

NORTHERN
LAND COUNCIL

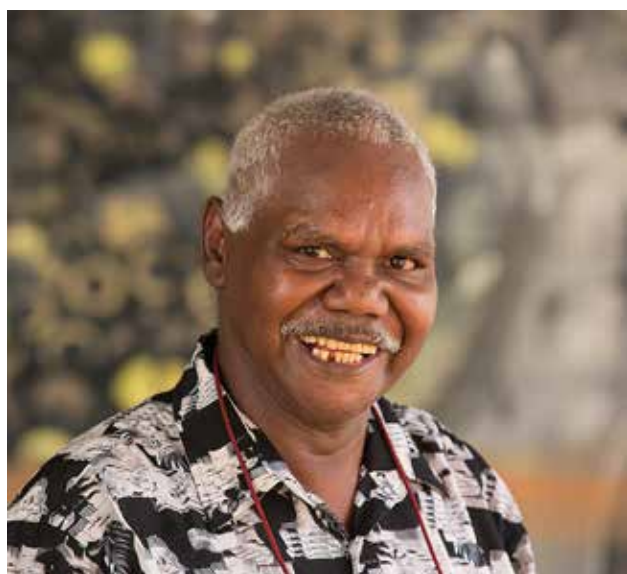
Northern Edition

LAND RIGHTS NEWS

Our Land, Our Sea, Our Life

April 2021 • www.nlc.org.au

Learning on Country: connecting school students to work on country



Meet the NLC Deputy Chair
Richard Dixon



Fighting Gamba grass across the
Northern Territory



Leadership training for
women rangers

Australia's oldest Aboriginal newspaper. Since 1973.

EDITORIAL

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


Land Rights News welcomes stories and photos about Aboriginal people and organisations.


Contact Bob Gosford and Leah McLennan at media@nlc.org.au


NLC CONTACTS


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

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COVERS

Back cover: Barunga Festival, 11-13 June 2021

Striking a fair balance between TOs' sea country rights and access for recreational fishers

A message about Aboriginal sea country from the NLC Chairman Samuel Bush-Blanasi



Mr Bush-Blanasi says fishos need to register before casting a line in Aboriginal coastal waters

HELLO you mob, I want to give you an update about Aboriginal sea country.

From 1 March 2021 there have been some changes to how our sea country is dealt with.

These changes will mean that our sea country mob will have more information about who is on sea country and why. This will give our rangers more information so they can protect our sacred sites, homelands and other dearly held areas.

These new arrangements allow for us to share our sea country – in a fair way and on our terms and in our law.

We've been sharing our country with visitors for around 400 years now. That's a long time before Captain Cook sailed into Botany Bay. Saltwater

mob across the Top End welcomed Macassan traders into our country for many years. Aboriginal people across the Top End were the first international traders in this country!

We lost control of a lot of our land and sea country for +many years. It was only in the 1960s and 70s that we started to get organized to fight for our Land Rights. At Yirrkala, at Newcastle Waters, at Wave Hill, in Darwin and many other places.

The NLC started fighting for land and sea rights nearly 50 years ago.

It's been a long, hard fight and we've won a lot of our land back over the years.

In 1973, the NLC told the Federal government that we wanted sea rights out to 12

miles from the coast.

When the Land Rights Act was presented to Parliament by the Whitlam government in October 1975 it allowed for sea rights out to 2 miles from the shoreline.

The Whitlam government was thrown out of government the next month. When the Land Rights Act came back to the Parliament under the Fraser government in 1976, the 2 miles of sea rights for Traditional Owners was gone.

But we never forgot about fighting for our sea country.

We started off with the Croker Island case and while we didn't win all we wanted, our native title rights in sea country were recognized.

In 2002, the NLC started the Blue Mud Bay case that was finally decided by the

High Court of Australia in 2008.

Since 2008, the NLC has built on that win in the High court by negotiating with the NT Government and other stakeholders. All the time, we know we have to protect the rights and interests of the sea country mob.

We also have to look after Aboriginal people who want to do commercial fishing on their land like at Maningrida, Port Keats and hopefully more in the future.

In 2019 at Nitmiluk, the NLC signed a comprehensive agreement with the NT Government and the other stakeholders. It was the biggest step forward in 10 years of tough negotiations.

In 2020, we signed an implementation agreement with the NT Government.

Recreational fishers can already access more than one thousand kilometres of sea country under Long Term Agreements made in 2013 on our terms and that support strong sea country management.

From 1 March 2021 recreational fishers have been able to register for an automatic permit to access an additional 2,000 kilometres of sea country – again under strong conditions – until the end of December 2022.

We reckon this is a fair deal.

We are calling this the Blue Mud Bay registration process in recognition of the landmark High Court case.

There is a lot more information on the NLC website and the NLC Facebook page. This isn't the last step in the ongoing fight to strengthen our sea country rights. I look forward to updating you more in the near future.

Governance training refresher for NLC Executive Council

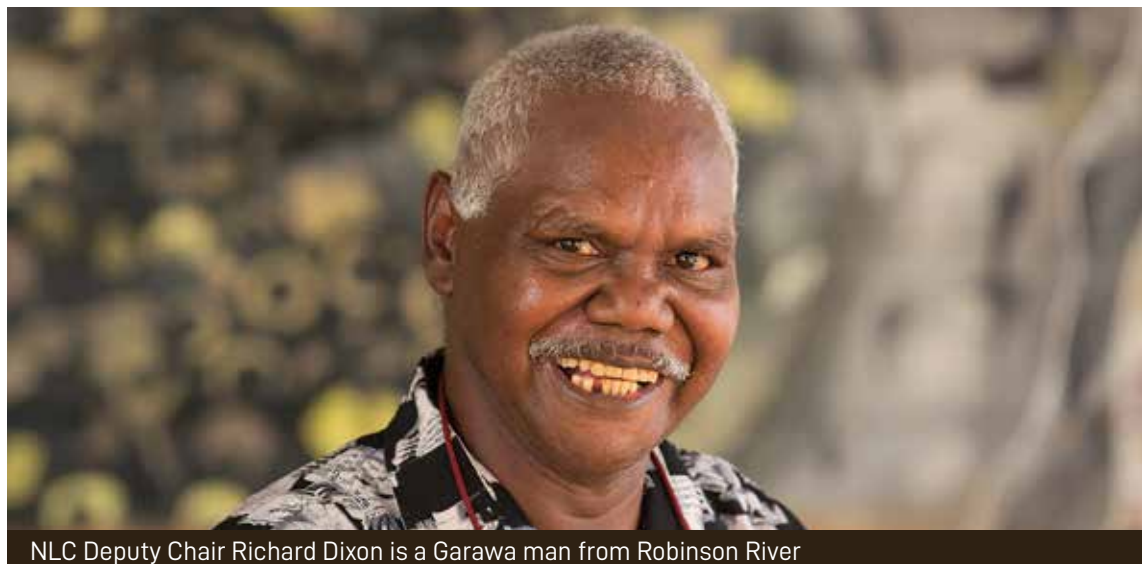
In February members of the NLC Executive Council attended three days of governance training provided by the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

DURING the training members learnt about the roles and responsibilities of being company directors, how to read and interpret financial statements and reports, and the importance of strategic planning and identification and monitoring of risks.

It was a long three days following the Executive Council meeting, with a lot of discussion about how to improve and strengthen the NLC.



NLC Executive Council in Darwin, February 2021. Back R-L: Bill Danks, Matthew Ryan, Samuel Bush-Blanasi, Djawa Yunupingu, Richard Dixon, Front L-R: Brian Pedwell, Chris Neade, Grace Daniels, Helen Lee



NLC Deputy Chair Richard Dixon is a Garawa man from Robinson River

Meet NLC's Full Council deadly Deputy Chair Mr Dixon

RICHARD Dixon is a Garawa man from Robinson River and is one the senior Traditional Owners for the community.

He is a member and former director of the Gulf Savannah NT Aboriginal Corporation, whose principal function is to provide Community Development Program services to the Gulf region.

He is also a member and former Deputy Chairman of the Mungoorbada Aboriginal Corporation, which delivers a range of essential services to Robinson River residents, including through its community store.

His vision is to help his people and the government to work together.

In memory of Mr L Norman

THE Chairman, CEO, members and staff of the Northern Land Council mourn the passing of former NLC Executive Council member Mr L Norman, who had also represented the NLC as a representative for Borrooloola since the 1990s.

Mr Norman was educated at Borrooloola and St John's College in Darwin.

He was a revered Yanyula elder of the Mambaliya-Wawukarriya clan group who worked for many years with the Li-anthawirriyarra Sea Rangers and was instrumental in the establishment and operation of the Yanyuwa Indigenous Protected Area since 2011 and of which he was particularly proud.

Mr Norman was a long-term member of the Aboriginals Benefit Account, had served as Deputy Chairman of the Gulf Health Services and was a member of the Mawurli and Wirriwangkurna Aboriginal Corporation.

In 1988 he played a key role in the films Journey East (Buwarrala Akarriya), followed by Aeroplane Dance (Ka-wayawayama) in 1994 and worked as a key advisor on many other projects that served to preserve and protect his beloved sea country.

Mr Norman also played an important role in ensuring that knowledge of and love for country was passed onto emerging generations of Traditional Owners and custodians of land and sea country.

Mr Norman will be sadly missed by all of us in the Northern Land Council family and we send our heartfelt condolences to Mr Norman's family, kin and friends.

He will be sadly missed by us all.

THE Ngukurr Arts Centre has launched its latest exhibition of work—Bla Mela Kantri (Our Country)—from the small but culturally and creatively active community of Ngukurr on the Roper River south-east of Katherine.

The exhibition will run until 10 May 2021.

For more information on the 'Bla Mela Kantri' exhibition go to the Godinymayin Yijard Rivers website at <https://gyracc.org.au/>



Meet our rangers: What do you love about your job?

"I love being out on country in the peace and quiet rather than being on the internet!"
Natalie Blitner, Wardaman Rangers

"It's good going out on country. I spent a lot of time out there with our elders. Plus I go to school and learn kids about bush tucker and they'll learn their culture."
Daphne Huddleston, Wagiman Rangers



"It's important to look after the country and teach our children."
Josie Davies, Waanyi Garawa



"It's important to look after our country and protect our sacred sites."
Karen Noble, Garawa Rangers



"I love getting out on the river and patrolling."
Cindy Archie, Timber Creek



"I love caring for country, learning different things every day and teaching our next generation."
Jana Daniels, Yugul Mangi

In late March, the Caring for Country Women's Leadership Forum took place, attendees included: Jana Daniels, Yugul Mangi; Eva Nungamadjbarr, Numbulwar; Joanne Pomery, Numbulwar; Eslyn Wauchope, Garngi; Cindy Archie, Timber Creek; Josie Davies, Waanyi Garawa; Sonia Shadforth, Garawa; Karen Noble, Garawa; Natalie Blitner, Wardaman; Daphne Huddleston, Wagiman; Teresa Burr Burr, Bulgul; Sheila White, Malak Malak; Charmaine Mininikirr, Mardbalk; Sharon Jimarin, Wudicupildiyerr, Sherylin Umbull, Wudicupildiyerr, Sophie Simon, Gajerrong; Desiree Simon, Gajerrong; Mary Blythe, Training; Penny Mules, W&Y Coordinator

COVID-19 vaccines: your questions answered

Do you want to know more about the COVID-19 vaccines?

These answers have been compiled by Danila Dilba Health Service using resources from the Australian Government Department of Health. All information is correct as of 18 March 2021.



Danila Dilba[®]
Health Service

How do I know the vaccine is safe?

All medicines used in Australia must be carefully tested, assessed and approved for use by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). The TGA checks a medicine's safety, quality and effectiveness. Both COVID-19 vaccines available in Australia have gone through this rigorous testing process, so you can trust that they are safe. In Australia, the vaccines have gone through the same process as any other medicine, rather than the emergency approvals we have seen in some other countries.

The vaccine was developed very quickly. Are you sure it's safe?

Pharmaceutical companies, universities, research institutes and governments across the world invested a lot of time, money and expertise into quickly developing a vaccine for COVID-19 due to the devastating impact of the pandemic. The emergency situation warranted an emergency response, but all the usual safety protocols have been adhered to. The relatively fast development of the vaccine is an example of what is possible when resources are pooled and the development is prioritised on a global scale.

Is one vaccine safer or better than another?

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has approved both the Pfizer vaccine and the AstraZeneca vaccine for use in Australia because they are both safe and effective.

Why should I consider getting vaccinated?

Vaccination is the most effective way to protect against infectious diseases. Vaccines strengthen your immune system by training it to recognise and fight specific viruses. COVID-19 can cause severe illness, serious ongoing health conditions, and sometimes death. COVID-19 spreads quickly and widely and has resulted in millions of deaths across the world, including 900 people in Australia. Hospitalising lots of people due to COVID-19 places a strain on our health care system, which means that we don't have the resources to dedicate to other more every day (but equally important) health conditions.

Being vaccinated against COVID-19 will help you protect yourself, your family, and your community. When enough people in the community are vaccinated, it slows down the spread of disease. Achieving herd immunity is a long-term goal that requires a large amount of population to be vaccinated.

Are there side effects? What should I do if I experience them?

You may experience mild side effects following vaccination. Most side effects last no more than a couple of days and you will recover without any problems. Side effects are an indication that your immune system is responding to the vaccine and are a common part of the vaccination process.

Common reactions to the vaccine include pain, redness or swelling where you received the injection, mild fever, and headache. Severe reactions (including allergic reactions) are extremely rare and usually occur within 15 minutes of receiving the vaccine. After you receive the vaccine, you should

wait 15 minutes before leaving just in case you have a reaction. There will be trained medical staff at all vaccination centres to take care of you if this happens. If you have a severe reaction after leaving the vaccination centre, you should see a doctor or health care professional as soon as possible.

If you have any concerns about symptoms that occur after you've been vaccinated, you can call the National Coronavirus Hotline which is staffed 24 hours a day: 1800 020 080.

Should I be worried about blood clots?

There have recently been several media stories about a correlation between blood clots and the COVID-19 vaccine. At the moment, there is no evidence to suggest that blood clots are caused by the vaccine. Blood clots in vaccinated people occur at the same rate as they normally would in unvaccinated people.

COVID-19?

**Wi garra holot
maindim mijal!**

Translation: Meigim Kriol Strongbala

**Wen turismob gu la komunidi, im meigim rong
bla ebribodi wen bigwan siknis ebriweya**

Works by famous Arnhem Land artist to feature at Darwin art gallery

Works by famous Arnhem Land artist to feature at Darwin art gallery

WORKS by one of Australia's leading contemporary artists – master bark painter John Mawurndjul AM – will be on show at Charles Darwin University's Art Gallery until the end of May.

More than 50 of Mr Mawurndjul's most celebrated artworks will be showcased in the exhibition.

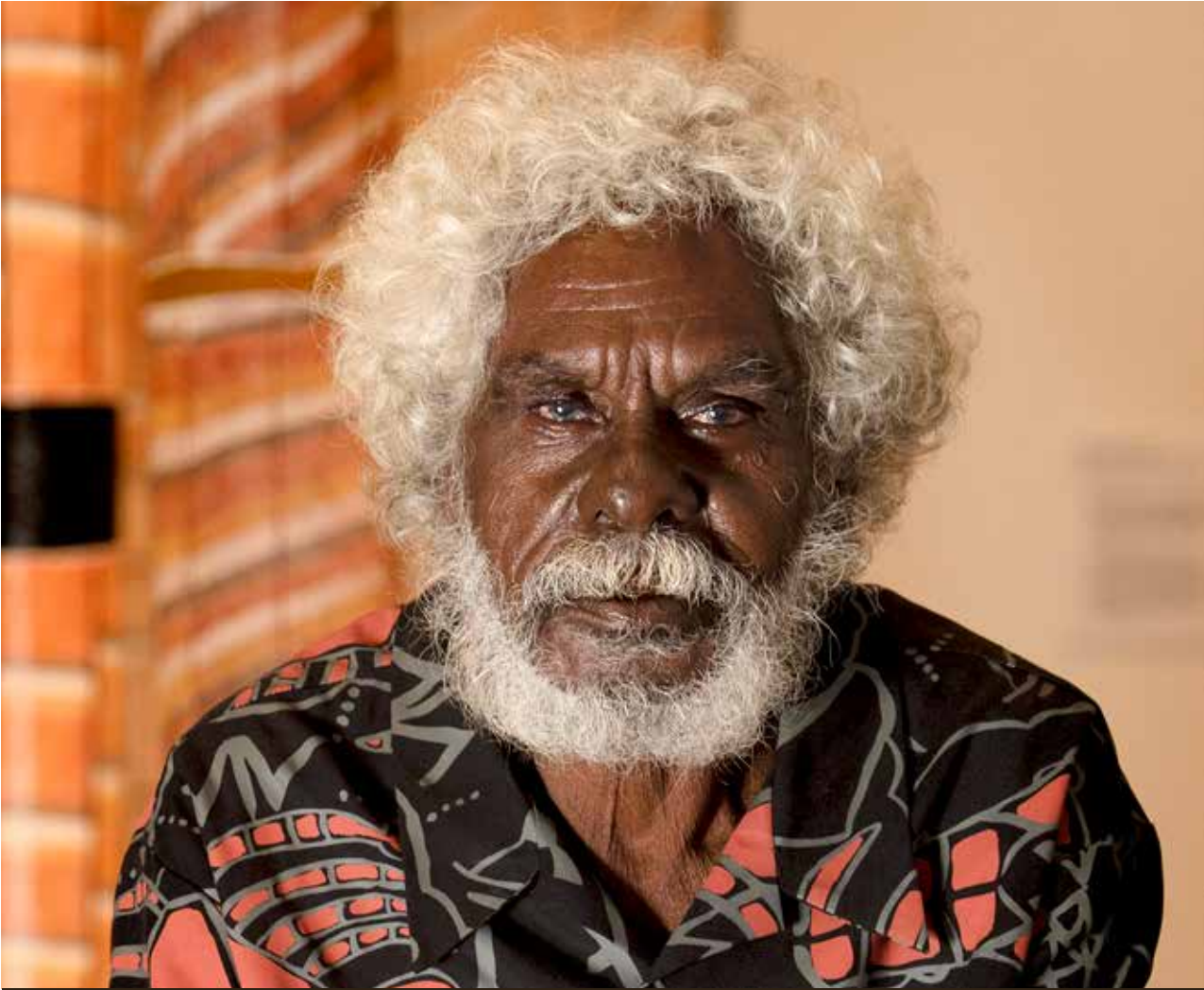
Mr Mawurndjul is celebrated for his mastery of rarrk (cross-hatching) and his depiction of djang (a sacred site or totemic emblem), a tradition shared by generations of Kuninjku artists.

Born in 1952, he lives and works in Milmilngkan in western Arnhem Land and Maningrida in central north Arnhem Land, where his bark paintings and sculptures tell the stories of Kuninjku culture and the significant locations surrounding his home.

CDU Art Gallery Curator Dr Joanna Barrkman said the university's gallery was fortunate to be the final venue on the exhibition's national tour.

"Mr Mawurndjul is arguably one of Australia's most well-known living artists and we are incredibly privileged to have this exhibition visit CDU," she said.

"It will take visitors on an extraordinary journey across country and culture."

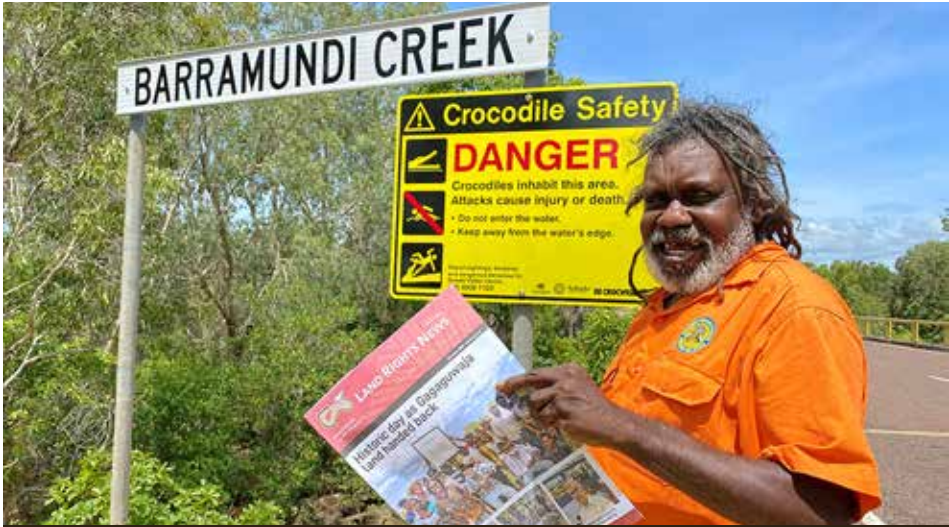


Master bark painter John Mawurndjul's work can be seen at Charles Darwin University until the end of May

Out and about: Look who's reading LRN!



Bunug Galaminda on Warruwi



Johnny Reid at Barramundi Creek



Stephanie Anderson, LoC Coordinator and Steering Committee member, in Darwin



Brock Burgher relaxes with a cool drink and the newspaper

Ranger Mine: towards realising Mirarr Cultural Closure Criteria

By Chris Brady, NLC Ranger Mine Closure Project Officer

In January this year, Energy Resources of Australia (ERA), majority owned by Rio Tinto, ceased production of uranium oxide at Ranger Mine.

FOUR decades ago the establishment of Ranger played an important role in the story of land rights. Ranger operates in an environmentally sensitive area. It is on Aboriginal land, surrounded by Kakadu National Park and the Mirarr people are the Traditional Owners. The mine was authorised under the Commonwealth's Atomic Energy Act. The authorization included Environmental Requirements, which set out environmental protection conditions with which ERA must comply. Under these requirements the company must rehabilitate the area to an environment similar to the adjacent areas of Kakadu National Park. The NLC has a role in assessing progressive rehabilitation and eventually in determining if the rehabilitation objectives have been met. In recognition of the importance of the views of Mirarr Traditional Owners in successful rehabilitation, ERA funded consultation with Mirarr which led to the development of Cultural Closure Criteria. The criteria have been endorsed by the NLC and agreed to by ERA. The criteria reflect Traditional Owners desire to once again be able to use the Ranger Project Area for hunting, gathering, recreation and ritual. Under existing regulatory arrangements the company has just five years to complete rehabilitation works. The NLC and Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation

(GAC) have been lobbying the Commonwealth to change this artificial deadline to ensure there is sufficient time to deliver the best possible environmental outcomes, such that all cultural closure criteria are met. The NLC and GAC have also been working to ensure views of Traditional Owners are considered during the rehabilitation period. Traditional Owners have recently nominated a steering committee of Mirarr and other Bininj from the region to discuss cultural reconnection with the Ranger Project Area. This includes better defining cultural reconnection for the benefit of regulators and ERA, considering how cultural knowledge can contribute to landform design and species plantings, and how the cultural closure criteria will be monitored and assessed over time. An example where Traditional Owners' input has influenced the design of the final land form is to do with traversability. Traditional Owners want the rehabilitated area to be relatively easy to walk across. At most mine rehabilitation areas the ground has been deep ripped, to allow water to penetrate and nutrients to collect in the furrows. However the result is generally deep furrows and parallel lines of large rocks. Along with making these areas difficult to walk across the result is an unnatural appearance. In recognition of the view of Traditional Owners, the backfilled Ranger Pit 1,

now being prepared for revegetation, has been lightly scarified rather than deep ripped. Recently members of the steering committee visited the site to inspect surface of Pit 1. The steering committee

also visited trial plantings at the mine and talked with ERA staff about a desire to see habitat features and cultural plantings to enhance the site. We are hoping to see ERA continue to engage with

Traditional Owners in the rehabilitation and monitoring of the site over coming decades, and the company meeting the goals outlined in the cultural closure criteria.



Stewart Gangale inspecting plants with Peter Christophersen at the Ranger nursery



Pit 3 in process of being backfilled



Members of the Cultural Reconnection Steering Committee visited Ranger in February

'You mob are doing a great job': Learning on Country



Around 80 school principals, teachers, ranger coordinators, LoC coordinators and Indigenous cultural advisors met in Darwin for the Learning on Country forum in March

MORE than a thousand young people from 15 remote schools are taking part in the Learning on Country Program.

The program integrates two teaching methodologies (culture and curriculum) and provides pathways to real education and employment outcomes.

NLC Chairman Samuel Bush-Blanasi said the program is producing culturally confident and educated young Aboriginal

people who can walk strong in two worlds.

"Our future is our kids and I want to see them get the right education and go on to live healthy lives and care for their families – the Learning on Country Program helps create that pathway for them.

"The program is extremely inspiring because it gives our kids a better education – a both ways education. Developed by Aboriginal people for our young people,

it teaches them skills that they need to survive in our culture and Balanda culture."

More than 80 school principals, teachers, ranger coordinators, rangers, Learning on Country coordinators, and Indigenous cultural advisors came together for a two-day Learning on Country forum in Darwin on 23 and 24 March.

The forum offered delegates opportunities for information sharing and included presentations

from each of the Learning on Country sites, as well as researchers and education specialists.

The meeting kicked off with a Welcome to Country by Larrakia Nation's Jeanneen McLennan, followed by an introduction from the Learning on Country Program Chair, Lirripiya Mununggurr.

Over the two days, each of the 15 sites gave presentations and Learning on Country coordinators

gave program updates.

One of highlights of the forum was the session 'the LoC pathway to employment, a participant's perspective' presented by Jonah Ryan and Grestina Wilson.

Jonah Ryan is from Maningrida, where the Bawinanga Djelk Ranger internship program supports Learning on Country students to transition into full time ranger work.

What is the LoC Program?

The LoC program is a highly valued community-driven initiative that has been operating successfully for almost 10 years across remote Top End communities. The program is a formal partnership between 15 community schools and local Indigenous ranger groups and provides practically-oriented educational, training and employment pathways for young Indigenous people, through the integration of culture and curricula. The LoC Program is a network of 15 sites supported by the Program management team in the NLC.

Meet Jonah Ryan, Bawinanga Djelk Ranger

Jonah is from Maningrida, where the Bawinanga Djelk Ranger internship program supports Learning on Country students to transition into full time ranger work.

"I've been a ranger for four and a half years now. It's just great being a leader for young ones and I'm loving it. I always wanted to be a ranger, just like my old man.

"That's why when Learning on Country started I thought this is my opportunity to be a ranger and here I am.

"Before this I didn't talk, I didn't say anything, I just kept myself and now here I am talking to all you people. I used to be scared or shaking but not now.

"Ever since I got this green shirt on, I look at myself in the mirror and I can't believe that I made it. I do a selfie and go wow, I'm a real ranger now, I can't believe it myself.

"I've been through a lot and I can tell the young ones you don't have to be really smart or good at reading or writing, you just need to be really strong and hardworking so just keep on moving forward".



Cindy Jinmarabynana from Maningrida spoke about her former student Grestina Wilson at the Learning on Country forum in Darwin.

"This is Grestina. I used to teach her, her father was a Djelk ranger. The first day when we went out I saw she was very passionate and strong and listening to the elders. Now it's making me be proud of what she's done now."

NLC chairman Samuel Bush-Blanasi speech to the Learning on Country forum:

"I'm the chairman of NLC, I'm from Beswick, born in Katherine. But my grandparents and my mum are from Blue Mud Bay region.

"Learning on Country has been operating now for 10 years. There's a little story behind this. This program was run by the Education Department and the NT government. I stepped in and brought it to the NLC in 2018. The reason behind it is, all you guys all know more about keeping young kids coming to school and teaching them all about culture and learning on country.

"Learning on Country with young kids is the most important thing, as you all know Facebook and Instagram are not our way.

"Looking at all you mob coming from all different regions, you mob are doing a fantastic job.

"Our kids need to learn both ways – Balanda way and Yolngu way. They go to school in the morning, and afternoon they go to you mob.

"There's one kid here that came through this pathway, young Jonah. I was at Maningrida when he was at school and he was presented an award for coming through the Learning on Country program and he ended up becoming a ranger with Djelk and now he's doing really well.

"I want to take you to the Beswick (Wugularr) and Barunga Learning on Country Program. It's hosted by the Jawoyn Ranger group and started in 2019.

"Not long after it started the Principal at Wugularr School said that attendance at the school had almost doubled as result of the program.

"It just shows how wonderful this program is, when you've got elders like you mob who lead these kids to their future."



New registration process for anglers in Aboriginal-owned waters

At the start of March, the NLC introduced a free online registration process for recreational anglers wanting to fish in the Top End's intertidal zones.

THE Top End's intertidal zones have been the subject of years of negotiation since exclusive Aboriginal ownership was recognised in the 2008 Blue Mud Bay High Court decision.

"As I promised last year, NLC has been out consulting widely with Traditional Owners of sea country about what they want to do with their land and sea country," NLC CEO Marion Scrymgour said.

"Aboriginal land and sea country is privately owned. Like any land owners, they have the right to say who can and who cannot come onto their country. There are some areas where, for cultural, environmental or commercial reasons, Traditional Owners want to restrict access.

"The NLC has statutory responsibilities to assist Traditional Owners to manage their country and we take those responsibilities very seriously.

"The NLC has been talking to and sharing information with all the other stakeholders – the NT government, Amateur Fisherman's Association

NT, the Seafood Council and the Guided Fishing Tour operators but at all times we have to put the interests of Traditional Owners first. And that's what we do."

Ms Scrymgour said the registration system would increase anglers' safety in intertidal zones — a key concern of Traditional Owners.

"We do so see accidents happening in some of those areas. Often we don't hear about it but it does happen," Ms Scrymgour said.

"What we've done here is to meet the wishes of Traditional Owners to look at and to make sure that ... particularly for our rangers, they know who is coming into those areas, so if anyone gets into difficulty or something happens, we're at least able to respond."

NLC Chairman Samuel Bush-Blanasi noted the long history of the battle for sea country in the NT.

"That struggle didn't just start with Blue Mud Bay in the High Court, we had the Croker Island case before that and sea country Traditional Owners have been fighting for their



Yag Bani CEO Steve Westley, Oyster Technicians Elroy Nayilibidj and Brando Westley and NLC Regional counsellor and Yag Bani Chair Bunug Galaminda

country for many, many years," Mr Bush-Blanasi said.

"We came close when the Land Rights Act was first introduced by the Whitlam government in 1975. Back then the Land Rights Act would have given us two miles of sea country out from the shore.

"But when the Land Rights Act was re-introduced to the Australian parliament by the Fraser government the next year those sea country rights were gone. We've never stopped fighting for our sea country and we never will."

In a statement, Aboriginal Affairs Minister Selena Uibo said the developments were "good news" and the NLC would "continue to work with land owners around long-term permanent access arrangements".

"The NLC has acted strongly on behalf of land owners who were granted ownership over much of the Territory's coastline in 2008 by the High Court and we thank the NLC for ongoing work ensuring Territory anglers have so much access to Aboriginal-owned waters," she said.

Key points:

- Online registration via www.nlc.org.au is now required for anglers fishing in certain areas of the Top End's intertidal zones
- The intertidal zones were recognised as exclusively Aboriginal owned in a 2008 High Court decision
- Nearly 750 fishers have already registered via the NLC website, and more were expected prior to the Easter break



Blue Mud Bay Registration FAQs

What is Blue Mud Bay registration?

From the start of March, the NLC introduced permit-free access to extensive areas of the intertidal zone – also known as Aboriginal sea country – on the NT mainland by a simple process of on-line registration that is quick, simple and free. It gives recreational fishers access to many areas of tidal Aboriginal land through to 31 December 2022. It is called the Blue Mud Bay registration process in recognition of the historic decision by the High Court of Australia in 2008 that recognises Aboriginal ownership of tidal Aboriginal land – sometimes called the 'intertidal zone' – in the NT.

Where do I need Blue Mud Bay registration for?

You will need Blue Mud Bay registration for the Blue Mud Bay Access Area that is marked in yellow on the Tidal Waters Access Map. You will not need registration from the NLC for access to areas subject to Long Term Agreements that are marked in green on the Tidal Waters Access Map. The areas marked in red on the Tidal Waters Access Map are Restricted Areas. These are the subject of continuing access consultations by the NLC or where for cultural, environmental or commercial reasons, Traditional Owners want to restrict access.

What is the intertidal zone?

The intertidal zone is the area between the high tide and low tide water marks. In relation to Aboriginal sea rights stemming from the Blue Mud Bay decision, the intertidal zone is the area between the mean high tide and the mean low water marks.

If I have a Blue Mud Bay access permission do I also need a transit permit if I'm travelling through Aboriginal land?

Yes, Blue Mud Bay registration only allows you to access Aboriginal tidal waters by boat. If you need to travel through Aboriginal land to access Aboriginal tidal waters, you will need a separate transit permit.

We're travelling in a convoy of boats, does each person in each boat need to register?

Yes. Each person travelling on a boat requires registration, except children under the age of 18 whose parent(s) are travelling in the boats and have Blue Mud Bay registration.

Where can I fish in the East Alligator River?

You can fish in the East Alligator River up to Cahills Crossing at the boundary of the Kakadu National Park and the Arnhem Land Aboriginal Land Trust.



55TH FREEDOM DAY FESTIVAL
Yapakayi-nginyi Jangkarnik — From Little Things Big Things Grow

SAVE THE DATE: 27-29 August 2021

International Women's Day event at the NLC highlights achievements of women and the road ahead



NLC's Women's Co-op Council Chair Joy Cardona

THE yearly celebration of women and all they have accomplished saw more than 50 people gather outside the NLC's Darwin office in March.

The event was hosted by NLC's Women's Co-op Council Chairperson, Joy Cardona, and guest speakers included NT Senator Malarndirri McCarthy and Deputy NT Treaty Commissioner Ursula Raymond.

Ms Cardona said International Women's Day was an opportunity to reflect on all the women who had come before us and the path ahead.

"In this building we have 158 women, that's 52 per cent of us," said Ms Cardona.

"We have 18 women over ten years [of working at NLC], three over 15 years, three for 20 years and at least one for more than 30 years.

"We're having women's day here to thank all the women - and men - that work for the land council. This place is special for many people throughout the Territory.

"I thank you all for being here. Enjoy this building, enjoy working for the NLC and remember

you're working for a Full Council, which sits above us through the Executive and through the Chairman."

Senator McCarthy told the crowd that every woman has the right to be safe in every single space she inhabits.

"One of the things we see that is not happening at the Federal level is the respect for women in the workplace and the ability to keep safe. We need to keep safe, whether we're at work or at home," she said.

"We know that here in the NT too many of our women experience violence and assaults of all sorts.

"So when you see it at the highest levels, where women are not being respected it sends a terrible message right across the country for all women and for all families. That's not the country we want to see in Australia, where you cannot feel safe in the workplace.

"On the weekend I head back to Canberra for sittings and it will be an important time to set the record straight about how the Parliament treats women and should be treating women right across the Parliament and right across Australia."



Cutting the cake!



Karen Cubillo and Kiara Petterson



'Enough is enough': March4Justice calls for change

Hundreds of people in Darwin marched toward NT Parliament House as part of March4Justice events held across the country.

THE march called on the Federal Government to pick up its act in regards to its response to recent sexual abuse allegations.

Event organiser Sara Rowe said the march was about creating a groundswell movement.

The rally was held across the country with an estimated 100,000 people participating at about 40 locations.

"On a Territory level we're calling for better responses to domestic family and sexual violence in the Territory," she told NT News.

"We're calling for police to receive better education – how to respond to these kinds of reports, we know they're terribly low rates in the Territory of police actually following

through with sexual assault complaints and people might say that's because of a lack of evidence, but that doesn't really correlate because we also simultaneously have the highest rate of sexual assault in the country."

NT Working Womens Shelter's Claire Pirrett said the march was "a conversation not the solution".

"The solution is the dismantling of systemic structural sexism and gender inequality," she said.

"We need those that benefit from it - mostly white men, to be advocates and support the changes of laws, policies, procedures and societal norms that gave them these advantages in the first place."



Farewell to dinosaurs!



NLC staff taking part in the March4Justice



Belyuen women march down Bennett St towards Parliament House

Galiwin'ku school playground officially opened



Galiwin'ku Traditional Owners at the opening of the new playground at Shepherdson College

Galiwin'ku Traditional Owners, school leaders and student representatives celebrated the official opening of a new playground at Shepherdson College on 20 November 2020.

THE playground is a colourful jungle of rope challenges, swinging bridges, monkey bars and double slides.

The funds for the playground were provided by the Traditional Owners and the Shepherdson College School Council.

Following COVID-19 shut downs last year, the children came back to school and the playground was ready for them to play on.

It is really “manymak for djamarrkuli” said one Traditional Owner.

At the opening celebration there was bunggul to reveal a plaque, which acknowledges the great contribution of Traditional Owners and the school to their community.

Richard Ghanduwuy acknowledge that “This is a very, very important memorial.”

Traditional Owners worked alongside NLC's

Community Planning and Development team to plan and implement the playground project.

This project meets this group's main focus, which is supporting children and youth in their community.

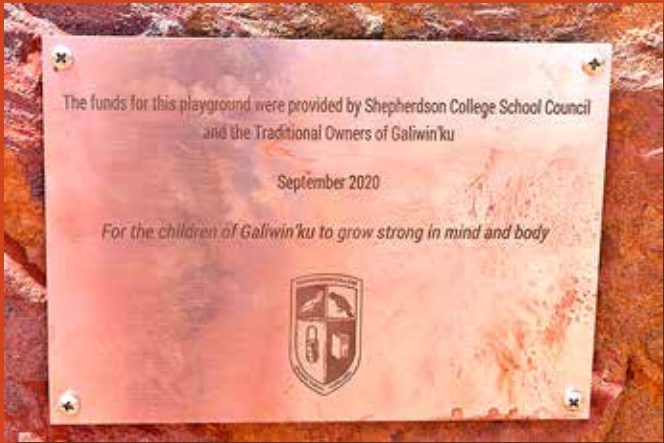
Traditional Owner Geoffrey Gurawunuwuy said he is happy with the outcome.

“That's number one, that's what we want,” he said.

The school playground is just one of nine projects the Traditional Owner group has funded to support their young people to grow up strong and healthy in both Balanda and Yolngu worlds.



At the opening celebration there was bunggul to reveal a plaque



“This is a very very important memorial” - Richard Ghanduwuy

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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 ad rates.



New commitment to community development from Mangarrayi Aboriginal Land Trust

Twelve groups are recognised as the Traditional Owners of the Mangarrayi ALT area.

MEMBERS from the groups live mainly in Mataranka, Katherine, Jilkminggan and Ngukurr.

In October 2020 the Traditional Owners decided to set aside money each year, for three years, from their Section 19 lease income towards community development using the NLC's Community Planning and Development (CP&D) framework.

The CP&D team is excited about working with Mangarrayi TOs this year to learn about their aspirations for community development, and then supporting them to put in place good governance and planning arrangements as the ideas and projects that benefit the group are developed.

As always, the focus from CP&D is to strengthen Aboriginal capacity and control and to generate positive social, cultural, environmental, and economic outcomes prioritised and valued by the group, using a "bottom-up" decision making process.



Members of the Mangarrayi Aboriginal Land Trust gathered for meetings in October 2020 and March this year.

The NLC celebrates rangers graduating from Batchelor Institute

IN the last 12 months, many of our rangers have completed certified training at the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education in areas of Conservation and Land Management, and Resource and Infrastructure Work Preparation.

Our Caring for Country Branch arranged a ceremony while in Batchelor in early December 2020 to recognise their achievements and present those in attendance with a certificate of completion.

Training is essential to the career development of our rangers. It equips them with the skills and competencies required to step into a spectrum of positions in the land and sea management sector. The end goal of this is to have Aboriginal rangers in leadership positions in ranger

teams and beyond so they can advance Traditional Owner aspirations for Country.

Graduating rangers included:

- Andrew Liddy (Cert 1 Conservation and Land Management)
- Aaron Green (Cert 2 Conservation and Land Management)
- Tim Burr Burr (Cert 2 Conservation and Land Management and Cert 2 Resource and Infrastructure Work Preparation)
- Brendan Morgan-Armstrong (Cert 2 Conservation and land Management and Cert 2 Resource and Infrastructure Work Preparation)
- Daphne Huddleston (Cert 2 Conservation and Land Management)
- Donald Shadforth (Cert 2 Conservation and Land Management)



Rachael Thurlow, Aaron Green, Andrew Liddy, Timothy Burr Burr, Brendon Morgan-Armstrong, Rebecca Jennings, Donald Shadforth, Daphne Huddleston, Wayne Barbour



Daphne Huddleston



Timothy Burr Burr

The NLC's women ranger employment program wins a Fitzy - NT human rights award



Kylie Burn, Daphne Huddleston, Penny Mules, Julie Roy, Fiona Peek, Eslyn Wauchope, Sheila White, Jana Daniels

THE NLC congratulates the Caring for Country Branch's Women's Employment Program, which was presented with The Fitzgerald Social Change Award at the 2020 NT Human Rights Awards at the NT Supreme Court.

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

"This is exactly the type of change we need to celebrate," said NLC CEO Marion Scrymgour.

"Our Caring for Country Branch has worked hard to create a work culture that attracts, retains and inspires Aboriginal women to become rangers. Through consultation with women rangers and community elders, the Caring for Country Branch were able to identify barriers to women's

participation and take action to overcome them.

"We congratulate all our women land and sea rangers and managers who have been a part of this cultural change and who continue to work towards achieving gender equity."

The Caring for Country Branch adopted the Women's Employment Strategy in 2018 and committed to increasing and supporting the participation of Aboriginal women in their ranger workforce.

Over the last three years, the implementation of the strategy has resulted in the employment of women in ranger groups increasing from 20 per cent to 47 per cent of the ranger workforce across NLC's ranger groups.

Leadership development opportunities provided through the Women's

Employment Program have resulted in Aboriginal women rangers being promoted to leadership positions within seven ranger groups, including as senior rangers and assistant coordinators.

Joy Cardona, Chairwoman of the NLC's Women's Committee, which met this week at Katherine, described the women rangers as "trailblazers."

"The courage and perseverance of all these women made it easier for others to follow in their footsteps and take on increased responsibilities as rangers and in supervisory roles."

"And while it's good news that more Aboriginal women are stepping into ranger positions, Indigenous ranger programs continue to face major funding challenges. We need a commitment to

longer-term core funding to ensure the stability of the ranger program," said Ms Cardona.

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.

"Ranger groups are now a safe space for young women to enter, as they are able to work with other women, and are supported by staff who understand their needs. Many women's lives have been changed by these opportunities."

New ranger coordinator presents boomerang to Jack Green

WHEN NLC's new Waanyi Garawa and Garawa Ranger Co-ordinator, Josh Cameron, arrived in Borroloola for work he presented a boomerang as a gift to Garawa elder Jack Green.

"The boomerang was a gift that was made from where I live in Swan Hill, Victoria with the help of another lad," Josh said.

"I brought it up to say thank you for accepting me into the community

and to show a sign of respect. It's a custom thing to do when visiting other people's country and show appreciation and respect for the country."

Josh, whose country is Kalkadoon and Waanyi, was born in Darwin and then moved to Victoria. He's happy to be back in the Territory.

"I'm up here to learn more about my culture and heritage and dreamtime stories from my people."



NLC's Josh Cameron and Garawa elder Jack Green

Fire information goes mobile to Australia's land managers



LAND managers across much of Australia can now access near real-time bushfire information on their mobile phones with the launch of a free mobile app.

The app is called NAFI - Northern Australia and Rangelands Fire Information system.

NAFI, previously only available on a web site, is a fire information web portal supported through Charles Darwin University's Darwin Centre for Bushfire Research.

CDU Research Development Officer Rohan Fisher says the app

places space technology literally in the hands of land managers on country.

"This is a major development that gives thousands of land managers in Northern Australia access to two to three-hourly updates on active fires, weekly updates of high-risk area across 80 per cent of Australia and burnt area maps from current and previous years – all on their phones," Mr Fisher said.

Darwin a tropical paradise for snakes, data shows

DATA analysed by a Charles Darwin University researcher has confirmed Darwin is a tropical paradise for snakes, harbouring more different species than any other capital city in the country.

The analysis, based on calls from members of the public to professional snake catchers between 2011 and

2017, found 5210 human interactions with the reptiles over a seven-year period.

CDU Research Institute - Environment and Livelihoods researcher Dr Brenton von Takach said despite the volume of callouts, almost 90 per cent of interactions were with non-venomous snakes.

"It's the classic pattern of biodiversity, there's an increase in diversity towards the tropics; you tend to find a lot more species up here than down south," Dr von Takach said.

"Darwin being a very northerly city has a lot more snakes than most other cities across the country."



Snakes love Darwin and Darwin loves snakes!

New Gamba plan for Kakadu and West Arnhem Land

A plan to protect parts of the Top End from Gamba grass has been produced by Territory Natural Resource Management, landholders in the region and ranger groups, including the NLC's Wagiman Guwardagun Rangers.

'The Gamba Grass Regional Management Plan for Western Arnhem Land and Kakadu' takes a collaborative approach to stopping the spread of this highly invasive weed.

Gamba grass grows taller and more densely than native grasses and matures later in the dry season. It creates high fuel loads that can cause uncontrollable hot wildfires that destroy vegetation, large trees, animal habitat and decrease local biodiversity.

The plan was developed as part of TNRM's West Arnhem and Kakadu Regional Project, which is supported through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

TNRM also supports ranger groups in the region

to undertake Gamba grass prevention actions. These actions include patrolling and monitoring roadsides and gravel pits, reporting and controlling new infestations, and mapping and data collection.

Susanne Casanova, Coordinator of the West Arnhem Land & Kakadu Regional Project, said there are many people who care deeply about keeping the West Arnhem region Gamba grass free.

"We have put this plan together to illustrate some of the best ways that any land manager, local or visitor to the area, can prevent outbreak and spread of Gamba grass in the region."

Darwin's rural areas, parts of Litchfield National Park and even some Darwin sites are battling serious Gamba grass infestations.

Fortunately, in west Arnhem Land and Kakadu National Park, there is still time to stop gamba in its tracks before it impacts on this unique part of the Territory.



Adjumarllarl Rangers and Njanjma Rangers used helicopters to help them survey Gamba grass



Adjumarllarl Ranger Jethro Demed takes part in a roadside Gamba patrol

Gamba Fast Facts

- A Gamba grass plant can produce up to 250,000 seeds per season
- Seeds can be spread by wind, vehicles, machinery, animals and people
- Gamba grass can grow up to 4m tall
- Gamba grass currently affects up to 15,000sq km of the NT, but has the potential to affect 380,000sq km of the NT



Australian Government

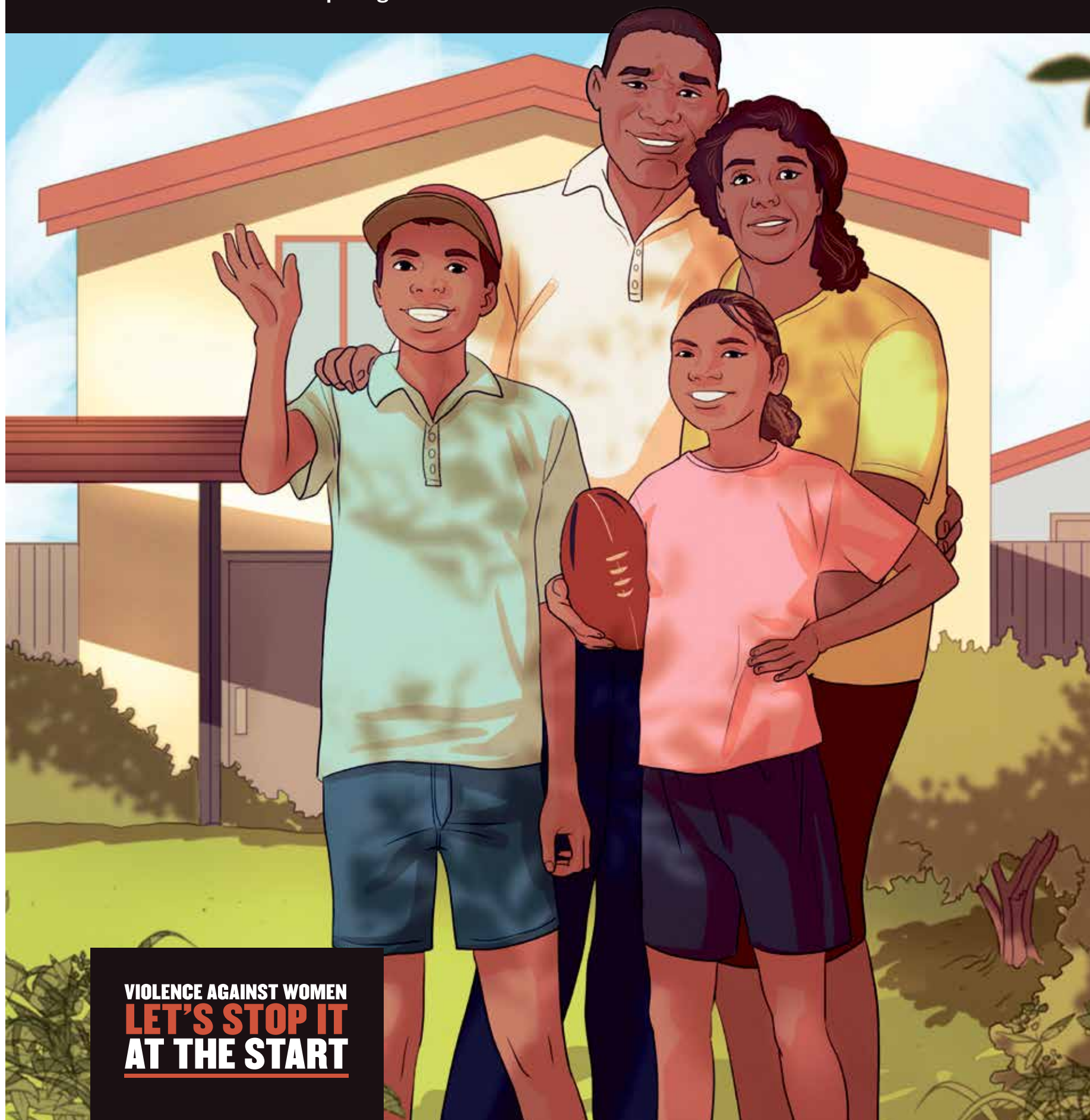
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VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
**LET'S STOP IT
AT THE START**

Top End fire managers cautiously optimistic this fire season shaping up to be one of the better years on record

THE recent 2019-20 North Australia fire season was deemed by researchers from Charles Darwin University to be one of the better seasons on record, however, a number of new challenges have been identified by fire managers working across the Top End.

In a presentation to the 2021 North Australia Savanna Fire Forum, Fire Managers in the NT have highlighted some of the challenges of a changing climate while providing an overview of the 2019-20 North Australia fire season.

In a panel session held on 9 February, representatives from Bushfires NT, Warddeken Rangers, Thamarrurr and Kakadu National Park, told of how a declining wet season has led to longer burning seasons, and the need to increase the size and extent of fire breaks to combat changing conditions.

Mamardawerre Ranger Coordinator, Torsten Unnasch, from Warddeken Rangers said while a declining wet season has meant less fuel for fires, it has resulted in earlier curing, and therefore provides for a longer fire season.

Despite these new challenges, Warddeken has used the previous fire season as an opportunity to build their capacity to better manage future fire seasons and have been training and setting up Daluk (womens) firefighter teams.

Similarly, Jaemie Page and Uriah Crocombe from the Thamarrurr Rangers, told Fire Forum attendees

that they also used the recent fire season to further their training programs, develop new partnerships, and better equip for the upcoming fire season.

Thamarrurr Rangers worked closely with the Mimal Rangers in the previous fire season, and helped to train up rangers to use a variety of equipment that can help to assist in managing fires. Partnership like the one between Thamarrurr and Mimal have also been identified as a vital resource in managing future fire seasons.

In a broader overview of the 2019-20 Northern Australia Fire season, Dr Rohan Fisher, from the Darwin Centre for Bushfire Research, summarised the 2019-20 North Australia fire season as one of the better years on record.

Dr Fisher told attendees at the 2021 North Australia Savanna Fire Forum that despite the annual changes in weather and a growing need to be adaptable in a changing climate, the 2021 North Australia fire season is shaping up to be a good year as well.

The Darwin Centre for Bushfire Research has also introduced new tools for the North Australian Fire Information (NAFI) service, including a Fire Information app, which helps to provide accurate and timely fire information to users across Northern Australia and the Central Desert, and which will greatly assist with managing fires in the upcoming fire season.



Thamarrurr Rangers. Supplied: Thamarrurr Development Corp



Nova Peris OAM and ABC News' Jane Bardon announce the winners of the Savanna Fire Forum video competition





Warddeken Daluk Rangers aerial burning. Supplied: Warddeken Land Management Ltd



Trent Lee opens the forum with a Welcome to Larrakia Country



NLC CEO Marion Scrymgour delivered the keynote speech at the North Australia Savanna Fire Forum in February

WANT TO TRACK NEW HOT SPOTS OR ACCESS FIRE SCAR INFORMATION?

Then download the new NAFl App to your phone. For further information visit firenorth.org.au.

The 2021 North Australia Savanna Fire Forum was hosted by the Indigenous Carbon Industry Network, thanks to the generous support of The Nature Conservancy and the in-kind support of the Savanna Fire Forum working group.

Videos, reports and recordings of the forum are now available at the ICIN website icin.org.au and savannafireforum.net.

Any Indigenous group supporting a carbon project is encouraged to join the network by contacting Anna Boustead at icin@warddeken.org.au or 0417 989 577.

\$40 million fund to help grow the Indigenous tourism sector

DETAILS of the \$40 million Indigenous Tourism Fund were announced on 19 February by Minister for Indigenous Australians, the Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP.

The Indigenous Tourism Fund was developed in consultation with the Indigenous tourism sector and includes business support and grants for Indigenous owned tourism businesses.

"The tourism sector was one of the first to be impacted by COVID-19 and will be one of the last to recover," Minister Wyatt said.

"This fund delivers on our election commitment, and has been designed in consultation with the Indigenous tourism sector who have told us clearly what they need to recover and grow their businesses."

\$10 million from this fund will go towards a National Indigenous Tourism Mentoring Program to offer businesses individualised support.

Up to \$12 million will be available under the Tourism Grants for Indigenous Business Program to help businesses and community organisations develop new products, and purchase systems and equipment. Grants are capped at \$50,000 for a privately owned business and \$100,000 for community organisations. Applications close on 6 April 2021.

The Indigenous Tourism Fund will also be used to invest in activities and initiatives to boost the Indigenous Tourism sector as a whole. Up to \$17 million will be co-invested with the states and territories for Strategic Indigenous Tourism Projects that generate supply chain opportunities for Indigenous owned tourism businesses. This investment will be in partnership with state and territory governments.

A National Indigenous Tourism Advisory Group will advise the Government on future priorities for the sector and provide an Indigenous voice in the implementation of the Indigenous Tourism Fund.

The advisory group is chaired by Professor Deen Sanders OAM with Deputy Chair, Ms Helen Martin.

For more information visit the NIAA website at niaa.gov.au.



Showing tourists spear throwing in Kakadu. Credit: Tourism NT/James Fisher



“I became an interpreter because of the language barrier between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.”

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Department of **LOCAL GOVERNMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**



Tourists admire Darwin street art. Credit: Tourism NT/Ashley Dobson

Congratulations to 2021 Senior Australian of the Year, Dr Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann AM

THE renowned artist, activist, writer and public speaker from Nauiyu (Daly River) was among an all-women line-up of recipients.

In 1975, Miriam-Rose became the Northern Territory's first fully qualified Aboriginal teacher. As an art consultant for the Department of Education, she visited schools through the Top End, advocating for the inclusion of visual art as part of every child's education.

Miriam-Rose later became the principal of the Catholic school in her home community before being appointed to the Federal Government's advisory body, the National Indigenous Council.

In 2013, she established the Miriam Rose Foundation, to bridge the divide between Aboriginal culture and

mainstream society – driving reconciliation at a grassroots level.

Through her professional and creative life, Miriam-Rose has remained dedicated to maintaining the cultural independence of her people and being a spokesperson for the Aboriginal worldview.

In recognition of her leadership, she was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia medal and an Honorary PhD in Education from Charles Darwin University.

During her acceptance speech, said she was 'very excited about what has happened tonight' knows she now has 'a lot more work to do'.



Shoes galore bound for Daly River

CHARLES Darwin University Education lecturer Dr Gavin Morris couldn't believe his eyes when he opened his door to 100 kilograms of brand-new shoes and clothing.

Dr Morris and Northern Institute Partnerships Coordinator Katrina Britnell had put out a call for donations of shoes to help the Daly River community in the Northern Territory's western Top End.

The Top End has had an unusually good wet season, but the inundation has left the small riverside community in flood.

CDU colleagues and Darwin people rallied and donated 200 pairs of shoes in just a few weeks but finding the mystery donor of two pallets of sports shoes and clothes took some detective work.

It turns out the shipment had come to the NT through

three different carriers.

"Eventually we tracked the donor down – it was the Melbourne Sports Institute," Dr Morris said.

"It was such a surprise and we're really grateful to be able to send shoes, socks and shirts out to the community."

Melbourne Sports Institute Director Neville Braver said an employee had heard about the call for shoes and organised the donation from sports suppliers.

"We are happy to help – to enable students to enjoy their sport and socialise," Mr Braver said.

The institute focuses on youth sport development with values of fair play, sportsmanship, team unity and morale.

Senior Australian of the Year Dr Miriam Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann lives at Daly River and called



Charles Darwin University's Dr Gavin Morris with Daly River community members Carmen Mullein, Senior Australian of the Year Dr Miriam Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann and Justine Wutiumaya as they take delivery of donated shoes

in to collect some of the donations while in Darwin.

She was amazed and delighted with the generosity of Darwin people and the Melbourne Sports Institute.

"Some of our young ones play for the football

clubs in Darwin, and they need football boots too," Dr Ungunmerr-Baumann said.

"I take kids out on cultural education in and around Daly River – so the school will happily take shoes for them.

"I can get them to bring

them back to me after they've worn them and then when they go to the city for excursions, they'll have good shoes to wear."

Kenisha Gurala Gumbula to become first Yolngu Lawyer

KENISHA Gurala Gumbula is a Yolngu woman from Galiwin'ku on Elcho Island. In 2020, she completed her Associate Degree in Law at Charles Darwin University (CDU). Kenisha achieved this while still providing for her two young children and working at the same time. After completing high school, Kenisha took some time out before having her two sons. She soon realised that she needed a challenge. With encouragement from her mum, Kenisha commenced an enabling course at CDU, Preparation for Tertiary Success (PTS) in 2015. Kenisha then participated in the Bilata Legal Pathways Program, a partnership program to increase the access and participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the study

and practice of law. Upon graduation from of her law degree in April 2021, Kenisha will become the first qualified Yolngu lawyer. "It wasn't always easy, and there were times when I had to take time out to be with family and have a break," Kenisha said. "But in the end it has been worth it. I am proud to be a role model for others in my community who have aspirations of their own. I tell them that if I can do it, then they can too." Kenisha is looking forward to graduation. She is also thinking about what her next challenge might be. "First, I want to get my driver's license and then have a break," she said. In 2021, she will look to undertake further studies in law to specialise in an

area yet to be decided. In the meantime, Kenisha continues her work with the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) as a Community Legal Educator (CLE). Kenisha's position at NAAJA incudes travelling into remote communities, mainly her community, and helping Yolngu people understand the Australian laws on different legal topics. Kenisha also helps out on court days. Kenisha acknowledges the support she received from her immediate family which includes her mother, her grandparents and her children. She also acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Galiwinku who provided both financial and personal support, and NAAJA who have supported her in her studies and provide employment



opportunities relevant to her studies. "Finally, I'm grateful to Charles Darwin University as well as the CDU Indigenous Support Services who have always helped me with any hardships throughout my studying at CDU," Kenisha said.

NLC versus Clontarf students to a basketball game. Guess who won?



During the February NLC Regional Branch Workshop staff challenged the Jabiru Clontarf students to a game of basketball. The NLC's Saffron Lami Lami and Jesse Hunter presented the NLC goodie bags to the winners!

After COVID set-back, NAIDOC 2021 to return even bigger

Country is inherent to our identity.

It sustains our lives in every aspect - spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially, and culturally.

IT is more than a place.

When we talk about Country it is spoken of like a person.

Country is family, kin, law, lore, ceremony, traditions, and language. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples it has been this way since the dawn of time.

Through our languages and songs, we speak to Country; through our ceremonies and traditions we sing to - and celebrate Country - and Country speak to us.

Increasingly, we worry about Country.

For generations Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been calling for stronger measures to recognise, protect, and maintain all aspects of our culture and heritage for all Australians.

We have continued to seek greater protections for our lands, our waters, our sacred sites and our cultural heritage from exploitation, desecration, and destruction.

We are still waiting for those robust protections.

Healing Country means hearing those pleas to provide greater management, involvement, and empowerment by Indigenous peoples over country.

Healing Country means embracing First Nation's cultural knowledge and understanding of Country as part of Australia's national heritage. That the culture and values of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders are

respected equally to and the cultures and values of all Australians.

The right to protect Country and culture is fundamental.

enormous loss for both our nation and the world.

But to truly heal Country we have more to do.

Our lands will continue to burn from bushfires, droughts will continue to destroy our livelihoods, without using traditional practices that have protected this country for centuries.

For generations, our Elders and communities have advocated, marched and fought for substantive

of consultation and discussions among our nations on a range of issues and grievances.

Healing Country means finally resolving many of the outstanding injustices which impact on the lives of our people.

It must be a fair and equitable resolution.

Fundamental grievances will not vanish. In the European settlement of Australia, there were no treaties, no formal

will remain a continuing source of dispute.

To Heal Country, we must properly work towards redressing historical injustice.

While we can't change history, through telling the truth about our nation's past we certainly can change the way history is viewed.

After 250 years, our children and our future generations deserve better.

For generations we have repeatedly called for just recognition of our right to participate on an equal basis in economic and social terms.

Yet such participation cannot be successful unless, first, there is formal recognition that Indigenous people have been dispossessed and, second, definite, specific steps are taken to redress the grave social and economic disadvantage that followed that dispossession.

Healing Country is more than changing a word in our national anthem - it is about the historical, political, and administrative landscapes adapting to successfully empower and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, nations, and heritage.

We are all looking for significant and lasting change.

We cannot afford to let pass the very real opportunity that now presents itself for reform based on a fundamental change in the relationship Australia has with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Heal Country, heal our nation.



HEAL COUNTRY!

4-11 JULY 2021

Destruction and desecration of our sacred lands or ancient sites - some of the oldest human occupation sites on the planet - is an

institutional, structural and collaborative reform.

The aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the culmination of generations

settlements, no compacts. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people therefore did not cede sovereignty to our land. It was taken from us. That

'Bla Mela Kantri' – an opening night full of stars



David Murrungun, Walter Rogers, Andy Peters and Andrew Wunungmurra

THE Ngukurr Arts Centre launched its latest exhibition of work—Bla Mela Kantri (Our Country)—from the small but culturally and creatively active community of Ngukurr on the Roper River south-east of Katherine on 26 March.

It was a warm Friday night at a packed Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre where the vibrant art on the walls was

(almost) matched by the very appreciative packed house.

Chairman of the Ngukurr Arts Centre, Walter Rogers, led a fantastic traditional introduction to the launch of this latest show, joined by songmen Andy Peters and Roy Nardilma on bilma (clapsticks), Andy Wunungmurra on didgeridoo and David Murrungun.

NT Minister for the Arts Chansey Paech and Member

for Arnhem (and Attorney-General) Selena Uibo gave short and enthusiastic speeches to get the formalities out of the way so that the crowd could get on with the serious business of checking out the fantastic artwork and prising open their wallets and purses.

There were plenty of red dots on the paintings by the end of the night!

The exhibition will run until 10 May 2021.

For more information on the 'Bla Mela Kantri' exhibition go to the Godinymayin Yijard Rivers website at <https://gyracc.org.au/>.

For more information on what's what and who's who at the Ngukurr Arts Centre go to <https://ngukurrarts.com/> or follow them on Instagram.

Bla Mela Kantri

Mela wek im luk la olwan stail en nyuwan stail. Mela luk la kantri en koltja bla mela wek, mikstimapbat olwan en nyuwan.

Longtaim, loda difrendifren traib bin gaman la ol mishin, bla bi seif burrum ola munanga hu bin kilimbat blakbala. Til didei, mela stil gadim bigmob traib jidanbat la Ropa. Mela Ngalakgan, Alawa, Mangarrayi, Ngandi, Marra, Warndarrang, Nunggubuyu, Ritharrngu-Wägilak en Rembarrnga pipul, en mela gulu mijel Yugul Manggi mijimit.

Yu gin luk dis histri la ola atwek la Ngukurr Arts. Ebirribodi gadim difrendifren stail. Ebirribodi peintim difrendifren ting na. Bat wan ting im seim la ebirribodi stail, im ol brabili braitwan en strongbalawan.

Mela olpipul laik Ginger Riley, Gertie Huddlestone, Sambo Barra Barra en Maureen Thomson bin ol feimis bla yusim loda braitwan kala en burdiwan stail bla shoum alabat kantri. Mela stil bulurum alabat didei la Ngukurr Arts.

Dijan eksibishin im Bla Mela Kantri.

Bla mela kantri brabili impotin la mela. Mela kantri im mela laif. Mela peinting ma shoum mela eksperiens la kantri na.

Disma peinting im bla shoum ebirribodi, munanga en blakbala, wi kantri. Bat im rili bla lenim mela beginini mob bla koltja du.

Wen mela peintim kantri mela gibit mesij la mela beginini, im dali alabat dat kantri im impotinwan.

Main Abija – new children's book from renowned Ngukurr artist and author Karen Rogers

'Dijan buk gada ola memri ai bin abum gada main abija from wen ai bin lilgel til imin libu wi. Imin titjim mi loda tings bla koltja en bla kantri. Mi hepi ba pasim det stori la main femili en bla pudum la dis buk.'

KAREN Rogers' first picture book, Main Abija (My Grandad) is a beautiful tribute to a much-loved grandfather and a celebration of the artist's culture, country and the circle of life. It is told in Kriol and English.

With luscious artwork and a lyrical text in Kriol and English, celebrated Ngukurr artist Karen Rogers evokes the world of her childhood in a remote part of the Northern Territory. Her story is a beautiful celebration of a special relationship, showing how culture is passed on from generation to generation.

Karen Rogers comes from Ngukurr Community in South East Arnhem Land

in the Northern Territory. She lives with her family and has five children, eight grandkids and one great-grandson. Karen studies Visual Arts at the Batchelor Institute and is inspired by her grandmother and sisters, who were all artists.

Karen works with textiles, glass and canvas and is currently working on animation and loves learning new skills and different art forms. In 2018, she was artist in residence at Glassworks, Canberra, and in 2020 she received a Creative Fellowship from Arts NT. Main Abija (My Grandad) is her first picture book.

'This book has the

memories I had of my grandfather from when I was small until he left us. He taught me many things about culture and country.

'My grandfather touched my heart. I hope everybody can have a chance to love one grandparent that way.' I'm happy to pass this story on to my family and to put it in this book.'



'Gone Fishing' by Karen Rogers



Karen Rogers (left) who wrote 'Main Abija My Grandad' with her mum and daughter

Have you seen a Brush-tailed Rabbit-rat?

THE brush-tailed rabbit-rat may have a funny name but scientists and Aboriginal rangers across the Top End are keen to find the remaining populations of this once-common and widespread small mammal.

Research suggests that the rabbit-rat arrived in Australia around five million years ago and was common across the monsoonal areas of northern Australia up until recently.

It has now disappeared from most areas and is only known to persist in several small relict populations off the north coast of Arnhem Land, on Groote Eylandt, the Tiwi Islands and Coburg Peninsula, and high-rainfall areas of the Kimberley.

Brush-tailed rabbit-rats have a long tail with a bushy tip that can be either black or white (on the Tiwi Islands) and are about the size of an

adult person's hand. They have big ears and eyes and their fur is brown on their back and creamy-coloured on their belly.

They like to live in tall woollybutt and stringybark forests but can also be found in coastal areas with she-oaks, pandanus and grasslands. They prefer areas that haven't been heavily burnt and don't like living in areas with lots of speargrass.

The main threats to the rabbit-rat are feral cats, hot late season fires and overgrazing by livestock and ferals.

The rabbit-rat is listed as a 'vulnerable' species for Australia, and 'endangered' in the Northern Territory.

If you see – or think you've seen – the brush-tailed rabbit-rat in your area please report any sightings and locations to your local ranger group.



If you've seen a rabbit-rat recently please tell your local ranger group



Rangers on Inglis Island hold a cage with a rabbit-rat

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Baluka Maymuru, *Gonj Wapitja*, 2018, natural pigments on wood, digital file. Purchased 2018, Telstra Collection, MAGNT Collection.

Drawings of Aboriginal stockman Charlie Flannigan on display

A Little Bit of Justice - Drawings by Charlie Flannigan highlights the story of an Aboriginal prisoner – the first person to be executed in the Northern Territory – at Darwin's Fannie Bay Gaol in 1893.

The exhibition features 22 of his drawings depicting various scenes from his life, all carried out whilst in solitary confinement. It is the first

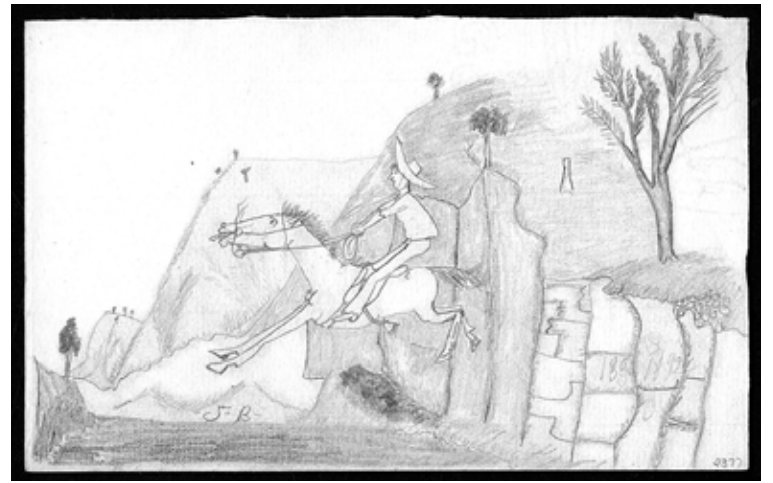
time Charlie Flannigan's drawings have been shown together.

Presenting themes of racial conflict and the injustice of early Northern Territory history, they provide a rare glimpse into the life of an Aboriginal stockman.

Charlie Flannigan was born around 1865 on a cattle station called Marion Downs in the Diamantina region in central Queensland. His

mother was an Aboriginal woman from the area, possibly a Maiawali or Karuwali woman, and his father was an Irishman.

He is also believed to have spent time with travelling families working on cattle stations. As a young man he worked as a stockman droving and mustering on stations in the Victoria River District.



'Horseman leaping from a cliff', 1892 by Charlie Flannigan

When and where: Until 27 June, 2021 at Northern Territory Library (Parliament House). Free.

Health and safety the priority at Garma 2021

THE 22nd annual Garma Festival will be a COVID-safe event with strict compliance measures in place to protect the health and safety of those on site, the Yothu Yindi Foundation (YYF) said today.

Announcing the dates of Garma 2021, YYF CEO and Festival Director Denise Bowden said there would also be a cap on General Admission and Corporate ticket sales, to help limit the number of people travelling to Arnhem Land from interstate, and accommodate reduced capacity at Gulkula.

"The health and safety of our people and our communities is the number one priority as we plan for this year's event," Mrs Bowden said.

"YYF is preparing for every possible contingency, and we proceed with an abundance of caution while the pandemic threat remains.

"We're consulting with the relevant authorities and

agencies as we develop a comprehensive COVID- safe plan, and we look forward to sharing more details of that in the weeks ahead."

This year's Garma will take place from 30 July to 2 August at Gulkula in northeast Arnhem Land. Ticket registrations opened on 10 February through the Garma and YYF websites.

"Unfortunately, we have no choice but to limit the number of tickets available for General Admission and Corporate guests, as there will be reduced capacity on site to accommodate COVID compliance measures," Mrs Bowden said.

"Strict caps will be in place on all ticket types except community passes, so that organisers can ensure the health and safety of all attendees.

"People who bought tickets last year and who opted to roll their registration over for Garma 2021 will have their tickets honoured this year."


Mrs Bowden said YYF was also exploring ways of delivering parts of the event online for those who can't attend in person.


"Nothing can quite match the magic of being on site at Gulkula, but providing a digital platform gives us the opportunity to bring even more people into the Garma conversation."





Pack your bags for Garma 2021, which kicks off 30 July at Gulkula. Credit: Peter Eve/YYF

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NLC's Regional Development crew at Jabiru, February 2021



NLC's Executive Services staff at a workshop, March 2021



Gone fishing! Nourlangie Bridge, February 2021



Rangers undertake compliance training at Batchelor, March 2021



Lewis Gittoes, NLC Regional Coordinator at Borroloola



Emma Jackson, Xavier Espiau, Ashley Perez and Jamie Damaso at Batchelor



Yugal Mangi Rangers Cherryanne Daniels, Roger Thompson and Dana Gumbula



Mardbalk Rangers Nicholas Hunter and Charmaine Mininkirrkir

A tribute to Mr Lamilami

by Professor Paul Tacon



Djulirri rock paintings

THE late Mr Lamilami had a rich and remarkable life, engaging in many activities and career paths to benefit his community.

He also had a passion for his traditional lands, cultural heritage and history. But although he wanted them protected from any sort of natural or human-made threat he also was keen to share his culture and heritage with the outside world. He believed that, through education and raising awareness about the importance of his cultural heritage, other people would help him look after it for future generations.

This led him to work with a number of archaeologists, historians, linguists, film-makers and other Balanda (non-Aboriginal) experts.

But he was not simply a Traditional Owner giving permission for research as he enjoyed fully engaging with it directly by participating in fieldwork, making decisions on how research would proceed, contributing to and co-authoring academic publications, and participating in a number of films, including two episodes of the 2013 four-part award-winning documentary *First Footprints* about the 60,000-year history of Aboriginal Australia.

He gave lectures, occasionally at universities

but more often to visitors to his traditional clan estate, Namunidjbuk, in northwest Arnhem Land and mentored a new generation of rock art researchers.

Mr Lamilami was particularly passionate about rock art, especially the hundreds of sites and many thousands of images scattered across Namunidjbuk. This led to him becoming a key player in two major Australian Research Council funded research projects that commenced in 2008, *Picturing Change* that focused on rock art made after the arrival of Macassans and Europeans, and *Baijini*, Macassans, Balanda and Bininj, that looked at the history of encounter between his ancestors and outsiders from across seas and oceans. Rock art was recorded and some rock shelters excavated.

Through the course of this research time and again Mr Lamilami would say that rock art sites were like books full of stories and really big sites were libraries with records of everyone who had passed through the region.

Mr Lamilami was particularly passionate about Djulirri, a rock art complex with over 3,000 paintings, stencils and figures made of native beeswax and one of Australia's most spectacular rock art sites.

He was interested in how old some of the ships depicted at Djulirri were, particularly two Macassan wooden sailing vessels known as perahus. His ancestors had interacted with Macassan visitors in search of trepang and other resources for hundreds of years and there were many family stories about this as well as evidence of trepang processing camps on the shore near Mr Lamilami's outstation.

He was instrumental in research that dated a painting of a Macassan perahu at Djulirri to the late 1500s or early 1600s, helping to rewrite the history of contact between Aboriginal people and southeast Asia. This research, of which he was co-author, made world headlines with hundreds of news reports and special features in magazines, including a prestigious American publication, *Archaeology*.

In 2011, Djulirri was included on the NT Heritage Register. Mr Lamilami said at the time: "One of the most extraordinary rock art complexes in the Territory – in terms of pigment rock art, it is the largest, most varied and historically significant across Australia".

Djulirri was then nominated for National Heritage listing in 2011 by the NT government, and

again in 2016. It is in the final stages of assessment and Mr Lamilami was hoping for an announcement of its success later this year.

Another major contribution by Mr Lamilami, in terms of teaching the world about rock art, is the inclusion of rock art in the then Google Art Project, launched in early 2012. He worked closely with myself to include over 70 photographs of Djulirri. By persuading Google to add a rock art gallery to the over 150 built art galleries and museums profiling their works a huge global audience was reached in a totally innovative way.

At the Canberra launch Mr Lamilami told ABC News: "Having those rock arts, you know, being displayed in a sort of a modern technology I think it's a good educational tool".

Photographs of rock art from Djulirri and other Namunidjbuk sites later featured in an exhibition at the Sarawak Museum, Kuching in 2013 and Mr Lamilami's son Patrick helped by contributing a didgeridoo, painting in the gallery and participating in a special celebration at the museum in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia.

In 2014, Mr Lamilami was a participant in a rock art workshop sponsored by the Getty Conservation Institute (USA) in Kakadu National Park. During the 10-day meeting, 28 rock art conservation, management and tourism specialists from across Australia and overseas met with Aboriginal people from NSW, north Queensland, central Australia, the Pilbara and various parts of the Top End to share their perspectives, concerns and ideas about the future of rock art conservation and management.

The workshop included a special visit to another significant Namunidjbuk rock art site, Malarrak, led by Mr Lamilami. A strategy to assist in the ongoing protection and preservation

of rock art sites as part of a holistic program within living cultural landscapes was then developed and in 2015 made available as a free downloadable publication. Once again, Lamilami was leading the way in the protection of rock art, not only for his country, but for Australia and the world.

In 2016, a new Australian Research Council project called *History Places* began, with a focus on Namunidjbuk rock art over 5,000 years of age, with related archaeological excavation. This project involved many of Mr Lamilami's children and grandchildren in the field research and culminated in a major paper Mr Lamilami co-authored, published in 2020. It focuses on a previously undescribed rock art style found in northwest Arnhem Land called *Maliwawa Figures*, a name given to the style by Mr Lamilami. This too made world headlines and another feature in the magazine *Archaeology*.

Mr Lamilami was keen to share his rock art heritage with children. A major project throughout 2020 was a community-focused book with lots of photographs of rock art of Namunidjbuk.

The whole Namunidjbuk rock art sequence is presented in the form of a story told by Mr Lamilami and myself. This was completed late in 2020 and copies were distributed to schools, family and friends.

His passion for his country and for educating others about its importance continued throughout his life.

Mr Lamilami has left his family, community, Territorians, Australians and the larger world a great heritage legacy and no doubt stories of this will be told for many years to come.

*Prof Paul S.C. Taçon
FAHA FSA is an ARC Australian Laureate Fellow, Chair in Rock Art Research and Professor of Anthropology and Archaeology, Griffith University, Queensland.



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