup space.

The project was funded through INET and supported by Warlukurlangu Artists. The Warlukurlangu team moved from house to house for a week, giving artists paints, brushes and big canvases. The artists also got plenty of good tucker to keep up their energy late into the night.

Warlukurlangu also worked with little kids in the school to paint 64 smaller boards representing life around Willowra.
Last year over 61 Warlpiri students from the Lajamanu, Nyirrpi, Willowra and Yuendumu schools got a taste of life outside the Territory.

Some of the highlights included visiting Parliament House in Canberra, surfing on the Gold Coast, canoeing down Margaret River and a guided tour of the Sydney Cricket Ground.

The excursions were all part of the WETT-funded secondary school support program.

Over the last five years the program has given over 150 Warlpiri students and Yapa (Warlpiri) teachers the chance to practice their life skills and their English.

Warlpiri students off at boarding schools did not miss out.

Last year, 23 students at Kormilda College, St John’s Catholic College, Warawa College and St Phillips College took part in excursions, bought their school uniforms, sports and music equipment or enjoyed family visits at special occasions – all thanks to WETT.

Activity has picked up at the Lajamanu Learning Centre with the arrival of its new co-ordinator Cheryl Cartwright.

Cheryl is employed by Batchelor which has formed a partnership with WETT to run the learning centre.

Training in money management, literacy and numeracy have started and construction training will start soon.

Computers have been installed and computer courses are next.

Thanks to WETT funding and the work of local people the centre also has new furniture and equipment. FaHCSIA has also given funds to run the centre for the next two years.

Cheryl’s next task is to work with the group to hire a local Yapa Coordinator. The local reference group has had a great first meeting with Cheryl.

New co-ordinator Cheryl Cartwright now has a real computer.

Willowra School Excursion Darling Harbour in front of the New Endeavour

Nyirrpi School Excursion Canoeing down Margaret River

Yuendumu School Excursion 2012 Surfing on the Gold Coast

Lajamanu School Excursion 2012 in front of the High Court
NEW COMMUNITY LEASE MONEY PROJECT KICKED OFF

A new community development project is creating benefits for communities in the CLC region. Kintore is the first cab off the rank, with a school excursion project already completed.

Another 10 are busy planning their own projects to strengthen their communities and there is no shortage of project ideas being put forward in other places.

Before too long, the Community Lease Money Project will work with 20 communities on Aboriginal Land and 10 on Community Living Areas on lasting community benefit projects.

The Community Development Unit is looking forward to supporting all of them to plan, implement and evaluate their projects.

The new Community Lease Money Project became possible when the Gillard government agreed to pay fair compensation for the leases the Howard government took over communities in 2007.

Traditional owners and residents will use the majority of this one-off compensation payment for the 5 years of the Intervention for projects across the 30 communities.

Most communities have also put aside money for community benefit payments that governments and other organisations will make every year for the land and buildings they lease. This “other lease money” could keep some of the community benefit projects from the “5 year lease money” going year after year.

The CLC’s full Council meeting in Aputula in November 2012 backed those traditional owners who had already decided to use much of their compensation, so I think they have chosen a very wise course and I congratulate them on a great decision which will minimise conflict in their communities.

Most of the 30 communities have chosen small working groups made up of traditional owners and residents. These groups plan the projects and do the ongoing work with support from the Community Development Unit.

Among the projects already on the drawing board are church buildings and renovations, sports, art and recreation projects, computer training, tree planting and land-scaping projects.
The Clyne family at Ulpanyali and the Williams family at Lilla have started planning for very small (also called “micro”) businesses at their outstations near the Kings Canyon Resort.

The Clynes have built and equipped an art studio and a workshop/garage at Ulpanyali with their Uluru rent money, while the Williams want to share important and beautiful sites at Lilla with suitable tourist groups.

The Community Development Unit introduced the families to an organisation that works with Aboriginal people in the bush who want to start their own businesses. The organisation is now helping the families to work out what they need for their business ideas to succeed, to find people or organisations who can work with them, to plan and budget for their businesses and to find money, in kind support and other resources.

Many Watarrka National Park visitors and guests of the Kings Canyon Resort want just the kinds of products and experiences that Ulpanyali and Lilla have to offer. When Laura visited the families they were busy making soap, screen printing and doing a stocktake of their products. Product samples such as soap, linocut gift cards, and screen printed aprons were given to the resort management.

“The resort wants to buy these products as soon as they are ready to be marketed, along with new products as they are developed, with this guaranteed customer and huge market potential, this is a great start to the project.”

The Clynes already have a name for their business - Ngalta Arts.

Armed with steel, brass sheet and a metal engraver, the Munguru-Munguru CLC Rangers have begun to install headstones on unmarked graves in the Kalkarindji Cemetery. The money comes from the traditional owners of Judburra (Gregory) National Park. In 2011 they decided to put $17,000 of their rent money to pay proper respect to people whose graves had been marked with just a “star picket and dog tags.”
Mutitjulu residents hope to get in their first few swims in the long awaited pool in April, before the weather turns too cold.

Of the six projects the Mutitjulu Working Group took on back then, the pool has taken the longest to complete. That’s not just because pools in remote communities are expensive to build and run. It’s also because this one is in the middle of the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, which meant there were quite a few extra planning steps that had to be done. After the CLC and the Mutitjulu Working Group got through these steps they had to find more money because building costs kept going up. The Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) came to the rescue.

The Mutitjulu Working Group saved $1.5 million of their rent money to pay the pool operating company.

The bad news was that Muti kids had to do without a fun and safe place to play for nearly a year because a fire damaged their newly repaired Recreation Hall.

The good news is that the hall will re-open its doors again in April, thanks to the foresight of the Mutitjulu Community Aboriginal Corporation (MCAC).

The Mutitjulu Working Group decided to hold the official opening of the Tjurpinytjaku Centre, as the new pool will be called, when the swimming season starts again. Stay tuned for a big wet party in September!

The $2.1 million building project was managed by the Centre for Appropriate Technology’s CAT Projects and constructed by the company that built the pools in the APY Lands.

It will be operated by the business that also runs the Alice Springs Aquatic Centre. Under its agreement with the CLC the company will operate the Muti pool for more than four years.

A year ago an air conditioning unit fire damaged the roof supports. The hall was forced to close for safety reasons. Luckily MCAC had insured the hall properly and made a successful insurance claim. The roof is now fixed.

The hall had only been upgraded two years ago, as part of the Mutitjulu Youth Recreation Precinct project. Mutitjulu Community had chucked in $400,000 of its rent money. The rest had come from the ABA and the Mutitjulu Foundation.

Mutitjulu Working Group talks pool
The Granites Mine Affected Areas Aboriginal Corporation (GMAAAC) was set up to benefit nine Tanami communities affected by the Granites gold mine. GMAAAC projects improve housing, health, education, employment and training, and essential services. They promote Aboriginal self-management.

The CLC’s Community Development Unit works with elected committees in Yuendumu, Lajamanu, Willowra, Nyirrpi, Yuelamu, Tanami Downs, Balgo, Billiluna and Ringers Soak to plan these projects, and funds organisations to implement them.

The committee members decide which projects to fund with GMAAAC money in their communities. They have also elected 18 GMAAAC directors who meet at least once a year to review how GMAAAC is going. Last year they put in place a Code of Conduct for GMAAAC members and discussed how to keep GMAAAC projects going when the Granites Mine eventually closes down.

GMAAAC committee elections are every two years. The next election will be in 2014. If you live in a GMAAAC community, are Aboriginal and over 18 then you can vote for your local GMAAAC committee and stand for election yourself.

The Yuelamu GMAAAC committee is helping the clinic to better look after the health of Yuelamu people.

The clinic has used GMAAAC money to buy two otoscopes, instruments which are used for looking into people’s ears and showing them the inside of their ear on a computer screen.

“Otoscopes help people to take an interest in their ear health” said Mario Dolfen, the Acting Health Care Manager of Mt Allan Health Clinic.

Lajamanu elders are enjoying their own meeting space and office in the renovated old laundry behind the shop.

The kurdiji group are senior people in Lajamanu who are working to make Lajamanu stronger and safer and find better ways for yapa and kardya cultures to work together.

GMAAAC also gave the clinic money to plant fruit trees and other plants to keep the dust out of the clinic. Patients now have a comfortable place to sit down outside the clinic, as well as enjoy oranges and lemons.
Two more traditional owner groups have put their mining exploration money into new community benefit projects.

In February, the traditional owners for an area near Tennant Creek have put some of their exploration compensation money aside for projects that benefit their communities. Metals X Ltd have been exploring for gold for a possible Rover Mine.

Last September the traditional owners for Nolan’s Bore near Ti Tree decided to use a portion of their mining exploration money for community benefit projects. Arafura Resources have been doing a lot of diamond drilling on this country.

Both groups have some great ideas for projects that will create long term benefits for their communities.