



NORTHERN
LAND COUNCIL

MEDIA RELEASE

Our Land, Our Sea, Our Life

King Stingray headlines concert to celebrate 50 years of the Northern Land Council

13 September 2023

The Northern Land Council is set to launch celebrations marking 50 years since the inaugural meeting of its first Full Council.

The meeting of 26 representatives from across the Top End took place at the Anglican Christ Church, now the site of the Christ Church Cathedral, on the corner of Smith Street and the Esplanade in Darwin on 25-26 September 1973.

The meeting was in response to the release of an interim report by Justice Woodward who had been appointed by the newly elected Whitlam Labor government 'to find an appropriate way to recognise the traditional rights and interests of Aboriginal people in and to the land'.

The NLC will commemorate the occasion with an invitation-only ceremony at the original site at 9.30am Friday 29 September 2023, followed by a free public concert later that day at State Square, Parliament House Darwin.

Headlined by King Stingray, the concert will see performances from Mumbali, Wildfire Manwurrk, Wairuk Band and The Mystics, alongside cultural performances and historic images from the land rights movement and 50-year history of the NLC.

Quotes attributable to Northern Land Council Chair Dr Samuel Bush-Blanasi

- It's a privilege to be Chair of the NLC in 2023 as we mark 50 years since the first meeting of our representatives.
- They fought hard for the recognition of our traditional law, culture and land rights
- The history of Aboriginal land rights would look very different without the NLC and the achievements gained on the backs of the first Full Council.
- Over the next few years we will mark other significant 50-year milestones – the official incorporation of the NLC in 1974, the start of land claim hearings in 1975, and the passage of the Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act in 1976 and its introduction in January 1977 – and will celebrate with events across our regions.
- We acknowledge 50 years since the inaugural meeting of the first NLC Full Council and commemorate the strong Aboriginal leaders who stepped forward to represent their communities and fight for their traditionally owned lands and seas.

- This history and leadership continues to guide us as we walk towards the future.
- The NLC is as necessary today as it was 50 years ago in the ongoing fight to recognise the land ownership of Aboriginal people, and it will only become more so over the next 50 years as we support Aboriginal people to protect, maintain and benefit from their land holdings.
- We look forward to celebrating with our current elected representatives, our constituents, families and the general public at the free concert on Friday 29 September.

The names of the first attendees (including representatives from the Tiwi Islands and Groote Eylandt who went on to form their own land councils) were:

- Chair, Silas Roberts – Maningrida (Chairman)
 - Deputy Chair, John Gwadbu – Goulburn Island
 - Secretary, Ruth Paul – Bagot
 - Dick Malwagu – Croker Island
 - Frank Gulamanamana – Kopanga
 - John Baya – Milingimbi
 - Stephen Bunbay Jnr – Galiwin’ku
 - Wali Wunungmurra – Yirrkala
 - Lindsay Joshua – Numbulwar
 - Douglas Daniels – Ngukurr
 - Silas Maralingura – Oenpelli
 - Victor Jackinimba (Hood) – Beswick
 - Felix Bunduk – Port Keats
 - Harry Wilson – Daly River
 - Harry Singh – Delissaville
 - Jack Isaac – Borrooloola
 - Peter Parrmiripal – Mudginberri
 - Snowy Ponto – Roper Valley
 - Allan Young – Victoria River Downs
 - Jack Cotton – Brunette Downs
 - Captain Andrew – Bamyili
 - Harry Munkara – Bathurst Island
 - Billy Hetherington – Snake Bay
 - Albert Tipungwuti – Garden Point;
 - Terry Meruyrwan – Angurugu, and
 - Clancy Wurramaminjamanja – Umbakumba
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