

FREE

LAND RIGHTS NEWS

October 2022

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CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

A VOICE TO PARLIAMENT



TREATY AND TRUTH

P. 2

SINGLETON WATER FIGHT



P. 4

BRIGHT FUTURE FOR ROCK RATS



P. 17

WOMEN'S WELLBEING



P. 18

EDITORIAL

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COVER



Hundreds took part in this year's Freedom Day march in Kalkaringi.
Photo: Glenn Campbell

CLC MEETINGS

1-3 November 2022
Council
Watarrka
6-7 December 2022
Executive
Alice Springs

Four NT land councils back the Voice



The four Northern Territory land council executives met in Kalkaringi to discuss common concerns in August.

FOR THE first time since July 2020 all four Northern Territory land council executives have met to discuss common concerns and the way forward.

The historic meeting was held on Gurindji country to celebrate Freedom Day, marking the anniversary of the Wave Hill Walkoff.

Central Land Council chair Robert Hoosan said he was proud to host executive members from the Tiwi Land Council, Anindilyakwa Land Council and Northern Land Council at Kalkaringi.

"Gurindji country is the birthplace of land rights and this week the anniversary of the Wave Hill Walkoff," Mr Hoosan said. "History was made 56 years ago this week and history was made again today."

Some of the topics discussed were the Uluru Statement from the Heart, the Voice to Parliament, and the Northern Territory treaty or treaties.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese announced on election night that his government supported the Uluru Statement and would hold a referendum about the Aboriginal Voice to Parliament in its first term.

Senator Patrick Dodson, the Special Envoy for Reconciliation and the Implementation of the Uluru Statement

addressed the joint executive alongside the newly elected member for Lingiari, Marion Scrymgour.

Senator Dodson explained that the government would hold a referendum to change the Australian Constitution – "the law book for the government" – to create an Aboriginal Voice to Parliament.

Do you support a change to the Constitution that establishes an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice? Yes or No?

"If there was a federal voice you'd be able to say to government – we want this or we don't want it. The government would need to listen to you. It might not take your advice but it would need to listen to you."

Changing the constitution is important

said Senator Dodson, because "people involved in those dialogues that led up to the Uluru Statement said they wanted something that couldn't just be dismissed by the government of the day if they didn't like what the representatives had to say."

"The question that you'll be asked, that I'll be asked, when we go to vote, will be something like this – "Do you support an alteration to the Constitution that establishes an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice? Yes or No?"

Senator Dodson told the joint executives that he and the government would be consulting with Aboriginal groups around Australia as well as explaining the proposal to the wider population. "We want to make sure the people of Australia are well behind us and supporting these propositions."

"That voice cannot be taken away like ATSIC was," Lingiari MP Marion Scrymgour told the meeting. "Once you go to a referendum it is there. It is a strong process to make sure this country cannot go backwards. It has to go forwards."

The combined executives agreed to support the implementation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full and to change the Australian Constitution to enshrine a Voice to Parliament within this term of government.

Mr Hoosan said he wanted the land councils to keep the momentum of cooperation going.

"We should be working together we need to sit around more and talk," he said. "We can't just pass this resolution, we gotta keep talking about it."

Council members also talked about how to address the poor voter turnout in remote Aboriginal communities at the last election, remote housing and homelands, the NT Government's plans to increase rent for remote communities, and township leasing arrangements on Aboriginal land under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*.



Senator Patrick Dodson said that the government would hold a referendum to change the Australian Constitution to create an Aboriginal Voice to Parliament.



Aboriginal land rights was born on Gurindji land. Will an Aboriginal Voice to Parliament be the next big step forward?



Senator Patrick Dodson Broome

Absolutely. This is a significant event in a significant place today and a great inspiration towards fulfilling the dream that Vincent Lingiari had of being allowed to live in our own country in our own way. That inspiration still exists and the fight and struggle over the years to get recognition, a Voice to Parliament, treaties and the truth to be told. I think every Australian should take heart from the goodwill that's been expressed from the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Sammy Wilson Mujitjulu

We're all here now walking because they started the land rights and the referendum when I was young and now we're still talking and we're going to have a new referendum now. Palya. Now we're looking at the Voice to Parliament so we all can understand each other – the government and the people. We're looking forward to the new referendum now.



Marion Scrymgour Member for Lingiari

Gurindji and the Freedom Day is not just about today – it's about that long journey and what we take forward. The Voice is part of that long hard-fought process that many of our elders have fought for on this important journey. This Voice is something that will be able to be frank and fearless and keep governments accountable.



Dean Parkin

Quandamooka (Stradbroke Island)
Director, From the Heart campaign for a Voice to Parliament in the Constitution.

We just know that the answer for all of our challenges and the opportunities in our communities, especially land rights – our mob understand these better than anybody else – and the Voice is about making sure that those voices are right at the table, informing the decision-makers about what needs to happen.

Selma Smiler

Kalkaringi

It makes me proud. It's really good to see other people travelling from a long way to get here to celebrate and commemorate this festival with us. I think my people, as Aboriginal people, are still fighting for that. One day we will get there. It will be exactly like what my great grandfather did – one day we will get there.



Thomas Mayor

Darwin, National Indigenous officer of the Maritime Union of Australia and Vincent Lingiari Memorial Lecturer.

I think it's the most important step we can take. After the handful of sand when Gough Whitlam gave some land back to the Gurindji people, we saw the importance of having an influence over the laws and policies that control or restrict the way we're able to live on our land. All sorts of things are decided in parliament and a Voice is just vital.

Frank Yamma Adelaide

I was excited to be on the bridge to remember the guys who did the long walk that started land rights. It's been several decades since then and many of those fellas are all gone. They did it rough and hard way in the scrub in those days and I have the greatest respect for them. It happened for real. As for the future, we must keep it strong. Parliament and government should keep their ears open and listen out. They should make Gurindji Day a public holiday.



Singleton water court case not over yet

THE MPWEREMPWER Aboriginal Corporation, with the support of the Central Land Council, is suing the NT Government over the granting of the largest single water licence ever issued in Australia.

The licence gives Fortune Agribusiness the right to take up to 40,000 mega litres of groundwater a year for 30 years for free. They want the water for a big fruit and vegetable farm.

The area affected by the Singleton water licence includes traditional lands for four Kaytetye groups – Anerre, Waake-Akwerlpe, Iliyarne and Arlpwe – in the Western Davenport region, about 100 kilometres south of Tennant Creek.

Traditional owners want the licence scrapped because they say it is too big and because not enough information is known about the underground water.

Most groundwater-dependent ecosystems in the area are sacred sites or sites of cultural value. People are worried that a lower water table will affect up to 40 sacred sites and they won't be able to fulfil their traditional responsibilities on country.

“Cattle, birds, kangaroos, human beings, everything. We need to look after our water. When you add it all up, the water they want to take is too much. What about the future of our grandkids?”

Several traditional owners and their supporters gathered in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) on 7 September to walk together to the Supreme Court for the start of the court case.

Senior traditional owner, Rodger Tommy Jungarrayi, said water was important to all the animals, plants and cultural activities in the area.

“Cattle, birds, kangaroos, human beings, everything,” he said. “We need to look after our water. When you add it all up, the water they want to take is too much. What about the future of our grandkids?”

Michael Jones Jampin, traditional owner from Karlinjarri community near Singleton, said traditional owners would become sad and sick if they didn't look after their land.

“That's why we always look after our country,” he said. “The area there's lots of trees significant to Aboriginal people. You take the water out, they are all going to die.”

Traditional owner Sandra Jones Nangala said the horticultural operation should be smaller.

“What worries us is the megalitres of water they going to take and the many bores they going to put there,”



“Water is life,” say traditional owners, their neighbours, the Central Land Council, and the Arid Lands Environment Centre moments before the Supreme Court hearing started in Mparntwe.

she said. “We don't want them to take as much water as they want to take. We want to leave the desert so the next generation can actually look after our country.”

Inside the Court, Mpwerempwer's lawyer, Chris Young KC, said “some of the most basic, fundamental things about this water resource are not known.”

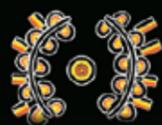
He said that lowering the aquifer could result in the roots of sacred trees no longer being in contact with water. Monitoring was needed to better understand the process, he said.

The corporation's case is being fought at the same time as a similar case by the Arid Lands Environment Centre. They are saying that the minister's decision to issue the licence was “legally unreasonable” because it did not follow the *Water Act*.

The legal fight over the Singleton Station water licence was still going on when the *Land Rights News* went to press in early October, with the judge's decision expected sometime after that.



Michael Jones from Karlinjarri community, said traditional owners would become sad and sick if they didn't look after their land.



CENTRAL LAND COUNCIL

LOOKING FOR WORK?

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

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

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



Contact the CLC on 8951 6211 or employmentunit@clc.org.au

Warlpiri Project moves ahead, builds community pride



L-R: Professor John Carty, Jamie Hampton, Warren Williams, Simon Fisher Japangardi, Ned Hargraves, Tommy Watson, Francis Kelly and Karl Hampton in the State Library of South Australia's Mortlock Wing, Adelaide. Image courtesy State Library of South Australia.

THE WARLPIRI Project has moved forward in many ways this year.

Members of the research and repatriation project men's group recently visited the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) collection in Canberra.

Geoffrey Matthews, Ned Hargraves, Dione Kelly, Karl Hampton and Jamie Hampton spent three days viewing about 80 hours of film and sound, and the large collection of photos.

All the material was put on a hard drive and given to the elders to take home. It is AIATSIS' largest digital return of collection material to Aboriginal people in many years.

Another of the Warlpiri Project highlights this year was the return of 10 secret objects from the University of Virginia's Kluge-Ruhe Museum.

This brings the number of objects to have been repatriated to Yuendumu to

around 200.

Mr Hampton, the NT Government's Regional Director for Yuendumu, said while it was important to return cultural items, the Warlpiri-led project was about "pride among the Warlpiri people".

"It's also about truth telling, about transfer of cultural knowledge, and it's about developing a cultural economy," he said.

"It's also about generating jobs and training for Warlpiri and creating opportunities for cultural exchange."

Another highlight were the trips to Adelaide where they were shown dental casts, hair samples, and face casts of Warlpiri men and women made in the 1930s.

One of the face casts came as a surprise to project steering group member and CLC deputy chair Warren Williams.

"One of them was my old man," he

"It's also about truth telling, about transfer of cultural knowledge, and it's about developing a cultural economy."

said. "I didn't know he was there. He looked just like my younger brother.

"It was very emotional for me; I cried, but it was a very good experience. It woke me up.

"Looking at things traditionally, we can see what's missing from our community."

The men have also viewed the Yuendumu Doors, some of which are

on display at the South Australian Museum, and others in storage at the Netley Complex.

"They are a really important collection painted by senior Warlpiri in the early 1980s," Mr Hampton said.

Each of the 30 doors is important for the Dreaming story it contains. But they are also important in the world of modern art where these acrylic masterpieces are recognised as early examples of ancient Aboriginal symbol and style on a modern Western medium.

Jamie Hampton, who is employed by the State Library of SA and the SA Museum to focus on Warlpiri collections, said: "It's great to have the two largest cultural institutions in Adelaide supporting Warlpiri on this journey.

"Our collections have a safe place to be cared for before eventually getting them back to country safely."



L-R: Jamie Hampton, Dione Kelly, Ned Hargraves, Geoffrey Matthews and Karl Hampton viewed artworks in the AIATSIS collection. Image courtesy AIATSIS.



Warren Williams and Simon Fisher Senior inspected stain glass window drawings from the Yuendumu church, now held by the State Library of South Australia. Image courtesy State Library of South Australia.

Carrying the fire for endangered languages

DELEGATES at a conference in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) have been shown how Aboriginal languages that are in danger of dying out can be made strong again.

Samantha Armstrong, a research officer with the Pertame School helped organise the Master-Apprentice Indigenous Language Revival conference, which invited Native American language revival experts to share their experiences.

“People from many indigenous language groups from across Australia and overseas came here in the Red Centre,” she said. “It was special and I think it had a lot of meaning for everybody.”

One of the presenters was Hallay Turning Heart, a Yuchi language speaker from Oklahoma, USA.

“The master-apprentice method of language learning has been a game changer in revitalising our Yuchi language,” she said.

“It brings together a speaker and one to three learners who ideally spend two to three hours a day only in the language; no English. Basically, they learn how to live in the language in a very natural context doing daily activities in the languages and being immersed completely in the language for that time. And so over time, within a year or two, the apprentices can learn to be good speakers.”

She said it was an effective way of passing down the fullness of elder knowledge to younger people.

“It has the potential to make a huge difference in Australia where Aboriginal languages are also severely endangered like ours, with very few speakers and resources available.”

“It is a different method to what we see a lot of time in schools where you read a list of words all taught in English. This is really different,” said Hallay. “A more intensive focused method that if someone is consistent they could become a really good



Yuchi language speaker Hallay Turning Heart and Pertame School research officer Samantha Armstrong at the Master-Apprentice Indigenous Language Revival Conference in Alice Springs.

speaker.”

“That’s how I learned my language, the Yuchi language. And now my own

endangered like ours, with very few speakers and resources available.”

Samantha said the aim of the conference was to kick-start the master-apprentice method across Australia.

“There’s always hope to make them stronger again, and for us, for Pertame people.”

She said Pertame was a severely endangered Central Australian language with about 20-30 fluent speakers, all of whom were within the “grandparent and great-grandparent generations”.

“Having language is good for identity and connection. You’ve got to sing out country every time you go out. You need your language to do that, to let your ancestors know that you’re there.”

Hallay said “carrying the fire” was

an important metaphor in Yuchi language.

“Everything is about fire for us ... like revitalising the fire with only a few coals remaining ... reigniting a full fire even when it has almost gone out. And that’s exactly what our situation has been. So now we have more than 20 speakers who are pretty good speakers.”

The conference was a collaboration between Batchelor Institute, Pertame School, the Global Indigenous Language Caucus, the Yuchi Language Project, and Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival. It was held at the Desert Peoples Centre in Alice Springs on 8-11 August.

Together Hallay, Samantha and the other participants are “carrying the fire” of language into the future.

New burial law respects Aboriginal traditions

A NEW NT Government law respects the rights of Aboriginal people to bury their loved ones in traditional ways, with dignity and respect.

The law is called the *Burial and Cremation Act 2022*. It replaces an old law that was passed before Aboriginal Land Rights in the NT.

The new law recognises the rights of traditional owners to bury family members on their land and to notify authorities about burials and exhumations, rather than having to seek approval. The process is set up to be flexible and simple and culturally sensitive information does not have to be provided.

It also allows those who make decisions for land to choose how burials are conducted. It means a record must be kept of who and where someone is buried, which is important

information for families and future generations.

The Central Land Council is pleased that the government listened to Aboriginal people through the four land councils, while preparing the new law.

“We support the new law and commend the NT Government’s consultation process as best practice,” said CLC CEO Lesley Turner.

“They also responded positively to the concerns we raised in relation to an earlier draft of the bill. We encourage government to listen carefully to Aboriginal Territorians regarding all legislation that affects them.”

Minister for Local Government Chansey Paech said he was proud the new law was “culturally appropriate”.

“It’s an Australian first,” he said. “This legislation acknowledges the

“It’s an Australian first. This legislation acknowledges the uniqueness of the NT, empowers decision makers, respects different cultural practices and ensures access to burial areas and burial records.”

uniqueness of the NT, empowers decision makers, respects different cultural practices and ensures access to burial areas and burial records.”

The CLC will continue to help Aboriginal people with burials. The assistance includes providing

anthropological expertise in relation to traditional ownership, legal advice on statutory requirements for burial, geospatial information to assist with burial planning and applications and help with the cost of funerals.

MK Turner awarded honorary doctorate

RESPECTED East Arrernte elder Margaret Kemarre (MK) Turner OAM has been awarded an honorary doctorate by the Batchelor Institute.

Dr Turner received a standing ovation upon the conferral at the September graduation ceremony at the Desert Peoples Centre campus in Alice Springs.

The award recognises Dr Turner's lifelong commitment to cultural maintenance and languages of Aboriginal people, as an author, educator and advocate.

She also was acknowledged for her leadership and knowledge in healing, community-controlled organisations, and intergenerational knowledge sharing.

Fifty-two Aboriginal students graduated this year with qualifications ranging from primary health care practice to conservation and land management, civil construction operations and early childhood education.

Wambaya/Gudanji woman Rhonda O'Keefe gave the student response.

The Diploma of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Practice graduate said: "Studying is not always easy, but there is help along the way. Batchelor has allowed us to be qualified and be leaders in our community."



Dr Margaret Kemarre (MK) Turner OAM was awarded an honorary doctorate at this year's Batchelor Institute graduation ceremony at the Desert Peoples Centre. Photo: Batchelor Institute.

The Batchelor Institute, which prides itself for providing a culturally safe learning environment for Aboriginal

people, has a 'both-ways' approach that brings together Aboriginal and Western knowledge.

Ltyentye Apurte wins again in tidy towns competition

LTYENTYE APURTE (Santa Teresa) has done it again – winning more awards in the national Tidy Towns competition.

This time the beautiful community won two awards – the Heritage and Culture Award, and the Community Health, Wellbeing and Interest Award.

The awards recognise the community's efforts to get rid of rubbish, make the streets look nice, recycle things that can be used more than once and other activities that help the environment.

"I felt proud for the community and the council that we got something

out of all the work we did," said MacDonnell Regional Council Services Coordinator, Annalisa Young. "It was a huge achievement for our civil team but all the services did their bit.

"Santa Teresa is a good place to live with the strong stakeholder partnerships in the community."

Keep Australia Beautiful Council NT chief executive Heimo Schober said the win showed that the community had worked well together for a better quality of life.

"They're going gangbusters," he said. "Everybody has taken ownership. It tells you something about the culture for the region, for Santa Teresa and the whole MacDonnell region.

"I'm proud that their community development plans meet all 17 United Nations sustainable development goals. They've set the benchmark for remote communities throughout the rest of Australia."

"They're going gangbusters. Everybody has taken ownership."



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Every kid deserves a good education.

New native title booklets in plain English

NATIVE title is one of the most difficult laws to understand. Two new booklets have been published that explain native title laws and rules in plain English.

They are *Native Title Story – Learning about native title and prescribed bodies corporate* and *Native Title on Cattle Country*.

They have been written by staff in CLC's prescribed bodies corporate (PBC) support unit with the help of literacy specialist Jodie Hummerston and designer Jonas Dare.

The CLC is now translating the booklets into ten Aboriginal languages spoken in its region.

The green *Native Title Story* booklet explains where native title came from and how it is different from the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*. It explains what Aboriginal people can and cannot do under native title law and what a PBC, has to do. The green booklet replaces the old blue booklet because the government changed some of the rules in the *Native Title Act* last year.

The *Native Title on Cattle Country* booklet is yellow. It explains the rights of native title holders who belong to land that has a pastoral lease. It explains how the *Sacred Sites Act*, the *Pastoral Land Act* and the *Native Title Act* have to work together. The booklet

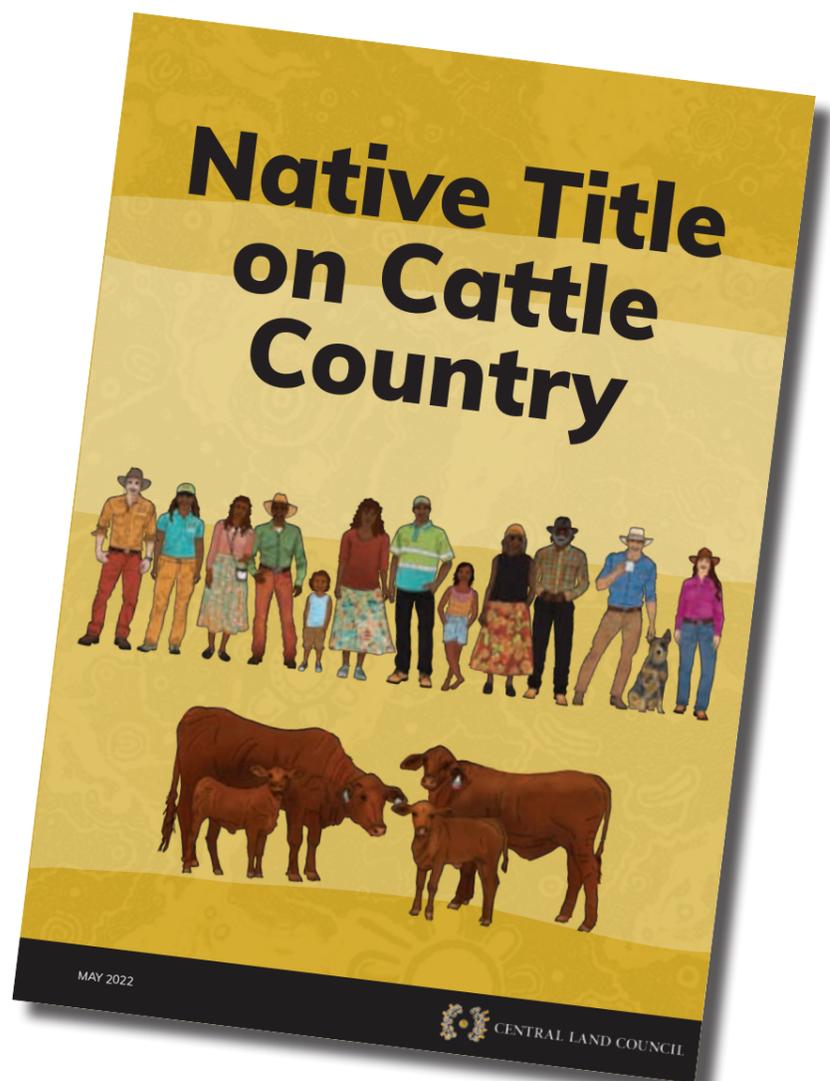
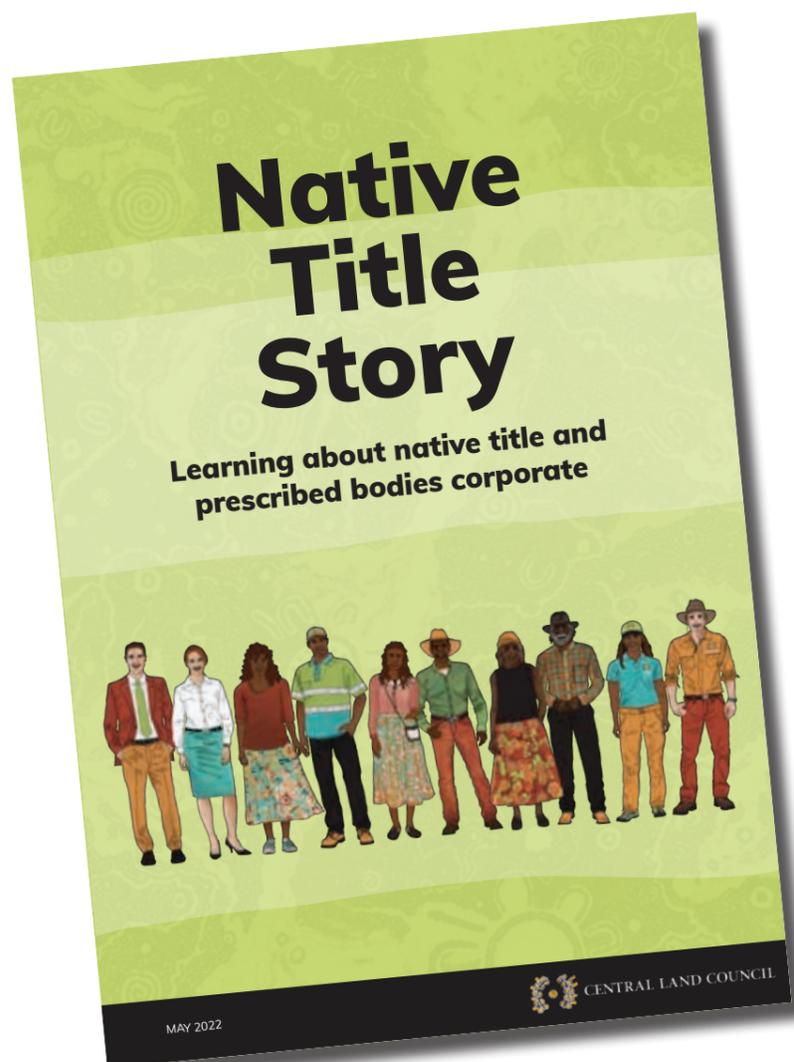


Theresa Ross recorded the Warlpiri language version of the booklets.

talks about cattle, fences and gates.

The CLC is now working on translating the booklets into ten Aboriginal languages spoken in its region. They will also be available on a special new mobile phone app, which will be ready in a few months.

In the meantime, the new booklets are available on the CLC website: <https://www.clc.org.au/native-title/>



Josephine proud of 10-year career as ranger



JOSEPHINE Grant is happy about her achievements as a Central Land Council ranger over the past ten years.

“There are lots of highlights,” she said. “One was to finish my certificate IV in conservation land management, another was to become the ranger coordinator with the Anmatyerr Rangers in Ti Tree. Another was going to Nepal.”

In 2019 Ms Grant and a delegation from the CLC and the Indigenous Desert Alliance attended the World Ranger Congress in Nepal where they

delivered a paper about the use of fire in the landscape.

“Rangers from all over the world came to share their stories and make friends and ask about the ranger exchange,” she said.

“I could see the snow on top of Mt Everest from my motel room.”

And while Josephine was impressed with her view of the world’s highest mountain, her greater love is working out bush in Central Australia. “That’s why I applied for the job,” she said.

“I had been a youth housing officer

in Tennant Creek and I’d worked for the Night Patrol in Alice Springs.”

But in 2012 a friend told her about a ranger vacancy with the Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers.

“It’s important to care for country and look after the sacred sites where our ancestors grew up and lived and roamed. It’s important to teach the younger generation knowledges of country and to follow our culture. Culture is our identity; it’s who I am.”

“It’s good because one day other women might want to become a coordinator. They can see how I started, and pursued my passion, and what I’ve been through.”

In her early years, Ms Grant undertook fencing work and animal surveys.

“We used a device to record data out bush,” she said. “We recorded bilbies, lizards and rats; whatever was in the pit fall traps.”

In the course of time, she worked her way through the ranks to senior

ranger, to support officer and to her current position as a ranger coordinator in Ti Tree.

“Her career progression has been an inspiration,” said regional land management coordinator Ben Kaethner.

“Josephine is the first indigenous woman to be employed as a ranger group coordinator with the CLC,” he said. “Her move to Ti Tree, where she had [few] family connections was a bold one and a really important life achievement for her. It’s something she aimed for and something she’s achieved.”

Ms Grant is also proud of the three Territory-level awards she has won in recognition of her achievements. These are the NT Minister’s Award for Leadership in Protected Areas Management (2016), the NT Indigenous NRM champion (2016) and the Territory NRM Rio Tinto Indigenous Land Management Award (2017).

She doesn’t mind being a good role model.

“It’s good because one day other women might want to become a coordinator. They can see how I started, and pursued my passion, and what I’ve been through. I feel happy and excited about what I’ve achieved.”

Grandsons remember Strehlow centenary

ANOTHER chapter in the remarkable story of the Malbunkas and the Strehlows has unfolded at Horseshoe Bend on the banks of the Lhere Pirnte (Finke) River.

About 60 people gathered at Carl Strehlow’s gravesite at Horseshoe Bend in late July for a church service to remember the life of the renowned Lutheran Missionary, who died 100 years ago in 1922.

Among those present were two grandsons – Carl’s grandson John Strehlow and Lutheran Pastor Rodney Malbunka, the grandson of Hesekei Malbunka.

In 1922, Hesekei Malbunka made a superhuman effort, travelling

130 kilometres by foot from Ntaria (Hermannsburg) to the Alice Springs Telegraph Station to send a telegram that Carl Strehlow was desperately ill and needed urgent medical help. It is said Mr Malbunka made the journey to Alice Springs and back to Ntaria in just three days.

He also played a big part in taking Carl Strehlow south. This story is told in the book, *The Journey to Horseshoe Bend*, written by his son Ted Strehlow. Mr Malbunka drove one of two horse-drawn buggies that took Carl Strehlow, who was critically ill, on the journey to get medical help. They had gone 260 kilometres to Horseshoe Bend, when he died on 20 October 1922.

“I have heard that he was a good man,” Rodney Malbunka said of Carl Strehlow. “He was kind to a lot of people. He looked after Western Arrarnta people around Ntaria, and he saved my grandfather, who was going to be shot.”

Mr Malbunka was referring to a time when a policeman had arrested a group of Aboriginal people – including his grandfather – and intended to shoot, them until the missionary intervened.

“Carl saved him and that’s why he was so close to Strehlow,” Mr Mulbunka said.

John Strehlow made the journey from the United Kingdom to

Horseshoe Bend, and to Ntaria, to celebrate his grandfather’s life and legacy. He unveiled a new plaque, which has been mounted on Carl Strehlow’s grave and commemorates his work, that of his wife Frieda and the work of Western Arrarnta people of Ntaria for their contribution to spreading the gospel in Central Australia.

The event took place on Pertame/Southern Arrernte country. Guests were welcomed to country by traditional owner Derek Swan.

Ntaria-based Lutheran pastor Neville Doecke officiated at the service, which he said was held in July rather than in October to avoid the summer heat.



Two important grandsons: John Strehlow and Rodney Malbunka at Carl Strehlow’s gravesite.



Pertame/Southern Arrernte traditional owner Derek Swan welcomes the congregation to country.

Voting rights high on priority list

DELEGATES at the council meeting at Kalkaringi in August decided to put voting rights on the list of important policy priorities they want the Central Land Council to work on over the next three years.

All Australians have the right to vote in elections for local government, their state or territory government and for the federal government, but in the Northern Territory a lot of Aboriginal people who are over 18 years old are not enrolled to vote. Even when people are enrolled there are often a lot of challenges that make it hard for people to vote, especially people who live in remote communities.

This means that people in the bush are not having their say.

This is an important issue with two big events coming up in the next couple of years. The next NT election is in 2024. There is also going to be a referendum about whether all Australians agree to have an indigenous Voice to give advice to the Australian Parliament about all matters that affect Indigenous people. The new federal Labor government has said it will hold that referendum in their first term of government.

At the referendum, all Australians on the electoral roll will be asked to vote 'yes' or 'no' about whether a First Nations Voice to Parliament should be put into the Australian Constitution. Making a change to the constitution is very hard to do, so it is important

that everyone, especially indigenous Australians, is enrolled to vote and gets to have a say.

The CLC will work with the Aboriginal Peak Organisation Northern Territory (APO NT) and the NT and Australian electoral

commissions to make sure people in remote parts of Australia can vote, especially in seats like the federal seat of Lingiari, where almost half of the people who should vote are Aboriginal.

At the referendum, all Australians on the electoral roll will be asked to vote 'yes' or 'no' about whether a First Nations Voice to Parliament should be put into the Australian Constitution.

Central Land Council policy priorities 2022-2025

A SPECIAL session of the council meeting at Kalkaringi in August talked about the most important issues for the CLC to work on over the next three years.

Members said positive and long-lasting results can be achieved when Aboriginal people are front and centre of policy development.

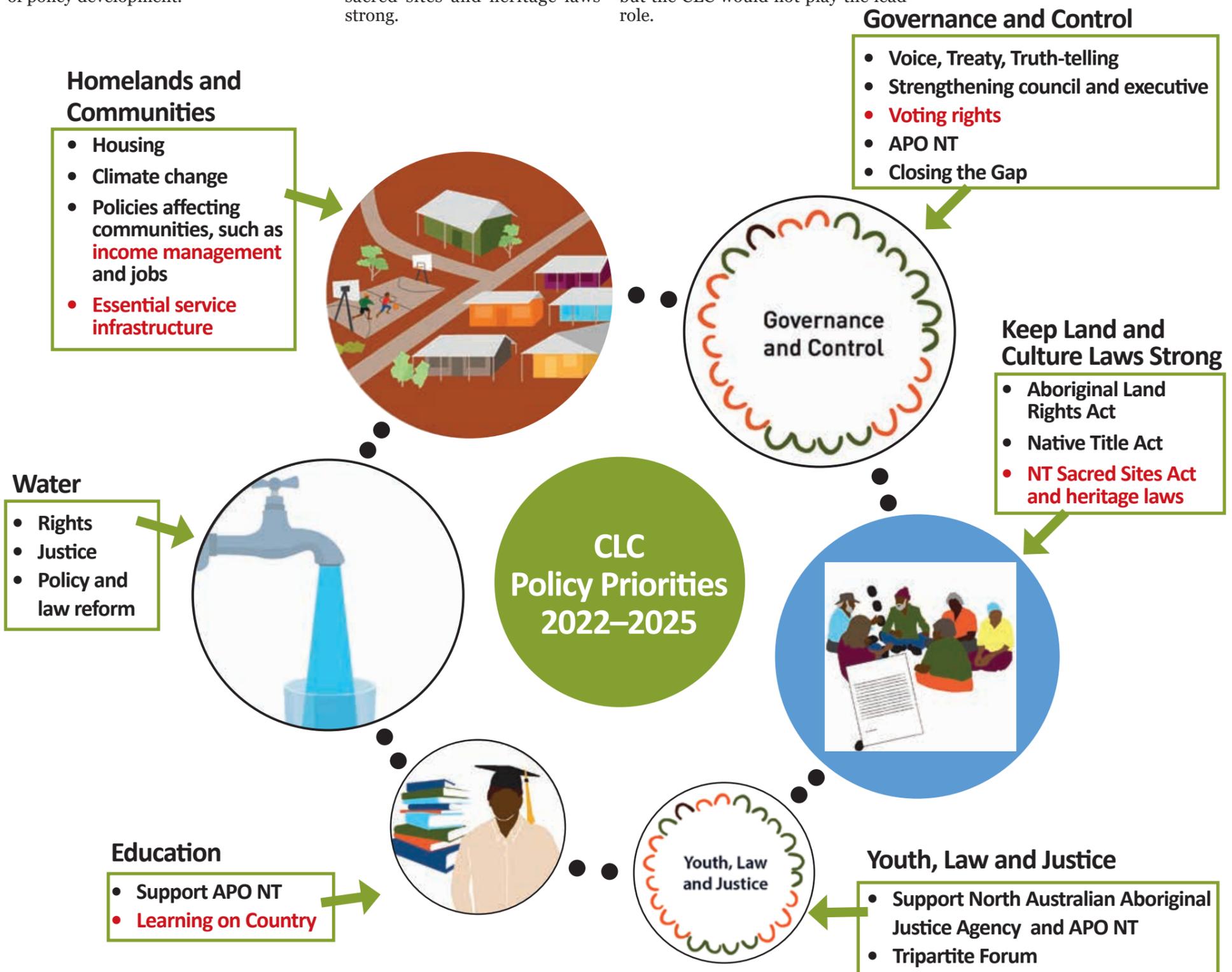
They decided that the main policy priorities for 2022-2025 are

- water
- the future of communities and homelands
- governance and control, including voter rights
- keeping land rights, native title, sacred sites and heritage laws strong.

Most are long-standing priorities, but those in red in the diagram below are new.

The council agreed that the CLC should support organisations such as the Aboriginal Peak Organisations of the NT (APO NT) to work on education, and law and justice issues, but the CLC would not play the lead role.

The council also decided that the CLC should be ready to work on new issues as they come up (as it did with COVID-19) and should think about opportunities to push for more change now there's a new government in Canberra.



Let's win this referendum! The fight for the Voice

THE VINCENT Lingiari lecture is given every year during the Freedom Day Festival. It commemorates the Walkoff by Gurindji people from Wave Hill Station, led by Vincent Lingiari.

This year Thomas Mayor gave it on Gurindji country for the first time. Mr Mayor, a Kaurareg and Kalkalgal and Erubamle Torres Strait islander man who grew up in Darwin, on Larrakia country.

He is an author and union leader and is the Co-chair of the Uluru Working Group. He is a passionate advocate for the Uluru 'Statement from the Heart'. After the Uluru Convention, he was entrusted with the canvas of the Uluru Statement to travel around Australia building support for the call for a Voice to Parliament, treaties and truth-telling.

His lecture was called *Walking on our land our way – the momentum towards a constitutional right to be heard*.

He urged Australians to spread the word about the Voice to Parliament.

Mr Mayor spoke of Lingiari's courage and inspiring legacy and about the Gurindji dream of making Australia a place where First Nations people can live on their land, their way.

"I want you to be courageous like Lingiari was, to take on any misinformation you might hear about it, because the truth is with us in this campaign."

"When you go back to your communities I want you to start talking to people about the importance of voting yes in this referendum," he said.

"The referendum is imminent now," he said. "We have a prime minister who has made a commitment to holding the referendum in this term of parliament."

"I want you to be courageous like Lingiari was to take on any misinformation you might hear about it, because the truth is with us in this campaign."

When people understand its nation-building merits and its capacity to change the way First Nations people are treated in Australia, "they'll vote yes", he said.

Mr Mayor said that changing the constitution to provide for the Voice would guarantee that what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people say



"We have our land but we still need to have a Voice," says Gurindji woman Rosie Smiler.

"will be listened to, transparently, and with due respect".

He pointed out that each time indigenous people have built a political voice on their own, their voice has been silenced – from the Australian Aboriginal Progress Association in the 1920s through to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) in 2005.

"All of them split up, ignored, defunded and destroyed," he said.

He said although there is now a record number of Aboriginal people elected to parliament this is not the same as having a Voice to Parliament.

"We want a voice with representatives who are chosen by

"I say to fellow First Nations people, let's back ourselves to win this referendum, this once-in-a-generations opportunity."

Mr Mayor introduced two special Gurindji guests – Rosie Smiler, a granddaughter of Mr Lingiari, and primary school student Ailani Thompson, whose great grandmother Nancy Warungali walked with Mr Lingiari 56 years ago.

"[There's] some unfinished business,

said Ms Smiler. "We have our land but we still need to have a voice."

"We want a powerful voice, so kartiya (non-aboriginal people) can hear us," Ailani Thompson said. "Our voice can tell Australia the truth. Our voice can help make treaties. Our voice should be in the rule book – the constitution – as it should have been long ago."

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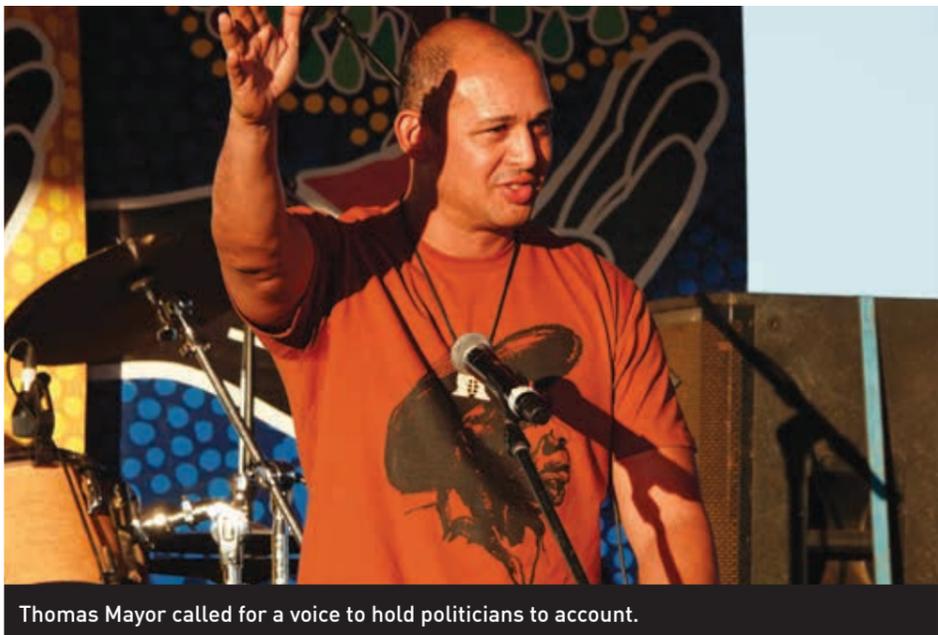
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Thomas Mayor called for a voice to hold politicians to account.

Freedom Day turns up volume on the voice

THIS YEAR'S Freedom Day Festival in the heart of Gurindji country had a little bit of something for just about everyone. There was singing, dancing and art, there was footy, food and fireworks, there were speeches, lectures and laughter – and there was the big march.

Thousands had come from far and wide to gather in the wind and dust at Kalkaringi before marching across the bridge in commemoration of the 1966 Wave Hill Walkoff, which sparked the Aboriginal land rights movement.

Senators, the Northern Territory Chief Minister and other dignitaries gave their speeches. They reflected on Vincent Lingiari's legacy and then channelled their passion and energy

into what is unfolding in Australia's consciousness – and potentially in the nation's parliament.

Festival coordinator Rob Roy suggested that Freedom Day should be declared a Territory public holiday – to much applause.

Uluru Statement from the Heart advocate Thomas Mayor delivered the annual Vincent Lingiari Memorial Lecture – the first time it had been delivered in Kalkaringi.

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people need a voice that is protected from being silenced by hostile governments," he said.

In the evening, singer-songwriter Paul Kelly burst onto the open-air stage and roused the audience with his

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people need a voice that is protected from being silenced by hostile governments."

iconic "From Little Things Big Things Grow" song.

Much has been achieved in 56 tough years since Mr Lingiari's powerful protest, but the steely resolve of the

Freedom Day crowd suggests much more is to come.





Photo by Glenn Campbell



Photo by Glenn Campbell



Photo by Glenn Campbell



Any questions about CLC business?
Call your region's office

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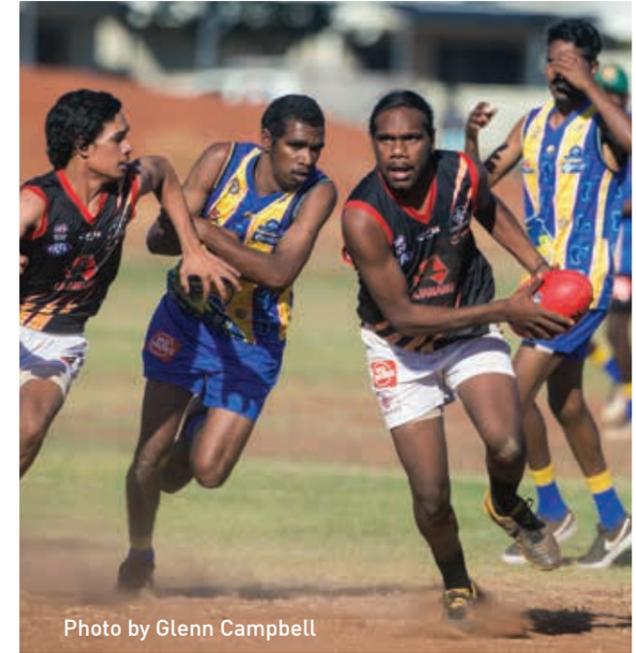


Photo by Glenn Campbell

RESEARCH - INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND MINING EMPLOYMENT

Are you a First Nations female with experience working at mines in the NT? We want to hear your story.

Jodi Cowdery, an Indigenous female researcher from Northern Institute at CDU, is gathering experiences from First Nations women who have worked at NT mine sites to better understand working conditions and why so few currently work in the NT mining industry.

The survey is anonymous, takes under 20 minutes and you can use your smartphone, iPad, or computer to take part. The first 30 women to complete the survey will receive a pair of earrings from Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Arts Centre at Yirrkala valued at \$50.

Got questions?
Email jodi.cowdery@cdu.edu.au
Call 08 8946 6367
Text 0403 176 737


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 Visit the link or QR code to do the survey: bit.ly/IWIMNT-survey22

Traditional owners inspect Simpson Desert tourist tracks



Ranger James Drover caught a sand goanna.



Ranger Charles Lechleitner on dunes along the Madigan Line.

JAMES DROVER was one of 24 traditional owners, Central Land Council rangers and other staff who travelled on an eight-day journey across the Simpson Desert recently.

Land management activities took the group across some 500 red sand dunes. Everyone gathered at the Mac Clark Reserve and continued along the Madigan Track and the Hay River Track, via Lake Caroline and the Batton Hill Bush Camp to the Plenty Highway. They travelled across the Atnetye, the Pmere Nyente and the Pmer Ulperre Ingwemirne Aboriginal land trusts – “permit country” to members of the public who might wish to do the journey.

Mr Drover is an Akityarre Ranger from Atitjere (Harts Range), and traditional owner of country west of the Hay River.

He said one of the main tasks was to selectively burn small patches of spinifex, which took place mostly between camps 8 and 12 along the Madigan Track and on the perimeter of the Batton Hill campground.

“We lit some of the thickest ones. It helps stop bush fires from getting too big, and it helps make new growth,” he said.

Large bush fires devastated much of the vegetation along the Madigan Track and across much of the Simpson Desert about 10 years ago.

“Sometimes the lightning starts them,” he said.

Tanya Dixon, a traditional owner for the nearby Hay River area, said another of the jobs was to check on the condition of the tracks, which are increasingly popular with four-wheel drive adventurers.

“Most (of the Madigan Track) was alright but some of the sand dunes were a bit chopped up. The Hay River Track was pretty good but the track from the (Batton Hill) bush camp to the Plenty was corrugated and needs grading,” she said.

Paul Williams, a traditional owner for western sections of the track, said: “It’s a long way but [the trip] was brilliant.”

He is concerned about the impact some four-wheel driving tourists are having on the Madigan Track, and in particular about those who travel in the wrong direction. It is a condition of a permit to travel only east along the Madigan.

“It is better if tourists travel from west to east [from the Mac Clark Conservation Reserve] so they don’t ruin the track. Sometimes they make their own tracks, and that’s a mess,” he said.

Mr Williams said traditional owners were also thinking about charging a fee to travel along the route.

“Traditional owners are not getting anything. We should charge them for being on the track. It’s something we’re going to keep on talking about,” he said.



CLC delegate Peppi Drover burned off along the Madigan Line.



Fat-tailed dunnart at Batton Hill.

Murial Williams, James Drover, Cherelle Williams and Katrina Bookie.

New fence protects sacred waterhole



From left: Traditional owners Paul Williams, Alan "Yellow Shirt" Drover, Damien Ryder and Jeremy Williams.

The fence was funded with a \$50,000 Aboriginals Benefit Account stimulus grant, which covered the cost of materials, employment and equipment hire.

“The camels have been terrible for this place.”

Ranger group coordinator Peter Worsnop said the Ltyentye Apurte Rangers had put their specialist welding skills to good use in the project.

“They are renowned as being some of the best welders in the CLC,” he said.

One of the welders was Farron Gorey.

“Usually we work on smaller fences but this was the first time we’ve done a fence like this. This one was much bigger. We used a jackhammer for the (fence post) holes and four strands of cable,” Mr Gorey said.

TRADITIONAL owners have played a big part in directing and designing a new strong fence to protect Oolera Springs, an important permanent waterhole on the edge of the Simpson Desert.

The 400 metre perimeter fence, built by the Ltyentye Apurte Rangers, is designed to keep out cattle and camels, which have been messing up the water and turning the sacred site into mud for many years.

“The camels have been terrible for this place,” said traditional owner Damien Ryder.

“This time we’re using cable wire,” which is being run along a fence

line of steel poles concreted into the ground.

Mr Ryder’s cousin Paul Williams is a caretaker for the waterhole, which is set on a tributary of the Hale River on Loves Creek Station, within the Arletherre Aboriginal Land Trust.

“It never runs dry,” said Paul. “It’s the only one that’s never been dry; even stays in drought.”

He said there had been other attempts to fence the waterhole.

“This is the third time,” he said. “You can see the old fence line and star pickets. They used gum trees as strainers.”

Alan ‘Yellow Shirt’ Drover said the spring was “a special place. It’s the main spring where people used to drink water.”

The CLC’s regional land management coordinator Martin Campbell hopes the waterhole will return to its former glory as

an oasis for people to visit.

“This fence also should keep out the cattle and larger feral animals, yet allow the kangaroos, emus and other native animals in to drink,” he said.



From left: Lance Palmer, Farron Gorey, Paul Williams, Damien Ryder, Peter Worsnop and Charles Lechleitner

MEET OUR RANGERS



Salbena Cleary

What strengths do you bring to your ranger group?

Knowledge that I have learned from my old people. How to be a hard-worker in life. I need to get up really early. “Don’t waste your life on sitting around,” that’s what my father and grandfather always told me.

How would you explain ranger work to other people?

It’s good to work and learn from your own country and get more knowledge from country and other rangers. You meet other people that you don’t know and you learn about different ways.

What do you enjoy doing outside of your ranger work?

Visiting family and hunting. And sometimes I like to do a bit of travelling around Australia.

What would you say to the prime minister about rangers?

Come and look and give us more funding. We need more rangers, where I am working right now. It’s a big land and there’s a lot of outstations and we need a ranger base there on the other side from Harts Range, at Bonya. We need a ranger place there so we can do work further to east, near Queensland border. And we need more female rangers on board. Reliable women that can come to work. That’s how I see it.



Future looks bright for endangered central rock-rat



Wildlife ecologist Danae Moore showed Tjuwanpa Ranger Kevin Malthouse how to put pillow stuffings in Elliot traps to keep the rock-rats protected from the cold.



Australian Wildlife Conservancy wildlife ecologist Danae Moore helps ferry precious cargo – six central rock-rats – to the ranger station for a health check-up.

TRADITIONAL owners joined scientists at a carefully planned operation at Ormiston Gorge that they hope will prevent the extinction of the central rock-rat.

“We thought the rock-rat was extinct until rangers found it.”

Ormiston Gorge traditional owner Mark Inkamala said: “This project is pretty good. These guys are doing a great job finding these [rock-rats].”

He was talking about a team of ecologists from the Australian Wildlife Conservancy and the NT Government who spent a week looking for the critically endangered mammal in the Tjoritja/West MacDonnell National Park.

Mark and Riedel Inkamala, from Ntaria (Hermannsburg), and the Central Land Council’s Tjuwanpa Ranger Kevin Malthouse visited the team to find out how they were going.

“This our traditional ancestral lands at Ormiston where we used to come as kids for swimming and fishing,” Mr Inkamala said. “We thought the rock-rat was extinct until rangers found it,” he said of the shy animal which was not seen between the 1960s and 1996.

The rock-rats have retreated to a few small areas and scientists believed numbers of the nocturnal mammal would have risen following two summers of above-average rain. And they were right. Over three nights, 74 rock-rats were trapped at five sites high in the Chewings Range and Heavitree Range, 60–85 kilometres west of Mparntwe (Alice Springs).

“Rangers take them to the Desert Park and Newhaven [Sanctuary] for breeding, then let them go, away from the cats,” Mr Inkamala said.

“We brought our younger brother [Mr Malthouse] here so he can learn; good for young people to learn.”

It was the first time Mr Malthouse saw the animals, “other than in a dictionary or in a book. They’re starting to take the rock-rats to Desert Park and Newhaven – good environments since they took out all the cats and foxes”.

Fifty-eight rock-rats were airlifted by helicopter to the feral-free fenced Newhaven Sanctuary and 16 others ferried to the Desert Wildlife Park where they will become founders of a new captive program.

The moves required some high-level logistics involving a helicopter, six cars and more than a dozen people. Small aluminium box traps (Elliot traps) were set at dusk and baited with peanut butter and oats. At daybreak, the ecologists returned to collect the trapped animals before carefully bundling them into pet packs and taking them to Ormiston Gorge Ranger Station, where samples were taken and information recorded.



Photo inset: A central rock-rat. Image Brad Leue, Australian Wildlife Conservancy.

Australian Wildlife Conservancy ecologist Danae Moore said: “We identified release sites that provided suitable habitat; small rocky gorges with rock crevices close to country that’s been burnt within the past few years.

“To think what this means for a species like the central rock-rat ... it’s potentially the difference between survival and extinction.”

She predicts that Newhaven could support about 800 central rock-rats in ideal conditions.

CLC staff members Jamie Moore and Kevin Malthouse talked about the rock-rat project at Ormiston Gorge.



WOMEN'S WELLBEING FIRES UP THE SPIRIT

A WELLBEING workshop for female rangers was held at Tilmouth Well in August 2022.

The workshop brought together 13 female rangers from eight different ranger groups for a colourful program designed to increase women's participation in leadership and decision-making.

The four-day workshop was created and led by women from the Central Land Council's land management section. It was a safe space for the women to network and learn skills to look after their health and well-being.

"Really good experience to meet people from lots of different places. I came with two other ladies from the same area. At first I was feeling shy, but I was looking forward to it," Gurindji Ranger Rhonda Rankin said.

The program included fun 'ice-breaking' activities like karaoke, a quiz-night and fire side yarns. The women also learned practical skills about food security from Walbira Murray, a workforce development researcher with the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT). The tips included how to feed more people by adding healthier and cheaper ingredients like lentils to meat dishes, how to shop to get the best value, and how to re-use plastic containers to grow your own vegetables.

During her 'Caring for Country – Caring for Self' session, Ms Murray showed how to cook curried mince on a budget, and fed the whole group lunch.

Mornings started with stretches and a river walk. "I woke up this morning in my bed, and smiled and got out of bed and felt that good energy. I tried that and did the exercise. I had such a good day!" Ms Rankin said.

A highlight of the workshop was the fire story. The CLC's regional workplace mentor, Jody Kopp explained "the fire story is about the fire being our spirit and how if our spirit is low, our fire is low."

The women talked about what 'fuel' they need to keep their spirit strong. "A lot of stuff that came out of the workshop was around family and country and culture," Ms Kopp said.

Then the group made a small fire using sticks wrapped in paper with their own words about what things build their spirit written on the paper.



Anmatyerr Ranger Angela Purvis, Utopia Ranger Amy Nelson and Akityarre Ranger Andrina Williams.

Then the sticks were taken away, and the group talked about the things that squash their spirit.

"We were talking about the resilience of the spirit and how as one person, if your fire is high, you can light someone else's fire to make their spirit strong," Ms Kopp said.

"If I feel down, I will talk to my Elders, ladies, I will sit with them, talk about it with them ... And then that fire will grow and they will understand that if they feel down, I give them courage like that."

"If I feel down, I will talk to my elders, ladies. I will sit with them, talk about it with them or with my workmate or sisters. And then that fire will grow and they will understand that if they feel down, I give them courage like that," Gurindji Ranger Helma Bernard said.

The younger women also appreciated their time with the more experienced rangers and being mentored by the

older women. Ms Bernard told how much one of the new rangers had gained from the workshop.

"It was her first woman trip, she is a new ranger and ... she was really happy. Seeing new rangers, new ladies, old ladies, and she didn't know that the older ladies (were coming). She

the women practical experiences of meditation in both Pitjantjatjara and English. Another activity used 'words for feelings' conversation cards, a resource designed to improve understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people working together in the mental health sector.

New rangers also learnt about the land management gender equity strategy and talked about how to get more women involved in the ranger program. The Indigenous Desert Alliance Ranger and Sector Development Manager travelled from Perth to spend time getting to know the CLC rangers before the upcoming CLC ranger camp and Indigenous Desert Alliance conference at Yulara in November.

The workshop brought the women a step closer to taking on a healthier approach to their leadership roles as rangers. Their new skills are bound to ripple out to the women's families, communities and beyond to attract more women to land management and ranger work.

was happy dancing and singing, and all the ladies were much happier, they were all making us laugh last night. You can feel it spiritually with all the ladies together," Ms Bernard said.

The wellbeing workshop included an interactive presentation by the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women's Council on the Uti Kulintjaku mental health project which gave



Gurindji Rangers Helma Bernard and Rhonda Rankin.



Health workforce development researcher Walbira Murray shared her food security tips with Anmatyerr Ranger Angela Purvis and other female rangers.

Sacred site now safe from fire

TRADITIONAL owners of Muruntji (Cleland Hills) are pleased with the results of the joint Indigenous Desert Alliance and Central Land Council burning trip on the Haasts Bluff Aboriginal Land Trust in July.

They and the Anangu Luritjiku rangers and Walungurru rangers burned from vehicles, by foot, and for the first time in this area, from a helicopter. The burns created a mosaic of different vegetation ages and firebreaks to prevent damage from big summer wildfires.

"It was awesome," said ranger coordinator Cleveland Kantawara.

"It was cold but it was a great place to camp. It was a bit overgrown with spinifex, native grasses and buffel grass (but) we got a lot burnt. We burnt a firebreak, which will stop any big bushfires," he said.

The ranges burned a firebreak around a sacred site on a sand hill.

Some of the area had been burnt in April following a lightning strike.

"Traditional owners were happy with the results of the burning and the CLC rangers were happy," Mr Kantawara said. "It was a

good opportunity for rangers to work with the traditional owners and to develop relationships with them."

It was also a good opportunity for the Walungurru and Anangu Luritjiku rangers to practice their aerial incendiary techniques.

Mr Kantawara said the area was a special place "in the middle of a desert where you could access water".

Located about 150 kilometres southwest of Haasts Bluff, it contains five permanent water holes and several significant cultural sites. It is listed as a site of conservation significance where threatened species like the black footed rock wallaby and long-tailed dunnart live.

The CLC is talking with traditional owners about declaring an Indigenous Protected Area over the land trust. This would create a corridor of protected areas from the South Australian border, into Western Australia and to the northern edge of the Tanami Desert.

While burning, traditional owners told CLC land management staff in detail about their ideas for keeping their country and culture healthy.



Traditional owner Liza Mulda plays a leading role in the burning project.



Patrick Nolan, Patricia Multa, Liza Mulda and Herman Whiskey at Tjungkupu.



Walungurru Ranger Moses Rowe points out petroglyphs at Alalya.

Grandfather's dreams come true at Akanta

THE “wish-list of hopes and dreams” for their family homeland at Akanta that Debbie Abbott spoke to her grandfather about is slowly but surely taking place.

A sleep-out structure has been built on the veranda of one house, and the dirt veranda floor of the second house has been replaced with concrete.

There are four brick houses and a large work shed at the homeland, north of the Ernest Giles Road and about 140 kilometres southwest of Mparntwe (Alice Springs).

“It’s peaceful, quiet and in the middle of nowhere,” Ms Abbott said.

“My grandfather told me and my partner (Aaron Rankin) to do it up. Make people come back. The back story is to get family to come back home and look after the place.”

She said that her grandfather had passed away.

“His wish was to come back home so we ended up laying him back there. We are going to put a fence around the grave.”

Ms Abbott said materials had also

arrived for a boundary fence, which will keep the horses and cattle out.

“Once we put the boundary fence up we want to plant native trees and fruit trees to bring back the bird life. Slowly, slowly we are getting there,” she said.

“It makes you feel happy being away from the town life. It gets the kids away from technology,” she said.

“We go fishing and camping and take the kids on trips to country in the school holidays. We want the kids to appreciate what they’ve got at the

homelands and to show them there is more to life than Alice Springs.”

The home improvements have been carried out by Tangentyere Constructions at a cost of \$74,233, which was sourced from Watarrka National Park rental income.

Ms Abbott said they also had plans to fix the campground and the demountable, which once operated as a school of the air.



Marnie Kenny and Treyson Rankin making use of the new concrete slab.



Elma Braedon, Marnie Kenny, Debbie Abbott and Johnny McCormack relax under the new verandah.

Ltyentye Apurte shines under bright lights

LYENTYE APURTE’S long and proud tradition as a sporting community has just become a little brighter with the installation of lights in the basketball court near the school.

installed to automatically activate the lights.

“They come on each night and they turn off at 9.30pm for sleep time,” he said.

Fellow working group member

“The community is really happy about it. And they make it a bit safer. I think other communities might want to do the same thing.”

Twelve 200-watt LED lights turn night into day for the kids and teenagers who use the court nearly every night.

Community development working group member Raymond Palmer said the lights were so bright that he could see them from his home at the far end of the community..

“It really brightens up the whole area all around,” he said.

“It’s been a good project for the community and we are proud of them. Every night the kids are down there, from the littlest ones to teenagers and some grown-ups.”

Mr Palmer said a timer had been

Annalisa Young said the lights had made a big difference.

“It’s a big improvement”, said Ms Young. “The community is really happy about it. And they make it a bit safer. I think other communities might want to do the same thing.”

Previously, basketball was played in the community recreation hall, but as a big tin shed, it was often too hot.

“Now we can have games in the open,” she said.

“We have a men’s competition and a women’s competition. It’s a bit competitive but it’s more about getting everyone involved.”

Ms Young said the skateboarders

also used the facility and the local Eastern Arrernte Band, who held a few concerts under the lights.

“We will also be using it during the community sports carnival. Usually they just play football and softball, but now we can also have basketball,” she said.

The lights were installed in May by Steve’s Electrix at a cost of \$25,000,

paid from the community’s ‘matched funds’. The basketball court is situated on the grounds of the Ltyentye Apurte Catholic School and used by the community outside of school hours.

Ms Young said the community is looking forward to more improvements, such as better seating or more shade.



Shalarna Young, Shalaya Young, Lathan Cavanagh, Champion Young, Darian Young, Jermias Alice and Temisha Young.

Warlpiri girls learn about culture at dance camp



Young girls are interested to learn about their culture. When they see other girls painted up they say "me too, me too".

YOUNG women from Warlpiri communities across the Tanami returned home with new skills and a spring in their step from the Southern Tanami Girls Dance Camp at Yarripirlangu.

“It was good to see all the women and young girls together.”

Some 32 elders and 28 young women came from different communities to the camp over the May Day long weekend. The camp

featured two nights of dancing ceremony, a day trip and a disco.

The young women developed their skills in photography, catering, hospitality, customer service, logistics and teamwork.

Peggy Brown, from Yuendumu, said: “Dance camp was good. It was good to see all the women and young girls together.”

The dance camp was an opportunity for new friendships to develop through shared culture and language. Particularly true for the elders who sometimes go for long periods without performing songs and dances on country.

Kitty Brown said: “It is important for all the Warlpiri communities to come together for dance camp.”

The camp was led by 10 senior



Maisie Napurrurla Wayne and Lorraine Nungarrayi Granites taught the girls.

women, who made key decisions about the location, activities, food and logistics.

The event was the second of two dance camps in a project designed to strengthen Warlpiri culture and language, build confidence, pride and knowledge about country and jukurrpa among young girls, and develop employment pathways for

women.

The dance camp was facilitated by Incite Arts and the Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation, and funded by the Yuendumu Committee of the Granites Mine Affected Areas Aboriginal Corporation to the tune of almost \$200,000.

New seats, new shade in Engawala

THE ENGAWALA community near the Plenty Highway has new seats in their church and new shade structures around the footy oval.

These were two of the projects the community said it wanted when it held a meeting in 2019 to decide how to spend its lease money.

Residents first thought 10 pews would be enough for their church, but

later decided they needed 20 because of the many people who sometimes attend funerals and services in their community.

Each of the five shade shelters around the oval have concrete floors. The community had wanted a tap and a toilet block at the oval but there is not enough water at Engawala for those projects yet.

Project partner Rainbow Gateway employed local men Henrick Collins and Eris Ryder to help build the structures.

“The pews and the oval have helped to give young people the idea of working in the community,” said Engawala resident Audrey Inkamala.

“We can see one of the main changes that we wanted in the community, all

the young fellas doing more jobs now,” said local residents and CLC delegate Kevin Bloomfield.

The work was finished earlier this year at a cost of almost \$100,000.



Henrick Collins with the new church pews.



Eris Ryder and Henrick Collins work on the shade structure.



The need for justice sparks Arrernte elder's performance

"THE NEED to find justice for my people" was one of the reasons why Eastern Arrernte elder Sylvia Purrule Neale presented *My History, Your History, Our History* in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) during NAIDOC Week.

The 78-year-old writer-poet's experimental solo work at the Watch This Space gallery comprised an installation and three performances set in a bedroom.

The work was based on a stage play that Ms Neale wrote many years ago.

"It expressed the anger, rage and despair of being an Aboriginal person grappling with the stark reality of colonisation, which continues to be swept out of Australia's consciousness," she said.

She told *Land Rights News* that in just 230 years, colonisers have wiped out ancient languages and ancient peoples, initially through massacres, but also with government policies such as assimilation, integration and reconciliation.

"The legacy of these policies are stolen children, stolen land, locked up children, deaths in custody and stolen futures," she said.

"There is a world of frustration, sorrow and anger in our communities. This anger and frustration is hidden deep inside each of us and often bursts out with a vengeance that is misinterpreted and punished."



Sylvia Purrule Neale performs *My History, Your History, Our History*.

Ms Neale said the second motivator for the presentation was her belief that the "history of our nation has to be told".

"The warts-and-all story of our history has to be known and admitted,

otherwise Aboriginal people are never going to be on a level playing field," she said.

Ms Neale said she had always been interested in performing.

"I've had this interest all my life as

well as the goal to find justice. I've dealt with this reality and how it is embodied by First Nations people in my performance.

"It's one Aboriginal woman's point of view," she said.

Desert Mob celebrates artists' vision

THE DESERT MOB Art Exhibition in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) showcases the works of Central Australia's desert art movement every year.

This year the exhibition was as spectacular as always, but there was one big difference – for the first time the curation of the exhibition was in Aboriginal hands.

"Desart dedicates this year's Desert Mob to those old people who had the vision to set up Papunya Tula and to all those who have followed."

Curators Hetti Perkins and Marissa Maher were given the honour of presented the collection of outstanding paintings, prints, ceramics and woven works in the way they thought best.

It was the reflection of a "momentous change" for a festival that was previously jointly managed and is now fully owned and managed by First Nations people and managed by peak Aboriginal art centre body Desart.

"Aboriginal leadership determining how Aboriginal works are hung for Aboriginal people to see," was how Minister for the Arts Chansey Paech put it to a large audience at the Araluen Art Gallery on opening night.

"The move will influence how we go forward in ensuring that Desert Mob is

presented in ways that strengthens its place in the national First Nations arts and cultural landscape," Desart chief executive Philip Watkins said. "And I can assure you we at Desart have big visions," he said.

The exhibition of 232 works by 227 artists from 23 art centres was opened

by Bobby West Tjupurrula of the Papunya Tula cooperative.

"In celebrating the 50 years since the establishment of Papunya Tula Artists, Desart dedicates this year's Desert Mob to those old people who had the vision to set up Papunya Tula and to all those who have followed, including

Bobby West," Mr Watkins said.

This year's 31st Desert Mob also featured artist and curator talks, workshops, Market Place, and Art Centres on Screen, a program where desert artists share stories about their art, country and history.



Purple House Director and Papunya Tula Artists Shareholder, Bobby West Tjupurrula, opened the 31st annual Desert Mob exhibition. Image: Oliver Eclipse Photography, courtesy Desart.



Strong spokesman remembered for his love of country

BRIAN ‘Big Bad’ Crafter is remembered as a strong spokesperson for his family and community, and as someone who loved to care for his country around Tennant Creek.

The senior traditional owner and native title holder from the Patta Warumungu group lived at Wittin Outstation. His mother and sister also lived at the outstation until his mother passed away. His own life was tragically cut short when he disappeared while swimming with friends and family members at Seven Mile Bridge last January. He was just 50 years old.

Mr Crafter was a Central Land Council delegate representing the Patta Aboriginal Corporation for six years. He also worked with the Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers, and had been a member of the group’s traditional owner ranger advisory committee.

He helped to set up the Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Cultural Centre, and was a member of its advisory group. He was also a member of the Papulu Apparr-Kari Aboriginal Corporation – better known as the language centre.

Mr Crafter worked as a cook, a gardener, a bouncer at Brian’s Place Tavern and the Swan Hotel, and on several cattle stations.

Born in Tennant Creek on 27 August 1971, he was the eldest of three children to Evelyn Dixon/Taylor and Elwyn Crafter. His sisters are Glenys and Brenda.

Glenys Crafter said one of her earliest memories of her brother was when they dressed up as rock stars, inspired by the band KISS. Brian, his sisters and cousins painted their faces as a spaceman, catman, star child and a demon.

“We used a lot of make-up,” Ms Crafter recalled.

Glenys said her brother was popular at school.

“He was a king on the monkey bars. He liked to play marbles and had the big steely (also known as a tom bowler), which no one was able to win off him. He also liked going to the disco in the Country Women’s Association Hall where the Central Land Council is now. He did break-dancing and the robot with all his friends.

“He was a big bloke for his age and some kids were frightened of him. They would never tease him or pick a fight with him at school.”

Mr Crafter left school aged about 15 to work on Kalala Station for Roy Bebee.

“Roy treated him like a son. He took Brian to the Cattlemen’s Dinner in Katherine. He bought him new clothes, let him drive his Mercedes-Benz to Katherine and drive Roy’s sister Nita to Daly Waters and Katherine a few times.”

His work colleagues included Lindsay Grant, and Joey Alum, and Neil Alum, who was his uncle, best friend and soul mate.

It was Neil who gave Brian his nick name, inspired by the Slim Dusty song Big John. To his friends and family, and more broadly in Tennant Creek, he was known as ‘Big Bad’.

Later, he worked at the Tanumbirini, Sunday Creek and Hayfield stations, and also for Bill Tapp Contracting.

Mr Crafter took his cultural responsibilities seriously. He represented Warumungu people in the Return of Cultural Heritage project with the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. The project seeks to repatriate sacred objects from around the world. He would no doubt have been delighted when the Klue-Ruche Art Museum in the United States returned a sacred object in May.



Mr Crafter loved bush life and never gave up on anything. He also loved his homeland where he lived with his two dogs and a beautiful garden. He will be sadly missed by his family, friends, colleagues and the community in which he lived and served.



EVERY HILL GOT A STORY
is now back in print

She boiled them and boiled them and boiled them



My dad used to work around Spotted Tiger mine [at Atitjere]. He was a woodcutter, and my mother used to milk the goats. Two of my mums were there – my father had two wives – and they used to work for Mr Floreani. They used to milk the goats, pour all the milk into a bucket and then take the milk back. They used to look after the nanny goats carefully, take them around. Then in the late after-noon they'd take them back and yard them.

They had a lot of work to do, I suppose, but they used to work just for food and for clothes. We didn't have many clothes, you know – my two mothers used to get flour bags and make dresses from them. They'd make a hole for sleeves and make little tops out of them, and others were made into skirts. Well, my mothers used to go around looking for things and they found this big old house. They saw these old mattresses lying there. 'Hey, these are really good fabric,' they said.

'Hey, gather up all of those mattresses' – then my father went around and collected the lot of them – those stripy mattresses – and then my mother washed them. She boiled them and boiled them and boiled them. Then she hung them out to dry – in a tree or spread them on a flat rock.

They made a skirt for me, a skirt for my sister, and two little shirts for my two younger brothers. And we thought that was really good. 'Hey, yekaye [Gee!] – these clothes are really great!' we said.

Sometimes they used to boil up the fabric and they would get some red-coloured rocks and grind them up and then put the fabric in and it would come out a really nice colour. Red and white – a rich dark colour.

We lived in a really strict place, and that's how we grew up. Food was saved, and meat and water. Mum used to cart water from the mines in a bucket – she'd go and get water and come back and put it up high in a tall tree.

MARGARET KEMARRE TURNER

Excerpt from *Every hill got a story*

For more information go to clc.org.au/every-hill-got-a-story

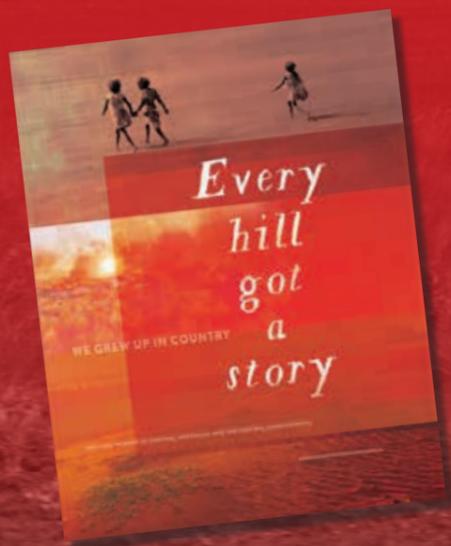


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**LISTEN TO THE STORYTELLERS OF
EVERY HILL GOT A STORY**

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