

RANGERS BLITZ BILBIES



P. 2



HOUSING CHAOS LOOMS

P. 7



**TJAKURA RANGERS
LAUNCHED**

P. 6



**SEE YOU AT BARUNGA
8 JUNE 2018**

TREATY NOW

P. 2



EDITORIAL

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

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COVER



Helen Wilson and Dione Kelly, from the North Tanami Rangers, with the bilingual Tracks app they are using for threatened species surveys. Thank you to the Desert Park for the bilby!

CLC MEETINGS

5-7 June

(all four NT land councils)
Barunga

4-5 July

Executive
Alice Springs

8-9 August

Executive
Alice Springs

Rangers blitz bilbies with new Tracks app

THE Central Land Council's bilingual Tracks app has helped the rangers to put together an up-to-date snapshot of bilby tracks, scats, diggings and burrows as part of the first national Bilby Blitz.

The Warlpiri and North Tanami Rangers have combined their tracking and language skills to help develop the digital tool that speaks Warlpiri and used it to survey the threatened bilby.

"It's good that we can start in Warlpiri because a lot of traditional owners in Lajamanu can't read English," Dione Kelly, from the North Tanami Rangers, explained.

"But they can read Warlpiri and we can explain things on this app to them."

Mr Kelly was among the first to field test the app before helping to launch the Bilby Blitz during the ranger camp at Hamilton Downs in March.

The cross border bilby survey between Yuendumu and the Indian Ocean involved 20 Aboriginal ranger groups from the Indigenous Desert Alliance (IDA).

"A century ago, bilbies roamed across most of Australia," Ti Tree ranger coordinator Josie Grant said.

"Feral cats, foxes, cattle, donkeys, rabbits, camels and changed fire regimes have pushed them to the edge of extinction."



Field testing the Tracks app: Arrernte elder Veronica Dobson gave the rangers a masterclass in tracking.

"Today, their last refuge is the land we manage and we're really their last hope."

The Tracks app is the rangers' main weapon in the blitz.

It collects their tracking information in a standardised way, allowing the results of this first (or base line) survey to be analysed across time and sites and to be compared with future surveys.

This will enable land managers and conservationists to detect local changes in biodiversity, as well as monitor

broader impacts of feral species and climate change across Australia's desert regions.

The CLC developed the app as part of a comprehensive threatened species data collection, storage and management system linked to the CSIRO's Atlas of Living Australia.

Once analysed, the rangers' bilby data will inform not only their work plans, but also national initiatives to protect the iconic marsupial.

Rangers do this through

cool season burning and eradicating feral animals and weeds across a huge area.

Ms Grant said they need all the technological support they can get.

"We needed a better handle on where our efforts will make the greatest difference," she explained.

Ms Grant is on the indigenous subcommittee of the Commonwealth's bilby recovery team, the first such indigenous advisory committee at a national level.

Continued p.18.

Land councils kick off treaty talks

THE Northern Territory's government and four NT land councils are preparing to sign an historic agreement about a treaty during a ceremony at the Barunga Festival on the 8th of June.

Chief Minister Michael Gunner and Aboriginal MLAs Selena Uibo and Chansey Paech met with land council representatives in Alice Springs before Easter and agreed to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

That MOU will be a guide for future discussions and will cover the principles and the consultation process leading to a treaty.

While the land councils got the ball rolling, other representative Aboriginal organisations will join the negotiations with the

"Traditional owners and the interests of all Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory must be taken into account."

government after Barunga.

The land councils want traditional owners and communities to be closely involved in the negotiations of the treaty.



Representatives from the CLC and the NLC talked treaty with the NT government. The Tiwi and Anindilyakwa land councils joined the historical meeting in Alice Springs on the phone.

This year's festival marks the 30th anniversary of the presentation of the Barunga Statement to former Prime Minister Bob Hawke in 1988.

In his speech, Mr Hawke promised to negotiate a treaty between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians by

hangs in Parliament House in Canberra.

Mr Gunner promised after the NT election in August 2016 to discuss a treaty.

His commitment followed Labor's loss of the Nhulunbuy electorate to a Yolngu candidate who ran on a treaty platform.

The Chief Minister then set up an Aboriginal subcommittee of cabinet whose priorities include advancing a treaty.

When there was no sign of action 18 months later, the land councils took the initiative.

The four representative bodies see a treaty as an important opportunity to

improve the position of Aboriginal Territorians over the long term.

CLC director David Ross said the land councils want traditional owners and communities to drive the treaty negotiations.

"Aboriginal people must have the opportunity to participate in a treaty process."

"Traditional owners and the interests of all Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory must be taken into account."

NLC CEO Joe Morrison told the ABC the MOU should include formal recognition of past wrongs.

Continued p.18.



Do we have enough rangers to look after country properly?



Dale Campbell

Itchykoo Park

No, I don't think we do. We need more, especially in some of the areas closer to town and for the really remote areas. It would be a good thing if we had more rangers. We're the ones who have been doing it for thousands of years before and we have the knowledge of the land so we're the best fit for the job.



Marcus Casey-Kirkman

Mutitjulu

We don't have enough rangers to look after this country properly because the service providers on the NPY lands are not employing enough Aboriginal rangers to work with them. If they did employ enough Aboriginal rangers they could pass on their education to the next generation so they can look after their country too when they get older and wiser.



Genise Williams

Ntaria

No, we'd like to have more rangers because we do look after a big area. It's REALLY big!



Paul Shadforth

Mutitjulu

There doesn't seem to be enough ranger job openings. There's only a certain number of Tjakura Rangers. If that number could be increased all rangers would get more training, certificates and diplomas and make a change. If everybody is educated enough in both ways.



Sonya Braybon

Ntaria

No, our land trust area is about 40,000 square kilometres that us rangers need to look after and more rangers would be good. It would allow our group to break up into two teams for surveys and monitoring work.



David Moneymoon

Mutitjulu

We look after waterholes and animals. We work together with other ranger teams but we need more rangers to join us, make bigger teams. That would be great.



Alice Henwood

Nyirpi

We need more! We only have three rangers in my community. We need more rangers to look after country, so we can do more ninu (bilby) surveys.



Bernard Bell

Docker River

We need more Aboriginal rangers to look after country because of old animals like ninu, possum, they disappear. We can go two ways, the whitefella way brings the technology and the recording and the black way brings the knowledge.

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Radical reform is the only choice

By Olga Havnen, CEO, Danila Dilba Health Service.

WHOLESALE reform - building a new youth justice and child protection system and not just tinkering with the current systems - is the only way to fix the

Among other things, these changes would mean that children younger than 12 can no longer be charged and those under the age of 14 can only be detained if they have been convicted of a serious crime.

They also mean more children will benefit from youth diversion and can only

protection and youth justice system.

Around June, new laws will come before the government and we will ensure they address the changes we need quickly.

We will fight for more young people to get the chance of diversion by removing some of the strict rules against this, and for holding the police more accountable for these decisions.

Young people also deserve more than one shot at diversion.

Right now, youngsters who jump bail will be charged with 'breach of bail', saddling them with more charges and leading to longer jail sentences. We'll fight for laws that stop this.

We'll push for changes in how police deal with young people, for example when they can arrest them, how they must interview them, how long they can hold them and how much information they can give out about them.

The child protection system must change radically to put



failures that triggered the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the NT.

The commission reported that the youth justice and child protection systems have failed children and big changes must be made.

Our Aboriginal organisations, working through Aboriginal Peak Organisations NT (APO NT), are making sure that governments implement the commission's more than 200 recommendations.

Wholesale reform means creating a new system that serves the needs of the children, young people and families and helps them to be

be arrested as a last resort and only with strict safeguards.

When a child or young person ends up in detention, force and restraints can only be used if absolutely necessary to protect them and they can only

"Wholesale reform means creating a new system that serves the needs of the children, young people and families and helps them to be the best they can be."

be stripsearched under strict conditions.

APO NT is using information from workshops with Aboriginal organisations and community members across

the wellbeing of children, family and culture first. We'll argue forcefully for early intervention and support for families.

Through APO NT we'll work



"Young people deserve more than one shot at diversion," says Olga Havnen. Photo: ABC News.

the best they can be, not one that just punishes them.

A system where Aboriginal people and organisations have a strong voice in designing services and programs delivered by Aboriginal organisations.

Combining youth justice and child protection - as in New Zealand and Scotland - would put the needs of children, young people and their families front and centre.

The NT government has implemented recommendations such as supported bail accommodation for kids and is considering changes to the Youth Justice Act.

the NT about wholesale reform to keep the government on the right track.

Wholesale reform is a big challenge with complicated changes. That's why we are helping the government to come up with a staged approach.

The first stage, now underway, focusses on improving how the staff work with young people in detention.

We also helped draft new laws against keeping kids in isolation for long periods and to cut down on stripsearches.

The next stage involves more changes to laws and policies to fundamentally reform the child

for laws and policies that keep children out of care by offering families early assessment and support as soon as they start having trouble.

The laws we need will involve families and communities in decisions about any kind of order and prioritise connection to culture and family.

All children in the care of Territory Families must have a care plan that involves their family and that includes family reunification.

These plans must also offer young people support when they leave the protection system.

Continued on p. 14.

Lajamanu bush court on the move



Justice Woodcock and members of the Kurdiji justice group hold court.

WHEN court comes to Lajamanu it now sits in the community's learning centre.

For too long, the bush court was held in a cramped room at the police station, a short drive away from the community.

There wasn't much room inside for residents and the elders of the Kurdiji justice group and the outside lacked toilets, water, shade and seating.

It was an uncomfortable place for families to wait, sometimes all day.

Kurdiji members had long wanted to move the court to the community, and the CLC and the NT's Aboriginal legal service backed them.

The community had

In 2014 they advocated strongly for tough grog restrictions at the Top Springs roadhouse.

Another milestone came when Kurdiji's Mr Jangala and Minawarra Japangardi Dixon gave evidence before last year's Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children, one of just two community-based Aboriginal groups to give evidence in Darwin.

In December, the group's work was recognised when it won the justice category in the NT Human Rights Awards.

The award recognised its work promoting respect for law and justice through dispute resolution and

"We do a lot of hard jobs, working for our community, for indigenous and non-indigenous because we all live together. We walk side by side and we work together."

already invested royalty income in their learning centre, through the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT), and felt a sense of ownership of the place.

In February, Kurdiji members Jerry Jangala, Judy Napangardi Martin, Norbert Jampijinpa Patrick, Tracey Napaljarri Patrick and Steven Wanta Jampijinpa Patrick sat alongside Judge Woodcock at the centre for the first time.

Residents were able to wait inside for their matter to be heard.

"There was plenty of room. It was really good," Jerry Jangala said.

Community members were happy with the change.

Kurdiji only began to sit with the circuit court judges in June last year.

The group of elders and community leaders, all unpaid volunteers, made big inroads in bridging the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal systems of law.

working with the courts.

The late Mr Jigili accepted the award in Darwin in December, on behalf of Kurdiji.

"I think this award is going to change our community and make our community stronger," he said.

"Hopefully other communities are going to follow us and [get] stronger."

"We do a lot of hard jobs, working for our community, for indigenous and non-indigenous because we all live together. We walk side by side and we work together."

Kurdiji draws on traditional authority structures and concepts to increase access to justice for Yapa and community safety.

It regularly holds meetings in Warlpiri in its own building, funded exclusively by mining compensation money from the community-controlled GMAAAC committee.

The Warlpiri word Kurdiji, or shield, means 'to shield, block, protect or ward off'.



Barkly childhoods marred by grog and violence

“THE courts regularly hear evidence of alcohol being consumed in Tennant Creek in quantities beyond comprehension.

“It seems that the excessive consumption of alcohol continues for so long as alcohol is available.

“People drink until they can drink no more and then get up the next day and start all over again.

“The frequency with which drunken violence occurs is unacceptable and the level of violence is likewise completely unacceptable.”

They are sentencing remarks made almost a decade ago by Northern Territory Chief Justice Trevor Riley.

That was in February 2009 and Justice Riley made a call for tough grog restrictions “for the good of the town, for the good of the victims, for the good of the offenders and for the good of the innocent children of Tennant Creek”.

He called for restrictions protecting “the people whose lives are being devastated in this way” and a system to “rehabilitate those already abusing alcohol.

“I accept that it is a complex issue but it must be addressed sooner rather than later. Hard decisions must be taken.”

“The people of the Northern Territory cannot sit on their hands and allow what is occurring in Tennant Creek to continue,” he said.

But sit on their hands they did - long enough for another alcohol damaged generation to grow up and unleash more mayhem in the impoverished community.

When shocking allegations of the rape of a two-year-old child by a 24-year-old in February triggered emergency alcohol restrictions, local Aboriginal organisations, backed by the Central Land Council, argued successfully that they should be extended.

For Barkly Aboriginal organisations Anyinginyi Health, Julalikari and Papulu Apparr-Kari, however, the resulting extension until June this year does not go far enough.

They have asked the NT Liquor Licensing Commission to restrict grog sales for at least 12 months, with a view to making them permanent, because the existing restrictions “have achieved little in terms of reducing alcohol consumption in our community”.

Anyinginyi’s general manager, Barbara Shaw, said the town has too many pubs, clubs and bottle shops, with “our children being hurt by our own people”, community violence affecting “everybody”, and parents “too hung over to get kids off to school”.

“Reducing the number of alcohol outlets will certainly go a long way to managing the problem,” Ms Shaw told the ABC.

The organisations’ joint submission calls for better policing of rampant sly grog running, random inspections of licensed premises and tough action against licensees selling grog to drunks, banned drinkers and pregnant women.

Anyinginyi is a member of peak



“Reducing the number of alcohol outlets will certainly go a long way to managing the problem,” said Anyinginyi’s Barbara Shaw.

medical services body AMSANT, which wants a “full lockdown by police on all take-away outlets in regional centres coupled with the removal of take-away alcohol sales from roadhouses up and down the Stuart Highway”.

“Calls for hard decisions to curb the level of alcohol consumption in Tennant Creek go back decades and it should not take a media storm for government to act,” CLC director David Ross said.

The storm only gathered force when reporters linked soaring numbers of child notifications to Territory Families with an outbreak of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) across Northern Australia.

The alleged sexual assault of a small child in Alekareng by a teenager fanned the flames in March, but the firestorm drowned out voices like that of AMSANT chair Donna Ah Chee.

AMSANT called for a network of family support services across the NT and specialist teams to assess all young people in detention for neurodevelopmental problems, such as fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD).

“This includes the urgent assessment of the 16-year-old young person that has been charged with the latest offence and the 24-year-old charged with the earlier offence,” Ms Ah Chee said.

Suggested solutions, such as a free-call 1800 number “to enable confidential, easy reporting of possible sexual abuse by children” hardly made the news.

Some mainstream media instead focused on the

removal of children at risk, and for their adoption by “white families”, only adding to the distress on the ground.

Admissions of failure and a flurry of visits by decision makers announcing extra funding for child protection, sexual violence and housing services have been welcomed by local leaders, but seen only as a start.

There is “an absolute sense of hopelessness” about the “build-up of years and years of neglect by governments”, Ms Shaw said.

“Mainstream services are limited and inadequate, overcrowding remains a crisis where tents have been erected in back yards to manage the overflow,” she said.

“Does a community have to reach a situation of desperation for it to attract the attention of governments?”

Ms Shaw said to reduce the risk for children the government needs to build at least 40 additional houses.

“Does a community have to reach a situation of desperation for it to attract the attention of governments?”

AMSANT, meanwhile, wants the government to reform the cut-price family support services the previous government put in place.

“Unfortunately, the evidence-based model developed by the Aboriginal community controlled health sector, requiring a qualified social worker working with a local Aboriginal family support worker, was rejected by the former CLP government,” Ms Ah Chee said.

“As a result, the intensive family preservation services that were funded are based on workers without university qualifications, who on their own are incapable of doing the complex work that is required, and are delivered by a range of non-Aboriginal NGOs.”

If something positive has come out of the crisis, according to Ms Shaw, it’s a shift in the relationship between the government and the local community.

“Meaningful discussions are occurring between the NT Government and the Aboriginal sector through APO NT and Aboriginal leaders about major reform to the child protection system.”

“This is an opportunity,” she said. “It is time we’re changing the way we do business.”





New Tjakura Rangers ready to share a big job

THE launch of the Central Land Council's 12th and newest ranger group in Mutitjulu in March was a happy and heartfelt community celebration.

Pantjiti McKenzie beamed and faced the rock as she led the *inma* with Nellie Paterson and Ester Teamay.

The three elders' voices rose as Rene Kulitja danced up to the gate of the ranger office to cut the ribbon with a group of young female ranger trainees.

When two young dancers, David Cooley and Ken Wilson, led the new Tjakura Rangers into the opening ceremony, flanked by their colleagues from the Kaltukatjara and Uluru ranger teams, some of the elders wiped away tears.

Ms McKenzie was overjoyed "to see the two young men and all the young women dance and sing for their country".

"*Wiru mulapa!* I'm an experienced singer and it's great that they are learning their part in practicing and celebrating their culture," she said.

"I was really thrilled to see such a big group of young people in Mutitjulu signed up for ranger work.

"It's great because it's such important strong work for young people. It's a really important chance for rangers to learn about their country," Ms McKenzie explained.

CLC chair Francis Kelly unveiled the new Tjakura Ranger logo and explained that the group are taking their name from the Pitjantjatjara/Yangkunytjatjara word for the great desert skink.

"We call him *tjalupa*", Mr Kelly said.

The logo is based on a concept design by senior Mutitjulu artist Malya Teamay.

"The *tjakura* is one of the animals we have to look after and it's a threatened species," Mr Teamay told CAAMA.

"It's a really good name to be giving the ranger group because it shows the importance of protecting what you have. I'm extremely

"We need more money to support these young people because it's ranger work they want to do and their families are happy and excited about it."

proud to see them in their new uniforms, being able to do some really good work," Mr Teamay told CAAMA.

The new group will share the protection of the five-million hectare Katiti Petermann Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) with the Kaltukatjara Rangers from Docker River.

"I'm so happy my team of six will finally be joined by seven new colleagues from Muti,"



The Tjakura Rangers with CLC chair Francis Kelly.



Ester Teamay, Pantjiti McKenzie and Nellie Paterson.

Kaltukatjara Ranger co-ordinator Benji Kenny said.

Mr Kenny's team often had to travel more than 1,000 kilometres a week to cover both ends of the IPA.

"We really needed these reinforcements because it's been a daunting job to look after an area of more than 50,000 square kilometres on our own," he said.

"By comparison, the Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park inside the IPA covers only just

bandicoot), *tawalpa* (crescent nail-tailed wallaby), lesser bilby, and *walilya* (desert bandicoot), which died out during their lifetimes.

Feral cats and foxes and changes in traditional fire regimes after Anangu were moved into settlements are largely to blame.

The Tjakura Rangers will help to look after more than 22 surviving native mammal species, 88 reptile species and 147 bird species found in the IPA, including threatened species such as the *murtja* (brush-tailed mulgara), *waru* (black-footed rock-wallaby) and the princess parrot.

"We use traditional knowledge and skills such as cat tracking and cool season patch burning and combine them with modern tools such as aerial incendiary machines and digital tracking apps to manage these threats," Mr Kenny said.

"Having two ranger groups look after the IPA means that we'll be able to double our efforts and involve more community members on a casual basis. For example,



Malya Teamay showed Francis Kelly the logo he painted.

to hire more locals to do controlled burns during the upcoming fire season."

Malya Teamay wants to see the female trainee rangers join the all-male Tjakura Ranger team.

"It's important for the young men and women to be able to be involved in this work of protecting the country", he said.

The new ranger group, promised by the federal government in 2015, shortly after Anangu traditional owners declared the country around Uluru as Australia's 70th IPA, has already inspired many local young people to keep an eye out for future job openings.

Long time Mutitjulu resident

and Katiti Petermann IPA co-ordinator Tracey Guest said the launch of the new CLC ranger group fuelled a groundswell of demand for casual and trainee ranger jobs.

"There were too many applicants for the Tjakura Ranger positions," Ms Guest said.

"We now also have a group of young Mutitjulu women who want to become rangers. And Parks Australia, who couldn't get any Aboriginal rangers, now have too many casual rangers to work with.

"So we need more money to support these young people because it's ranger work they want to do and their families are happy and excited about it."

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Uluperte mob invest in their outstation



Aaron Burdett and Anthony McMillan working at Uluperte.

A BIG investment in their outstation has paid off for a determined family.

After five years of putting their rent money from the East MacDonnell Ranges into their outstation, Uluperte, great planning and hard yakka the Williams family is spending more time there.

The traditional owners of the outstation, 200 kilometres east of Alice Springs, are enjoying the rewards for their efforts.

“Jeremy went out for a week and the other week Anthony did the job. You know, they get experience working, and get to spend more time out on their country.”

In 2013, they installed solar power, then they repaired the houses.

Recently, they finished their last project - new decks and plumbing repairs.

The family asked the Central Land Council to contract the Centre for Appropriate Technology because CAT agreed to employ locals to do the work.

Jeremy Williams and Anthony McMillan joined CAT employee Aaron Burdett, also a traditional owner of the area, on the job.

“Jeremy went out for a week and the other week Anthony did the job. You know, they get experience working, and get to spend more time out on their country,” explained elder Paul Williams.

Mr Williams hopes the work will lead to more job opportunities for the men.

“They can get experience to work on fencing, or other jobs like that. There might be some fencing work at Nummery (Station) that they can do.”

Now that his family have invested so much of their rent income at Uluperte, he can’t wait to “move back and live on country”.

Housing chaos or local control?

HOUSING services in remote communities, outstations and town camps face chaos because the Australian government refuses to say how it will fund Aboriginal housing from July, when the current national funding agreement runs out.

“The standoff between the Territory and Commonwealth governments hurts Aboriginal people”, Central Land Council director

“It is no longer going to be managed as part of the NT government coffers,” he said.

The NT government said the plan lacked detail and urged the minister to match the \$1.1 billion it has committed to housing services for the next 10 years.

This call was backed by the almost 200 delegates at the ‘Listen To Us’ Aboriginal housing forum in March who called on the Australian



Lena Pwerl in her humpy at Arlparra.

David Ross said, while the Northern Land Council’s Joe Morrison has criticised the “very unclear messages coming out of both”.

“All remote community residents and half of public housing tenants in towns will be affected unless this is resolved quickly,” an Aboriginal housing forum in Darwin has warned.

“Our young and fast growing Aboriginal population urgently needs a solution to the intergenerational housing crisis that successive governments have allowed to develop,” the forum’s communique stated.

Adding to the sense of chaos, Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion announced plans for a new funding model for remote housing, that would reduce NT government control over federal housing funds, to the media before consulting the major players.

Senator Scullion told the ABC in April that housing funding would bypass the NT government and instead go to a new entity that was partly managed by the land councils.

This was news to the Central Land Council.

The minister said the new model would “ensure that the jobs stay here, that we oversee the way that the budget is dealt with, that the procurement happens here in the Northern Territory.”

Government to “shoulder its responsibility” for remote housing.

However, they said even double the NT commitment would still be less than the current National Partnership Agreement for Remote Indigenous Housing (NPRH).

“We remain deeply concerned that the current commitment falls significantly short of the level of funding committed under the NPRH, which has failed to deliver an overall increase in housing stock,” the communique reads.

The federal government’s remote housing review estimated that at least 2,750 new houses would be needed by 2028 to keep overcrowding to “acceptable levels”.

The stalemate over housing funding between the NT and the Commonwealth took another turn in late March, when Chief Minister Michael Gunner rejected Senator Scullion’s offer of two years’ worth of housing funding in return for renewing the NT’s housing subleases in remote communities for five years.

Mr Gunner believed it was too risky to take on leases without funding that matched the lease period and supported “the development of local community housing providers”.

Continued p.14.

Signs of life return to Greenwood



Frank Curtis paints the deck at one of three outstation houses at Greenwood outstation.

IT has taken about six years, but Greenwood near Tennant Creek is back in action at last.

Residents have returned and the outstation is alive again – thanks to traditional owners committing more than \$220,000 of their own money.

While it was uninhabited, Greenwood fell into disrepair, but its traditional owners always wanted to move back to look after their country.

With that in mind, they saved up their rent money for the Karlu Karlu (Devils Marbles) Conservation Reserve and threw in some

railway compensation funds to restore the solar power supply and battery storage.

It was enough to repair two of the outstation’s three houses.

Local workers Frank Curtis, Luke Curtis, Myers Sandy and Michael Armstrong worked with Tangentyere Constructions on the project.

“It was a good experience helping out the Tangentyere mob,” Luke Curtis said.

“They showed us what to do. First time I’ve done it.

“It gives us experience. If something breaks we know

what do to,” he said.

The residents are now looking after Greenwood and plan to fix up the third house so the rest of the family can also move back home.

“I go out to Greenwood and stay because that’s our country there.

“Once we got it renovated we can live out there again.

“It’s important to get back there to be on the land - that’s the most important thing,” Mr Curtis said.



Standing up to take a seat on council



For any question about the coming CLC elections contact Peta Braedon on 8951 6210.

THE next Central Land Council elections are more than half a year away, but the CLC's phones are already ringing.

"That people are calling up with questions suggests they want to be a part of the elections and that

is a good time to hold election meetings, where is a good place to have the meetings and to make sure people know about those meetings," Ms Braedon said.

At election meetings, anyone aged 18 years and over and living in the CLC

of women and young people bringing their own experiences, views and skills into the council so it reflects all the different issues across Central Australia."

But how do they know if they might make a good council member?

"They might already be doing things in their family and communities that would make them a natural fit for council, but they just haven't considered it before," Ms Braedon explains.

"So don't limit yourself. As a member of your local community consider taking that next step."

One way of getting a better understanding of the role of a land council member is to speak with current delegates about being on council, attending council meetings

and talking to regional officers.

It's also a good idea for anyone considering running for council to let people in their community know that they are thinking of nominating.

"To be a member of the council, that's a pretty important role," Ms Braedon explains.

"It's never too early to think about running, although the elections are months away, maybe you can have a bit of a think about them now and talk to people about it."

She's asking everyone with a question about the elections to give her a call on 8951 6210.

"I might not know all the answers, but I can find out and get back to you."



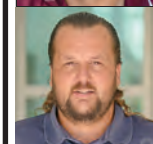
Any questions about CLC business?

Call your regional officers:



1. ALICE SPRINGS

Nigel Lockyer,
8951 6264



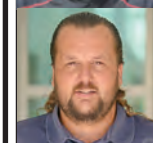
2. SOUTH WEST

Vacant (Jesyjames),
8956 6255



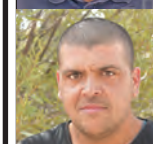
3. NORTH WEST

Howard King,
8975 0885



4. TANAMI

Vacant (Jesyjames),
8956 6255



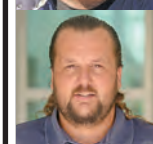
5. WEST

Michael Turner,
8956 8658



6. TENNANT CREEK

Darryl "Tiger" Fitz,
8962 2343



7. EASTERN SANDOVER

Jesyjames Carr,
8956 6255



8. EASTERN PLENTY

Richard Dodd,
8956 9722



9. CENTRAL

Willy Lane,
8951 6256

"Strong leaders can be men, women and young people."

community support for the CLC remains strong," explained policy officer Peta Braedon, who fields the calls.

She says planning for the elections in March/April 2019 has already begun.

"Regional officers are going to call meetings early next year and discuss with community leaders when

region or a traditional owner in the region can be nominated or nominate themselves.

Ms Braedon is encouraging people who would not usually think of running to have a go.

"Strong leaders can be men, women and young people," she suggested.

"We are supportive

Continued from p.2

"I think there's a need for the levels of leadership in the Northern Territory and the Commonwealth to realise the deep injustices," he said.

"The high levels of violence that took place with settlement and dispossession in the Northern Territory and that (needs) to be the first point of call.

"And obviously there are issues associated with outstanding claims to land, and getting some formal settlement process bedded down."

An NT treaty process could be led by an independent treaty commissioner, similar to those appointed in Victoria and South Australia.

Mr Gunner indicated during the Alice Springs meeting that this was something he would consider supporting.

He thanked the Land Councils for their "constructive engagement and advice" and

for having taken the lead in setting up a treaty working group.

The Alice Springs meeting follows a gathering of the executive members of the four land councils in Darwin in March that agreed on a roadmap to Barunga.

"The 30-year anniversary of the Barunga Statement represents perhaps a unique opportunity to reset the process and ensure that Aboriginal people are leading front and centre when it comes to these kinds of things," Mr Morrison told the ABC after the meeting.

He said an MOU would ensure Aboriginal Territorians are driving the treaty agenda.

"We don't want to see governments and anyone else come up with ideas on behalf of Aboriginal people because we've seen the sorts of messes that unfold," he said.



Former prime minister Bob Hawke receives the Barunga Statement from Galarrwuy Yunupingu at the 1988 festival.

Closing the Gap 'refresh' on the run

THE federal government wants to replace the failing decade old Closing the Gap strategy with a so-called prosperity agenda that has Aboriginal people baffled.

"The starting point should be wellbeing, as defined by Aboriginal people and based on local and regional development agendas and led by community-controlled organisations," CLC policy manager Josie Douglas said after attending a Closing the Gap 'refresh' round table meeting in Alice Springs in April.

"The gap is widest in remote communities and that is where we need a much greater focus because hardship and poverty are getting worse."

"We need to continue to build on the original effort, not replace or reduce it. There have been enough changes in Aboriginal affairs," Ms Douglas said.

"The refresh should be based on wellbeing because it covers all life stages and fits the Closing the Gap targets."

The prosperity framework is another top down approach and we don't understand why it has replaced wellbeing".

Ms Douglas said the initial Closing the Gap strategy was a strong basis for state and federal governments to co-ordinate activities and be more accountable.

There has been limited progress in three areas: Aboriginal students finishing year 12, enrolment in early childhood education and reduced infant mortality.

However, Aboriginal leaders of the Close the Gap Committee said it was only ever partially implemented.

They want governments to reset their relationship with the Aboriginal community.

"Indigenous people and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations need to lead and have greater decision making powers and

responsibility," Ms Douglas said.

She said they should be driving the new direction for the Closing the Gap strategy, but also have an ongoing role in negotiating and reviewing implementation plans and monitoring progress.

Round table meetings are being held in selected locations around the country, following a 'special gathering' of Aboriginal leaders in Canberra that kicked off the 'refresh' in February.

The invitees, including the chairs of the four Northern Territory land councils, expressed frustration at the rushed process.

They were successful in getting the government to shift the deadline for the 'refresh' process from June to October.

The Canberra gathering left many participants feeling that questions remained about what the government had learned from the failure of the past 10 years' policies and whether it would change how it works with Aboriginal people.

CLC chair Francis Kelly is still wondering what the gathering was all about.

"It was big talk, no action," Mr Kelly said.

Participants at the local round table meetings are similarly unimpressed with the rigour and transparency of the consultations.

"I asked if the consultation process was going to be made publicly available, how the 'refresh' was going to be 'co-designed' by Aboriginal people and what mechanisms were going to be put in place to facilitate this," one participant said.

"We were told that there would be technical advisory groups made up of Aboriginal academics and experts."

Details on the consultation process, the how, when and who needs to be made public."



NT land council chairs Sam Bush-Blanasi, Francis Kelly, Tony Wurrumarrba and Gibson Farmer Illortaminni in Canberra.

Kimberley Land Council chief executive Nolan Hunter was among the first to call the hurried 'refresh' process a "tick the box" exercise.

Mr Hunter told *The Australian* that he suspected the government was merely going through the motions so "they can say there's been a consultation".

Mr Hunter did not receive an invite to a two-day leaders meeting in Canberra, but Tasmanian lawyer Michael Mansell did.

He accused Mr Turnbull of having "an arrogant belief that he knows what's best for Aboriginals, even though he concedes his Closing the Gap strategy has been a failure."

"I feel we are being used as scapegoats in a consultation process which, until complete, relieves Mr Turnbull of being accountable," Mr Mansell told the paper.

That process, however, started badly.

Mr Kelly, the Northern Land Council's Sam Bush-Blanasi, the Anindilyakwa Land Council's Tony Wurrumarrba and Gibson Farmer Illortaminni, from



CLC chair Francis Kelly (left) listens to Aboriginal leaders from the Close the Gap Steering Committee in February. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull (right) left the presentation half way through for more pressing business.

the Tiwi Land Council, had hurried to Canberra with just a few days' notice.

The meeting raised more questions than were answered.

After watching Mr Turnbull walk out of the presentation of a scathing review of the Closing the Gap scheme by Aboriginal leaders from the Close The Gap Steering Committee, the land council chairs released a statement.

"Governments had 10 years to get it right. Ten years ago, they did not talk to us. After 10 years of failure why are they rushing us now?" it read.

"Why don't they give us time to consult our people

and elected members properly about these life and death issues?"

The National Congress and the Redfern Alliance have also gone public with their frustration about the 'refresh' consultations.

"The government is not meeting its own expectations and working 'differently'," Congress co-chair Rod Little said in April, after learning the organisations were expected to share their consultation time with non-Aboriginal agencies.

Continued p.13.

Land councils push for ABA reform

THE four Territory land councils have stepped up their campaign for Aboriginal control over grants from the Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA).

Executives of the land councils have written to the Indigenous Affairs Minister, Nigel Scullion, asking for talks about changes to the Land Rights Act that will allow decisions about all grants to be made by the elected members of land councils.

There is an ABA advisory

committee with land council members who are able to say to the minister if they support grant applications or not. However, the minister makes

"ABA grant processes must be accessible and accountable to Aboriginal people living out bush."

all the decisions, including how much to spend on grants every year and who gets those grants.

Land councils have argued

for decades that ABA funds come from mining on Aboriginal land, belong to Aboriginal traditional owners and that they should make

the decisions rather than the minister.

As far back as 1984, a government review of what was then called the Aboriginals

Benefit Trust Account (ABTA) recommended that an independent statutory body, controlled by elected members of the land councils, be set up under the Land Rights Act to make grants. However, this has never happened.

"It is now timely for the administration of the ABA to be devolved to Aboriginal control," the Central, Northern, Anindilyakwa and Tiwi land councils wrote in a joint letter to the minister.

They wrote that as land

claims work is nearing completion, "going forward the four land councils have a collective responsibility to ensure that development correlates with Aboriginal people's aspirations and improves the socio-economic circumstances of traditional owners, their families as well as those Aboriginal people with no land base."

The land councils want the government to transfer the ABA's grant functions

Continued on p.13.



These bush teachers' book is a lesson in determination

SEVEN remarkable Central Australian teachers have written up their education journeys to inspire another generation of Aboriginal teachers.

Linda Anderson, Tarna Andrews, Fiona Gibson, Mona Kantawarra, Barbara Martin, Yamurna Oldfield and Carolyn Windy are all qualified teachers who have worked in bush schools for more than 30 years.

“Kardiya teachers are just visitors. We are the ones who will always be here, teaching our kids.”

“I hope people can hear my story and how people helped me, all the community people, how my family helped me,” explained Fiona Gibson who has taught at Nyirrpi, a small community five hours north-west of Alice Springs.

“Then community people can see it for themselves and start thinking, ‘We might ask to study’, because our community needs more Yapa [Aboriginal] teachers.”

The teachers told their stories to Batchelor Institute’s Lisa Hall to raise awareness of “what it means for Aboriginal teachers to teach their



Educating the next generation: Fiona Gibson, Barbara Martin, Tarna Andrews, Yamurna Oldfield and Linda Anderson. Photo: Lisa Hatz.

kids their way in their own schools”.

Central Land Council director David Ross launched *We Always Stay* in March.

Mr Ross said all the teachers had to beat significant odds in order to qualify in their profession.

“One message that comes through loud and clear is how important the support of family, school colleagues and lecturers has been to the authors,” he said. “And how

much the women themselves have contributed to their communities and the skills of their non-Aboriginal colleagues.

“Conversely, it’s clear how crushing a lack of support can be, especially when it comes from bad-apple principals and other bureaucrats.”

Linda Anderson, from Papunya, is clear about what it would take to improve bush schools in the Northern Territory.

“I think it is really important to have Anangu [Aboriginal] teachers in our classrooms because they know the culture from the inside,” she said.

Barbara Martin, from Yuendumu, says with the right support bi-lingual and bi-cultural local teachers can make enormous, long-term contributions to both their communities and their non-Aboriginal colleagues.

“Kardiya [non-Aboriginal] teachers are just visitors,” she

says. “We are the ones who will always be here, teaching our kids.”

Ms Martin and three of her co-authors are members of the CLC’s Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT), a community development program which funded the book from gold mining royalties.

We Always Stay is available from www.batchelorpress.com for \$35.

Language protection attracts international attention

YUENDUMU’S Simon Japangardi Fisher has shared lessons learned by Yapa during their efforts to preserve their Warlpiri language to an international conference in Portugal.

The journey to attend the conference in the small town of Alcanena, an hour’s drive from Portugal’s capital, Lisbon, was Japangardi’s first overseas trip.

Invited to speak at the conference about threatened languages, he told delegates about his research into how Yapa protect their languages.

“I spoke in Warlpiri and shared stories about our research on song lines, repatriation and archiving with people from all over the world,” the PAW Media archive officer said.

That included presenting the views of Yuendumu elders on the return of historical recordings of Warlpiri songs.

The conference, ‘Communities in Control’, was also a chance for Japangardi to find out how Indigenous languages are protected and revitalised in other countries.



Simon Fisher and Linda Barwick shared ideas with conference participants from around the world in Portugal. Photo: Georgia Curran.

“I want to teach my people to do research like this and share knowledge about our culture,” he said.

Last year Japangardi brought more than 10 hours of recordings of Warlpiri songs from the sound archives of the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in Canberra back home to Yuendumu.

The songs had mostly been taped in the 1950s and 60s.

Japangardi travelled to Portugal with researchers Linda Barwick and Georgia Curran as part of a research project linking PAW Media and Kurra Aboriginal Corporation with top universities in Sydney and Canberra.

Million dollar grant ke

THE forward-looking people of Yuendumu have secured the future of their swimming pool in a ringing endorsement of their ‘yes school, yes pool’ initiative.

A Yuendumu committee has invested almost \$1 million of the community’s mining compensation money to operate the pool until the end of 2021.

It is the first time that the Granites Mine Affected Areas Aboriginal

“We’ve never had that before. I’m very happy for the community.”

Yuendumu self-funded the operation of their pool on an annual basis since 2015, by combining income sources such as the mining compensation and community lease money.

A recent increase in GMAAAC income allowed the committee to award the first multi-year contract for the operation of the pool.

“It’s very good to have funding for three years.”

Corporation has funded the pool for three years.

The money will go to the Warlpiri Youth Development Association which runs the pool.

“It’s very good to have funding for three years,” said WYDAC chair Eddie Robertson.

The decision makes Yuendumu and Mutitjulu the only two communities in Central Australia to run their pools under their own steam.

Sure beats waiting for governments to drag their feet!



In case of emergency buy your own ambulance



Robert George and Dion Anderson check out Lajamanu's new ambulance.

LIVING more than 550 kilometres from the nearest hospital has just become a little healthier for Lajamanu residents, thanks to the community's GMAAAC committee.

The committee has invested 170,000 dollars of the community's mining compensation income in a new ambulance and an ultrasound machine.

Annalise Thomson, Lajamanu's clinic co-ordinator, said the new ambulance replaces the previous GMAAAC-funded ambulance which the clinic kept on the rough roads since 2008.

"Having a modern, functioning ambulance and an ultrasound machine is essential for the clinic and has helped save many lives in the region,"

Ms Thomson said.

St Johns bought the ambulance for the clinic and fitted it out.

Aboriginal health worker and administration officer with the Katherine West Health Board, Teresa Matthews, said the ambulance is a great comfort to the residents of Lajamanu.

"The ambulance is really important for our people out here," she said. "We are a long way from hospitals so we need to be able to look after our people. Our community is proud of our clinic and our ambulance."

The Granites Mine Affected Areas Aboriginal Corporation (GMAAAC) has supported health projects with its mining compensation money for many years.

Alpurrurulam rides church led recovery

AN investment by Alpurrurulam residents in a new church has fuelled a minor jobs boom and much pride in the remote Aboriginal community on the Northern Territory/Queensland border.

In 2014, the community voted to use some of its compensation money for the five years of the Intervention to replace their tiny, ramshackle church.

The Central Land Council's community development unit helped a local committee to plan the half-a-million dollar project.

The committee chose local builder Ben Olschewsky for the job, in part because of his strong track record of working with the community.

Four locals helped the German-born tradesman to complete the church in time for the Christmas celebrations in 2015.

The committee's focus on local jobs paid off when T and J Contracting

enjoy earning money."

Apart from the individuals directly involved, the builder also observed at close quarters how the original decision to train and hire locals for the church project had many positive impacts on the whole community.

"I hear community members talking with pride and ownership about what 'their' locals are doing," he said.

"It's motivating some who are bored. Others are seeing an opportunity to earn some money and do and buy things for themselves and their families.

"They are talking about travel, not just in Australia, but internationally."

Mr Olschewsky believes that the availability of willing and trained local workers gives Alpurrurulam a head start when it comes to attracting government investment.

Between August and December last year, Ausbuild from Alice Springs



Trevor Age and Matthew Long have fenced the self-funded church.

from Tennant Creek snapped up the workers to upgrade 45 houses in the community during the following year.

"It's better paying the locals to do the work than paying outsiders to come in," said Matthew Long, one of the workers.

Mr Long and Trevor Age then joined Mr Olschewsky on another community lease money project - fencing the church block.

Mr Long had just moved back to Alpurrurulam from Canteen Creek, where he had repaired fences, but this was the first time he built one from scratch.

"It's good to work outside," Mr Long said. "I'm looking forward to doing more of this work."

Mr Age, who had been fencing at nearby Lake Nash Station, agreed.

"It's better to do something for the community, and for the church," he said.

"We can do buildings like this."

Mr Olschewsky then hired the men for a construction project at the school and a few other small jobs.

"They are above average in skill and very motivated and keen learners," he said. "They enjoy being left in charge of works."

"They and other community members I know are keen to work. They enjoy doing things that are creative or constructive," Mr Olschewsky said.

"They've told me they feel better about themselves, they feel a sense of pride. It avoids boredom and they

employed a group of local workers to build seven new three bedroom houses for government staff. In April, Darwin's T&S Constructions employed locals to build a storage space for the clinic.

The community, meanwhile, kept investing the lease money in its number one asset.

It installed split system air conditioners and fire extinguishers at the church and, to make sure it lasts the distance, they set up a repair and maintenance project.

It even paid for two years of water bills in advance to cater for the community and visitors alike.

The locals use the church regularly for services, singalongs, funerals and other events and the congregation often hosts visitors from other communities who camp in the yard.

Late last year, Alpurrurulam got ready to host a large CLC meeting - before the rain intervened and the meeting had to be moved to Tennant Creek.

The community has earmarked its next instalment of lease money for insuring the church, constructing a stage and adding pews and outdoor seating.

"I think it's now a lot easier for contractors coming to work in Alpurrurulam to employ locals," Mr Olschewsky said.

"I love being asked: 'so are the locals any good?' and being able to point to the church and say, 'Well mate, they helped build all of that'."

Keeps Yuendumu pool afloat



Donald Martin dives into one of only two remote community pools with secure funding.



Child's play makes Lajamanu parents happy



Roseanne Dixon and baby Hollylena enjoy the new playground.

PREPARING Lajamanu's preschoolers for a healthy future is child's play, thanks to a new-look playground.

The Families as First Teachers play area at the

"Playgroup is more comfortable for the kids. They can play in a clean environment."

Lajamanu school has been upgraded with more than \$75,000 from the Granites Mine Affected Area Aboriginal Corporation.

It is part of a program that aims to give local kids the best start in life.

GMAAAC has paid for

connecting the play area to plumbing and installing a wash trough, rubber mats and artificial turf.

Families find the area much more welcoming.

"Playgroup is more comfortable for the kids," Robyn Lawson said. "The kids can play in a clean environment."

Jillian Dixon had similar thoughts.

"The kids really like to come to school now," she said. "It helps them learn to go to preschool."

Roseanne Dixon said with the clean water comes better health.

"The sink encourages the kids to drink water," she said.

"The little kids follow the older kids and learn to wash their hands."

Pina Pina Jarrinjaku backs life long learning

A LIBRARY, a classroom, an internet café and service hub - Pina Pina Jarrinjaku is so many things to so many people.

Yuendumu's learning centre, as it's also known, promotes lifelong learning for the whole community and can even organise a taste of education in another state.

The centre offers computer access, workshops, formal training and Warlpiri language and culture activities.

"It's really good. People come in to learn Warlpiri and English," said Yamurna Oldfield from the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT) advisory committee.

Ms Oldfield says Pina Pina Jarrinjaku [to learn] is "where they can find the correct words".

The Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC) has received close to \$1.1million in royalty income through the WETT to run the centre up until 2021.

Ten residents are enrolled in certificate courses in community service, and organisations across Yuendumu use the WETT-funded centre for their staff training.

Preschool teacher Doris Jurrah is one of the local workers using the centre.

"We are doing our work today. We want to keep learning. It is good for our future too - good for the kids."

Once a week the school's senior girls and boys classes visit the centre to support and encourage young people at the learning centre to follow their education and life goals.

The centre invites guest speakers, including Yapa staff from local organisations, to talk to centre users about employment opportunities.

It also offers opportunities for kids who have dropped out of school to explore learning outside of the school environment and sometimes outside the community.

Tommy Hargreaves, Luciano Williams and Mahalia Hargreaves attend the Academy of Sports Health Education (ASHE) in Victoria with



Elisah Robertson and Elizabeth Dixon use all the resources of Pina Pina Jarrinjaku, Yuendumu's WETT funded learning centre.

the support of Pina Pina Jarrinjaku.

The three 16-year olds are spending nine months at Shepparton under the guidance of Yorta Yorta teachers who are focussing on life skills, culture and on getting them job ready.

"I went to Shepparton because I like trying different stuff," said Mr Hargreaves. "Camping in Geelong near the beach, meeting new friends and playing sport."

"I enjoyed going to ASHE because I want to get away from trouble," he said.

ASHE provides lots of opportunities for learning outside the classroom.

The trio has already inspired other young people in Yuendumu to give life at the academy a go.

The WYDAC plans to send another group later this year.



Mahalia Hargreaves, Enid Gallagher, Luciano Williams and Tommy Hargreaves at ASHE.



Sharing their past with the future

TRADITIONAL owners of the Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park are making sure their songs, stories and historical images will always be there for those who should have access to them.

They are funding high speed computers equipped with an Anangu social history database in seven communities, as part of a three-year cultural maintenance project in the cross-border region of the Northern Territory and South Australia.

Ara Irititja (stories from a long time ago) is an interactive multi-media project returning

films, photos, songs and stories of cultural and historical significance to their Anangu owners.

The Uluru rent money working group's contribution of more than \$143,000 of collective income from the park to the Ara Irititja project means that Mutitjulu, Pukatja, Amata, Kaltukatjara, Imanpa, Utju and the Watarrka outstations will all receive a computer with the database.

The working group members, who planned the project with Ara Irititja, are very happy to see the computers installed at

art centres, schools and community offices.

The Central Land Council's community development project has funded a field worker to set up the database in Anangu communities, train the locals and help with troubleshooting.

It is helping Anangu to share important photos and stories with future generations.

Ara Irititja, a partnership between the South Australian Museum and the Pitjantjatjara Council, is the model on which the CLC's own digital archive is based.



Tarna Andrews points out loved ones in an old photo at the Ara Irititja computer in the Utju school.

Continued from p.9.

"to a new administrative arrangement supported by land councils".

That is because they have the "local knowledge and institutional capacity that can be mobilised to ensure the delivery of appropriate forms of development to our constituents".

At their meeting in March in Darwin, the land council executives agreed on 12 principles to guide the reform of the ABA.

Two of those principles are ones that we hope Nigel

Scullion will strongly support, not only because he is the minister, but also because he is a senator for the Northern Territory.

One principle is that "a reformed ABA should include a senior position of director of the ABA that must be responsible for all ABA functions based in the Northern Territory".

The land councils are frustrated that over time the management of the ABA has been moved to Canberra, despite it being only for the benefit of Aboriginal people living in the Northern

Territory, and that it is no longer clear who is responsible for what and who to talk to about grants.

Another principle is that "ABA grant processes must be accessible and accountable to Aboriginal people living out bush".

The public servants who manage the ABA in Canberra are a long way from traditional owners in our remote communities and they don't understand how hard it is for people to apply for grants.

There have been signals that the minister may be interested in discussing this.

Nyirrpi can't have too many cooks in the kitchen

NYIRRPI'S learning centre has cooked up a plan to put healthy meals on the menu.

Every Thursday, learning centre staff Antonia Wilson and Delena Turner hold a cooking session where they prepare one nutritious meal.

"It's good for mothers with kids to learn about this," Ms Wilson said.

"It's really good to do something different. People can learn about cooking at home."

She has been with the centre for three years and loves the variety of the work.

"It's a really good job. When I open up the centre we do things like helping people open accounts, banking and other things on the internet. People like coming in to use the computers."

The latest plan is to sell the meals prepared at the cooking workshops through

the local store and to build a greenhouse behind the learning centre.

"It's really good to do something different. People can learn about cooking at home."

"We're going to plant some vegies in the greenhouse behind the learning centre and we can use them for the cooking days," Ms Turner said.

Nyirrpi's learning centre is funded through the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust and run by the Batchelor Institute.

In 2017 the WETT allocated almost \$2,450,000 to Batchelor to fund learning centres in Nyirrpi, Willowra and Lajamanu for two years.



Learning centre worker Antonia Wilson with niece Maria Turner.

Continued from p.8.

Many Aboriginal leaders blame Mr Turnbull's dismissal of last year's Uluru Statement from the Heart, the result of a consultation process that proposed an Indigenous advisory "voice" to the parliament as a practical measure for closing the gap, for their deep mistrust of the government.

The United Nations backs them up.

In a report released late last year, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous

Peoples, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, called Australia's lack of progress on closing the gap "woefully inadequate".

The report supported a referendum to establish a First Nations advisory body in the constitution and urged the federal government to establish a treaties and truth-telling commission.

"Such measures would carry momentous significance to resetting the relationship with the First Peoples of Australia," Ms Tauli-Corpuz said.



Josie Douglas, Mischa Cartwright, Jackie Huggins and Donna Ah Chee attended the Closing the Gap 'Refresh' round table meeting in Alice Springs. Photo: NACCHO.



Tangentyere women take anti violence solutions to Canberra



Malarndirri McCarthy, Shirleen Campbell and Barb Shaw at the Parliament House sorry camp. Photo: ABC / Adam Kennedy.

A YEAR of fundraising and a shared determination to break through indifference and ignorance.

That's what it took for a group of women from Alice Springs town camps to take their battle against domestic violence to Canberra, so that the nation's politicians and mainstream media could hear their stories.

The 11 members of the Tangentyere Women's Family Safety Group placed flowers on the Parliament House courtyard and cried for their killed and injured loved ones. Shirleen Campbell, from Hoppy's Camp, was one of the women who, for a short time, transformed the courtyard into a sorry camp.

The thoughts of the group's co-ordinator were with her two aunties who had been killed by their partners after years of abuse.

"I'm doing it for my daughter, and I'm doing it for my grandmothers, my mothers, my aunties, and I will also be reflecting on two of my aunties who are not here today and I'm doing it to honour those two ladies," she said.

Marlene Hayes said other members of the group had suffered domestic violence as well.

"All us women, we have been victims," Ms Hayes said. "The violence always goes into the homes and it starts off with racism and arguing and then a fight starts and it's got to stop."

"We wanted politicians and the people who make the decisions to listen to us, hear our voices and realise we are

real people with real solutions, not just statistics," Ms Campbell said.

"We are the grassroots people, we know what's best for our mob, so coming to Canberra was a big part of making people realise about the work we do, and that it deserves proper funding support."

The women's urgent appeal for decision makers to back community-led solutions was

"We are the grassroots people, we know what's best for our mob, so coming to Canberra was a big part of making people realise about the work we do, and that it deserves proper funding support."

heard loud and clear by Labor senator Malarndirri McCarthy who facilitated the visit.

"They were tired of being overlooked and not being heard, especially by the wider community," Senator McCarthy said.

Among the politicians the group briefed were opposition leader Bill Shorten and his deputy and Shadow Minister for Women Tanya Plibersek, Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion, Greens Senator Rachel Siewert, Shadow Minister for Human Services Linda Burney and members of several parliamentary committees.

"They told us clearly that Aboriginal community-based organisations need long term secure investment in grassroots programs. They told us Aboriginal people have

family and domestic violence solutions," Senator McCarthy said.

The senator said the group has achieved much in less than three years, starting by training town camp women to identify family violence, its risks and its triggers.

"They have trained 165 women, including 25 in one town camp where there are only five houses. Think about that ... do the maths

on that. It goes to show that overcrowding is a very real challenge for the Tangentyere women."

Senator McCarthy also explained to her fellow politicians about the education resources the group has developed and its tireless advocacy.

"They have stood up and said: 'Enough. This is not good enough.'

"Most importantly, they have developed their own solutions for their own communities, and they are making an enormous difference," she said.

The women hatched their plan for the trip to Parliament House after their march through Alice Springs early last year, where they were joined by hundreds of residents.

Continued from p. 7.

The bush is running out patience with the NT government, which has yet to deliver on its promises to return control of housing to Aboriginal community organisations.

The forum in March called on the NT government to work with Aboriginal bodies Aboriginal Housing NT (AHNT) and Aboriginal Peak Organisations NT (APO NT) to develop regional and local housing models.

It wants both organisations to help review government procurement rules to ensure Aboriginal organisations and businesses are first in line to win future housing contracts, the communique stated.

Delegates welcomed Mr Gunner's offer "to talk about" the development of a peak Aboriginal housing body in the NT and urged him to match the commitment with dollars for AHNT and APO NT.

Meanwhile, the NT government has promised to spend \$25 million on urgent repairs to housing and infrastructure, as part of its response to a review

into town camp housing it received last August.

The sum is not even one third of what the report said was needed just to bring dilapidated houses up to a standard that complied with tenancy laws.

On top of the almost \$78 million required to bring the houses up to scratch are costs associated with better infrastructure, governance and fixing other problems.

"Various governments over the years had failed to provide an efficient and effective public housing service to Aboriginal people living in town camp communities," the report said.

The 16,000-page report found that a combination of decades old houses, neglect by tenants and a lack of maintenance meant almost one in five was in "poor condition" or worse.

The government supported most of the recommendations in the report.

However, it did not agree to implement a recommendation to encourage some town camp residents to move to places with more jobs.



Francesca Williams and Mark Alice outside their house in Santa Teresa.

Continued from p. 4.

We'll fight for families' right to appeal against decisions to remove children and to hold Territory Families accountable for its performance.

Wholesale reform also means that factual information must get out and that Aboriginal voices are strong in the public debate.

Media reports in March about Aboriginal children being abused and having sexual diseases were not accurate.

APO NT members challenged misreporting with the facts and helped people to understand what Aboriginal children and

families need to thrive.

The TV show Sunrise discussed adoption of Aboriginal children by non-Aboriginal families with two non-Aboriginal people.

The resulting outcry created an opportunity for Pat Turner, James Ward and myself to tell the real story in an interview with Sunrise.

APO NT and its members – our medical and legal services and land councils – will fight for governments to do what it takes to make the child protection and youth justice system work better for our children and their families.

Hamilton Downs Ranger Camp 2018



Preston Kelly, Cleveland Kantawarra, Obed Ratara and Jeffrey Foster learned about excavators.



Jasmin Moneymoon and Sarissa Driffen practised with cat traps.



Helma Bernard rescued Craig LeRossignol and Benji Kenny from a snake.



Faron Gorey, Nikita Smiler and Helma Bernard performed with Indigenous Hip Hop Projects at ranger camp.



Jonathan Ailtek warmed up for the snake catching.





Indigenous alliance boosts Australia's desert voices

ABORIGINAL land managers speaking up for their country will be much harder to ignore, thanks to a new project that will put Australia's deserts on the map.

The 10 Deserts project aims to co-ordinate ranger activities across the world's largest Aboriginal led network of protected areas covering one third of Australia.

The Central Land Council's Josephine Grant and Benjamin Kenny were among dozens of rangers who helped to launch the project at Canberra's Old Parliament House in March.

Mr Kenny presented to politicians and the global charity of mining giant

As a project partner, the CLC stands to benefit from some of the \$20 million the BHP Billiton Foundation is investing in the project.

The CLC plans to use its share to scale up its vital land management work with traditional owners and its 12 Aboriginal ranger groups.

The extra income will support its cultural and ecological knowledge transmission, threatened species protection, feral animal and weed management work.

Building on the success of the first Aboriginal carbon credit business in its region, the CLC will lead the 10 Deserts project's cross border fire management activities.

“Power comes when people all talk the same language about the same things, and that's what this project is trying to do.”

BHP, who are funding the project.

“I spoke about my work with the rangers on the Katiti Petermann Indigenous Protected Area and how we plan burning activities with elders and rangers from the cross-border region of the Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia,” Mr Kenny said.

The five-year project will help the Indigenous Desert Alliance, a collaboration of Aboriginal ranger groups, to become a strong voice that will be there long after the project has finished.

10 Deserts links Aboriginal land management organisations with regional and global conservation groups so they can develop the strategic approach needed to fight threats such as large wildfires, feral camels and buffel grass.

“Power comes when people all talk the same language about the same things, and that's what this project is trying to do,” said Peter Donohoe, who manages the CLC's land management section.

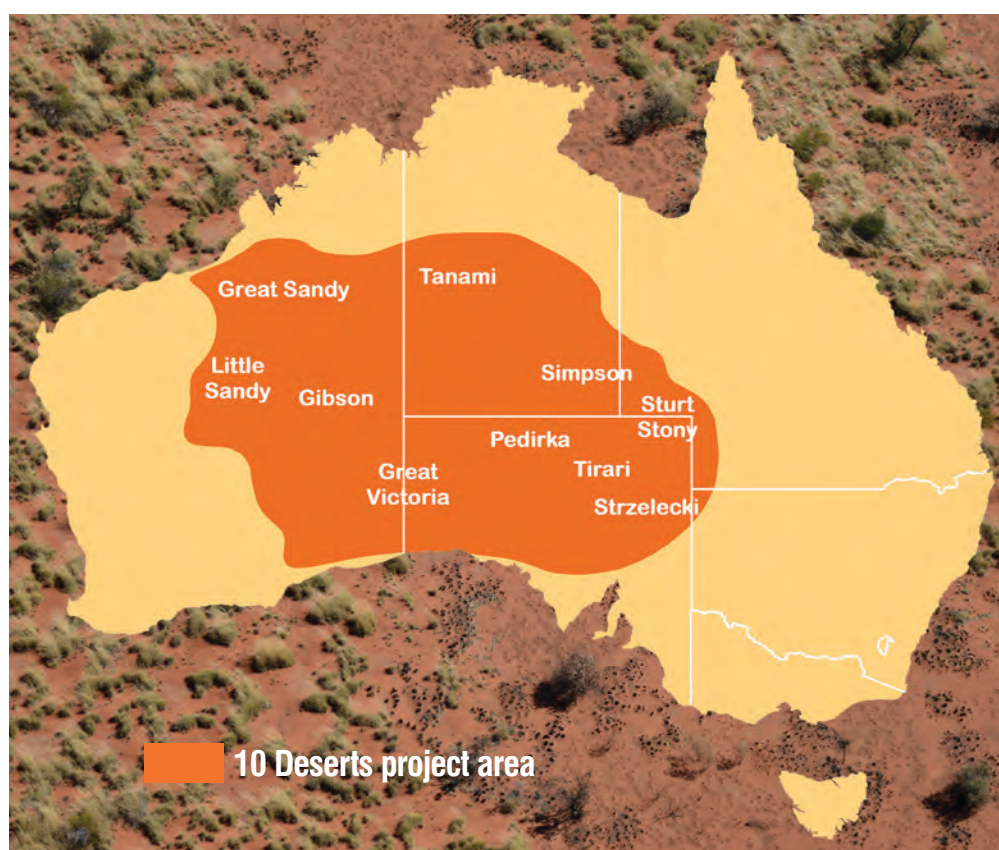
“The 10 Deserts project will raise the profile of Aboriginal desert land management and will help us to create more opportunities for rangers and traditional owners to get out on country and do this work.”

For communities such as Kintore, which have long wanted their own ranger group, it will provide short-term opportunities to carry out burning or any other work they prioritise.

“The idea is that we can get some work happening out on country and really test how keen people are,” Mr Donohoe said.



David Ross, Josie Grant and Benji Kenny arrive in Canberra for the 10 Deserts project launch.



“B2, what's the Indigenous Desert Alliance?”

DESPITE it being an unfriendly daylight hour for bilbies, two concerned representatives of the endangered species made an appearance at the ranger camp at Hamilton Downs.

B1 and B2 wanted to make sure the rangers got their message about aerial burning.

B1: “The rangers reckon they're burning the country in a way that's going to give me more of a chance to stay alive – I hope! Sometimes I worry when I hear these choppers flying around and these ping pong balls fall from the sky and the whole country bursts into flames.

“But I think the important thing is that all the rangers are working together and that can be a good thing.

“I've heard about this thing called the Indigenous Desert Alliance. Do you know anything about that one B2?”

B2: “Not really, B1, because I'm usually underground so they won't be able to find me. I'm afraid to get out. I usually just send my family out to get me food.”

B1: “You need to get out a bit more, B2.”

If those bilbies were not so nocturnal they would know that the Indigenous Desert Alliance (IDA) brings together land management organisations that support ranger programs.

The Central and Kimberley land councils, Kanyirninpa Jukurpa, Central Desert Native Title Services and the Ngaanyatjarra Council are all IDA partners.

The idea behind the alliance is to support Aboriginal rangers in South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory by speaking with one voice.

The latest IDA project, the Bilby Blitz, showed that unity is strength.

The CLC received one-off funding from the federal government to lead the blitz.

It involved hundreds of cross border bilby surveys by 20 ranger groups to find out how B1, B2 and all their families are surviving on Aboriginal land.

To find out more about the IDA go to indigenousdesertalliance.com.



“You need to get out a bit more, B2.” Bilbies at the ranger camp at Hamilton Downs.



It's the culture: why rangers feel happier and healthier

A NEW study has found that Aboriginal rangers in Central Australia report better health, life satisfaction and family wellbeing than non-rangers.

A study by the Central Land Council, the Australian National University (ANU) and the Tangentyere Research Hub sheds a light on how ranger work improves Aboriginal people's wellbeing.

The researchers compared interviews with 49 rangers and 160 non-rangers and found that rangers report being more satisfied with their lives than non-rangers.

"I really expected that one," commented Tjuwanpa

education, employment and financial situation were taken into account.

This shows that being a ranger has benefits beyond the education, training and income that come with the job.

Rangers also reported a 50 per cent improvement in family wellbeing compared to non-rangers, saying they are proud to be role models for family and community.

"I do this for my grandmother," one ranger told the researchers.

"I am walking in her shoes, she wants me to work on country that she fought to



Jumping for joy: happy rangers at the Ross River ranger camp in 2017.

"We do everything with a smile. If you can't smile, you can't work. Every time we come to town, people ask us if there's any jobs out bush."

Ranger co-ordinator Craig LeRossignol from Ntaria.

"We do everything with a smile. If you can't smile, you can't work. Every time we come to town, people ask us if there's any jobs out bush. They want to get out of town. Every type of abuse is here [in town] and it's really at an ugly point now."

The results in life satisfaction remained high even when the interviewees'

get back and it makes me feel good to know that she is happy."

"It highlights the broader impacts on family and community of programs that combine cultural participation with work", lead researcher Ray Lovett said.

"Many rangers said they felt proud looking after country and the community. They are looked up to in families and by the broader community for what they do," he said.

Dr Lovett presented the findings to the CLC's annual ranger camp at Hamilton Downs in March.

Few rangers

were surprised by what they heard and many had stories of personal change.

"I used to be a gambler, but I've changed and go to work every day," a female ranger said. "It's a good job and I really love it. I get up every morning with pride and joy in me."

The study also found that rangers are almost 50 percent more likely to report good health compared to non-rangers.

Mr LeRossignol said staying healthy is important because ranger work can be physically demanding and draining.

"Every complaint we have, physical or mental, it's a requirement to get it checked out. And more than that. It's a cultural requirement. It's very strict," he said.

A lot of people are worried when a problem occurs in the group because we're all together. We understand the

repercussions our way."

The researchers believe that rangers feel a greater sense of wellbeing because cultural knowledge is central to their work.

They were more likely to live on their country, be in touch with elders and cultural practices, and more likely to know their mob, languages and dreaming than non-rangers.

The study also identified opportunities to improve ranger health, for example by cutting their high rates of smoking.

"Two hundred years of being paid with tobacco does that to families," Mr LeRossignol explained.

"Out in the bush people were given tobacco as a form of payment and then it became an enjoyable thing and we all became addicted because it was the only form of pleasure for a lot of years

and just became the norm unfortunately," he said.

Also, just under a quarter of rangers reported high blood pressure and diabetes, common health concerns across Central Australia that affect the work some individuals can do.

Mr LeRossignol said the CLC has systems in place to keep rangers safe.

"The few fellas I had in my group that had health problems in the past they go to the clinic every Monday and get it checked out," he said.

"It's compulsory before we go out. We can't afford to take that risk of having something go seriously wrong when we are out on country."

Dr Lovett's team plans to revisit the rangers regularly so it can test the growing evidence that Aboriginal cultural participation is linked to better health and wellbeing.

MEET OUR RANGERS



Fraser Oliver

FRASER Oliver from the Ltyentye Apurte Rangers has won the environment category of the Northern Territory Young Achiever Awards.

Mr Oliver travelled from Santa Teresa to Darwin in April, to collect his award.

He is part of the CLC ranger program's digital knowledge group and thinks of himself as an ambassador for the program.

This year, he is tackling a certificate 4 in conservation and land management at Batchelor. He admits he has spent less time with his friends in order to become better at his job.

"My friends need to understand how important my job is to me and that I can spend time with them on weekends. They have since realised how empowered I am and are now constantly trying to obtain a position

with the ranger group.

I am considered a role model within the whole ranger program, for my community, for my family and Indigenous people everywhere.

My goal is to inspire the next generation of community leaders to take greater responsibility for their education, their careers and how they would like to achieve their goals.

I am required to leave my family for extended periods of time, which is hard for a young, very culturally strong person, but I learned to balance this and maintain a solid connection with my family, culture, country and employment.

I was a shy person but as soon as this ranger job got me it gave me self confidence. It's about being yourself and still being open to one another."



Continued from page 2.

“The Bilby Blitz is a ground breaking threatened species program for a culturally significant animal, a two-way ecological case study that demonstrates



Dione Kelly and Josephine Grant with the artwork of the Tracks app's starting screen.

The results of the blitz will be released in the middle of the year.



The Tracks app.



Their last refuges are on Aboriginal land between Central Australia and the Indian Ocean.

The Billy Blitz over Easter is the first test of what the groups can achieve together to save the threatened marsupial, for our children's sake and for the rest of the world.





Ranger deputies join Bilby Blitz



The Muru-Warinyi Ankkul Rangers and elders show Tennant Creek students how the Tracks app works.

THE Muru-Warinyi Ankkul Rangers have enlisted a group of deputies - Tennant Creek high school students - for the national Bilby Blitz, the first cross border bilby survey on Aboriginal land.

Elder Dianne Stokes welcomed the students to Kalumpurlpa, north-west of Tennant Creek, where the threatened marsupials have been found in the past.

Everyone headed out to look for bilby signs along the railway corridor, but very few burrows, tracks, scats or scratchings were found.

"We are worried they are being eaten by feral cats," ranger Amber Waistcoat said.

Despite those results, the students still enjoyed learning about the Central Land Council's Tracks app, which the rangers use to record signs of threatened species and their predators.

"I learned how to record stuff on the iPad, and how bilbies dig their holes," Kerrin Butterworth said.

Students also enjoyed learning about the characteristics of different animals.

"I learned the difference

between a goanna's hole and a bilby's hole," Alana Foster said.

Ms Waistcoat said she felt "very excited to work with students from the high school, to show them about bilby burrows, bilby tracks and how to use the app".

Another highlight was receiving an elder's historical perspective from Ms Stokes.

She told the students how the old people fought for their land and forced back John McDouall Stuart at Attack Creek. They also heard about the successful six-year fight against a nuclear waste dump at Muckaty.

Asked what could make the trip even better, most of the students said they'd like to stay overnight.

"We could go out camping and actually see the bilbies," Troyston Corbett suggested.

The rangers have installed sensor cameras near some of the burrows, hoping for some night time movement from the bilbies.

"We will go back again later this year to check if they have come back," Ms Waistcoat said.

"Ranger maths" makes sense to students

"ATHEL pine poisons the land by making it too salty for other plants to grow.

"Identify the right herbicide for it and the mix ratio to make the spray.

"Calculate how much herbicide you will need to mix to spray four hectares of Athel pine."

Yirara College maths teacher Ralph Folds believes maths makes more sense to students from remote communities when it's taught the ranger way.

He has tapped into the Central Land Council's ranger program to turn his students onto the subject.

"It's certainly a great way to teach maths and the students love it", Mr Folds said.

The Alice Springs college invited Benji Kenny, Craig LeRossignol, Cleveland Kantawara and Jermaine Kenny, from the CLC ranger program, to speak with its senior maths class about the many ways Aboriginal rangers use numbers in their daily work.

"All the work we do has

got numbers," explained Kaltukatjara ranger group co-ordinator Benji Kenny.

"Every time we burn country, monitor waterholes, survey plants and animals, and mix chemicals for weed control we use maths."

Senior student Benny Hayes, from Aputula (Finke), said "ranger maths made me see that maths has a real life purpose."

Such a hit has ranger maths proved to be with Yirara students that the school is teaching it as part of the NT Certificate of Education.

Mr Folds says ranger maths does more than make numeracy relevant.

"I'm a big fan of the ranger program and often promote it to our students as an employment opportunity because almost all of our students want to work in their communities," he said.

"So ranger maths is partly to provide a meaningful context for maths and also promotes future employment with the program."

"Many of the students will

return to their communities after they graduate," Tjuwanpa Ranger co-ordinator Craig Le Rossignol said.

"Ranger work provides young people with the chance to be active looking after country, be guided by elders and to continue their education."

Becoming a ranger is one of the most popular careers on offer in the students' home communities and the CLC can choose school leavers with good maths skills, who are able to do their work safely and confidently.

In 2017, it ran career information sessions for more than 200 school students.

Mr Kenny, who recently completed a certificate 4 in conservation land management at the Batchelor Institute, said maths can be difficult, but it's really worth persevering.

"Keep on learning and always just keep trying, that's what I did and now I am the ranger group co-ordinator responsible for looking after five million hectares," he said.

... and is deadly on weeds



Ranger Silas Ross collected 429 baby melons from a single plant.

IT was a haul that that'll help the environment for years to come: one paddy melon plant (*Citrullus colocynthis*) with 429 baby melons.

The North Tanami Rangers were spraying buffel grass at Kamira near Lajamanu when they removed the weed.

But the value of the rangers' discovery can't just be measured in a single plant, as the excitement of the NT Government's weed management people soon demonstrated.

They jumped online and after some research informed the rangers that by removing the Kamira paddy melon they had "prevented

a possible 7,722 new plants from establishing".

They wrote that, according to Wikipedia, "these plants generally produce between 15 and 30 fruit, each of which contain 18 seeds".

"Awesome work and thumbs up to the Northern Tanami Rangers!"

In the spirit of scientific inquiry the team cut open one of the baby melons for a seed count.

They found 320 seeds, which means they stopped 137,280 potential new weeds dead in their tracks.

Not a bad day's work for the rangers!



Benji Kenny, Craig LeRossignol, Cleveland Kantawara and Jermaine Kenny with Yirara students.



“You have to be happy” to do tourism

LOOKING after culture and their own happiness turned out to be a good business decision for the residents of Wanmara outstation in the Watarrka National Park.

Fed up with collecting welfare payments and visitors just passing them by, Peter Abbott said the family began to dream about a business that could employ their own.

“Being on Centrelink benefit makes your self esteem drop, so we said we will do tourism to present and preserve our Luritja and southern Arrernte culture with a one hour tour,” Peter Abbott said.

“We thought of a one kilometre walk, about how many visitors we could cater for and who would do it. We looked at our strengths and weaknesses and we had a bit of a trial.”

Peter and Christine Abbott have run Karrke (bower bird), their cultural tourism business, for three years and their visitor numbers speak for themselves: 600 in the first year, 1,600 in the second and just under 3,000 this year.

Throughout the journey from idea to business with a bright future, the family has made a little support go a long way.

“We received help from [CLC tourism development officer] Patrick Hookey and the NT government,” Mr Abbott said. “They have people who really help you to find funds to set up in the industry.”

He said personal drive and happiness are his keys to success.

“You have to be determined if you want to do it, and the main thing, you have to be happy,” he said.

“Christine is a traditional owner for Wanmarra, the community is just there. This is her home and she and I are comfortable.”

He adds that it is just as important to set ambitious goals.

“We want to increase our visitor numbers and so we prepared a marketing strategy using the NT Tourism grants.

Getting a certain amount of



Christine and Peter Abbott have run their cultural tourism business at Wanmara outstation for three years. Photo: Tourism NT.

visitors per day was what we want to keep perfecting,” he explained.

Two hundred visitors a day is the magic number that would make the business viable.

“Some people laugh at Christine and I when we say we want to do 200 people per day. It can be achieved in this region.”

The extra tours can’t happen without the help of other community members. The Abbotts’ secret to keeping them working is flexibility.

“We try every day to get the community members involved, but they have their needs,” Mr Abbott said. “They will work two weeks and have one week off.”

“If it is ceremony time and they have to go for several weeks, that is fine, they get paid for the time they do.”

“We want to cater for a working environment Anangu way, we want our business to adapt for our people to make it work.”

“We are getting pretty close to being an active employer and paying superannuation. There are six people who are on Centrelink and we want to get them off also,” he said.

A big part of his job is to get on the radar of the big tourism operators.

“They come and see and once we have perfected our marketing they can advertise our business to international visitors around the world through our website,” he suggested. Happy

customers also spread the word about the tours and help put the family’s dream of a life off welfare within reach.

Solar powered internet and WiFi at the nearby Kings Canyon Resort means Karrke can process electronic payments straight into the business account.

Not all visitors contribute cash.

“You have to be determined if you want to do it, and the main thing, you have to be happy.”

“Someone paid for a tour with a watch once and sometimes with phones,” Mr Abbott said.

But he goes on to say that keeping the business afloat will take more than just growing visitor numbers.

“We are still finding it difficult to find funding,” Mr Abbott explained.

“We need grants from the networks, NT government and federal. We need a lot more help from the CLC, like signage and funding and make it quicker!”

The CLC has a legal duty to consult the wider traditional owner group about any business proposals on Aboriginal land.

Tourism proposals from small traditional owner groups such as the Wanmara mob are no exception, and many find asking the wider group for approval daunting.

It can be “very complex and disheartening when gathering with big family groups and traditional owners,” Mr Abbott said.

With only one CLC staff member dedicated to tourism

development, getting the necessary approvals has been slower than Mr Abbott expected.

Add to this the processes of NT Parks and Wildlife, who had to approve a traditional owner-funded road diverting tourist cars away from the community living area, and you can understand his frustration.

“Aboriginal people, if they have an idea, they want to do something. Funds can be approved in a meeting, but it can take a year to actually get going. It breaks the motivation and the spirit,” he said.

None of this, however, has deterred the Wanmara mob.

“Go ahead, start small, whatever your idea is,” is Peter Abbott’s advice to other families.

“Look at what you can achieve, what you are capable of, make sure you are happy. Don’t do something you won’t be happy with.”

“The first step is going to the CLC, they have a stepping stones program and can look at some funding. There is a Territory Business centre with an indigenous or business champion,” he continues.

“NT Tourism has indigenous business officers and they can help you with funds and business plans.”

Mr Abbott wants them all to help with solutions that “make it easier to pay certain persons for bookkeeping and writing.

“It needs to be structurally easier to do the text, do the

payments,” he added.

“Our people might not be too knowledgeable in the European way, public speaking and writing, but they know their own country and can speak very proudly about their land and their culture. That is our uniqueness,” he said with pride.

“Remote communities have to look at technologies. This is a way to move forward, not only wati tjuta (men) but also kungkas (women) can be very powerful and they are equal.”

Since Karrke started, other Aboriginal owned and operated companies have sprung up on outstations in the region.

One of them is Sammy Wilson’s business at Patji outstation.

Mr Abbott said Mr Wilson “is doing a wonderful job on his country at Uluru”.

Others have visited Karrke “to get inspiration”.

“Nyinku [Tjingo] does it in her unique way at Yulara Pulka,” Mr Abbott suggested.

“She shows her culture in her and her partner’s way. It is not about copying, but about being unique in our own way.”

Mr Abbott urges anyone with a tourism idea to have a go.

“There are so many possibilities,” he said. “There are people who love birds, walking, cyclist, nature-based and photographs. Some groups just like to sit at the campfire.”

“There are so many ways you can actually do a tour and show your amazing country.

You will be successful and visitors will come.”

For help with a tourism business idea call 8951 6361.



Growing the growers - when bush harvesters meet markets

HARVESTERS of bush foods in remote areas across the Northern Territory have met in Alice Springs for the first time to talk about their growing industry.

The event was hosted by Raylene Brown at Kungkas Can Cook, her catering business and café.

Ms Brown jumped at the chance to host the first gathering of wild harvesters in March, which attracted people from Mutitjulu to Groote Eylandt and from Nyirripi to Cloncurry.

She says it's about time the expanding bush foods industry supported the hundreds of harvesters of wild grown bush foods in Central Australia, who sell "premium products that can't be matched by machine harvest".

She believes such harvesters are the industry's backbone and deserve a fair share of the profits in exchange for their backbreaking work and for the sake of their children.

"The main thing these ladies are saying is, 'We want our young people to benefit from this industry as it goes forward'," she told 8CCC's *Coolibah Swamp* program.

"I'm telling them, 'Stay strong, work with the young people and really educate them about future opportunities for real jobs on country, doing the things people want to do.' To turn their knowledge into an income out on communities."

Ms Brown believes the knowledge people grow up with is becoming more valuable as the word about the benefits of bush foods spreads to the cities.

"There's an extraordinary interest in bush foods, which is being helped by all the yuppie mob hearing about all those wonderful, nutritious and healthy foods," she said.

"I'm sure we can ramp things up another 100 per cent compared to what's happening now."

Despite all this potential, nobody really knows how big the market share of wild harvested bush foods currently is.

According to Ms Brown, the last harvest produced some "five tonnes of hand harvested wattle seeds", but no hard figures are available.

"There haven't been any records of what people have been selling and trading, nothing like a wheat board thing where you can see what yield is coming out," she explains.

This is where the Territory government's new bush foods development officer comes in.

Primary Industries and Resources Minister Ken Vowles said the government sponsored the position and the two-day workshop because it wants to develop "real jobs for real people on country".

Ms Brown's mission is to make sure the harvesters are heard by decision makers.

"Mob from country are starting to speak up strong about their bush tucker and their bush medicines," she said.

"We've been practicing with our bush medicine for a long time, we never stopped. When people go to hospital we



Bush foods catering queen Raylene Brown sources her seeds and bush fruits from harvesters in Central Australian communities.

"They want to be price makers, not price takers. They want to talk to people about how hard they work to collect that seed and have a foot in the door."

still look for that bush medicine and here today we have some really great examples of the social enterprises that are in our town.

"Akeyulere mob have a contract with Oxfam and a lot of that money is going directly to the young people, who are making it under the instructions of the elders. There's that intergenerational exchange of knowledge, from old ways to new ways."

Ms Brown says university researchers were not the first to discover that bush foods are good for people.

"Aboriginal people could have told them that from the start," she said. "We survived for thousands of years in this country. Surely you can see that these products have high nutritional value and are healthy."

"Why are our mob sick now? It's because our bush tucker is not in our foods any more. We're eating rubbish! We only used to get sugar from the flowers, the sugarbag and that little lerp on the gum leaves. Now we eat sugar by the cup."

Ms Brown was among the producers, traders, researchers and public servants who met with around 35 harvesters at Arlparra community last June to kick off a series of workshops to help the women to grow their side of the industry.

She was thrilled to welcome more than twice as many people to Kungkas for the second workshop.

The harvesters found the trade of their seeds difficult to understand, especially all the value adding that happens after sale.

"People trade in buckets, not kilos," she explained. "They want to know: how much can I expect to get paid for that bucket of akatyerr (bush tomatoes), that red gum seed, that lerp or that acacia?

They need to be more informed about pricing.

"They want to be price makers, not price takers. They want to talk to people about how hard they work to collect that seed and have a foot in the door."

"It's fallen on deaf ears for quite a long time, but now because a lot of people are starting to speak up the



Lulu Teece cleans a yam. Photo: Fiona Walsh.

industry is going to have to deal with it and start to answer the questions that are coming up around getting a fair deal."

The co-chair of the Prime Minister's Indigenous Advisory Council, Andrea Mason, attended the workshop and promised to raise another concern of the harvesters with Mr Turnbull: the need for recognition of Aboriginal ownership – or Indigenous intellectual property (IIP) of bush food species. Or 'who owns that plant', as Ms Brown

puts it.

"We talked about patents, fair trade and other ways people in other countries have protected their plant rights," she said. "The harvesters all want to protect their knowledge. I think connecting their story to the plant is a way of doing that."

"They don't want their plants to go moving around. They want recognition that that plant is growing on their country."

"They want provenance, the traceability of where that seed's come from and how it's helping people on the ground, and that strong story about connection to country around it. That helps that product to be marketed and that's what the market needs to learn," she said.

"We don't want people to take a specimen of that bush medicine plant and do their testing without negotiating agreements. Don't let people just come out on your country. Start asking: 'Who are you and what are you doing with that plant?'"

The workshop also drilled deeper into concerns the harvesters raised at last year's workshop: how to pass their knowledge to future generations when the local school doesn't support bilingual and bicultural education?

How to keep your country strong when it is surrounded by cattle stations? How to stop buffel grass from crowding out bush foods?

"We know pastoralists love the buffel, but for us to get an economy off our land we need to fight it. How do we do that hand in hand?" Ms Brown asked the *Alice Springs News*.

"We have the right to make money off our lands as well."

For bush foods to thrive they need regular cool season patchwork burning, yet many communities lack Aboriginal rangers who could help with these controlled fires.

"They don't want to get into trouble, but they need to burn the country to get the akatyerr to grow," Ms Brown said. "The ladies want all their young men to do that."





Telling stories and painting life, brightly

THE desert Aboriginal art world and wider community was deeply saddened by the death of acclaimed Alice Springs Town Camp Artist Kunmanara Nampitjinpa M. Boko last December.

A much-loved and loving wife of David Boko, she was also a mother of two daughters and one son, and a grandmother of three.

Born in 1953 at Hermannsburg Lutheran Mission to Joan Gidi and Andy Williams, Kunmanara lived her life across the bush, mission, station, community, outstation, town camp and town worlds.

She was a native title holder of Narwietooma Station and also Glen Helen (Ungunka), where her father was head stockman.

She was baptised and confirmed at the Jay Creek Reserve (Iwupataka) after moving there with her father and siblings in the late 1950s, aged around six.

She went to school at Jay Creek, where she met her sister-cousin Dulcie Inkamala, and occasionally at Papunya, where she stayed with her grandparents.

Kunmanara's father helped build early tourist facilities at Angwerle Atwatye (Standley Chasm) and as a young woman Kunmanara received training there. She also worked in the Jay Creek mission kitchen, school and clinic, eventually travelling to Batchelor College in Alice Springs for clinic training.

When water at Jay Creek became scarce Kunmanara moved to Amoonguna where she met her close friend and fellow artist Sally M. Mulda.

Kunmanara married David Boko at Jay Creek and gave birth to their first daughter Rosalyn there in 1973, followed by another daughter and a son. She and David raised their children at Jay Creek, as well as on the nearby Inkamala block.

As a young wife and mother,

Kunmanara took part in the important events occurring around her.

"In town, whitefellas said and wrote on papers, 'This is our land, not yours'. But we always knew. Those whitefellas were telling lies!

"Finally, we had enough! We wanted our land. So we all marched through town, biggest mob of Aboriginal people, while all the whitefellas locked themselves in their houses.

"We were angry. We always knew who owned it, where we belonged. And in the end, government agreed, when they made that new piece of paper (the Land Rights Act)."

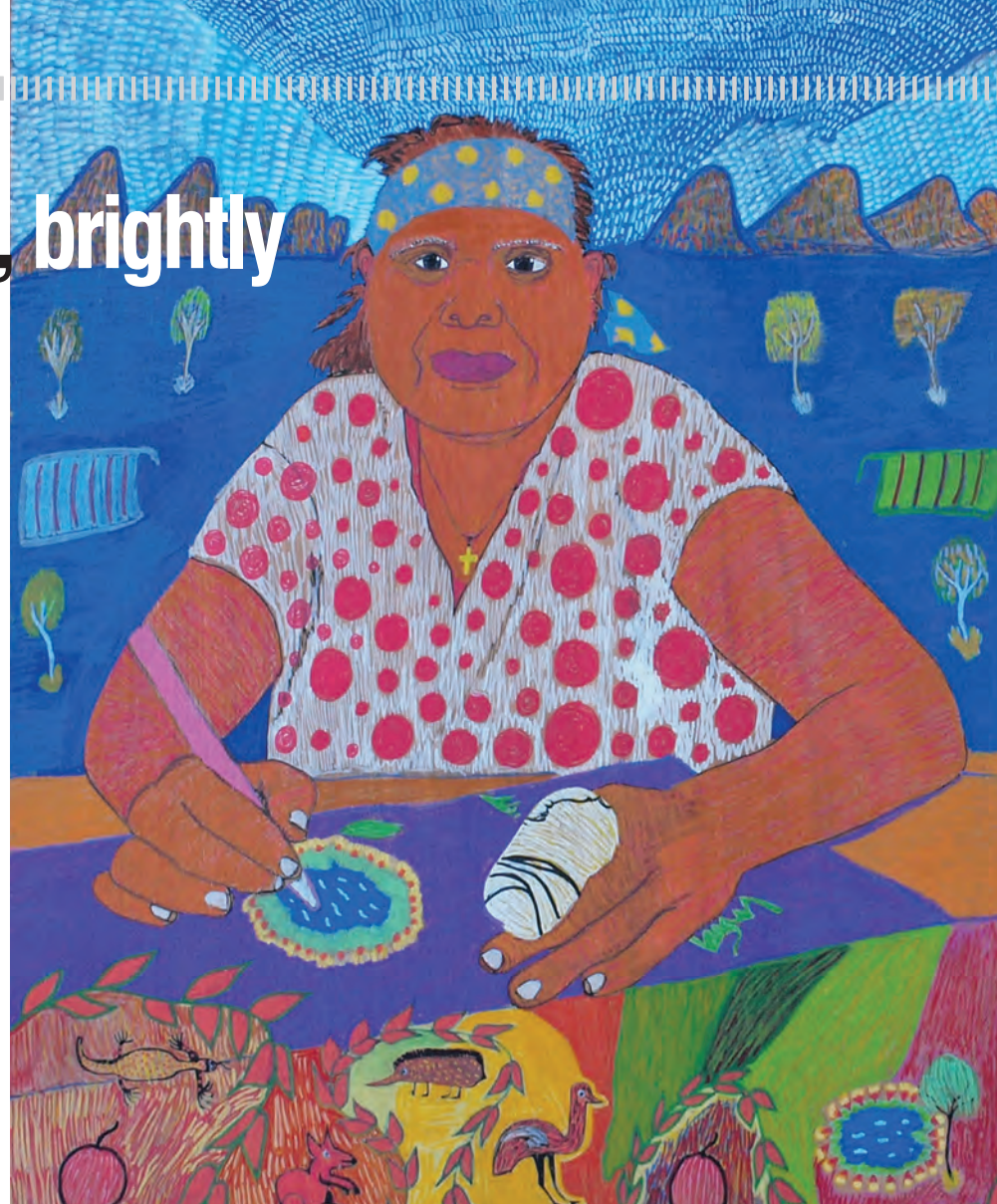
In 2012, Kunmanara and her family won native title over Glen Helen Station, an achievement of which she was always immensely proud, but after land rights, people started to leave Jay Creek and return to their homelands. Kunmanara and her extended family were last to leave. She spoke of fear of 'KKK' activity in the surrounding hills being the final lever that dislodged them out of their home.

Kunmanara and David raised their children and grandchildren at Inerlange (Little Sisters) town camp in Alice Springs, and served on the board of Tangentyere Council.

Kunmanara was dedicated to her family and staunchly proud of their town camp lives, even as the hardships challenged her vivacious spirit in deeply unsettling ways.

When two of her grandsons were taken by Child Protection on entirely spurious grounds one Friday afternoon in 2010, her fierce love for them and ability to quickly pull together a powerful network of support saw them returned home within days. The tragic death of Kunmanara's first-born daughter in mid-2017 turned her world upside down, again.

Within a decade of starting to paint she had produced more than 450 works. In the eyes of many she became what one museum director recalls



This self portrait is from 2013. Kunmanara's work *Finally we had enough* was shortlisted for the Vincent Lingiari Art Award in 2016.

as "a magnificent presence" in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art world.

Having worked with Tangentyere Artists since 2007, Kunmanara's painted stories form a rare archive of a visualised oral history of the major social, cultural and economic upheavals in Central Australian desert people's lives over the past half-century.

In 2016, one of her paintings celebrated the adoption of unsniffable unleaded OPAL fuel across Central Australia 10 years earlier. Many depict her father's country M'Bunghara.

She was a finalist in the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards in 2011 and 2015, and a finalist in the 2011 Togart

Contemporary Art Award. Her works have been exhibited in Korea and Singapore.

"She couldn't stop telling stories!" her daughter Rosalyn said.

The Lutheran congregation at Gap Road was a big part of Kunmanara's life. She helped found the Mission Block Choir and performed with the acclaimed Central Australian Aboriginal Women's Choir around Australia and the world.

She is remembered for her playfulness, teasing and laughter, her ability to make others laugh, and the power of her open friendship to everyone. As family recalled in their eulogy, 'wherever she went she made people happy'.

Minyma mukulya: a caring loving woman

MRS BRUMBY of Utju is described by her sister-cousin and best friend Theresa Nipper as a 'minyma mukulya', a caring loving woman who was knowledgeable and good at everything.

"She was always helping, always giving," Ms Nipper said. "When her elder sister and younger siblings passed away she cared for their children and lovingly grew them up as her own.

"There were always lots of kids around her house because she really cared. Together we shared the responsibility for so many kids."

Ms Nipper said Mrs Brumby would give so much that sometimes there was nothing left to give.

"Sometimes I felt like saying to her, 'You don't have to feed all the kids! Centrelink can give you support.

"She would make damper after damper and have nothing left for herself. She would help everyone to the point of exhaustion and I used to have to tell her to rest because she would

never say no to anybody who was in need, always giving everything."

Mrs Brumby was born at Utju, the third of seven sisters and brothers – Patty, Bruce, Nellie, Larry, Watson and Matthew. Kunmanara Brumby's husband was Dennis Nipper.

Literate and fluent in Pitjantjatjara, Arrernte and English, Kunmanara was a highly respected interpreter and translator, working on translating the Bible and hymns into Pitjantjatjara. She worked on the NPY Women's Council mental health language project Uti Kulintjaku with Angela Lynch, who said Mrs Brumby would "lift our spirits and make us laugh, then sing! She sparkled." Ms Lynch says "her deep store of knowledge about feelings and mental health, language and culture, and a bottomless well of compassion, and the combination of all these together made her such a powerful contributor to the UK team."

A qualified teacher, having studied at Batchelor College, she produced many Pitjantjatjara story books with the Utju



Kunmanara sang at the Melbourne International Film Festival in 2017. Photo: Jim Lee.



Jangala Jigili - thinker, listener, mediator, leader

KUMANJAYI Jangala Jigili passed away unexpectedly on the 12th of January, while looking after his wife, Elma Nungarrayi McDonald, who was on dialysis in Darwin.

His sudden death shocked and saddened people in his home community of Lajamanu and his many friends and family across Australia.

Jangala was born in Lajamanu on the 7th of March 1963 and lived his whole life there. His father's country was Pirlinyanu and Jangala often spoke about how he longed to live there.

From a young age he took part in many ceremonies, public and private,

and gentle man who put others' needs before his own.

During the emotional funeral on the 7th of March, Jangala's birthday, dozens of people spoke about the impact he had on their lives and how much he would be missed. His funeral, with the red and white colours of the Swans displayed around the church, started in the late morning and finished at sunset as the community and visitors laid him in the ground.

As a young man, Jangala was a very good football player. He won Best and Fairest at the Barunga sports weekend in the early 1980s and went on to play a strong role in the North

Katherine and was on the board of the Association of Northern, Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists since 2009.

Jangala had a long interest in education and strongly supported bilingual education. He served for many years on the school council, including as its president.

He was also heavily involved in local government, including as president of the Lajamanu Community Government Council and later at meetings of the shire.

He spent many years on Lajamanu's store committee. He had a long stint as chair and for decades held positions on many other boards and committees.

Jangala was also a leading figure in Lajamanu's Kurdiji group, first in the mid 1990s, before it lost government support in 2003.

In 2010, he advocated with the North Australian Aboriginal Justice

Agency and the CLC to help restart Kurdiji.

He played a leading role in the group and spent many hours helping to solve problems, supporting the community to take control and plan for the future.

Last December, he accepted the Fitzgerald Human Rights Justice Award on behalf of Kurdiji.

"To win this award is so overwhelming, to be part of this," he said at the time.

"We do a lot of hard jobs, working for our community and to help

our community be stronger, for indigenous and non-indigenous, because we all live together in our community. Together we walk side by side and we work together." Kumanjayi is deeply missed in Lajamanu and all over Australia.

By Robert Chapman with Geoffrey Matthews, Wangapa Barnes, Valarie Patterson and Alastair Jigili.



Many people knew Jangala as a kind and gentle man who put others' needs before his own.

and the old people were training him to become a ceremonial leader.

With his beloved wife Elma he had three children, Alastair and Greg Jampijinpa and Richache Nampijinpa, who, along with his grandchildren, he loved very much.

He was well known as a skilful mediator and negotiator and could often be seen around the Lajamanu shop, where people would approach him for help in solving issues, identifying the right people to speak to and advising on the background to problems.

He was a leading figure in Yapa public meetings and helped to bring everyone together to talk about problems and find a solution everyone could live with.

He was always available to help solve family disputes, and support his community and others.

"He was always there to support Yapa and encourage them when they were down ... and tell them not to be ashamed to advise kardiya," explained his nephew, Roger Japaljarri Jurrak, who worked with him at the Lajamanu school.

Many people knew Jangala as a kind

Tanami Sports Club, including being a leading organiser of the Lajamanu sports weekend.

He was an inspiring coach of the Lajamanu Swans as well as a dedicated supporter of the Sydney Swans.

Jangala was also strongly involved in kardiya business and spent many years learning about kardiya meetings and business.

He was a major figure in many organisations. Central Land Council staff remember him as someone who would remain calm and positive when hard issues were being talked about.

His best mate, Wangapa (Geoffrey) Jungarrayi Barnes, said "he never rushed into anything, he thought before giving an answer. He was a good thinker. I learnt a lot from him in both ways, kardiya and Yapa".

His jukana (cousin-sister), Valerie Napanangka Patterson, added that he was also "a good listener", taking everyone's viewpoint into account.

He was the main one who restarted the Warnayaka Arts and Cultural Centre in the early 2000s and was its chair for many years. He also chaired Mimi Arts and Crafts in

school kids to teach them how to read and write.

"Her message to the kids was 'culture and education go hand in hand. Don't just do one or the other, keep on learning about culture and go to school'," Ms Nipper said. "That's what she would always say."

Kunmanara was also a major contributor to the Ara Irititja project, which gathers photographs, film, sound recordings and documents of cultural and historical significance to Anangu so they can access them through multi-media software.

Linda Rive, from Ara Irititja, said Mrs Brumby was the number one community contributor to the social history database.

"She has really put Utju on the map with names of people added, which is of great benefit to any Utju person researching their family history."

"She was computer literate, and at

ease with the program, and has left a large and valuable body of work on Ara Irititja," Ms Rive said.

"She also encouraged the community ownership of the archive and encouraged Anangu to put their collections on Ara Irititja also."

"Ara Irititja would like to pay tribute to her as a beautiful person, and the number one community operator. We miss her."

"Keep on learning about culture and go to school."

"Her voice was sweet and gentle but crystal clear, and she was easy to hear and understand. She was an educator through and through, and kept a high standard in her use of the Pitjantjatjara language, pronunciation and grammar."

She had a beautiful singing voice with the ability to sing soprano and alto, and

that voice helped take her to Germany in 2015 with the Central Australian Aboriginal Women's Choir.

A documentary film, *The Song Keepers*, was made about the tour and screened at the Melbourne International Film Festival last year.

The tour saw the singers perform the hymns and songs their families learnt from German missionaries 140 years earlier.

"We took what the missionaries taught us back to Germany, so it was like a boomerang message going back to them," Kunmanara told *Land Rights News* at the time.

She also said the choir had wanted to sing for German audiences to show that the songs had helped keep their Aboriginal languages alive.

"So they know we're keeping our culture and language strong," Kunmanara explained.

Mrs Brumby always welcomed

newcomers. Her friend Starlady said Kunmanara was a great teacher.

"I'll always remember her saying 'Starlady, she's the real Queen of the Desert'. She was telling me that I was family, that Areyonga was my home and that I would always be welcome there. That's such a gift to be offered a place in the world where you can be yourself."

"She was so proud of her culture and so generous with sharing that with the world. I'm glad that she got to do all those amazing things so that everyone can keep learning from her."

"She gave me so much confidence and strength in the world, when I think of her I always remember the most important thing in life is just to have a good heart."

Theresa Nipper remembers one of Mrs Brumby's favourite sayings was "Let's hold hands together and walk the walk together."



Gallery divides the community

THE Northern Territory government is imploring Alice Springs residents to unite behind its plans for a national Aboriginal art gallery on a controversial site at the town's ANZAC oval.

"I hope that we can be unified in this shared vision for Alice Springs", local MLA Dale Wakefield pleaded in an email she sent to her constituents in April.

Ever since announcing the Chief Minister's

Perkins told *The Australian*.

"For it to be taken out of our hands and subject to the commercial interests of the business community is an absolute travesty."

Other experts on the committee called the decision "pretty shabby".

"After exposure to politicians in the NT and some of the bureaucrats, I can't say that I'm totally surprised that they disregarded our august advice," one told the paper.

recommendation from the expert panel's report: that the gallery must be run by a board that has a majority of Aboriginal people.

"It's important that Aboriginal people have agency in this gallery, that they have ownership and a strong majority say in terms of what's presented and how it's presented."

"We are very much watching what processes they will put in place to engage key stakeholders including Desart, but more broadly communities in Central Australia."

Aboriginal ownership and control is key for Ms Perkins, who judged the Vincent Lingiari Art Award at the Tangentyere Artists Gallery in 2016, celebrating 50 years since the Wave Hill Walk Off and 40 years of land rights.

The launch event was attended by a proud and rarely seen mix of Mr Lingiari's family, arts lovers, town campers and bush residents, who spilled onto the pavement outside the small exhibition space.

Back then, a new Aboriginal controlled national gallery was regarded as a fitting home for future award exhibitions.

Whether the signature event will be a good fit for the new gallery is now an open question.

NT Tourism and Culture Minister Lauren Moss promised "ongoing" consultations with Aboriginal people about the design and operation of the gallery, but Ms Perkins won't be part of the process "at this stage".

"If it's started off like this, I don't think it's going to improve," she said.

Mr Watkins said the success of the national gallery also depends on the owners of national and international collections of Aboriginal



Desart's Philip Watkins with the steering committee report about the national Aboriginal art gallery.

art, who want to know that Aboriginal people back the gallery before they send priceless works to be exhibited there.

"They want to see that Aboriginal people are supporting this. If that isn't demonstrated it will be a challenge," he said.

Meanwhile, the all-Aboriginal steering committee of a separate government

process and its own approach.

The committee told the *Alice Springs News* that the cultural centre will be "community led", "working in reverse" to the government's process on the national art gallery.

Over the next year the cultural centre committee's Owen Cole and Harold Furber will consult with Aboriginal cultural organisations in each



Aboriginal control: Hetti Perkins at the launch of the Vincent Lingiari Art Award.

'captain's pick' of the site the government has been battling a backlash about its failure to consult widely.

The government is trying to sell the gallery location as a way to revive the tired centre of the town, but

"I just don't think the ANZAC Oval site is going to work."

The process so far has not instilled confidence in the Aboriginal panel members that the government will heed their other recommendations.

"They have chosen a site without broad consultation with the wider community and without regard to the traditional owners."

ignored the preference of its expert steering committee for a stunning and expansive location near the Desert Park.

Desart's Phil Watkins, one of the authors of the steering committee's \$200,000 report, remains to be convinced that the government will be able to bring Aboriginal people along with it.

"They have chosen a site without broad consultation with the wider community and without regard to the traditional owners," Mr Watkins said.

"Our report clearly states that there needs to be broad agreement with the traditional owners and managers of Mbandia about the land use."

Co-author and respected curator Hetti Perkins slammed the government's process as "Clayton's consultations".

"It's like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, a dream that has gone up in flames. It's just very, very disappointing," Ms

"My other concern is that if it is going to be a game changer, as the government said, then it needs to be relevant to Aboriginal people, particularly in terms of employment, training and professional development, so they can take on jobs at all levels of this new gallery," said Mr Watkins.

He said the government needs to engage with existing Aboriginal enterprises to ensure there are broad employment opportunities.

"The times of Aboriginal people being only producers of art are over," he said.

"We need opportunities to take on all roles in the industry. If you walk down the main street of Alice Springs you see a lot of galleries and very few Aboriginal people working there. We need to change that and the gallery has the potential to do that."

He put the government on notice about another

"It's like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, a dream that has gone up in flames. It's just very, very disappointing."

supported project, a national Aboriginal cultural centre, has pointed out the contrast between the government's

state and territory about the gallery which aims to tell Australia's history from an Aboriginal point of view.



Desart is celebrating a twin anniversary this year: a quarter of a century of supporting Aboriginal arts centres in Central Australia and 10 years of its art worker program that has supported many jobs for Aboriginal art workers. But that's not all - Desart has also broken its own record by attracting more than 150 artists, art centre directors and managers, industry professionals and special guests to its annual conference in March. Judith Inkamala from the Hermannsburg Potters spoke up during the conference's employment rights and responsibilities workshop.



“I felt fear, as if my grandfather was in me”

IF you are planning to commemorate the Coniston Massacre next August, chances are you will run into Hamilton Japaljarri Morris. The Yuendumu-born lead actor in Warwick Thornton's award-winning western *Sweet Country* feels a strong personal connection to the 'killing times' 90 years ago.

“My grandfather was involved in the massacres at Coniston. He was travelling from Jay Creek with my father's brothers and sisters and also my grandmothers.

My grandfather had two wives. He was on his way to Coniston, according to my mother. On the way my grandfather was confronted by the police. The police then shot those people and he was taken to Darwin prison and put in chains.

My father told me that he was just about to get hanged when a donkey came running through the crowd, opened its mouth and said: “He's innocent”. They let him go.

My grandfather was an innocent old man, coming to

Coniston to see his family. But then this man, the white settler Frederick Brooks, [was killed by] someone by the name of Bullfrog. Bullfrog comes from my grandfather's country, Yarrungkanyi.

They took my grandfather by mistake, thinking that he looked like Bullfrog. There was a lot of brutality going on in those days, in the 20s.

The film *Sweet Country* is also very sad and powerful. It's inspired by true stories of the 1920s, about a little boy called Philemac who was a witness to a shooting of a whitefella, so the story goes, and went on the run after that.”

What went on in the scene in *Sweet Country* that reduced fellow actor Sam Neil to tears?

“When they put me in chains I became overwhelmed. It was just so emotional. Tears started falling from my eyes. Sam Neil noticed me sitting with my head bowed down, remembering what my grandfather was going through when they put those chains around me. I felt fear, as if my grandfather was in me.”

What does the 90th anniversary of Coniston



Actor Hamilton Morris plans to come to the 90th Coniston commemoration.

mean to you?

“Reconciliation. Both black and white need to wake up to what has happened. White Australians grow up without knowing what has happened in those days. It's very important that people know what

happened in Central Australia when the white settlers were taking over our land. But not just to reminisce about the past, you know? We are trying to live in a different world now, coming together and co-operating with one another.”

Is *Sweet Country* a contribution to truth telling or reconciliation?

“It's both, I think. The world needs to know what happened in those days. Learning about Aboriginal history is not what happened in schools in the past. It was only whiteman's way. Nowadays we want to have an input about what happened in the darkest days. We need to push for Aboriginal history to be taught in white schools. It's very important that the Coniston Massacre is taught as well.”

You have been a big supporter of the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust. Is acting a form of education for you?

“I think it is. It's been an honour to represent my people through acting. If I can do that through acting then young people can look at what I've achieved and stand up as well.”

Should local students play a role in this year's commemorations?

“The teachers should work with the traditional owners and encourage young kids to take part. It's very important.”

“We were radicals in those days”

FRANCIS Kelly and Tracker Tilmouth were childhood friends, tearing around the East Side of Alice Springs on donkeys and nicked bikes.

Asked by Tracker's family to launch Alexis Wright's award winning biography of the late Central Land Council director the current chair accepted in a heartbeat.

Here's what he told the audience at the Northern Territory Library in Darwin:

“Tracker was a good fella. That was the most important thing. He was a smart man, a talented person. He knew two sides of the world. Yapa side and kartiya side. But in the middle he used to joke a lot.

He was a good teacher. He used to teach me about two-way policies. Yapa policies and kartiya policies.

He was a straight talker.

He talked straight to the land council and government, but some of them didn't listen to him. He used to talk and joke at the same time. People liked his sense of humour.

We played for Pioneers

“We had a favourite Bob Marley song, *One Love*. It's about friendship. He knows me, I know him and we have to share that with other people.”

together in 1973. He was a left foot kicker and a bit of a dodgy player. He was really quick, but sometimes he put his foot on another player's foot to try and stop him.

He used to dodge people, joke with people and make them wild, teasing them on the side. Scared the players. He called me Bull Kelly. I

used to run like a bull with the football, passing through.

When we were younger we've been - sorry to say - radicals in those days. Me and Tracker and Henry Bloomfield and Alan Campbell and a few

other youngfellas. We used to stick together, we didn't join the other mob.

We used to ride donkeys on East Side and to that place of old Milton, the wood yard, in that area where the Pioneer footy club shed is now. He used to sell wood to the town area. We were about

14, 15. We used to have a lot of fun, cut wood with old Milton, helping him out and bringing wood back.

Tracker wasn't a leader of the pack, we were all sharing it. We used to go to that old man who used to have a bicycle centre, called Mr Nichols I think. Somebody used to talk to him while we used to steal some of the bikes. And we used to go to that hotel to sell [empty] bottles, give 'em to that fella who used to give us ice cream.

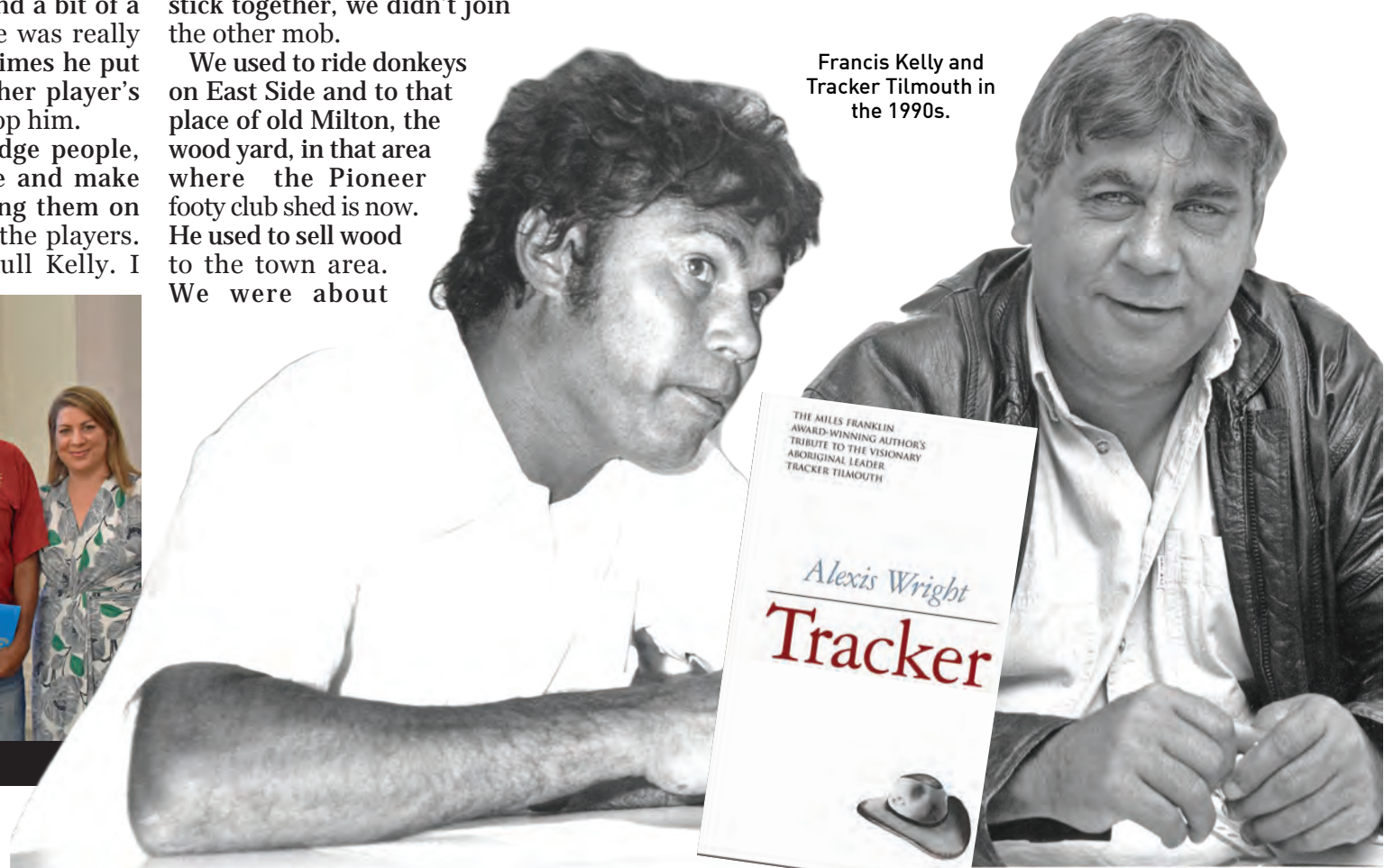
I was going to interview Tracker and make a film about him and myself, what we've done in those days.

I didn't make it that time when he was at land council doing the job that Rossy does. He was a busy man in those days. I should have done it and I'm a bit sad about it.

We had a favourite Bob Marley song, *One Love*. It's about friendship. He knows me, I know him and we have to share that with other people.”



Alexis Wright (in black) with Francis Kelly and Tracker's family.



Francis Kelly and Tracker Tilmouth in the 1990s.



Environmental defenders face fatal threats



An indigenous activist climbs a tree during a demonstration at the Museu do Índio (Indian Museum) 'Aldeia Maracana' (Maracana Village), Brazil in 2013. Photo: Tasso Marcelo / Getty images.

ALMOST 200 environmental defenders were killed around the world last year and up to half of them were from Indigenous and local communities, according to an international report.

The international non-governmental organisation Global Witness says almost four people, who defend the environment or their ancestral lands, are killed each week doing so.

Global Witness said the figures only represent documented statistics and the true number is likely to be much higher. Many more are harassed, intimidated and forced from their lands.

Land Rights News has previously reported on the dangers Indigenous peoples face protecting or claiming their lands, which often include

fatal attacks.

The United Nations has now moved to change that.

In March it launched the UN environmental rights initiative, which aims to help people understand how to defend their rights and to help governments uphold environmental rights.

“Those who struggle to protect the planet and people should be celebrated as heroes, but the sad fact is that many are paying a heavy price with their safety and sometimes their lives.”

The UN says two disturbing trends are undermining both

between 2002 and 2013 for defending the environment and land. The UN says the pace of killing is increasing.

The second is the attempts by some countries to limit the activities of non-government organisations, or NGOs.

Between 1993 and 2016, 48

has been heavily criticised by charities, which conduct a range of advocacy, including environmental, over its proposed bill to ban foreign donations. It claims the crackdown will stop foreign interference in Australian politics.

Among other things, the UN initiative will help governments implement policy and legal frameworks protecting environmental rights, and assist businesses to better understand their environmental rights obligations.

The UN's environment program director for Latin America and the Caribbean, Leo Heileman, has called it “an opportunity to give environmental rights the same legal standing as human rights”.

“Those who struggle to protect the planet and people should be celebrated as heroes, but the sad fact is that many are paying a heavy price with their safety and sometimes their lives.”

“It's our duty to stand on the side of those who are on the right side of history. It means standing for the most fundamental and universal of human rights,” Erik Solheim, executive director of the UN environment program, said.

the environmental rule of law and the human rights to participate and assemble.

The first is the escalating harassment, intimidation, and murder of environmental defenders, which saw 908 people killed in 35 countries

countries enacted laws that restricted the activities of local NGOs receiving foreign funding, and 63 countries adopted laws restricting activities of foreign NGOs.

Australia is one of them. The Australian government

Central Land Council

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Canadian reform in contrast to Australian rejection



THE Canadian prime minister, Justin Trudeau, has committed to legislation that will make the recognition and implementation of rights the basis for all relations between Indigenous peoples and the federal government.

The laws are expected to include new measures to support the rebuilding of indigenous governance and advance self-determination, including the inherent right of self-government.

While the exact detail of the legislation, the Recognition and Implementation of Rights Framework, is still to be finalised, Mr Trudeau said it will lay the foundation for real and lasting change.

In a statement, the government said for too long Canada's first peoples have had to prove their rights exist and fight to have them recognised and implemented.

It said to truly renew the relationship with Canada's first peoples, the government must make the recognition and implementation of rights the basis for all relations between the parties.

Mr Trudeau has promised the law will be developed in full partnership with first nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.

"Reconciliation calls upon us all to confront our past and commit to charting a brighter, more inclusive future," he said.

"We must acknowledge that



A First Nations woman cheers while taking part in the Walk for Reconciliation in Vancouver, Canada in 2013. Photo: AP / Darryl Dyck.

centuries of colonial practices have denied the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples."

Canada's minister of crown-Indigenous relations and northern affairs, Carolyn Bennett, said the approach recognises the nation's shameful past.

"Today we begin the engagement that will finally address Canada's uncomfortable truth – centuries of colonial practices have denied the inherent

rights of Indigenous peoples," she said.

"The recognition and implementation of Indigenous rights is critical to reconciliation. We invite all Canadians to work to better understand the damage done by our colonial past and join us in the journey of reconciliation."

In contrast, the Australian government has rejected the Uluru Statement from the Heart, which Australia's

Indigenous peoples developed after an Aboriginal-led national consultation process culminating in the Uluru constitutional convention.

The statement called for an Indigenous voice to parliament, to advise on policy.

That would include a first nations voice enshrined in the Australian constitution, a Makarrata commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between

governments and Aboriginal peoples and telling the truth about Australia's violent history of colonisation and dispossession.

Prime minister Malcolm Turnbull rejected the statement out of hand, without any attempt to engage the broader Australian public, saying it had no chance of being accepted. Opinion polls shortly after the Uluru convention contradicted this view.

The Kimberley fires up Botswana



THE traditional fire knowledge of indigenous Australians, now recognised as an important factor in the environmental management of country, is being exported to southern Africa.

Communities in Botswana, leading project partner in the new international savanna fire management project announced at an international conference in Germany late last year.

It says the project is the result of national and

"Indigenous people in Australia have developed a solution to this threat and Kimberley Aboriginal people are leading the way."

near South Africa, will combine their traditional methods of fire management with the expertise of traditional owners from the Kimberley to manage threats from uncontrolled savanna fires.

With funding of \$3.87 million over four years, the project will help deliver carbon abatement methods suitable to the Botswana landscape, as well as enable an exchange of indigenous knowledges between Kimberley Aboriginal people and Botswana locals.

The Kimberley Land Council says it's been named as a

international recognition of the knowledge of Australia's first people in reducing carbon emissions.

KLC chief executive officer Nolan Hunter said the project highlighted the valuable role Aboriginal people play in looking after country, as well as contributing to a global effort to prevent wildfires and cut greenhouse gases.

"Every year wildfires make news headlines across the world," Mr Hunter said.

"They are a major threat to human lives, biodiversity, property, and economies.

"But Indigenous people in



Gooniyandi head ranger Virgil Cherel during a cool season burn near Fitzroy Crossing.

Australia have developed a solution to this threat and Kimberley Aboriginal people are leading the way."

The ground-breaking project will see the implementation of savanna burning at a series of pilot sites in Botswana.

The traditional approach

leads to a decrease in greenhouse gas emissions, provides carbon market opportunities and delivers valuable jobs for poor and remote communities.

First revived in Australia in 2006, Aboriginal fire management is now creating

employment opportunities right across northern Australia.

There are 75 projects registered across that vast region, worth more than \$100 million and employing more than 400 Aboriginal rangers.

Bush football is so much more than a game

A RESEARCHER from Charles Darwin University has taken an idea for a footy competition inspired by the Wilurrara Tjutaku Football League to Australia's high society.

Professor Barry Judd is a descendant of the Anangu and a leading scholar on Aboriginal participation in Australian sport.

He believes that an Australian Rules football competition in Central Australia's bush communities may hold the key to improved health and wellbeing among residents.

Professor Judd put forward the idea to guests of philanthropist and former Western Bulldogs vice president Susan Alberti at Melbourne's exclusive Australian Club, on the eve of the 2018 AFL season.

"I spoke about the wellbeing benefits of playing football in communities such as Papunya, and of the need for an on-country football league with support from the AFL industry to operate out there in a way that it hasn't to date," Professor Judd said.

"I explained that communities are relatively safe places for young men to play football. They are places where they know how to behave socially according to traditional law, and where elders are able to engage with younger men and put them on a right path in life through football."

Professor Judd argues that local community competitions in remote

areas could do with more support from the traditional hierarchy of the sport.

He also said the centralised models of the major centres of the Territory and other states may not be the best approach for remote players.

He said a number of social issues could be linked to football's existing structure in Central Australia, which funnels many games into Alice Springs.

"Young men come to Alice Springs to play or watch football and don't go home," Professor Judd explained.

"This can lead to overcrowding in town camps, people running out of money for food, and law and order issues that contribute to the high number of Indigenous men who end up in jail.

"We could minimise risks by reducing the number of trips these young fellas make to Alice to play football in a way that is similar to how the game is structured in Top End communities and Arnhem Land."

In researching a 'bush league' where communities west and north-west of Alice Springs compete in a home and away format, followed by a short finals series, Prof Judd has looked closely at the WFTL.

"The research I have been doing has been focussed to some extent at least on giving voice to Sid Anderson and the Papunya

community's calls for the WFTL to be supported by the CAFL/AFLNT/AFL," he said.

The league started in the 1960s with just four teams.

Papunya Eagles coach Sid Anderson is keen to start a winter competition following a long ceremony break.

He has sourced small grants to cover the players' transport but needs more support in order to pay wages.

"We need a general manager and an Aboriginal person learning from them," Mr Anderson said.

Professor Judd agreed. "We have the expertise to study and analyse such a football competition and to track changes in wellbeing, but what's needed is a supporter who's prepared to invest in on-country football over a

number of years," he said.

"Football has a positive impact in the lives of young Aboriginal men by keeping

them fit and on the right path, but it could do so much more if we took the time to restructure football in Central Australia."



The Papunya footy team is part of the Wilurrara Tjutaku Football League.

Lajamanu Sports Academy lifts attendance



Lajamanu students Mervyn and Liam Rose use the room of the Lajamanu Sports Academy after school.

SPORT is a language kids in Aboriginal communities understand well and for many it's a pathway towards a brighter future.

Lajamanu's Granites Mine Affected Area Aboriginal Corporation, or GMAAAC, committee has backed this approach by investing almost \$93,000 in the Lajamanu Sports Academy.

Working out of the local school, the academy offers Lajamanu students at least 15 hours of sport and recreational activities every week.

Students can play table tennis and pool, do artwork and use computers before and after school, as well as during recess and lunchtime.

"I like to play pool in the academy room and do footy training after school every week," Mervyn Rose, a student at Lajamanu school, said.

The academy also links talented students to elite sport pathways, for example through the Michael Long Learning Centre in Darwin.

Sports academy officer Liam Patrick says the program is not just about sport.

"The academy is good for helping kids come to school," he said.

"They really like the morning sport and the skills sessions."

There has been a three per cent increase in secondary school attendance during the second semester of 2017.

The Wanta Aboriginal Corporation which runs the academy in Lajamanu and six other NT communities, also rewards students for good school attendance and behaviour with trips to other communities, towns and capital cities.

Lajamanu students have visited Sydney, Cairns, Katherine and Kalkaringi.

To build on this success the GMAAAC committee have funded the sports academy until 2020.

Wanta was set up in April 2015 to manage the federal government's remote school attendance strategy in Yuendumu and has since expanded to Ntaria, Arlparra and Kalkaringi.





Locally designed Willowra uniform is a winner



Willowra women's softball team shows off their new uniforms by local designer Cecilia Martin.

WILLOWRA'S women's softball and basketball teams aim to be the best going around, but they're already one of the best dressed.

That's thanks to new uniforms designed by team member Cecilia Martin and funding support from the Granites Mine Affected Area Aboriginal Corporation, or GMAAAC.

The uniforms feature the Aboriginal flag and the GMAAAC logo while the stripes represent the Wirriyajarrai (Lander) River.

"We respect the double blues colour because it was chosen by my [late] grandfather, Ray Japaljarri Ross."

Ms Martin said the uniforms help the Willowra women to feel proud of their teams.

"We respect the double blues colour because it was chosen by my [late]

grandfather, Ray Japaljarri Ross," she said.

"That's why the football team and the softball and basketball teams still compete with the same colours.

I just want to pass on my message to my people to be proud and strong of our culture."

Last year, Willowra's GMAAAC committee allocated more than \$20,000 to support women's sport in the community.

Running for desert dialysis

THE INDIGENOUS Marathon Project has changed many lives since sending its first four runners to the New York City Marathon in 2010.

More than 70 graduates have followed in their footsteps, including many from the Northern Territory, running in the world's biggest marathons, such as New York, Boston and Tokyo.

Zibeeon Fielding is one of them. A Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara man from Mimili in the APY Lands, Fielding, 24, is an inspiration for anyone who experiences setbacks while trying to achieve their goals.

It took Mr Fielding four attempts to be selected to run at the 2016 New York marathon, finishing one of the world's great marathons in 3 hours and 28 minutes.

"It really took me to a whole new world, but thinking of my family back home got me through it," Mr Fielding said.

His latest challenge is to run a road he drives all the time - the 62 kilometres between his home town and Indulkana.

Starting on May 20, he hopes to raise \$50,000 for the Western Desert Dialysis Purple House.

He's hoping the money can contribute to setting up a dialysis unit on the APY lands in Pukatja (Ernabella).

It would mean dialysis patients could be treated on their lands rather than having to relocate to Alice Springs or



Zibeeon Fielding in training. Photo: Indigenous Marathon Project.

to Adelaide.

With a certificate IV in primary health care, Mr Fielding is passionate about improving the health of his community.

He is taking that dream and local children back on the road.

He told the Centralian Advocate that he is encouraging them to join him in order to teach them the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

"It's my responsibility as an Aboriginal man and health worker to educate people," he said.

"Looking at indigenous people dying at such younger ages gave me a real shock. If I could put myself in a position where people could look up to me, I guess I'm making some kind of positive effect," he said.

Mr Fielding plans to run the Boston marathon in April and his journey is being filmed with support of the South Australian Film Corporation.

Recently, he'd raised just over half of his target, with \$26,834 committed. His fundraising page is at <https://goo.gl/JJVxCe>.

When normal marathons just aren't tough enough



Adrian Dodson-Shaw posted this photo of himself in Chile on his Facebook page.

CITY, snow or 'desert in the sky' - Adrian Dodson-Shaw won't be denied.

It's fair to say that running has taken him to places he never dreamed he'd go and to heights he never expected.

Last November, Mr Dodson-

by how well things went," Mr Dodson-Shaw said.

"Most of the runners took off at the start like a bat out of hell, but you need to pace yourself.

"Those ascents at the end were killers. You really feel

"Those ascents at the end were killers. You really feel the altitude when you're up that high; it's like someone's standing on your chest."

Shaw finished third in one of the toughest marathons in the world, Chile's Volcano Marathon.

It's held at Atacama, in the driest and highest desert in the world, with a finish line 3,600 metres above Mr Dodson-Shaw's coastal home town of Broome.

It all began back in 2014, when he was selected as one of the Indigenous Marathon Project's runners to take on the New York Marathon.

Finding that challenge a little too easy, he followed it up by becoming the first Indigenous Australian to run in the North Pole Marathon.

It was held in minus 40 degree temperatures.

And then to his latest challenge, a marathon at an altitude which makes it difficult to breathe while walking, let alone running.

He told the *National Indigenous Times* he was pleased with his time of six hours and four minutes.

"I was actually surprised

the altitude when you're up that high; it's like someone's standing on your chest."

His exploits have seen him move to Canberra as the IMP's head coach and program manager.

Mr Dodson-Shaw got his chance in the 2014 program after missing out on selection in 2012. He said it's a privilege to now be coach.

"Being the first Indigenous coach of the IMP and a graduate puts me in good stead for the position because I know firsthand what the program is about and the outcomes which is important empowering young leaders and drivers in their communities," he said.

"It was a tough decision to get outside my comfort zone and move my family to Canberra but I strongly believe in the vision and direction in which the project and foundation are going, so I'm glad to be a part of it."



We will miss you all!



Fifteen years at the CLC: Martin Darr (right) and his partner Peter Granzer have moved to Queensland.



Alex Gyles joined the Northern Land Council and Louise Stanley is now in London.



Jayne Weepers has moved to Canberra.



Meagan Wynniatt left for Margaret River in WA.



Malcolm Kenny has celebrated 10 years with the Tjuwanpa Rangers.



Professor Stephen Hagan congratulated Petria Cavanah on her certificate at the ranger camp.



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.

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



Contact Vaughn and Tyrell on **8951 6211** or employmentunit@clc.org.au



Aleen (Chongy and Gina Howard's daughter) and Josie Douglas had fun at council.



Senator Pat Dodson joined the WETT's Sharon Anderson and Fiona Gibson at the ACFID conference.



Sammy Wilson looks forward to cutting the Uluru climbing chain.



Barbara Martin, Fiona Gibson and Yamurna Oldfield sign their book *We always stay*.



Trainee rangers get ready to perform inma with Rene Kulitja (back) at the Tjakuṛa Ranger launch.



Sandy Willie and Clem Toby Dalby at the Tjakuṛa Ranger launch at Muṯitjulu.



David Cooley and Ken Wilson danced the new Tjakuṛa Rangers to their HQ at Muṯitjulu.



Megan Bell from Kaltukatjara accompanied the rangers on a field trip.

Police got my father and tied him to a tree at Coniston



When they were killing people because of that Coniston, my father told me about that story. There was a bloke there, Bullfrog, he was the murderer. Because Bullfrog's wife, that man [Fred Brooks] had her in his home. Bullfrog went on the north side and his friend Japaljarri went on the east side [of the humpy]. Bullfrog got a big spear and speared that Brooks in the chest, then he fell over, and Japaljarri had an axe and killed that man dead.

Bullfrog went to Mount Doreen, right through. In Coniston, on the west side, he went into that cave and he had a white dog. He put all that rock on him [covered the hole]. Then Alec Wilson was the tracker. He was tracking on a horse. He saw that Bullfrog and he helped him. And he put all the stone, because that was his father-in-law. At a place west of Yuendumu, at a place called Wakurrumpu, that's how far they shot people, all the Warlpiri people. Mum and Dad they went from Mount Doreen, went along. My father, Mussolini, was a really solid bloke, he got all the dingo scalp to sell it to Coniston Station. But he was halfway when the police came. They [my parents] heard a lot of people singing out, 'Hey, old man come here', but it was too late. Police got my father and tied him to a tree at Coniston, put a chain around his neck. They thought he was a murderer. Then they took him to Alice Springs, to that old jail. They left my mother there in Coniston. Then from Alice Springs to Darwin they took him, to put him in to hang. But then he came out free.

~ Mosquito Morris ~
Excerpt from *Every hill got a story*



For more stories go to clc.org.au/every-hill-got-a-story



The 80th anniversary of Coniston at Baxters Well in 2008.

LISTEN TO THE AUTHORS OF EVERY HILL GOT A STORY

WWW.CLC.ORG.AU/PODCASTS



@every-hill-got-a-story

Coniston 1928 - 2018

We will remember them always.

Nganimparlu kapurnalu-jana manngu-nyanyirni taarnngangku-juku.

Nwern inenhenh kweteth iterl-arerlanetyenh.

Aynanthe atewanthepe etelarerrantye intemaperte.

**Get ready for the 90th commemoration of the Coniston massacres.
All welcome!**



Akirkra and Padygar were charged with murder but found not guilty.