

LAND RIGHTS NEWS

NORTHERN EDITION



NORTHERN
LAND COUNCIL

FREE

SEPTEMBER 2021 • NLC.ORG.AU



NAIDOC 2021



Jabiru Township handback - page 3



Wuyagiba Bush Uni - part of the 8 page
education supplement inside!

AUSTRALIA'S OLDEST ABORIGINAL NEWSPAPER. SINCE 1973.

EDITORIAL

Land Rights News Northern Edition is published by Chairman Samuel Bush-Blanasi for the Northern Land Council.

We welcome stories and photos about Aboriginal people and organisations.

Contact media@nlc.org.au

NLC CONTACTS

Northern Land Council
45 Mitchell St
Darwin NT 0820
(08) 8920 5100
www.nlc.org.au

FOLLOW US

@northernlandcouncil

@NLC_74

@northernlandcouncil

Watch NLC TV on YouTube

SUBSCRIPTIONS

To subscribe fill out the online form at www.nlc.org.au

ADVERTISING

Next publication date is December 2021

Rates are at www.nlc.org.au/media-publications or email media@nlc.org.au

Circulation: 4,000 print and 700 digital subscribers

New beginnings, welcome changes and sad farewells

A message from the Northern Land Council chair Samuel Bush-Blanasi

It was very sad to hear of the recent passing of Mr Wavehill, a man who never stopped fighting for his country and always worked to protect his Mudburra culture. He was a great friend to our mob right across the NLC area.

Mr Wavehill was one of the last survivors of the Wave Hill Walk Off, a pivotal early moment in the land rights movement and was 18 years old when joined his brother-in-law, Vincent Lingiari to demand of 'a fair go' for all Aboriginal people.

The past few weeks have also seen the welcome introduction to Federal parliament of fundamental and long-overdue changes to the Land Rights Act that will empower all Land Councils, correct some lingering injustices implemented during the NT Intervention period and assist land councils - particularly the NLC - with controlling illegal activity on Aboriginal land by lifting penalties for infringements.

Other key reforms will improve the processes for dealing with requests for mining and exploration on Aboriginal land.

In late July the NLC held another very successful Full Council meeting - our 123rd - at Banatjarl on Jawoyn country. As ever it was a lively and interesting meeting with wide-ranging and vigorous discussions about the many items of business that the NLC has to deal with.

These included the recent handback of Jabiru township to the Mirarr Traditional Owners, the NLC's continuing good working relationships with both the Federal and Territory governments in addressing the very real threats that Covid-19 poses for our communities and historic reforms to the Aboriginals Benefit Account



Malarndirri McCarthy, Samuel Bush-Blanasi, Marion Scrymgour and Warren Snowdon at Banatjarl.

that will finally see that very important fund controlled by Aboriginal people.

An important element of all NLC meetings - whether the seven regional councils, the Executive Council or the twice-yearly Full Councils - is the

supplement that looks at some of the education opportunities for Aboriginal people in the NT.

This past Full Council also saw an emotional farewell speech from Marion Scrymgour, who in her two and a half year term as NLC

of rebuilding internal self-confidence and respect inside the NLC.

We all wish Marion the best for her future career and know she will always have the best interests of our mob at heart.

Finally, the Full Council gave a warm welcome to our incoming NLC CEO Joe Martin-Jard for his first NLC Full Council meeting.

Joe brings a wealth of experience and knowledge with him and we all look forward to him joining us in facing the many challenges ahead.

'The Full Council gave a warm welcome to our incoming CEO Joe Martin-Jard for his first NLC Full Council meeting,' NLC Chair Samuel Bush-Blanasi

opportunity for members to bring their local community concerns and grievances to the attention of the Full Council and NLC staff for consideration and action.

We also welcomed the attendance at Full Council of federal political representatives - including our good friend Warren Snowdon for what might be the last time as he will be retiring at the next election - and the NT Chief Minister Michael Gunner and Ministers Uibo, Kirby and Paech, all of whom received a warm welcome and a fiery grilling from members on a range of issues of concern.

Also in this issue is an eight page education

CEO has done wonders to rebuild our relationships with both the Federal and NT governments but also helped in the essential task



Incoming NLC chief executive Joe Martin-Jard.

'A great day': Jabiru now in Mirarr hands

For four decades the Mirarr people have been calling for the town of Jabiru, inside Kakadu National Park, to be returned to its rightful custodians.



Mirarr Traditional Owners May Nango and Yvonne Margarula.



Indigenous Australians Minister Ken Wyatt and Environment Minister Sussan Ley with Mirarr Traditional Owners.

THE Mirarr Traditional Owners are "very happy and proud" that the long fight for recognition of Traditional Ownership at Jabiru has culminated in the grant of freehold title under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act*.

"This is a great day for Mirarr people," said Mirarr Senior Traditional Owner Yvonne Margarula.

"The handing back of Jabiru to Mirarr recognises our land rights here and gives us economic independence. We are excited for the future of Jabiru and for the future of all our people," she said.

At the ceremony in Jabiru on 26 June, Northern Land Council Chairman Samuel Bush-Blanasi joined the Minister for Indigenous Australians Ken Wyatt, Minister for the Environment Sussan Ley, local politicians and the community to officially grant the freehold title to the Mirarr.

"Today we celebrate a great event," Mr Bush-Blanasi said.

"The return of the land Jabiru sits on to its Traditional Owners, the Mirarr people.

"Myself, and fellow NLC members, are proud to be part of the rightful handback

of this land to the Mirarr. Correcting a deliberate act a generation ago to deny the Mirarr recognition of their land ownership under Balanda law.

"This is the first time that land, not already part of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act estate, has been returned to Traditional Owners for them to manage as a town; to be central to what happens on their land.

"I thank the Mirarr for allowing us to share this significant milestone with the wider community and I acknowledge their journey and connection to this country as the

original custodians."

The fight for land rights at Jabiru commenced in 1978 when the town was built on what was then Crown land

native title claim, which was decided by the Federal Court in 2016 after one of Australia's longest-running native title matters.

'We are excited for the future of Jabiru and for the future of all our people,' Mirarr Senior Traditional Owner Yvonne Margarula

without the involvement of Traditional Owners. The senior Mirarr elder at the time, Toby Gangale, is the father of today's Senior Traditional Owner Ms Margarula. In 1998, Ms Margarula lodged the Jabiru

At an early stage, the Mirarr confirmed their wish that Jabiru should become Aboriginal land and have a bright future as the centre for regional services, tourism and for all Kakadu.



Minister Ley with several Djurrubu Rangers.



Brian Pedwell, Chris Neade, Joe Martin-Jard and Richard Dixon.

Laynhapuy Homelands vaccine rollout 'going well'

LAYNHAPUY Homelands Aboriginal Corporation chair Barayuwa Mununggurr has told *Land Rights News* that the vaccine roll out in his area is 'going well'.

Seventy-two per cent of Aboriginal people in his region have been given at least one jab, and 44 per cent are fully immunised, he said on August 27.

"I'm proud to be the Chair of a Yolngu organisation, which has a done such a great job in getting the vaccine out to our homelands," said Mr Mununggurr.

"I know a little about vaccination but we trust our health staff when they recommend we should get vaccinated.

"The reason why our vaccination rates are high is because our health staff come out to where we live. They come to us, they don't sit in a clinic waiting for us to come to them.

"All people should get this vaccine, to protect their gurutumala and djamarrkuli."



The NLC calls for 90% vaccination rate

ON 8 September, the NLC's Borroloola Barkly Regional Council meeting at Tennant Creek made two resolutions. The first resolution was for a minimum vaccination rate of 90% in the Northern Territory for all Aboriginal Territorians aged 12 years and above before the NT government opens the borders with surrounding states. The Council also resolved to call for better information from the NT and Federal governments on vaccination rates for each region across the NT.

The resolutions followed a call by the Aboriginal Medical Medical Services Alliance NT's (AMSANT) for the NT government to adopt a 90 to 95 per cent Aboriginal vaccination threshold before opening borders.



Maningrida community leaders line up for jab



MANINGRIDA'S vaccination rollout made national news headlines recently after record numbers showed up to get their Pfizer vaccines. As of 1 September, more than 70 per cent of the eligible population aged 16 and over had received their first dose and almost 45 per cent were fully vaccinated.

The successful rollout comes after weeks of community-led campaigning by Mala'la Health Service, Aboriginal health workers, Traditional Owners, community leaders and multiple agencies coming together to build community confidence about the vaccine.

Community leaders told *Land Rights News* that it is important to 'talk straight' and 'our way' to the community, adding that mainstream campaigns are confusing and do not work. Local community videos were broadcast in multiple languages online

and on large screens; community workers went door to door to talk with families and multiple information sessions were held to address community concerns.

When the vaccines arrived, the community leaders were among the first to get the vaccines including the Mayor of West Arnhem Regional Council Matthew Ryan, Traditional Owners and Aboriginal health workers.

"This is a serious thing all over the world. We've got eight language groups here and we have culture and family to look after. It's important to get that vaccine to protect our songlines".

On the vaccination days, campaigning continued non-stop with Traditional Owners on megaphones encouraging the community to get the vaccine.

In the second round, Maningrida broke its own previous NT record administering 467 vaccines on a single day - the highest in any single vaccine hub in the Territory at that time.



Bagot community local encourages mob to get jab

LAND Rights News paid a visit to the Bagot Aboriginal community following the August lockdown in Darwin and found some residents were concerned by a rise in alarming misinformation about the Covid-19 vaccine. They welcomed the news that more community consultations were on the way.

Danila Dilba Health Service told *Land Rights News* that they are planning new community consultations, following a campaign of doorknocking, SMS messaging and letter drops to explain the importance of the Covid-19 vaccination.

Long-time Bagot resident Helen Fejo-Frith - who has been nominated for the Senior Australian of the Year Award 2022 in recognition of a lifetime of hard work for her community - has been trying to convince her neighbours to get the vaccine.

"It's no little game, it's serious stuff, what I say to a lot of people around the community is that if you have not had your vaccine yet, get up and get it done now, because this could be vital to your health, to your life," said Ms Fejo-Frith.

"We need people to saying that to me too, better to be safe than sorry, our mob need to understand we're really vulnerable to Covid and we need to do the right thing, for once do the thing the government is telling us to do," she said with a smile.

While some worry about vaccines having a negative impact on existing medical conditions, the 74-year-old believes getting Covid-19 would be a lot scarier than any vaccine side effects.

"It is very scary. If you have any type of illness, all the mob that had anything wrong with them, they need to be really careful, that little virus thing can kick it off again."





Deadly design

Branding + websites + video + annual reports + uniforms + displays + banners + posters + illustrations + animations + vehicles



Full service creative agency - FREE Quotes

With over 20 years of experience working in the Northern Territory, the Campaign Edge Sprout team can help you produce, promote and communicate on a community, local and national level through innovative and professional creative design services.

campaignedgesprout.com.au



Former Don Dale detainees win historic class action payout



Former prisoners at the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre in Darwin will share \$35m after a class-action settlement with the NT government.

UP to 1200 youths mistreated while in detention in the NT could share in a \$35m class-action settlement brokered with the Territory government.

Law firm Maurice Blackburn said details could be revealed after the federal court ruled against moves by the NT government to suppress the settlement figure.

on how long they were in detention, what happened to them, and how many people register for compensation.

Maurice Blackburn Principal lawyer Ben Slade said the firms' clients welcomed the NT government's decision to compensate those who were mistreated while in youth detention in the Territory.

"No amount of money through. Our shoes bear those scars and marks. The brothers and sisters who are no longer with us are not forgotten and we send them our love. I hope this settlement leads to change to create a better system for the younger mob."

In 2017, the final report of the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the NT revealed "systemic and shocking failures", including "regular, repeated and distressing mistreatment" of young people.

"As the Royal Commission made clear, the Territory's youth detention system was damaging children and young people, not rehabilitating them," Mr Slade said. "Our clients hope the Royal Commission and this hard-fought class action will lead to changes in the youth detention system that mean other young people will not suffer as they did."

The NT government does not admit that officers acted illegally, but it has previously apologised for the way young people were treated in youth detention. Notices about the settlement have been sent to potential class members, with a Federal Court hearing to approve the final settlement scheduled for 8 November 2021 in Darwin.

'These young people may have broken the law, but they did not deserve to be broken by the law,'
Principal lawyer Ben Slade

Registrations are now open for young people who believe they may be eligible to claim compensation as part of the class action settlement.

The class action covers anyone who was mistreated while in an NT youth detention centre between August 2006 and November 2017.

The case was brought by lead applicants Aaron Hyde and Dylan Jenkins, who were assaulted and abused by youth justice officers while in detention.

It's estimated about 1200 people could be eligible for a share of the compensation. The amount paid to each person will vary depending will undo the ongoing harm caused by these abuses, but it is an important acknowledgement of the pain caused to hundreds of young people.

"While in detention, these young people were subjected to appalling treatment that included excessive force, handcuffing, strip searching and isolation in cells.

"These young people may have broken the law, but they did not deserve to be broken by the law."

Aaron Hyde, one of the two lead applicants, said very few people understand what he has experienced.

"Only the people who have walked in my shoes know what we've been

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

Speak to Maurice Blackburn Lawyers to get compensation money.

Call 1800 226 211

Bradshaw Traditional Owners welcome troops

Among the bulldust at Bradshaw Field Training Area, ADF and US Marines complete Exercise Koolondong.



Exercise Koolondong at Bradshaw Field Training Area in the NT.

RESIDENTS of Timber Creek walked through the security gates of the Bradshaw Field Training Area (BFTA) in late August for a rare glimpse of weaponry used in the latest warfighting exercise involving Australian Defence Force soldiers and US Marines.

Bradshaw, the largest military training facility in the Southern Hemisphere, played host to Exercise Koolondong that brought 1000 US Marines from Marine people. Defence does a good job and Aboriginal people benefit from it."

Exercise Koolondong provided three months' work for the Aboriginal-owned Bradshaw & Timber Creek Contracting & Resource Company and its 18 employees.

The company provides trades and other services to the military through the Bradshaw Partnering Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA).

'We are encouraging Defence to use our land because it brings jobs for our people. Defence does a good job and Aboriginal people benefit from it,'
Traditional Owner Lorraine Jones

Rotational Force-Darwin (MRF-D) together with 1000 Australian Army personnel.

The BFTA - one of the largest live-fire weapons training areas in the world - welcomed people from Timber Creek with displays of armoured personnel carriers, tanks, helicopters, mobile launching equipment, cannon, an Osprey and a robot dog.

Lorraine Jones, chairperson of the Bradshaw Liaison Committee, said Traditional Owners support BFTA because it creates jobs for local people and gives hope to future generations.

"It's an eye-opener for kids to see the equipment and maybe one day they might join the army," Ms Jones told *Land Rights News*.

"We are encouraging Defence to use our land because it brings jobs for our



Brigadier Collingburn

Government," Brigadier Collingburn said.

MRF-D Commanding Officer Colonel David Banning thanked the Traditional Owners of Bradshaw for their hospitality and support.

"The Marines and Sailors of Marine Rotational Force-Darwin are thankful for the continued opportunity to operate in the NT - made possible by the strong relationship that exists between the Traditional Owners of Bradshaw and the Australian Defence Force as evidenced by the Indigenous Land Use Agreement and our commitment to continuing consultation," he said.

"It is impossible to spend



Traditional Owner Daniel Jones inside a helicopter.

any time at Bradshaw and not be moved by the beauty and scale of the land. I am deeply appreciative of the meaning that the land that we are allowed to train on has for the Traditional Owner community. We are committed to continuing and deepening the consultative process with the Traditional Owners to ensure that our training practices respect traditions and location."



Brigadier Ash Collingburn hands a 1st Brigade football to a child from Timber Creek.



Children from Timber Creek take a closer look at a tank at Nackaroo Airfield at Bradshaw.

Why the unrelenting focus on education targets?: Pat Turner



Pat Turner is the CEO of NACCHO.

WHY, when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have been successfully educating their children for 60,000 years, are modern day education systems failing to meet the needs of First Nations' children?

That's the question Pat Turner, the CEO of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), asked of representatives the Department of

Education, Skills and Employment in June.

Ms Turner, who is also the Lead Convenor of the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak organisations, said socio-economic targets in areas such as education, employment, health and wellbeing have an "unrelenting" focus on targets - but to what end?

"Not a single state or territory in Australia has managed to achieve a 'meaningful improvement' in school attendance for our children," Ms Turner said despite the Closing the Gap targets.

About one in four of our students in Years 5, 7 and 9, and one in five in Year 3, remain below national minimum standards in reading.

"While targets are important for accountability, they can sometimes distract us from the holistic and interconnected nature of change needed to drive better outcomes."

Ms Turner said, "Nobody in Australia knows why we are failing to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous education more than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples."

She said far too often, our experiences, concerns, and voices are missing from the conversation.

"Decisions about what policies and programs will help our children and young people to thrive in education needs to be driven from the Aboriginal and Torres children's families and communities and our

community-controlled organisations."

Ms Turner said while it was important for the community-controlled sector to provide more services, the role of mainstream in providing many of these critical services in early childhood, school and tertiary education should also be recognised.

However, she warned these services needed to be supportive and culturally safe.

"Mainstream services, and the institutions that deliver them have potential to improve life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

However, while there are some examples of good practice, particularly when partnerships are formed with the Aboriginal community-controlled sector, overall, our peoples continue to be concerned about whether mainstream services are supportive and culturally safe," Ms Turner said.

Very fashionable Top End artists win DAAF awards

ARTISTS from Groote Eylandt and Tiwi Islands were among the winners of the National Indigenous Fashion Awards for this year's Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair (DAAF).

Anindilyakwa Arts from Groote Eylandt took home a \$5000 prize for the Community Collaboration Award, in recognition of effective and productive relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the textile and fashion industry.

Maicie Lalara and Annabell Amagula from the Anindilyakwa Arts collective collaborated with designers Dr Aly de Groot and Anna Reynolds to present their innovative designs at this year's DAAF. Ms Amagula works with ghost net and recycled fabrics to create bags, baskets and clothes. "I got everything from my grandmother. My Elders showed me how to do it, and now I do it myself - doing weaving the old ways and new ways," she said.



Artist Annabell Amagula.

The NLC cuts a pathway to jobs for Aboriginal students

More and more students have been visiting the NLC to explore future job opportunities.

THE Northern Land Council has launched a new Aboriginal employment strategy that aims to increase the number of young Aboriginal staff members.

As part of this strategy, the NLC has been attending career expos at schools throughout the Top End and inviting students to tour the Darwin and regional offices.

The NLC has welcomed students who are part of the Stars and Clontarf Foundation programs at Taminmin College, Haileybury Rendall School and Casuarina Senior Secondary College.

The NLC has also welcomed students from Palmerston Flexible Learning School, Katherine High School and the Catholic Education Office.

The visits include a presentation about the

NLC, a question and answer session with NLC staff, a tour of the offices and a chat with the Chairman Samuel Bush-Blanas, NLC chief executive Joe Martin-Jard or one of the NLC's general managers.

"These visits are all about making the students feel comfortable in the offices and breaking down barriers that may exist so that one day these students might come to work here," said Leigh Crossman, NLC's Education and Employment Pathway Manager.

As a result of these visits and NLC participating in expo days, the NLC has employed two new staff members.

Former Casuarina Senior Secondary College student Emma Pollard is working in NLC's Darwin office, and Jamalia Irwin,

who attended the Kalano Community Careers' Expo, is working as an administration assistant in the Katherine office.

"We look forward to increasing the number of visits to schools and communities and the amount of school visits to our 11 offices across the Top End. This will help to increase the number of new Aboriginal employees at the NLC," Mr Crossman said.

Expos attended by NLC in recent months include the Casuarina Senior Secondary School Futures Festival, Jabiru Area School Careers Expo and the Kalano Indigenous Careers Expo in Katherine.

The NLC also facilitated the Community Careers Expo at Maningrida, which was attended by over 300 community members.



Contarf Academy Gunbalanya students at NLC in September.



Taminmin College year 10 students at the NLC's Darwin office.

Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) Grant Funding Round



ROUND OPEN

Funding for one off projects that benefit Aboriginal people in the NT. ABA supports projects not covered by other government funding.

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

Opens: **30 August 2021**

For more information:

Contact **1800 354 612** or email **aba@official.niaa.gov.au**

Or visit **www.niaa.gov.au/aba-grants**

WANT TO EARN WHILE YOU LEARN?

Outback Stores provides meaningful **employment** and **V**ocational **E**ducation and **T**raining (VET) while remaining **on country**.

To learn more about training and careers at Outback Stores: Contact **(08) 8982 1900** or **info@outbackstores.com.au**

OUTBACK Stores
Working With Communities



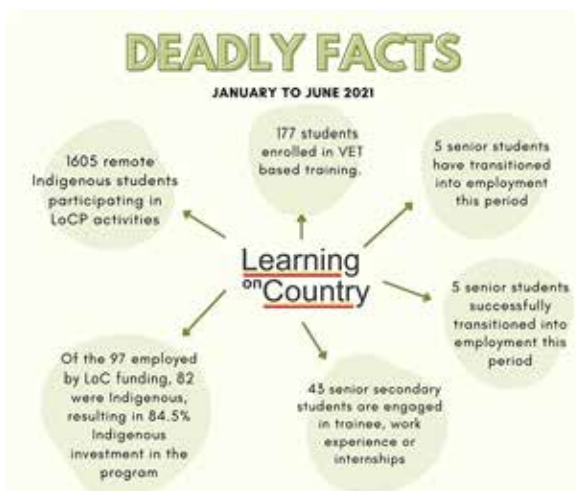
“

VET developed my skills and confidence and opened up career pathways that I thought weren't possible. Becoming the first Aboriginal Training Officer at Outback Stores was one of the proudest moments of my life. Now I can share those skills by training others in community.

”

ALMA NGALMI from Numbulwar Community NT Training Awards Finalist 2021

Learning on Country



THE Learning on Country Program has had some good outcomes in the first half of the year. The Program continues to be strongly supported by the local communities where it is being delivered - and although remote student attendance is down a bit during this period, students are continuing to attend and engage in LoC activities.

Gangan students and Yirralka Rangers study biodiversity on country

STUDENTS from the Gangan class at Yirralka Homelands School on the Laynhapuy Homelands have been working closely with the Yirralka Rangers on a large biodiversity survey of the community's natural environment.

During the survey, students set up a variety of different animal traps, which they baited and set every afternoon, returning early the next morning to check them.

They learnt how to care for trapped animals, ensuring they were never caught under the sun for too long.

Shaina Russell from Macquarie

University's Department of Environment and Geography joined the students to lead them through scientific methods of assessing the health of the bush.

Ms Russell, with the assistance of Yirralka Rangers, is compiling research about local North East Arnhem Land flora and fauna into a book.

The biodiversity survey has been deemed a great success with students being able to learn and ask questions, and rangers and elders being able to answer with practical, cultural, and historical knowledge.



Learning on Country with a 'two toolbox' approach



Learning on Country meeting in Darwin in March 2021 (left to right, at back) Rosetta Wayatja, Ursula Badari, Linda Williams, Stephanie Anderson, Bobby Wunungmurra, Lirripiya Mununggurr (Chair), Alister Andrews, Fabian Marika and (left to right, at front) Frieda Wurramara, Cindy Jinmarabynana (Co Chair), Hilda Ngalmi, Richard Milurrurr, Joseph Diddo, Danny Dangadanga.

THE Learning on Country Program enjoys strong community and institutional support through a dual-knowledge systems that links culture with curriculum.

The 'two toolbox approach' incorporates both Western and Indigenous knowledge systems to deliver culturally appropriate education and training supports remote students' training and employment pathways.

The LoC Program, delivered to secondary students, is developed

collaboratively between school and ranger staff with a focus on field work.

Activities include a wide range of ranger groups' projects and responsibilities around land and sea management, and cultural knowledge-based learning.

Culturally-based learning activities, such as intergenerational knowledge transfer, are delivered by Cultural Advisors and Traditional Owners and can be undertaken as in-class workshops, day trips or

extended activities such as cultural camps.

The intention of the program is to incorporate LoC into the learning culture of both the school and the community of people who support it.

The LoC Program is both an incubator and succession planning solution for various industry sectors involved in the sustainable use of land, sea and conservation management (Working on Country, Indigenous Protected Area Programs).

In many ways the LoC Program is developing the next generation of rangers and traditional custodians.

Underpinning the ongoing adoption, sustainability and success of the LoC Program is the emphasis on Indigenous governance and community ownership of the program, which is ensured through the guidance and directives of the Local LoC Committee (LLOC) and the LoC Steering Committee.

The Local LoC Committee meets a minimum of four

times a year and is made up of a Coordinator and key stakeholders from schools, ranger groups and other community representatives as appropriate.

The Committee nominates the Indigenous LLOC Chairperson, whose role includes participation in the overarching Steering Committee. The LoC Steering Committee guides and oversees the delivery of the program, in accordance with community aspirations.

Ngukurr's conservation students going strong

The South East Arnhem Land community of Ngukurr joined the Learning on Country (LoC) Program in late 2018. It's already reporting significant student achievements.

A strong foundation for the Program has been established through a partnership between the Ngukurr Community Education Centre (CEC) and the NLC's Yugul Mangi Land and Sea Rangers.

The Ngukurr LoC Program also engages students with a wide range of other community organisations including community elders and the art centre, and these partnerships have contributed to the development

of skills in literacy, numeracy, science and technology.

Ngukurr CEC currently has students in years 9 to 12 completing units from the Certificate II in Conservation and Ecosystem Management.

These units will enable students to develop a range of vocational skills and gain experience working in a real workplace setting with the Yugul Mangi Rangers. This improves

educational outcomes for students by developing tangible skills that can be applied directly to possible post-school employment opportunities.

Completion of the Certificate II will also contribute significantly towards NT Certificate of Education and Training graduations in 2022.

Three students who participated in the LoC Program in 2020 are currently undertaking their University pathway course at the Wuyagiba Study Hub.



Students from Ngukurr learn about rock art.



Ngukurr students take a class in language.

Are you the next CEO of Batchelor Institute?

Batchelor Institute is looking for a First Nations trail blazer to lead the organisation and harness exciting new opportunities to provide First Nations students with meaningful pathways to employment, further study and research opportunities, and support to become community leaders.

Batchelor Institute is Australia's oldest and only tertiary-provider for First Nations peoples who mostly live in remote communities. It offers a wide range of vocational education and training courses, higher education, and post-graduate research programs, in culturally safe spaces on campus, On Country, and online.

The new CEO will lead Batchelor Institute to be the First Nations institution of choice, where truth, knowledge and wisdom meet.

If you have a vision for Batchelor Institute, to advance the aspirations of First Nations Peoples across Australia, view the position description at www.batchelor.edu.au/people/current-vacancies or enquire in confidence to:

Professor Gareth Allison

» 0439 610 581

» gareth.allison@batchelor.edu.au



Batchelor Institute

RTO PROVIDER 0383

For more information about Batchelor Institute visit www.batchelor.edu.au

Wuyagiba study hub offers pathway to university

A two-way learning program founded through a collaboration between South East Arnhem Land communities and Macquarie University is proving to be a stepping stone to a tertiary education, reports Madeleine Stenmark.

THE Wuyagiba Study Hub, known as the Bush Uni, is located at Wuyagiba outstation in South-East Arnhem Land, between the communities of Numbulwar and Ngukurr. To reach the Hub you head along the Numbulwar Road and follow a rough and sandy track across floodplains, creek beds and stone country, past the buffalo and through grevillea and banksia scrub until you see the secluded coastline of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

The Hub is part of the Australian Government's Department of Education, Skills and Employment 'Regional Study Hub Program'.

This year the Hub is delivering a Certificate 1 in Mechanics (in partnership with Charles Darwin University) and two 10-week 'pre-university' courses of first year university level subjects (with Macquarie University).

The learning is two-way,

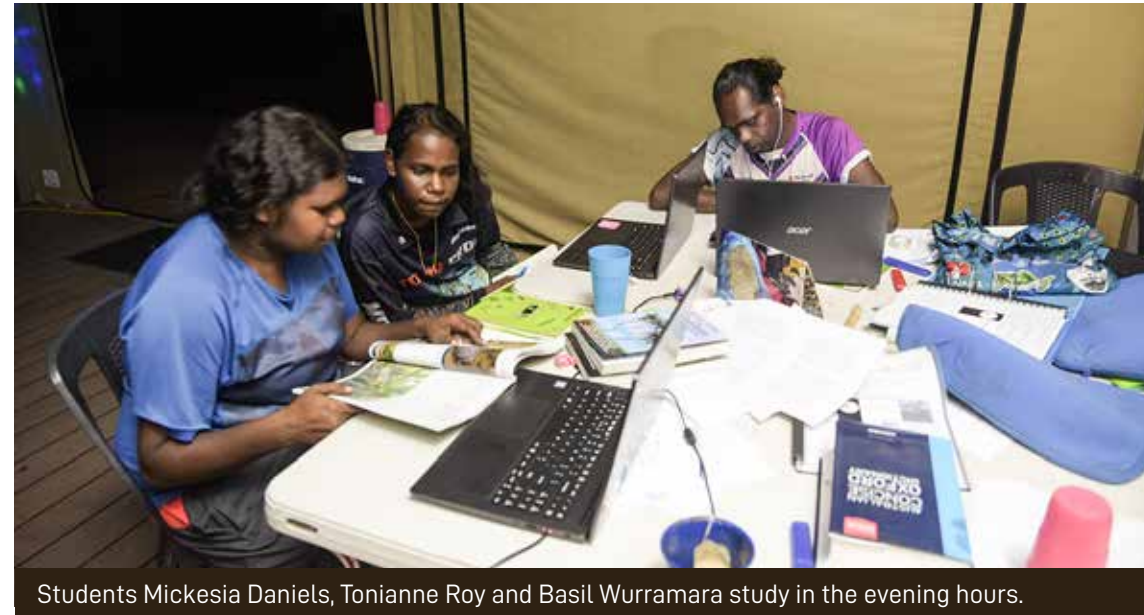
with students taught courses based on both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal information.

During their study, all students and staff live at the Hub.

Accommodation and classrooms are beachside tents, which have been installed by the Hub's staff and students.

The Bush Uni started in 2018 following years of planning by Elders, including the late Cherry Wulumirr Daniels OAM and former Ngukurr school principal Kevin Rogers and his wife Helen, with Emilie Ens from Macquarie University.

That year, the Federal Government's Department of Education released a Regional Study Hub funding package, with Wuyagiba being one of 23 hubs across Australia that was initially funded. The Study Hub funding is administered locally by the Wuyagiba Bush Hub Aboriginal Corporation that was set up to run the Hub, in partnership with



Students Mickesia Daniels, Tonianne Roy and Basil Wurrarama study in the evening hours.

Macquarie University.

Throughout the locally designed two-way pathway courses, students work from an evenly-split timetable. They engage in on Country learning with Elders, and learn academic skills, such as different writing styles, referencing, using Excel, mapping and online research, from Macquarie staff.

Ms Ens, Wuyagiba Co-Leader and Macquarie University Senior Lecturer, said students thrive in the two-way learning system.

"We are trying to mimic university education in a culturally supportive context, so we do all the courses through the Macquarie University's online system," she told *Land Rights News*.

"The students are exposed to that digital interface...

it's so foreign when they start out, but by the end they're all over it."

Cultural units are taught by Mr and Mrs Rogers, Heather Ponto, Annette Daniels, Dean-Austin Bara and Cynthia Turner, as well as other local experts.

The cultural units focus on traditional aspects of Aboriginal culture and Indigenous science.

"It seems old fashioned but it's very important that we maintain our cultural aspects," said Mr Rogers.

"We teach them about bush medicine, bush tucker, fire, seasons, tribal relationships and all that. It's pretty exciting, we're doing a language revitalisation thing too."

Two new cultural units taught by the Wuyagiba team have been accredited

through Macquarie University: South East Arnhem Land Caring for Country and Culture, and Indigenous Science. Both have full credit points that count towards a university degree once students graduate from the Bush Uni, just like the academic units taught at Wuyagiba, which are Academic Communication in the Social Sciences and Humanities, and Environment Skills.

"That's what this is all about - building both-ways skills and qualifications of local Aboriginal students so they can confidently run their communities," said Ms Ens.

"Students can study and get certificates at Wuyagiba, and we support them if they want to continue with further study at University



Students at the Wuyagiba Study Hub can study a 10-week course of first year university-level subjects or a Certificate 1 in Mechanics.

for a Bachelor degree so they can take on the big jobs in town. We want to do as many units of study that we can at Wuyagiba so students spend more time on Country learning with Elders. But some specialist studies will

near Maningrida.

"I'm trying to get some of the ideas from here to take back to Maningrida so I can help the young people there to start learning both ways - whitefella way and blackfella way. That's my

'We teach them about bush medicine, bush tucker, fire, seasons, tribal relationships and all that. It's pretty exciting,' Kevin Rogers

need to be done on campus." At 18, Ritney Manggura is one of the youngest students at Wuyagiba. She wants to study law.

"I want to help families when they get stuck having problems with police," said Ms Manggura, who comes from the nearby community of Numbulwar.

Meanwhile, Russell Brian said he signed up to the 10-week course in the hope of gaining entry to Macquarie University's business course.

In the future, he'd like to start his own education hub at his family outstation at Bulukarduru,

hope - to be a community leader," he said.

Wuyagiba's second 10-week course began in September.

For the Bush Hub to grow, Mr Rogers said the facility needs new water tanks and an all-weather road into the community.

He is optimistic that continued support from communities and Government funding will get them there.

"I encourage all young Aboriginal people to come in, do their studies, get academic qualifications then come back and help the community," he said.



Students Russell Brian, Basil Wurrarama and Tonianne Roy.



Wuyagiba Study Hub co-ordinators Kevin and Helen Rogers.



Student and staff live in self-installed tents at Wuyagiba outstation.

Do you want to **learn new skills to find work**, advance your career, or **contribute to your community**?



Batchelor Institute has a wide range of nationally accredited courses, from certificate level to post-graduate education. Our courses are taught in a culturally safe space, to help you further your education and career.

Our courses will support you to gain the skills and qualifications you need in health, education, media, construction, early childhood care, business, and more.

Assistance for eligible students is available for travel, accommodation, and meals.

Learn with your mob. Don't wait. Take charge of your career.

Batchelor Institute – respecting our past, creating your future



**ENROL
TODAY**

For more information

Freecall 1800 677 095
Email enquiries@batchelor.edu.au
www.batchelor.edu.au
RTO PROVIDER 0383

Bulgul Rangers target feral pigs and weeds



Bulgul Ranger coordinator Timothy BurrBurr (left, back row).

THE Bulgul Rangers have received a \$95,000 grant from the NT government to train two rangers in the management of feral pigs on the Delissaville/Wagait/Larrakia Aboriginal Land Trust. The rangers will partner with Wildscience, through the Finnis Reynolds Catchment Group project, to develop long-term, cost-effective ways to control



feral pig numbers and to share information with other ranger groups. The grant will provide mentoring for rangers Timothy BurrBurr and Bernie Lewis to become trainers in monitoring techniques and the aerial shooting of feral pigs.

The Bulgul Rangers believe the feral pigs contribute to the abundance of weeds, such as Mission

What's the go with feral pigs?

- ✦ It's believed there are between 13-23 million feral pigs spread across Victoria, NSW, Queensland and Northern Australia.
- ✦ They need water daily, so they're usually found close to water.
- ✦ They can produce one or two litters each year.
- ✦ Feral pigs cause more carbon emissions every year than a million cars.

and Gamba grasses, which are resulting in hotter fires that kill native grasses and animals.

Bulgul Ranger Coordinator Timothy BurrBurr said rangers have been working hard for the past three years - getting firearms licences, working closely with Wildscience, and graduating in Certificate II and undertaking the last stage of Cert III in Conservation and Land management.

"This has allowed us to put what we have trained for into practice and really make

an impact with our feral management on the land trust," said Mr BurrBurr.

"Bulgul rangers have an opportunity now to pass on our knowledge and training to other ranger groups in our region and beyond."

"That this is why we work in the field that we have chosen - to pass on knowledge and have a positive impact for our people and hopefully change our country back to how it was. It's a big dream but we have to have a goal for the future to strive towards."

Teaching in the Territory is a *shared adventure.*

Teaching is an engaging, exciting and rewarding career. As a teacher you have the opportunity to change lives.

Join us today

- ☎ 1800 646 391
- 🌐 teachintheterritory.nt.gov.au
- ✉ ctattraction.doe@education.nt.gov.au
- 📘 facebook.com/groups/teachintheterritory



Tourism NT/ Mark Fitzpatrick

Native Title holders of Gulf Region pastoral leases celebrate at last

On 29 June, Justice White of the Federal Court of Australia made determinations of native title, by consent, for land and waters subject to the Lorella pastoral lease and former Nathan River and Billengarrah pastoral leases.

LOCATED 600km south-east of Darwin on the Gulf of Carpentaria, the former Billengarrah and Nathan River pastoral leases now form part of the Limmen National Park. The following groups' native title rights and interests were recognised across these three areas: Burdal Riley; Murrungun Wunubari; Mambali Walangara; Wurdaliya Garambarini; Mambali Nangguya; Guyal Manaburra; Burdal Mingkanyi; Munnungun Baluganda/Langgabany; Mambali Ngubayin; and Rrumburriya Ngurrmu/Jawuma.

For two decades these groups have been seeking to have their native title rights and interests recognised. "The NLC congratulate the native title holders of the areas underlying Lorella pastoral lease and former Billengarrah and Nathan River pastoral leases," said NLC Chairman Samuel Bush-Blanasi. This is the first time in the NT that a generic formulation of native title has been recognised over a national park, whereby native title rights and interests prevail over the interests of the national park,

in the event of inconsistency. A spokesperson for the native title holders said they look forward to working with the NT Government to manage and care for the Limmen National Park. In respect of the Lorella pastoral lease, which is subject to a significant tourism operation, the determination of native title provides the native title holders with a greater opportunity to participate in

conversations about country. A number of senior native title holders had planned to travel from Borrooloola, Minyerri, Ngukurr and Numbulwar to attend the determinations in person but due to the Covid-19 restrictions this was not possible and Justice White made the determinations of native title via video-link. During the video session he commended the native

title holders for their "strong cultural knowledge, hard work and resilience" that led to the determinations of native title. These determinations of native title recognise that these groups have always had, and still have, a special relationship with and rights in the land subject to the Lorella Pastoral Lease and former Billengarrah and Nathan River pastoral leases.



Limmen National Park

A Federal Labor Government will:

- Scrap the CDP and develop a new remote jobs program in partnership with communities
- Implement the Uluru Statement in full: a national treaty, a voice to parliament, and truth-telling
- Double Indigenous Rangers by 2030 and spend \$10 million per year on Indigenous Protected Areas
- Establish a \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund



Authorised by L. Gosling, 3/266 Trower Road, Casuarina NT 0810





**FIGHTING
FOR THE
NORTH**
(08) 8928 0180
luke.gosling.mp@aph.gov.au



Richard 'Dicky' Dixon
Robinson River
All the issues that are happening around the Territory in our Aboriginal communities, when it comes to proper management and working together, this is the parliament we use to discuss how we're going to provide service out to our people.



Margaret Daiyi
Twin Hill Station
The council is important in getting our people to further themselves in their dreams, in what they want to achieve. I wish people could come and see what we've done, to see that they can achieve what they want. It was our dream when we were kids that we wanted a station and we've achieved that.



Bill Danks
Greater Darwin Region
The Northern Land Council has always held the NT government accountable. The NLC is a powerful lobby group for us in terms of voicing our opinion.



Keniyan Anthony at the Full Council meeting.



Noelene Martin
Kneebone Community
There's always something to look forward to because you learn what's happening in other peoples communities and regions and it's good to get ideas from what others are doing.



Jack Green
Two Dollar Creek
NLC is very important to all Aboriginal people. What comes out of it gives us more knowledge and more heart to talk up for the country and how to protect our land a bit more. It helps us build that strike up.



Lorraine Jones
Fitzroy Station
For our seven regions, we come as one strong voice then we benefit as seven regions because each region helps the other to push the council toward getting things happening on our country.

The NLC Full Council at Banatjarl

The 123rd NLC Full Council Meeting was held at Banatjarl Outstation on Jawoyn country, south-east of Katherine, over five days in late July 2021.



The NLC's Full Council is the major decision-making body of the organisation. Gathering for the 123rd biannual meeting in late July, members discussed and made decisions on a wide range of matters, interest and concerns.

It welcomed federal political representatives - including Warren Snowdon, Senator Malarndirri McCarthy and the NT Chief Minister Michael Gunner and Ministers Uibo, Kirby and Paech.

The Full Council meeting also heard an emotional farewell speech from Marion Scrymgour, who has been the CEO of NLC for a two and a half year term. The incoming NLC CEO Joe Martin-Jard received a warm welcome for his first NLC Full Council meeting.

During the week, there was a visit from NT Police Chief Commissioner Jamie Chalker and his staff, who acknowledged the support and the work the NLC had provided during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Permanent seabed mining ban a win for Aboriginal people



NT seabed mining has been banned after a 9 year moratorium.

By Keith Ferdinands, NLC Research & Policy Officer

SEABED mining in NT coastal waters has been permanently banned, the NT Minister for Environment, Eva Lawler, announced on 5 February 2021. This was a major victory for Aboriginal people of the Top End and a fitting response to concerns

first raised in 2011 by the Anindilyakwa Land Council and the Maringa clan groups, following mineral exploration licence applications related to the seabed near Groote Eylandt, Milingimbi and the Wessel Island Chain. When concerns were raised in 2011, this triggered further concern from many Aboriginal groups and the

land councils. As a result, a formal objection was made to the NT government's (NTG) Department of Resources in October 2012. In response, the NTG imposed a moratorium on seabed mining in the NT in 2012. This moratorium was to stay in place until the issues and concerns raised could be examined and addressed. The

moratorium was extended twice and was due for review this year. Prior to the moratorium being reviewed in 2021, the NTG received reports from the NT Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA) in 2020. The EPA's report focused on environmental risks, risk management and existing NTG policies and guidelines; the AAPA report focused on Aboriginal social and cultural values at risk from seabed mining. NLC Policy and Stakeholder Engagement staff reviewed both documents, other published material and provided a submission to the EPA in November 2020. The NLC's submission was one of a large number made to the EPA, almost all of which recommended that either the moratorium be extended or that seabed mining be permanently banned. The NTG decided, based on the near universal opposition to seabed mining from a range of key stakeholders and the general public, that the right thing to do was to ban seabed mining. The decision in very clear terms reflects the need to recognise the relationship between Aboriginal values, environmental health and the economy, and the need to consider all of these important elements in the environmental protection and development approval process. All of these things could have been impacted by seabed mining.

New infrastructure for children, family and communities at Wadeye and Kalkaringi

THE NT government has has partnered with the Da Ngimalmin group to establish a new Child and Family Centre in Wadeye. Thamarrurr Development Corporation, which supports Da Ngimalmin, has received \$2.4 million in funding to establish and operate the centre for five years. An additional \$300,000 capital allocation will assist to refurbish an old church in Wadeye and restore the old mission kitchen across the road for staff accommodation.

directly by community leaders, supported by a local Aboriginal organisation. "Our child and family centres across the Territory ensure children, young people and their families, get the support and access to networks they need. We have ensured local communities are empowered to create location solutions and the Da Ngimalmin Child and Family Centre is being designed by Wadeye locals to strengthen the community's capacity to raise happy, healthy

community centre that will house a child and family centre to support families in the region. The NT government has contributed \$150,000 towards the fit-out of the Ngaliwany Purp'ku Kalkaringi Community and Family Centre in addition to establishment and operational funding worth \$2.4 million over five years. The Federal

Government's NIAA has also contributed funding. The Gurindji Aboriginal Corporation's own construction enterprise managed the project with a local work crew on the job. While the community's Child and Family Centre program has been operational since late 2020, the move into a new facility is a game changer, according

to the Centre's manager Quitaysha Thompson. "We're so excited to be opening this facility," Ms Thompson said. There are now six child and family centres operated by Aboriginal organisations in the NT - in Katherine, Tennant Creek, the Alice Springs Town Camps, Kalkaringi and Darwin's northern suburbs.



Works on the new community centre at Kalkaringi are now complete

'The Centre is being designed by Wadeye locals to strengthen the community's capacity to raise happy, healthy children,' Minister for Children Lauren Moss

Minister for Children Lauren Moss said the Da Ngimalmin Child and Family Centre would be the first of its kind to be established children," she said. Meanwhile, local Kalkaringi workers have transformed an old 1970s health clinic into a modern

'Gooda' work done by the Wagiman Rangers

IT'S been a busy fire season for Wagiman Rangers this year. Gooda (the Wagiman word for fire) management planning started in March, when the rangers held meetings with Traditional Owners and partner organisations and neighbours. These discussions included a community meeting at Kybrook Farm about carbon farming and what this entails - the benefits and risks of entering into a carbon project. The on-ground fire work commenced in late May once a burn permit was approved by Bushfire NT. Burns were conducted through a series of day trips and week-long fire camps on different parts of the

Wagiman Land Trust. The first fire camp was a combined camp with the Wardaman Rangers, who operate on the Mengen Indigenous Protected Area and are based in Katherine. This was a great opportunity for the rangers to work together and gaining new perspectives of fire management. Burns that Wagiman and Wardaman Rangers conducted were an exercise in integrating traditional fire knowledge with modern fire techniques. They included asset protection burns, cultural and site specific burns, as well as larger scale burns aimed at creating fire breaks to make buffers between neighbouring properties to protect against late

season wild fires. The gooda work done by the rangers was supported by attending a three-day training workshop in Katherine with the Timber Creek, Malak Malak and the Jawoyn Rangers. The camps provided opportunities for the younger rangers to interact on country with the senior Wagiman Traditional Owners who gave advice about fire in the landscape and directed the rangers in regards to significant sites and where to burn. The rangers were able to put this training into practice through some fee-for-service prescribed burns in Pine Creek, Katherine and Timber Creek.



Wagiman and Wardaman Rangers have been undertaking large scale burns together.



Senior Wagiman Traditional Owners have been sharing knowledge with younger rangers at fire workshops this year.

Big healthy country plan launched by Marrathiel language group TOs

TWENTY FIVE Traditional Owners from the Marrathiel language group gathered at the Wudikapildiyerr Ranger base in the middle of June to put together a 10-year land management strategy known as a Healthy Country Plan.

loss of a key facilitator delayed proceedings. Traditional Owners discussed important values including the health of waterways around a community, economic opportunities, the existence

with each other for years. This was seen as hugely beneficial to the future aspirations and direction of this community and the surrounding outstations. Major threats to the

values included illegal entry to the Land Trust and hunting from outsiders, wildfire, the existence of invasive weeds and feral animals. By the end of the

first workshop, heads were buzzing with ways to preserve existing knowledge and initiatives, as well as ways to investigate new opportunities.

'Major threats to the health of the country include illegal entry to the Land Trust, hunting from outsiders, wildfire, invasive weeds and feral animals.'

The meeting was the first of two that will be held for the development of the Healthy Country plan, which involves identifying shared community values, rating the health of these values and recognising their risks. These values will govern decision-making for the Port Keats Daly River Aboriginal Land Trust over the next decade. The workshop had been planned for 2020, but the Covid-19 outbreak and

of cool burning regimes, abundance of healthy animals and bush-tucker. On an intergenerational level, they identified the ongoing need for the transfer of cultural knowledge and language to younger Traditional Owners. As well as providing the workshop members with an opportunity to voice their concerns and values, it was also a reunion for many who had not interacted



Traditional Owners, ranger coordinators, rangers and children at Wudikapildiyerr Ranger base in June.

More boots on the ground for Gamba Army

THE NT government has boosted the fight against gamba grass by \$500,000, as part of a management initiative aimed at reducing the threat of one of the most problematic weeds in the Top End.

NT Environment Minister Eva Lawler said the continuation of the Gamba Army would bring both environmental and economic benefits by supporting up to 40 local jobs.

"Continuing the Gamba Army makes sense - we have Territorians in jobs and we are working towards managing the spread of gamba across the Top End," said Ms Lawler.

The funding is part of a \$6.5 million package that will be injected into weeds management as part of the 2021 Budget.

Pew Charitable Trusts NT Manager Mitch Hart said the funding would be a great relief to the landholders, firefighters, park rangers and community members who have been dealing with the issues caused by gamba.

"We've heard from so many Territorians that the Gamba Army got off to a strong start and the community wants it to continue," Mr Hart said.

"People out of work got to

train and gain new valuable skills. Contractors have been able to hire trained employees. Landholders, land managers and community groups really appreciated the help tackling gamba on their land. We also saw this effort encouraging more action over the fence."

"If we want to tackle the Gamba crisis once and for all, we need to ensure that all elements of the Territory's gamba strategy are properly resourced."

"The Gamba Army is an important part of the overall plan to tackle this issue - continued funding will set it up for success."



Ranger Jethro Demed Adjumarllart tackles some gamba grass.

Flora River water testing with the Wardaman Rangers

THE Wardaman Rangers have been undertaking water testing in collaboration with experts from the Department of Environment, Parks and Water Security for many years.

Recently the rangers undertook water testing on the upper Flora River in the north of the Wardaman Indigenous Protected Area (IPA). The rangers investigated a range of data, for example on dissolved oxygen, conductivity, pH levels and more. They plan to revisit the site in September to ascertain seasonal variations.

The rangers also learnt how to test water flow rates.

Wardaman IPA Coordinator Andrew Drenen said "these skills will prove valuable to our environmental monitoring program across the IPA and other Wardaman country".



Wardaman Rangers have been busy testing the health of the water in the Flora River.

'A week, picking by hand': Timber Creek rangers versus Devil's claw

TIMBER Creek rangers have been working hard to manage the noxious weed Devil's claw (*Martynia annua*) in Judbarra/ Gregory National Park.



Timber Creek Ranger Monteanna Kattermole.

The rangers teamed up with Parks and Wildlife staff from Timber Creek and Bullita to remove the weed from around the Gibbie Track and Humbert Track.

The rangers worked for a week, picking the weed by hand and collecting it in bags, which were later burnt.

Devil's claw is problematic because it is invading and replacing native bush lands in the Judbarra/Gregory National Park. The seeds are also a



Watch out with those pretty flowers of the Devil's claw... they're spikey!

Protecting cultural sites: Judbarra Traditional Owners hold women's camp on country

By Anna Gordon, CfC Joint Management Project Officer

FEMALE Traditional Owners of Judbarra/Gregory National Park, NLC staff and rangers from Parks, came together in late June for a women's camp at Stone Yards campsite in the southern section of the park.

On the first day, the 20 Traditional Owners and NLC Timber Creek rangers used a helicopter to locate a remote women's site, using a GPS with AAPA coordinates as a guide.

The following day the women piled into helicopters to visit the site. They spent many hours having lunch and fishing on the riverbank. Short-necked turtles were caught and cooked back at camp that afternoon.

Only a couple of women had previously visited the site, decades ago, and this was a valuable opportunity for intergenerational knowledge sharing.

Across the four days, the women sung, painted, collected weaving materials, and made johnny cakes and damper. They enjoyed themselves and were happy to be on country.

Through the Savannah Fire Managment (SFM) project, about 22 per cent of

the park was burned in the early dry season this year. Next year they're hoping to involve more Traditional Owners in the project.

The Judbarra/Gregory National Park Joint Management Committee plays an important role and helps design the burning plan and ensure culturally significant sites are protected.

Future training and development opportunities are planned for rangers and community members.

The project is an exciting opportunity for landowners to gain social and economic benefits for their communities by participating in the carbon economy, and for Joint Management partners to work together to manage the park.



Cidella Campbell (front), Mona Anzac (back left) and Jill Wallaby.



Susan Jones (in middle) enjoying the camp!



Judy Marchant, NT Parks Ranger for Judbarra/Gregory National Park Wendy Heywood, and CfC Joint Management Project Officer Anna Gordon.



Time to fly Aileen Daly!



Francine Dan holds up a turtle!



Northern Territory Treaty Commission

***Submissions deadline extended to
30 September 2021.***

A Final Report on the outcomes of our Treaty consultations, recommendations on next steps, and a proposed negotiation framework for Treaty to proceed in the Northern Territory, will be delivered to the Chief Minister in March 2022.

We welcome your feedback on the Discussion Paper which you can read or download from our website at www.treatynt.com.au.

You can make a submission in written, video or audio format, and in any language you choose - we will get it translated.

Go to our website to read or download the Discussion Paper. www.treatynt.com.au

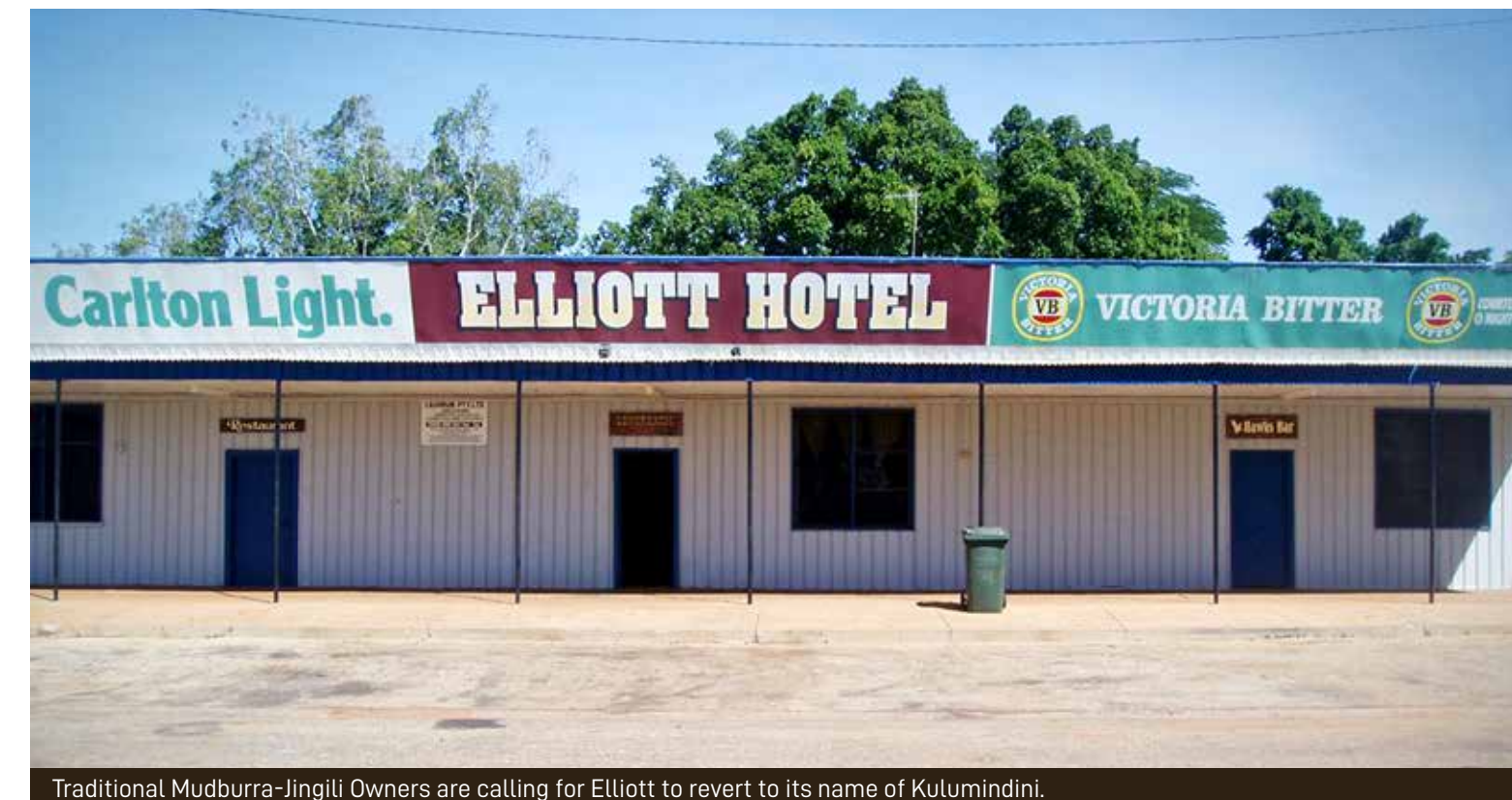
Please send to: EMAIL: admin@treatynt.com.au

POST: GPO Box 2096 Darwin NT 0801

An NT by other names would sound much sweeter

By Chips Mackinolty

About 25 years ago former NLC Director the late John Ah Kit envisaged a much changed landscape for the NT—where Aboriginal place names would be recognised along the whole stretch of the Stuart Highway.



Traditional Mudburra-Jingili Owners are calling for Elliott to revert to its name of Kulumindini.

It is a dream which may finally be realised as the NT government - and its Place Names Committee - is actively seeking Aboriginal input to naming places, streets and localities with traditional language names.

With the exception of the dual naming of Karlu Karlu, south of Tennant Creek, there is not a single Aboriginal place name signposted along the Stuart Highway - let alone our other major highways.

Indeed, many of the rest stops along the highway commemorate non-Aboriginal people. No Aboriginal place names? We know there are thousands.

And, of course, there is Attack Creek.

Around 30 years ago, while working in Katherine, Mimi Arts and Crafts got a \$3600 grant from the Tourist Commission to signpost 18 place names in and around the township. A fair bit of money back then. The result? The then Katherine Town Council went feral - and refused to allow it to happen. Indeed, a prominent

councillor said: "It'll only encourage people to take a shotgun to them, and I might be the first one to do it!"

This, of course, was during the Nitmiluk land claim, during which a senior claimant had shots

and Alice Springs in 1940, during World War II by Captain Reginald Douglas Elliott MBE of the Darwin Overland Mobile Force. It became known as 'Elliott', so the name is perpetuated by naming the township 'Elliott'."

With the exception of the dual naming of Karlu Karlu, south of Tennant Creek, there is not a single Aboriginal place name signposted along the Stuart Highway - let alone our other major highways.

fired over his head after giving evidence to the Land Commissioner.

The plan was quietly dropped.

But things, hopefully, are changing.

Take the example of the township of Elliott, for example.

Elliott? Named, according to the Place Names Register: "The suburb of Elliott takes its name from the town of Elliott which in turn derived its name from the military staging camp established half way between Darwin

as is their art centre - not to mention the name of one of their most famous rock bands.

A number of Aboriginal communities have already successfully applied to have street names re-badged in language - and don't forget both Uluru and Nitmiluk, along with other place names, have successfully been changed to names Traditional Owners and community residents want.

Chaired by historian Sam Wells, the Place Names Committee is finalising a straightforward process for the dual naming, re-naming and naming of places with Aboriginal names.

In the case of new housing developments in towns, there is a strong emphasis on consulting Traditional Owners to promote local names, including the names of prominent Aboriginal people. Ms Wells has been talking to the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority, and land councils, about the process.

So, if readers are interested, you can contact the Place Names Committee at place.names@nt.gov.au or talk to Areas Protection or NLC staff who can give you a hand.

Note: the author has recently been appointed as a community member to the NT Place Names Committee.

So, according to this story, a bloke who spent a few months in the area supervising an army camp 80 odd years ago gets the glory, while the traditional name for the area - Kulumindini - is lost to the world.

Maybe not. Recent meetings of the Traditional Mudburra-Jingili Owners have agreed to call for Elliott to revert to its name of Kulumindini, and instructed the NLC to chase it up.

After all. The local footy side is called Kulumindi,



There aren't any Aboriginal place names signposted on the Stuart Highway, except for Karlu Karlu.

'I worked through all that country, my foot-track is all through that country': Mr Wavehill's life story

Mr Wavehill was one of the stockmen who walked off Wave Hill Station in 1966, a pivotal moment in the Aboriginal land rights struggle. He passed on 25 August 2021, aged 85 years old. Back in 2012, Mr Wavehill wanted to record his story, which was published in *Crikey.com's* blog *The Northern Myth*.

"MY bush name is Nowandja. I was born near Katherine at Low Level in about 1941, before the Japanese bombed Darwin and Katherine. I was born in the bush.

My mother, her name was Little Minnie, put me in the coolamon, carried me 'round in the coolamon. My father was called Left-hand Charlie. His blackfella name was Mulyungarni. They were from Daly Waters and Newcastle Waters. They used to be travelling together before I was born.

When I was a little boy I used to hear the elders, you know, just talking. That used to go into my brain when I was growing up. Those stories came into my brain then. Then I was thinking, 'Oh, well, that is good. When I grow up I just want to do things just like my father does'.

I can speak and hear Mudbura, Jingili, Alawa. I never been to school. It was welfare time then. They didn't chase me around. I

was learning in the stock camp. I don't know reading and writing English. I can spell my name but I can't read and write. I was travelling with my father. I was only a little boy.

We started from Nutwood Downs Station and we got to Maryfield Station and they were mustering the cattle, branding and all that.

My father used to do the bronco horses and roping all the cleanskins and take them to the bronco yard. They used to make rope and catch 'em up. Brand 'em, cut balls and horn and everything. I was watching and learning all the time.

My father was a top man with a horse and with cattle. One head stockman he had two Blue Heeler dogs and he said to all them elders, you know 'I don't need them camp dogs around – they might spoil my dogs. I don't want you mob playin' with my dogs'.

No kids been there, only myself. Everyone was off

working. Anyway, I went out and was playing with those two dogs. That head stockman seen me and he came out from the yard and smacked me hard on the bum. I was crying and crying. My father was in the bronco yard and my father saw what that bloke done to me. So he took that bullock to the bronco panel and roped it off and got off the bronco horse and gave it to another bloke and he went and talked to that head stockman. 'Hey, why you done that to my son?'

That head stockman said: "I told you I didn't want that kid to play with my dogs."

He said: 'What you taking the place for your son?' My dad said 'Yeah, that's the only son I've got.'

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

After my father knocked that bloke out he got a rope and jammed that bloke in the bronco panel. He made that head stockman squeal.

My father and I pulled out from there. Got his swag, put me in the saddle-bags and we went walking towards Larrimah way, there was an Aboriginal camp there, the compound for the Aboriginal people that used to work for the army.

My father got a job there and he used to work with the Army at Gorrie near to Wubaluwan now. That place was good. The Army used to treat us well, real good tucker. There were still a lot of Army, a lot of Americans camped everywhere at Larrimah then.

After my father finished work there we went to Mataranka then we went to Maranboy. You can still see where the old army camp



was and all the old mines. Later we went to Barunga and we were staying, then we all ran out of tucker there – we were starving for a feed. I was still a kid then.

I been get my knowledge then. Then two men found my father and we went to Old Delamere Station and I grew up there. My father put me in the stock camp on the station. That was my first job. I was learning how to ride a horse and how to muster cattle.

you know, so he would buck good way. We used to get thrown everywhere – but on the sand. That's the way we used to learn to fall off a horse properly. After that we been really good – good cattlemen, good horsemen. I never got broken leg or arm nothing. I learned how to fall off good way. I had a lot of rough horses.

I heard stories from Wave Hill about us stockmen at Delamere. They used to say that us mob at Delamere can handle those rough

'I want to talk on the tape [recorder] so I can make my histories and to make my family happy. Family is just about the most important thing for me,' Mr Wavehill

Those old people used to tell us 'Young fella, go out and get us a killer (beef)'. Some of us used to be riding colts, you know, quiet ones... but we forgot all about that killer. We used to just go out to the river, on the sand. We'd put all the bush on the side and get on the rough horse with the spur and spur him up good way

horses. They used to send those horses, real wild ones, you know? Nobody been ride them for three years or so and they used to send them to Delamere for us. We'd be arguing with each other over who would get the roughest horse!

I was good on a horse. I'd

Cont. on page 27

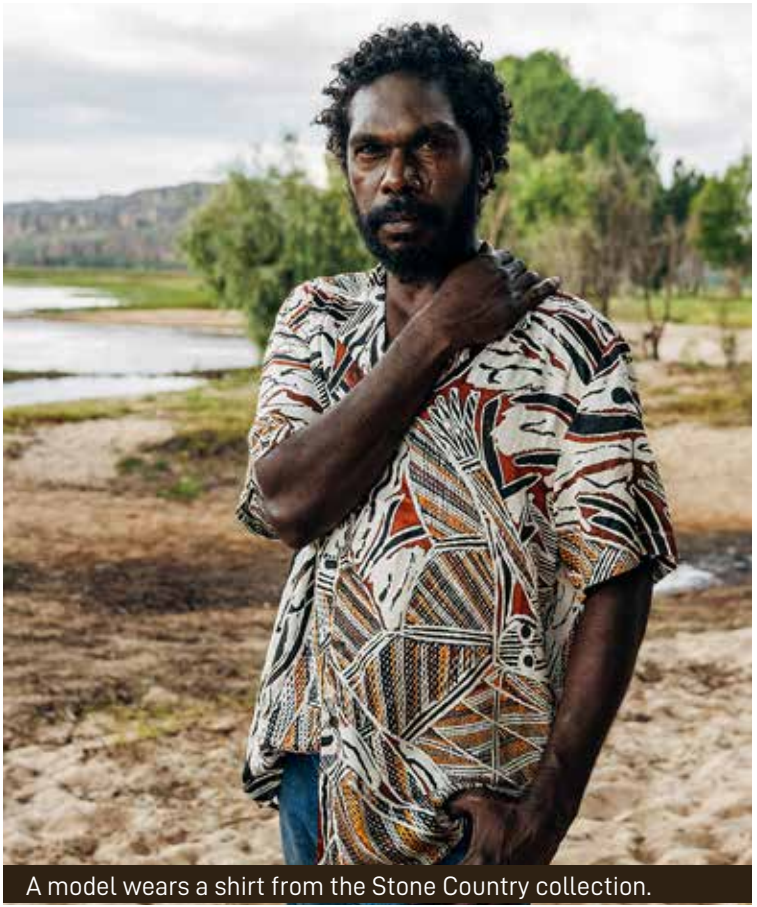
Rock art inspires fashion from North

WEST Arnhem Land and Kakadu artists have teamed up with textile social enterprise 'North' to create a collection of garments inspired by the landscapes and stories from their homelands.

Founded in 2015, 'North' works with remote community art centres. While it is not an Aboriginal-owned business, it is a non-profit organisation governed by Indigenous and non-Indigenous board members.

The Stone Country Collection includes the work of artists Graham Rostrom, Robbie Namarnyilk, Alysha Alderson and Kabbindi White from Marrawuddi Arts and Culture, Gabriel Maralngurr from Injalak Arts and artist Lorraine Kabbindi White of Stone Country Creations.

Drawing on 65,000 years of culture and inspired by



A model wears a shirt from the Stone Country collection.

rock art, the artists explore themes of spiritual and ancestral beings from their

homelands. The patterns reflect traditional painting methods using ochre and



Models wear the 'casual pants' from the new collection.

crosshatching, blended with contemporary ink methods. Collaborating artist Alysha Alderson is a Murumburr woman from Ngurrungurrudjba (Yellow Waters) in Kakadu National Park's Cooida region. For Alysha, making

art is therapeutic as it helps her to feel deeply connected to country. "I love doing the rivers and billabongs because it's a provider for not only Aboriginal people but for the animals," she said.

From page 26

do it with my feet, turn that horse when he tried to buck me off and then get back on again. I learnt that all from my Dad. He'd tell me to get on the horse. He'd say "Don't back out, get on that horse and learn something!"

I was at Delamere nearly nine years – I was a grown man by then. I got initiation at Willeroo. At holiday time they came and got me and put me in the ceremony, made me a man at Willeroo.

I worked through all that country. My foot-track is all through that country. I foot-walked from Delamere to Willeroo and all over.

That Vestey mob, they was real tough people. They didn't

like we in those days. They could be cheeky bastards, they used to fight with us and we used to fight back.

They sold Delamere and we took a mob of horses from Delamere through to Victoria River Downs station (VRD) and from VRD to Mount Sandford and then to Limbunya Station. From Limbunya we took those horses over to Waterloo Station.

When we had to sell those horses at Waterloo we was really crying for that horses. We used to like those horses, they were just like a father for us. We used to learn from those horses, they used to buck and jump and we worked hard with them and make them real quiet.

They were really like family, real mates for us. I miss those days. All my mates.

Later I went to Wave Hill and we stayed there. Then the manager wanted me back at Manbulloo Station, so I went back there. I was married up by then. I only got married one time, it was at Vestey's time.

That Vestey's mob used to be run-amuck for Aboriginal girl – all them white fellas – stockmen, ringers and all.

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

off that bloke and me and that bloke had a big rip.

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

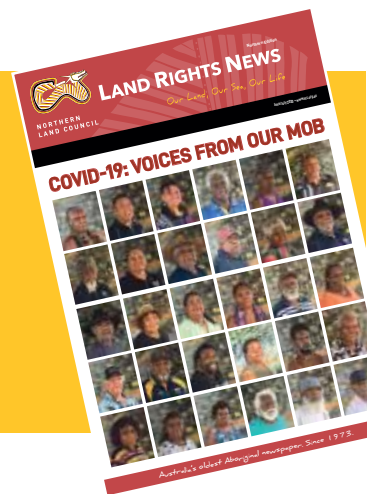
After I got married traditional way. We had two kids to start with. My eldest is in Kununurra and another one is at Kalkaringi. We had two while I was working there at Wave Hill. Then when we went to Limbunya we had three blokes born at Limbunya. Four really but one been pass away. And I got three girls – and ten grandchildren – I'm a good

bull eh! I want to talk on the tape so I can make my histories and to make my family happy. Family is just about the most important thing for me. The other thing that is important is country. I have been in a lot of land claims and native title claims. They call me Jimmy WaveHill. I'm a famous man! I'm happy and I feel proud that I can do that good work. I teach a lot of other people, about the right way to behave and all that. I want to put them through the same school that I been through with my old people – I'm passing on all that knowledge. That makes me feel happy.

Advertise in LAND RIGHTS NEWS

The *Land Rights News* is read by Aboriginal people across the Top End of the NT.

If you want to place an ad, simply email media@nlc.org.au and ask for our media kit and advertising rates.



Capturing the benefits of camps on film

THE Galiwin'ku Gungaynamirr Mala Community Working Group are documenting their community development projects to showcase the advantages of Traditional Owners investing lease money in local projects that have long-term benefits.

Supported by the Milngimbi and Outstations Progress Resource Association (MOPRA) and the Crocodile Island Rangers, the group fund a 'raypirri' camp project at Maroonga Island, with the aim of sharing knowledge and culture with young people.

Traditional Owners at Maroonga Island run the camps throughout dry season. So far in 2021 there have been four raypirri camps, with more planned for later this year.

In July, the NLC visited Maroonga Island to help the group create a short film that shares the raypirri camp story.

Galiwin'ku Traditional Owners have funded a number of similar community projects since 2017 supported by the NLC's Community Planning and Development Program.



Traditional Owners Jonathan Roy at Maroonga Island.



The NLC has been making a video to share the 'raypirri' camp story at Maroonga Island.

Get the jab! Project Sea Dragon ILUA Committee promotes Covid-19 vaccines

THE Project Sea Dragon Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) Committee has adopted a resolution to promote Covid-19 vaccinations.

Native Title Holders and Seafarms are encouraging community members to get vaccinated.

"Covid-19 is a serious problem for our community," said Maurice Simon, a senior DjarranDjarrany Native Title Holder, at a meeting in Kununurra on 27 July this year.

Wadanybang elder Fred Gerrard said "vaccination

is very important because prevention is better than cure". DjarranDjarrany representative Bernadette Simon said the Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Service (OVAHS) has done "a really good job" making sure local people are vaccinated - holding vaccination barbeques in parks and popular meeting places.

Almost all of the ILUA Committee representatives, and many of their family members, are now vaccinated.

Project Sea Dragon is

a large-scale commercial prawn farm now under construction at Legune Station, located in the Victoria River District, about 100km from Kununurra. The construction phase is expected to involve more than 400 workers.

Native Title holders have made it clear that they want to be part of the action and to make the most of upcoming job and training opportunities. This is one of reasons they are being pro-active about getting vaccinated.

A spokesperson for



Backrow: Janelle Simon, Sarah Rennie, Rod Dyer, Chris Mitchell, Dreylin Meeway, Maurice Simon, Alfred Gerrard, Liam Golding and Jimmy Paddy. Front row: Annie Thomas, Bernadette Simon and Kylie Burn.

Seafarms' lead contractor for construction, Canstruct, said the company will take a firm approach to

vaccinations for workers at Legune and enforce strict Covid-19 safety measures.

Finding good ways to tell the community development story

COMMUNITY-BASED researches have had a busy final year of their Charles Darwin University Community Planning and Development Ground Up Monitoring and Evaluation Project.

Ground Up is one of three monitoring approaches that works with Traditional Owners to find good ways to tell the community development story.

The approach uses local definitions of monitoring and works closely with community researchers who collect stories from key

elders and community members in relation to community projects.

Here's what community-based researchers have been up to.

Community researchers meet in Darwin

Community-based researchers Nyomba Gandanu and Emmanuel Yunupingu shared their expertise in monitoring with NLC staff in Darwin in June.

Nyomba and Emmanuel said: "Balanda monitoring is writing on paper, computer and reports. But Yolngu writing is within us, we can see it. It's important to bring balanda and yolngu together".

Together NLC staff and researchers talked about ways to do two-way

monitoring and learning.

NLC Monitoring and Evaluation Project Officer Jacinta Barbour said the discussion was a chance to gain insight into how to make monitoring culturally safe.

"This is really important for the ongoing monitoring work we want to do," she said.

The meeting was one of six workshops the NLC is doing with Charles Darwin University to refine the monitoring framework.



Back: Emmanuel Yunupingu, Hayley Barich and Stuart Worthington. Front: Sarah Bentley, Nyomba Gandanu, Michaela Spencer and Jacinta Barbour.

Nyomba Gandanu at AIATSIS Summit 2021



Nyomba Gandanu, NLC's Hayley Barich and Charles Darwin University's Michaela Spencer took to the stage at the AIATSIS Summit 2021 to talk about monitoring work being undertaken at Galiwin'ku.

Nyomba showcased her work with the Ground Up approach and detailed the Yolngu approach to monitoring and evaluation.

"From Yolngu lens we straightaway have to see the very important part for those children, even for those adults. It's really important, just makes our spirit happy and excited to see the child first trying for themselves, guided and monitored by family. Then later, that moment of evaluation when the child is dancing together with their family, knowing who and where they are."

Nyomba has been working with CDU's Michaela Spencer on a Ground Up monitoring and evaluation project supporting Traditional Owners in their community development visions for Galiwin'ku.

Their work is part of a larger three year research project being undertaken by NLC to create a bespoke framework for monitoring of the Community Planning and Development Program (CP&D). The AIATSIS Summit was an opportunity to share lessons learnt and be inspired by peers.

You can check out the CP&D Program Ground Up Monitoring and Evaluation Interim Report - December 2020 on the NLC website.

New communication tools for explaining money story

Check out these new visual tools NLC have created to use during Community Planning and Development meetings.

These posters will be used to help Aboriginal land owner groups to explore money decisions.

Ways to use money

Use of money	Good Things	Bad Things	Can we get support?
Individual money (Pocket Money) Money in your bank accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Can use money straight awayCan use for important thingsIndividuals make their own choices and don't need to wait for the whole group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Money disappears too quicklyCan cause arguments or fightsCan be used in bad waysCan lower Centrelink payments	NLC is not an expert. If you have questions NLC can try to find other organisations that can help.
Community Projects Money to use together as a group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">More money when all put togetherCan do important things for the whole community (culture, health, education)Shares good things (benefits) from money more widelyLess conflictOpportunity to learn new skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Takes more time to see the good things (benefits)Individuals don't make decisions - only groupsPeople might live in different places, hard to do good things equally	NLC can help groups to plan and do projects like culture camps, education projects, music projects and building things in the community NLC helps for free (no cost)
Save (or invest) Money to save or grow for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Can grow into more money over time if looked after wellGives group time to decide how to use money in a good way	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Still need to decide how to use funds in the futureNeed good advice and decisions to make sure money keeps growing	The NLC cannot invest money for you. BUT we can help you find investment organisations that can help. You can also ask NLC to hold your money and release it over time so that it lasts longer.

Our Land, Our Sea, Our Life

BARUNGA FESTIVAL 2021

OUT AND ABOUT



ABRAHAM WESAN
"Every year we have this carnival, it's about all the people and it's about meeting new people. It's good for the whole community and good for the whole Territory."



ANDREW DJANARRI YUNUPINGU
"I came here for the sport... for the concerts...it's good, enjoy yourself."



TARA ROSTROM
"We came here to perform as Ripple Effect band. We performed last night, it was really great and we were really excited."



NIGEL BROWNE
"Barunga is a celebration of Aboriginal culture, people and life in the Territory. It's been going on for so many years now it's good to see even in 2021 the number of people it attracts from all walks of life."



JADE JURRUPU
"My daughter modelled in the fashion show with my design. I'm really proud of her, it's her first time modelling."

'This is the place': Lisa Mumbin's Barunga opening speech

"This place that we gather here today is a place that Bagala have welcomed so many people from around the country to come together to join hands to celebrate our culture, our law, and us as Aboriginal people of this country."

"IN 1989, Jawoyn country was handed back to the Jawoyn people. A lot of Elders aren't here with us today but in spirit they are. I stand here each year in great spirit and in great honour to acknowledge every one of my Elders. Not only Jawoyn people but other tribal groups that have supported my tribe through that great fight. And not to forget the Barunga Statement that was put together right on this ground by a master himself, Galarrwuy Yunupingu. Let us not forget that family. This is the place and the stomping ground that we send our messages to the government that sits before us here today. And sometimes some serious messages when we want to lobby the government. I have been with my Elders for so many years, through the land claim to now. And as the chairman of Jawoyn Association I have gained back a lot of services that our people in this community now have -full time jobs and that's what shows and speaks of leadership. And I stand today and still not forget the Elders who have left, the march, and fighting for our rights, for this country, for our people. I want to thank you mob, everyone who has gathered here today. It has been a difficult year through this Covid-19. I thought Barunga

wasn't going to happen and the last thing I wanted to do was go walkabout bush. My son Sammy Bush-Blanasi thought I was gone, but I wouldn't give up a speech for this country, for my people, because it is that important that we still share with each other messages, but also take heart for what we believe. A journey Jawoyn Association has been through for quite a long time since 1989, the land claim, we have fought, and continue to stand and fight for the rights of our people. And I want to thank the Bagala people for the land that we stand on today. My grandson that has done that speech in welcoming people. I take heart and seriously to acknowledge the people of this country. Once again I'd like to thank Minister Wyatt for being part of this festival, Malandiri McCarthy and many on behalf of Jawoyn people. I thank you for being part of this festival."



Chair of Jawoyn Association Aboriginal Corporation Lisa Mumbin.

Travelling laundry spins at Barunga Festival

FESTIVAL goes and community members enjoyed a free laundry facility at this year's Barunga festival, provided by non-for-profit organisation Orange Sky. The organisation provides access to free laundry and a good yarn for people in need. They now have 31 services across Australia with three laundry services being in remote communities, Lockhart River and Palm Island in Queensland and Maningrida in the NT. Remote and Indigenous Services Program Manager Judith Meiklejohn has spent three months on the road in a mobile laundry van, visiting communities in five regions across four states to learn about community priorities and needs, to connect with people and provide a mobile laundry facility for people to wash for free. Judith said she and her team member Richard Cassady enjoyed connecting with and learning from people across many communities. "A highlight for us was yarning with performers including Johnno Yunupingu and young Saltwater Band." Orange Sky worked alongside NT-based not-for-profit One Disease, an organisation dedicated to eliminating Crusted Scabies. "It was a great opportunity for us to work alongside each other in a community setting, as we have collaborated closely over the past few years," said Judith. The team thanked One Disease for their ongoing collaboration, Skinny Fish and the Barunga community for including them in such an amazing event. If you would like to connect with the Orange Sky team, please contact Judith at judith@orangesky.org.au.



Judith Meiklejohn, Johnno Yunupingu, Sharon Yunupingu and Richard Cassady.



Jacko Angeles (first on the left), Manual Dhurrkay (fourth from the right) with members of the Saltwater Band.

Mibala Histri – Barunga's history returns home



Mibala Histri on the big screen.

THE NLC and Library and Archives NT (LANT) presented a collection of photographs from the 1970s and 1980s back to the Barunga community on behalf of a former Bamyili School teacher at this year's Barunga Festival in June.

Ruth Jones was a teacher at Barunga School (formerly known as Bamyili School) from 1976 to 1981 and recently left the NT, donating her photos to LANT. Her photographs, shot on a combination of black & white and colour film, document life at Barunga community 50 years ago.

The collection of 145 images, named *Mibala Histri - Our History* in Kriol - was gifted to the Barunga community on the night before the Festival opening through a slideshow presentation. There were tears, squeals and laughter as locals pointed out family members and reminisced on growing up in the community.

Tracey Camfoo and Anita Painter both attended Bamyili School and were pleased to receive the collection of photographs to use for safekeeping and as a time capsule for the community.

For Tracey, seeing the photos brought back happy memories of her school days, and growing up with her elders.

"It reminds me of how they would teach us all the important things in life," she said.

Anita Painter now works as the Language & Culture teacher at Barunga School, teaching topics like clan groups, country and Traditional Land. She said she was looking forward to using the photo collection as a teaching resource, to show her students how life at Bamyili used to be and inspire them to want to learn differently.

"When we were growing up, we had a lot of strong leaders and elders. We had a deep respect for our elders back then. We had the opportunity to go out on country, and learn things out there instead of being in the classroom all the time," Ms Painter said.

"It's going to be hard to get the new generations of kids taught the way I was taught because now we have only a few elders left. But with this book of old photos, just by looking at it, it gives the new generations a clear picture of what our school was like back then."

Barunga community members also had the chance to sit down and look through the printed collection with fellow former teacher Elizabeth Walker, who worked alongside Ruth Jones.

"We didn't even know that they had all these important photos, so we want to thank NLC and Library and Archives NT for keeping that and sharing it with us," Ms Painter said.



The photos in the Mibala Histri collection were taken between 1976 and 1981.



Tracey Camfoo and Anita Painter.



Former teacher (second from left) Elizabeth Walker had a great time identifying people in the photos.

Voters lodge discrimination complaint against Australian Electoral Commission

COMPULSORY voting in Australia has always had a racial taint. Most people would associate the term "voter suppression" with the many and varied electoral systems and "Jim Crow" laws in the United States or the operation of electoral systems by autocratic regimes, but not with the operation of Australian electoral regimes.

That all changed in June with the filing of a complaint that the national agency charged with the conduct of Federal elections and the maintenance of the Australian electoral roll was itself guilty of voter suppression based on race.

Non-Aboriginal Australians have had universal suffrage since 1902 and been required to enrol since 1911, and vote since 1924, but it took half a century - until 1962 - before the Commonwealth Electoral Act was amended to give Aboriginal people the right to vote in Federal elections.

For Aboriginal people enrolment was voluntary but once enrolled, voting was compulsory. Compulsory enrolment for Aboriginal people wasn't legislated until 1984.

Commission (the AEC) alleging that the AEC has effectively suppressed the Aboriginal vote in remote areas in the NT.

They claim the AEC has done this by failing to implement its own mandate that allows it to directly enrol eligible persons who are not on the electoral roll or to update personal details, by using electronic data readily and lawfully accessed from trusted government agencies, including motor vehicle

seat of Lingiari which has an Indigenous population of 41.7 per cent, the highest of any electorate in the country.

As with many remote communities in the NT, Maningrida and Galiwin'ku have seen their populations grow by around 40 per cent since 2001.

The AEC policy at the core of the complaint concerns the performance of its functions under the Electoral Act in relation to the maintenance of the Commonwealth electoral



Matthew Ryan, Mayor of the West Arnhem Council.

Key points:

- A complaint against the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) has been lodged with the Human Rights Commission
- The complainants are Matthew Ryan, the Mayor of the West Arnhem Regional Council, and Ross Mandi, Chairman of the Yalu Aboriginal Corporation in Galiwin'ku
- They allege Aboriginal voters living in remote communities have been discriminated against
- They are calling on the AEC to take "rapid action" to improve Indigenous enrolment rates

registries, Centrelink and the Australian Taxation Office.

Mr Ryan lives at Maningrida and Mr Mandi lives at Galiwin'ku.

roll - which is also used in NT Parliamentary elections.

In 2012 the policy, known as Federal Direct Enrolment and Update (FDEU), was developed following an amendment to the Electoral Act designed to arrest an 'alarming' downward-trending nation-wide drop in enrolments in 2009 to just over 91 per cent.

The FDEU has been lauded by the Australian Electoral Commissioner, Tom Rogers, who claims it produced 'the best roll since Federation' and was a 'modern miracle' for the 2019 Federal election with a 97 per cent enrolment.

The FDEU was not so miraculous however for those remote residents of Lingiari (which covers most of the NT apart from Darwin and the satellite city of Palmerston that

house, one by-product of the Federal Intervention in the NT from 2007 to 2012 is that most larger communities in the NT now have accurately-surveyed house lots that are now incorporated into the NT's land registration system.

Similarly, most remote housing is subject to tenancy agreements that identify the tenants for each house, which in turn are - perhaps less consistently - usually readily identifiable either by a locally-relevant house number visible from the street or by colours, i.e. "the blue house on Rainbow Street." Street names and signs have been implemented in most remote communities as part of the "normalisation" regime of the NT Intervention.

Another complaint by Mr Ryan and Mr Mandi concerns

together form the electorate of Solomon) and Durack in Western Australia which are both in the lowest electoral enrolment band of 75 to 80 per cent.

Most of the remote residents of Lingiari do not receive mail directly to their homes, i.e. by Australia Post, but do so through a community post office, by mail bag or post box.

Notwithstanding the absence of numbered letter boxes affixed to a neat white picket fence outside every

the differential treatment for remote Aboriginal community residents in Lingiari where they were allocated a polling booth on or prior to polling day (usually serviced by remote mobile polling teams) that operated for a substantially shorter time than booths at similarly sized towns in the NT such as Nhulunbuy, Tennant Creek and Jabiru.

The Maritime Union of Australia and the United Workers Union supported the Arnhem Land men in lodging their complaint.

"The AEC must urgently change this discriminatory policy so that Indigenous people are better able to reach a ballot box during elections, and so they are no longer turned away at the ballot box en masse," MUA national Indigenous Officer Thomas Mayor said.

A date for the conciliation of the complaint to the AHRC has yet to be set.

*First published at *Crikey.com.au* blog, *The Northern Myth* on 21 June 2021



Women's employment strategy goal almost met

Almost there! Women now make up almost half of NLC permanent ranger positions, bringing Caring for Country close to its goal of employing equal numbers of Indigenous men and women.

IN 2018 just 26 per cent of Caring for Country rangers were female, prompting the NLC to adopt a Women's Employment Strategy. Three years later numbers are close to meeting the Strategy's target of 50 per cent female representation.

According to Penny Mules, Caring for Country Women & Youth Engagement Coordinator, benefits flow to community and the broader society when Indigenous women are employed to look after country.

"Increasing the employment of Indigenous women, and empowering them to work and care for their country, involves entire communities and inspires future generations to follow in their footsteps. For these benefits to be realised,

it is important to ensure that women have equal access to employment as rangers," she said.

In terms of numbers, in June this year 36 women were working in permanent positions in NLC ranger groups alongside 41 men. Women rangers are represented in all 13 NLC ranger groups.

However, the number of women employed in the casual workforce remain low at 38 per cent.

The NLC wants to see interested and available women recruited as casual rangers and coordinators employing more women casuals.

"The recruitment of women into all vacant roles until equal numbers are achieved, and the replacement of women rangers with women, is still crucial in reaching equity



Numbulwar Rangers Joanne Pomery and Eva Nunggumajbarr at Batchelor Institute.

in those groups, and in maintaining these numbers overall," Ms Mules.

In recognition of the gains made by women in the Caring for Country branch, it was awarded the 2020 NT Human Rights Award for Diversity.

The award recognises an organisation or person who has contributed significantly to the promotion of social change for human rights and equal opportunity.

Malak Malak Assistant Ranger Coordinator Sheila White said women rangers are leaders in their communities and are inspiring young women to take up the role of caring for country and culture.

"Working as a ranger has not only benefitted me personally, I see how the young people and other women look up to us, and it makes us feel really proud," Ms White said.

Darwin's NAIDOC week 'huge and deadly'

THE NAIDOC march celebrations began at the State Square lawn in Darwin's CBD on the Friday of NAIDOC week, with crowds waving the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags in a show of unity.

People of all ages and cultures proudly carried the Aboriginal flag, as children let their red, black and yellow balloons fly high and waved flags.

This year's NAIDOC theme was 'heal country'. It called for our mob to "continue to seek greater protections for our lands, our waters, our sacred sites and our cultural heritage".



Sam Pearson



Stephen Van Der Mark and Peter Van Wyk



Natalie Leysley



Zaya Pedro

VACCINATE!

To protect our Elders!

To protect our Kids!

**To protect our
Community!**

