

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS STORYBOOK



CELEBRATING & SHARING
GOOD NEWS STORIES
The Kimberley Edition





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Edition No.5

ISBN number: 978-0-9924807-1-4

© July 2014 Public Health Advocacy Institute WA - Publication Design by Makomedia, Fremantle WA

Acknowledgements

PHAIWA would like to thank The Government of Western Australia and Healthway for their support, confidence and financial contributions towards the development of the Indigenous Storybook series. This Storybook would not have been possible without the support from our Advisory Committee who oversee the concept.

Special thanks to:

- Ray Christophers
- Lyn Dimer
- Juli Coffin
- Dave Pigram

Finally, PHAIWA would like to sincerely thank all the storytellers who contributed their experiences and stories. Special thanks to Sunni Wilson and Melissa Stoneham from PHAIWA for providing the coordination roles.

Cover Photo - Photo Credit Rod Hartvigsen

The area where the cover photo was taken has special cultural significance to the traditional owners of Walmadan.

This photograph is taken at Walmadan on the Dampier Peninsula. Walmadan was a powerful leader (Marban) of his people and he was living at Walmadan where the late Paddy Roe met him and his people. Walmadan taught Paddy Roe about Country; how to look after it and how to maintain his law and culture. Walmadan (and his people) were the last remaining people from that particular era as all of the young people had been taken away to live at the Beagle Bay Mission.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the fifth edition of the WA Indigenous Storybook which focuses on the beautiful East and West Kimberley regions. Every time I proof a Storybook, I am overwhelmed with a sense of inspiration, hope and positiveness. Producing these Storybooks is one of the great delights of my job and I look forward to each edition with anticipation and a strong feeling of pride.

There are so many positive stories to tell from our Aboriginal communities and we are again privileged to showcase a selection of these in this edition of the Storybook. From the stunning coastline of the Dampier Peninsula with spectacular views out to the Buccaneer Archipelago, to the tropical delights and spectacular ranges around Kununurra, this edition includes 14 stories that have changed lives. These positive experiences of Aboriginal communities simply don't get told enough, which is why it is so important that we celebrate and share these stories with you.

We have included four personal journeys in this storybook. They tell the stories of Mark Bin Bakar, Albert Wiggan, Russell Bandy and Garry Sibosado – all very different individuals, yet each one in their own style, is committed to maintaining and promoting their culture and the wellbeing of Aboriginal people.

Some of the innovative projects showcased in this edition include a community garden project in Kalumburu, which is Western Australia's most remote and isolated community, the story of Tomorrowgirl which is a short story competition for Indigenous girls which was won by 14 year old student Shania Willett from Halls Creek and the story of Waringarri Radio which is based in Kununurra and which started life from a transportable studio in 1986 but is now a highly successful Aboriginal owned and operated radio station.

No less important are the other stories in the book, which all describe positive journeys and illustrate how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and projects really are making a difference to the lives of the people in their communities and keeping culture close to home. In this edition, we feature stories that describe eco-tourism and cultural tours, media facilities, environmental stewardship, healthy communities and innovative social programs.

The Public Health Advocacy Institute of WA (PHAIWA), together with our key partner Healthway are very proud to be associated with the authors and contributors acknowledged in this Storybook. From the very first Storybook right through to the fifth edition, we have and continue to, acknowledge the book as a terrific way to recognise and celebrate the often invisible projects that positively influence the lives of others.

The next Storybook is planned for the Gascoyne Region, with a focus on Carnarvon which is well known for its banana plantations, tropical fruits, fine seafood and warm climate. PHAIWA welcomes all stories that focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues – whether these are individual stories or those that have affected whole communities. If you would like to contribute your story please contact PHAIWA at www.phaiwa.org.au



ABOUT THE KIMBERLEY REGION



- The Kimberley is the northernmost region of Western Australia and covers an area of approximately 421,451 square kilometres^[1]
- The Kimberley region has a population density of around one person per 12.5 square kilometres compared to an Australian population density of around 35 people^[2]
- The region consists of four local government areas and includes the towns of Broome, Derby, Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek, Wyndham and Kununurra where the majority of the population lives^[1,3]
- The Kimberley region was first inhabited about 40,000 years ago^[2]
- Of the total population in the Kimberley, 40 per cent are Indigenous persons. This is approximately 11,500 people^[1,3]
- Almost one quarter of the total Indigenous population in Western Australia live in the Kimberley^[1]
- Today, more than 30 Aboriginal tribes remain in the Kimberley region, each with its own language and many with unique cultural practices^[4]
- There are over 100 Indigenous communities of various population sizes, scattered throughout the region^[3]
- The median age of Indigenous people in the Kimberley region is 22 compared to a State median of 36^[2]
- Geographically, this region features arid desert areas, spectacular gorges and river valleys, beautiful beaches, pockets of rainforest and extensive cave systems^[3]
- Four wetlands in the Kimberley are recognised for their global significance and listed under the Ramsar Convention.^[2] These are the Ord River Floodplain, Lake Argyle and Kununurra, Roebuck Bay and Eight-mile Beach
- The 'tropical summer' or wet season from November to April, delivers 90 per cent of the region's rainfall^[2]
- The Kimberley has 80 per cent of the States total divertible water resources, however, less than 1 per cent is currently being utilised^[2]
- Towns in the Kimberley have between 250 – 320 days every year where it reaches above 30 degrees^[2]
- The Kimberley has a diverse economy, with the major contributors to economic output of the area including mining, tourism, agriculture, and pearling^[3]
- About 50 per cent of the region is held under pastoral lease for grazing stock^[2]
- The hydroelectric power generation station is operating at the Ord River Dam; it is the largest single contributor to renewal energy electricity generation in northern WA^[2]
- The Argyle Diamond Mine is the world's largest diamond mine^[2]
- In 1985 Gold was discovered near Halls Creek^[2]

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NYUL NYUL RANGERS

ORGANISATION NAME:

Nyul Nyul Rangers

CONTACT PERSON:

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PROGRAM / PROJECT PARTNERS:

Kimberley Land Council

KEY STAFF/PEOPLE INVOLVED:

Mark Rothery- Ranger Coordinator; Dale Marshall –Admin; Yoshi Akune- Head Ranger; Brendan Smith- Senior Ranger; Rangers – Albert Wiggan, Ninjana Walsham, Preston Cox, Zynal Cox, Aaron Cox

KEY WORDS:

Caring for Country

About the storyteller...

This story was told by the Nyul Nyul Ranger Cultural Advisory Committee-comprised of local traditional owners (TOs), Yoshi Akune- Head Ranger, Albert Wiggan – Ranger/ PR, Dale Marshall Admin, Senior Ranger -Brendan Smith, Rangers – Ninjana Walsham, Preston Cox, Zynal Cox, Aaron Cox and the Kimberley Land Council (KLC) Ranger Coordinator - Mark Rothery.

About the Nyul Nyul Rangers...

The Nyul Nyul Rangers are based out of Beagle Bay and look after the Nyul Nyul Land and Sea Country of the Dampier Peninsula. The land component is a commonwealth declared “Beagle Bay Aboriginal Reserve”, and is subject to Native Title claim. The Rangers are funded by the Working on Country program, and undertake strategic fire management, weed programs, and visitor management, as well as freshwater monitoring and management, and bilby, gouldian finch, crocodile, and turtle monitoring and management as part of their Healthy Country work plan. They look after their coastal dune systems and protect their cultural sites. Together with their key partners, they undertake quarantine surveys and manage their coastal monsoon vine thickets- a nationally declared endangered ancient rainforest ecosystem.



Putting up signs

Once upon a time...

around six years ago, the community of Beagle Bay on the Dampier Peninsula identified that there was a need to care for and monitor Country so they established a ranger group and called it the Nyul Nyul Rangers. Historically, this particular Country was run as a pastoral station for roughly 100 years and handed back to Aboriginal people as a



natural reserve. There was a lot of damage done to the landscape during this period, and the Country is currently still in a restoration phase from the effects of pastoral history. Our work as rangers is to restore it back to its former condition, as the essence of a ranger's work is Healthy Country. We see ourselves as 'Healthy Country' rangers. Today, we have nine staff, of which seven are rangers. We have a committee that is comprised of Traditional Owners (TO's) and community Elders which we call the Cultural Advisory Committee who guide and steer our work. In May each year, we have a meeting with the Traditional Owners of the Cultural Advisory Committee, to determine what to focus on and what needs to be achieved.



“Our aim as rangers is to look after our Country for future generations. It’s important because Country is a big part of who we are. It’s an honour and a privilege for us to maintain our responsibility as Indigenous people on our land. The unique relationship that we have with the natural environment is something that we feel is rare and preserving our way of life and our traditional beliefs and principles is vitally important to us.”

This information is then put into our Work Plan which is a five year plan that guides our tasks and timeline. For example the TO’s may tell us they want us to identify and register every heritage site on Country which may be a five year process. The work plan is modified each year according to what the TO’s determine to be a priority.

The funding to implement our ranger program is all under the Working on Country budget and facilitated through The Kimberley Land Council in Broome.



Fire management

And then one day...

once our ranger group was officially established, we got busy immediately. Our work is always varied and is often determined by environmental and biodiversity factors. We undertake strategic fire management, weed mapping and management as well as freshwater monitoring and management of our wetlands and spring system. Our primary aim is to ensure we are looking after our coastal dune system and ultimately protecting our cultural sites. We also undertake quarantine surveys and manage the coastal monsoon vine thickets in conjunction with our key partners. We also conduct fresh water monitoring, bilby and gouldian finch research, biodiversity surveys, and crocodile patrol and tourist management. It is interesting and often fun work!

There is always a lot of work to do on Country and although our workload is enormous, our day to day operations are relatively flexible. Things are always popping up that need our attention. For example, if we’re committed to managing monsoonal vine thickets for a week but one of our rangers sees a B\ bilby down the road, we drop what we are doing and focus on bilby monitoring as bilby’s are a priority due to their highly endangered status.

On a weekly basis, we have meetings and discuss our aims for the day and week ahead. During one day we may carry out five different jobs. One of the primary tasks is to conduct a beach patrol where we pick up marine and foreign debris and rubbish on the beaches and try to identify it. Everything we do on a day to day basis is recorded and stored on an IT





handheld tablet called an I-tracker (or cyber-tracker). Once we upload all the data to a computer it can be analysed and interpreted. It's an excellent piece of technology for our particular type of work as we can record data and acquire GPS readings. The I-tracker reveals where we have been and what we have been doing on Country and is an important and accurate representation of our work. It's fantastic to be able to jump out of the car, head down a bilby track and have the resources to record data immediately. We call ourselves environmental detectives!

And because of that...

we love what we do. We have established several excellent partnerships with other organisations in the last six years. For example, we work closely with The Northern Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance / Northern Environment Regional Program (NAILSMA-NERP) who have identified this region as being a place of abundant freshwater springs which hasn't been researched before, and we assist them in this work. We monitor freshwater systems in the region, check for quality, and conduct comprehensive research of microorganisms which we can't see with the naked eye. That's just one example of a successful partnership that we've established, and that we will continue in the future.

One of the most important things we are trying to do at the moment is to implement an effective, culturally appropriate fire management program. Fire management is an important step in the restoration and regeneration of the native environment. We have a different approach to the pastoralists whose system was to burn indiscriminately. Historically the pastoralists introduced the idea that it's normal to have fires and burn off land but we don't view that as a healthy practice. It's not the old way, we have a different way of managing fire in Country and it's focused on protecting rare and endangered species, preserving the old growth trees, and burning in the early dry season for Good Fire.

When we undertake the cultural heritage assessments, we get to discover the proper names of



The Rangers (L-R) Aaron Cox, Mark Rothery, Zynal Cox, Albert Wiggan, Dale Marshall

Country and where our family is from. It's incredible to think that we as Aboriginal people have defied sometimes insurmountable odds regarding the destruction of our Country and identity. We have such a strong pull to our Country and our culture and 130 years later here we are, stronger and more determined than ever.

And since that day...

we are ultimately hoping to be more independent so we can establish our own management and Caring for Country plan. We'd like to apply for our funding directly so we have financial autonomy. The other direction we are potentially headed in is tourism and we are currently considering how to implement a tourist management plan. Our natural lagoon is our biggest draw card for tourists, as is the Beagle Bay shell lime clad church known for its beauty and simplicity. Several rangers will need to undertake training in order to attain their skipper's license so we can take tourists out on charters.

Last year at our annual music festival we revived a traditional practice and danced a Corroboree for the first time in 74 years. It was an exciting celebration, particularly for the Elders who had not witnessed that in their lifetime because it had been banished from this land. Being able to bring back such an important ceremonial tradition and dance our songs 130 years down the track was very empowering for our people.

Even though we are rangers in our day job, we have a very holistic approach to our work that encompasses culture and family. We are all from this Country and we care about what we do because we all want to live in a healthy community. It's important for people to understand when the Trappist monks established a mission at Beagle Bay in 1890 and introduced the assimilation program, a lot of people from that generation were taught that being in Country and practicing their culture was false. They were forced to convert to Christianity and the western way of living. However, it's really important to acknowledge that today, several generations later, we are now bringing back our language, recognising and identifying where our sacred places are, reopening those sacred grounds and relearning the stories that reflect these sites; our traditional stories and Dreamtime stories. In a sense, the rehabilitation of our Country is not only happening on a physical level but on a spiritual and emotional level.

Our aim as rangers is to look after our Country for future generations. It's important because Country is a big part of who we are. It's an honour and a privilege for us to maintain our responsibility as Indigenous people on our land. The unique relationship that we have with the natural environment is something that we feel is rare and preserving our way of life and our traditional beliefs and principles is vitally important to us.



Did you know?

Beagle Bay is a small Indigenous community that was founded in 1890 by French Trappist monks, who had come to the 'new' land of Australia to work and convert Aboriginal people to Christianity.



Marine Debris Patrol



On Patrol

KICKING GOALS

ORGANISATION NAME:

Clontarf, Durack Institute of Technology,
Geraldton Senior College

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PROGRAM / PROJECT PARTNERS:

The organisations listed above form the Midwest Clontarf Academy through a partnership

KEY STAFF / PEOPLE INVOLVED:

- Katie Clune and Craig Allen; Durack Literacy and Numeracy Lecturers
- The Clontarf Midwest Senior Campus Director; Ian Taylor and his staff.
- The Principal, Deputies and Staff at the GSC

KEY WORDS:

Meaningful education, team work, relationships, healthy lifestyle, employment, independence

About the storyteller...

Katie Clune is the Literacy Lecturer at The Midwest Clontarf Academy Durack.

About the Clontarf Football Academy...

The Clontarf Foundation is a not for profit organisation that exists to improve the education, discipline, life skills, self-esteem and employment prospects of young Aboriginal men and by doing so equips them to participate meaningfully in society.



The Clontarf specific Awards night, held at the Lighthouse Church. The students had been called to the stage to be congratulated on their graduation



DURACK
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Once upon a time...

In 1986, the Clontarf Aboriginal College commenced operating as a co-educational College for Indigenous Australian youth. For almost 14 years, enrolments were low and the attendance and retention of students at the College were extremely poor. However in 2000, the Clontarf Foundation established its inaugural Academy at the school and the impact was immediate. The Clontarf Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation formed in partnership with local schools in the region which

targets Aboriginal boys who are educationally at risk. The boys are offered an opportunity to succeed academically through participation in either Australian Rules Football or Rugby League. The premise behind Clontarf is that by tapping into the passion that many Aboriginal boys have for football, the Foundation can attract more of these boys back to school and retain them there. However, the sporting program that Clontarf offers is just one aspect of the program, education always comes first. Football takes up a small portion of school time; it is viewed as an extrinsic motivator to education.



Zade Connell and Kevin Seelander

And then one day...

since opening its first Academy for 25 participants on the campus of the Clontarf Aboriginal College, the Foundation has grown rapidly and now operates in 55 schools in Western Australia, the Northern Territory, New South Wales and Victoria. Each Clontarf Academy is funded in approximately equal proportions from the Federal Government, the relevant State or Territory Governments and the private sector. This allows the Foundation to remain independent. The Clontarf Foundation aims to improve the education, life skills, self-esteem and employment prospects of the students through developing positive attitudes and encouraging behavioural change. Clontarf offers students a broad range of extra-curricular activities to expose them to a wide range of life experiences to challenge and develop their character. The overall goal of the program is to equip the boys with the skills they require to achieve better life outcomes and to grasp employment opportunities once they graduate.

The boys are involved in leadership camps and personal development activities throughout the year. We provide the opportunity to travel interstate on regional tours, school camps, inter-Academy events and excursions and the boys are mentored throughout all the excursions and activities. Towards the end of 2003, Clontarf opened its Geraldton site and at the end of 2004, three Indigenous male students associated with the Midwest Football Academy completed Year 12. The unique partnership between Clontarf, the Central West College of TAFE (now Durack) and the Geraldton Senior College resulted in the establishment of the Kicking Goals senior school engagement program. This program has been adapted and refined over the last decade with a range of strategies in place to encourage the

boys to stay in school. The program has increased the number of classes due to demand, changed the curriculum to meet the literacy and numeracy needs of the group and ensured that the learning program is more culturally appropriate. There is now an incredible team of support staff including teachers and mentoring staff. Many of the mentors at the Clontarf- Midwest Football Academy are Aboriginal and are able to provide an excellent cultural support network for the boys, which means they are receiving a tailored education on site with the support of people from their own culture. As a result, enrolment figures have dramatically increased.

One of Clontarf's partners; Durack Institute of Technology, is responsible for delivering the core subjects of literacy and numeracy to all the boys enrolled. I came on board in 2013 as the Durack Literacy Lecturer/Teacher to deliver the WACE curriculum and the Certificate of General Education. As part of their curriculum, the boys undertake literacy based tasks for an entire day every week.

And because of that...

local businesses have provided support which is fundamental to the program. We have an excellent network of industry partners who support us, including a group of local businesses. The partnerships we form are crucial to the boys' employment prospects as many of them go on to secure jobs and traineeships with our industry partners.



Katie Clune and Gary Scott

To facilitate this transition, Clontarf employs an Employment Operations Officer whose role is to liaise with the industry partners and provide support to the graduates. They also facilitate an employment forum and discuss employment pathways with the boys. Whatever path they choose after graduation, whether it's undertaking further study, securing employment or vocational training, the Employment Operations Officer provides support throughout the job application process. Once they are employed, the Officer continues to offer guidance until the graduate becomes comfortable with his new job and surroundings.

Graduating high school has an enormous impact on the boys' lives and the choices they make in their future. There is a strong link between completing Year 12 and decreased rates of Aboriginal males in prison. It's not just the academic aspect of learning that changes these boys; it's the personal growth that comes from the mentorship they receive and being involved in a positive program which develops their independence and confidence.

And since that day...

we recently made history! Last November the Midwest Football Academy celebrated the graduation of their Year 12 students. A total of 29 boys received their certificate of completion, 22 of which achieved the Western Australian Certificate of Education. We had 100 people attend the graduation ceremony including family, distinguished guests and staff from the Durack Institute of Technology, Geraldton Senior College, John Willcock College and Clontarf Foundation. Clontarf CEO Gerard Neesham was overcome with pride at the success of the Geraldton Academy. Of the 48 Clontarf Academies in Australia, Geraldton has now set a national record for its number of graduates and standards of education. In 10 years we've gone from three boys graduating in 2004 to 29 in 2013, which is a remarkable achievement.

Throughout the evening students from Year 8 through to 12 received awards in the categories of 'Most Outstanding', 'Attendance', 'Encouragement', Clontarf Spirit and the Anthony Cogan Academic Award. On graduation night when the year's work with the students culminates, there is such a sense of gratification that comes from being a part of this program. The success of the Midwest Clontarf Academy is attributed to a collaborative effort between Clontarf, Durack Institute of Technology and the Geraldton Senior College.



The students are preparing for the Geraldton Senior College leavers assembly at the Cultural Centre with the Director of the Geraldton Academy and staff Dan Toner and Edie Maher

CEO Gerard Neesham 'nailed it' when he said that the unique partnership facilitates education to take place in a safe environment with quality staff. Mr Neesham believes that of the 300 boys enrolled in Year 12 this year, two or three might get drafted into the AFL; every one of the others will be placed in a job - most commonly apprenticeships, and that one or two first university goers will emerge. The education program is so fulfilling because it not only empowers Indigenous males to sustain meaningful positions in the workforce, but it also helps them develop the skills and confidence to positively contribute to society. In that regard, the benefits of the Geraldton Clontarf program are far-reaching in that it improves outcomes for the individual and the wider community. The Academy Awards night was a humble reminder of how fortunate I am to be a part of the operations of the Midwest Clontarf Academy. Our staff, including all the stakeholders involved in the Academy, are incredibly supportive and passionate and the boys are wonderful characters with an array of talents and personalities.

"The education program is so fulfilling because it not only empowers Indigenous males to sustain meaningful positions in the workforce, but it also helps them develop the skills and confidence to positively contribute to society."



WARINGARRI RADIO

ORGANISATION NAME:

Waringarri Media Aboriginal Corporation

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PROGRAM / PROJECT PARTNERS:

ORIC, APRA/AMCOS

KEY STAFF / PEOPLE INVOLVED:

Rowena Alexander

KEY WORDS:

Indigenous broadcasting, employment, training, communication, East Kimberley

About the storyteller...

Rowena Alexander is a mother of three and has lived in the East Kimberley most of her life. She is Gooniyandi (Fitzroy Valley) from her Grandmother's side and Ngarinman from her Grandfather's ancestry. She first came to Waringarri Radio in 2001 as a cleaner and is now back as the Station Manager. The bulk of her life's work experience has come from eight years with Rio Tinto; however she has held jobs in landcare, aged care, child care and women's advocacy. She enjoys volunteering in her community and hanging out with family and friends. She loves working back in the entertainment industry, connecting community through music, information, culture and good old fashioned fun!



Once upon a time...

In 1986, the ABC provided Waringarri Radio with a transportable studio to begin an Aboriginal radio station and by 1987 it was completely operational. For a couple of years, the station was run out of the transportable studio and then in 1989 it was expanded to two dongers, a studio and an administration building. Primary funding support was and continues to come from the State government programmes.

Over the years the organisation has gone through several incarnations. Originally the radio station was part of the Waringarri Resource Centre which operated as the umbrella body for several organisations including Waringarri Arts, and the Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre. However in 2000, the station became an incorporated body of its own, and was re-

About Waringarri Radio...

Waringarri Radio 6WR is a successful locally owned and operated Aboriginal Media Organisation committed to achieving excellence. Waringarri Radio broadcasts to the major towns and remote grazing and outback communities of Australia's East Kimberley region.

named Waringarri Media Aboriginal Corporation. By that stage they had been producing radio for several years and had some really strong local staff who gave the station a recognisable identity.

Today, we have three fully functional radio studios and are a locally owned and operated Aboriginal Media Organisation who has been delivering our unique brand of radio seven days a week for 25 years.

And then one day...

In 2000 when I first came on board, I was employed as a cleaner. The station was bustling with people; there were about 10 staff, five of whom were full time. It was very family orientated so it felt like the perfect place for me. The first day on the job I was told by one fella, who is still on air to this day, "You will be broadcasting soon, Rowena, it's just a natural evolution for all the cleaners who work here!"



The East Kimberley Aboriginal Achievement Awards – Contribution toward community and family life

About six months into my cleaning work, a trainee broadcast position came up so I applied. They put me on as the 'weather girl' and at first I was really bad, I was so nervous and I kept skipping my words because I was naturally a fast talker. Family are very honest, if you're great they'll tell you and if you're crap they'll tell you and they certainly told me! I had to have voice lessons and learn to enunciate my words properly. Learning to relax and be comfortable with myself was incredibly challenging. You feel like you're on a stage, but you have to block that out and just relax as if you're speaking to a friend. At the end of the day that's what got me over the line.

I learned to create a mental picture of who was actually listening and tried to focus on how they would want to be entertained. Not long after that, one of the radio presenters went away for two weeks and I took over their program broadcasting a three hour show and I felt like a star! So that was my rapid trajectory and fortunately for me, I got rid of the mop! That was a long time ago now, 12 years in fact.

I worked as a broadcaster for four years. I enjoyed it immensely because I felt I could apply myself creatively when I was producing and create something out of nothing. Following an eight year stint in the corporate world, I came back to the station as acting Station Manager. A core group of people who were incredibly passionate about reinvigorating Waringarri Radio worked really hard to make that happen.

And because of that...

Waringarri Radio currently has nine staff of which around 66 per cent are Aboriginal. We broadcast locally 24 hours daily. Our live broadcast runs from 6am until 5pm. Our three broadcast staff work part time in four-hour shifts with three-hour on air time slots. The other hour is spent producing their shows and choosing their songs. Our licence stipulates that we have to play both a certain amount of Indigenous music and Australian music hourly. As we are a community station, we mix it up and play a bit of everything, which makes us competitive with the local commercial radio station SPIRIT FM because we don't just play all the latest released music. You will never hear a country and western or two rock songs back to back because we are not a country station or a rock station.

Our transmission reach is 300 kilometres radius around Kununurra (693AM) and we also have four re-transmission sites, which are all run on FM frequencies in Warmun, Wyndham, Kalumburu and Argyle diamonds. The great thing about having an AM station is that we have greater reach. All the trades people that are working out bush are listening to us which is fantastic.

One of our main objectives is to provide relevant community information on issues affecting Aboriginal people.



Broadcaster, Bradley Shadforth



Broadcaster, Danielle Wilson

We have a number of segments on health promotion and education including a housing segment that discusses property issues and tips on maintenance and home improvements. The segments provide information on acceptable noise levels and the possible consequences that may occur from a lifestyle of excessive alcohol consumption. These are big issues in Kununurra and as a community radio station we can help combat them by educating people on the effects and where to seek help.

And since that day...

there have been a lot of structural changes in the last ten years but our key objectives have not changed. One of our primary objectives is to provide local Aboriginal people with certified training relevant to their roles. Waringarri Radio has been a real hub for training employment over the past 25 years. We have recently developed a program with the Language Centre to create opportunities to promote Aboriginal culture and language and this has been a very important addition to our line up. The segment is called "Let's Talk Miriuwung". Miriuwung and Gajerrong are the two main traditional languages of the Kununurra area.



Rowena Alexander

I have recently taken on the CEO role. The first few months of this journey as CEO, I just knew I had to give it my best shot as it was my first time in a senior management role. The challenge for Waringarri Radio is to continue to create a vibrant, exciting environment in which people want to work so we can continue to employ and train local people. Although they might not earn a million dollars, they are going to get certified training and work in a happy, progressive organisation with some pretty cool people.



TRADITIONAL CULTURE MEETS CONTEMPORARY ART

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KEY WORDS:

Artefacts, jewellery, community, culture, tourism, heritage, history

About the storyteller...

Garry Sibosado is a Bard artist and jeweller who comes from the Aboriginal community of Lombadina. Garry's art reflects his heritage as a saltwater man from the Bard Country in the Dampier Peninsula of the West Kimberley. The sea is a constant inspiration for his designs. Garry collects materials for his work from the land and sea around Lombadina and incorporates precious metals and stones to combine contemporary ideas and techniques with traditional designs.



Garry Sibosado



The Nautilus and the Pearl

Once upon a time...

I grew up in the remote Aboriginal community of Lombadina on the Dampier Peninsula in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. I am a descendant of the Bard tribe and have spent my entire life living at Lombadina with my extended family. During my childhood, I always loved to draw and make things. Growing up on the coast I had access to many beautiful objects from the natural environment. This unique and remote stretch of coastline is rich with natural materials, in particular the exquisite Kimberley mother of pearl (guan) shell which I use daily to create my works. My childhood formed the beginning of my love of creating artefacts and those formative years exploring the coastal landscape continue to influence my work today.

And then one day...

in my mid-teens, I started carving and engraving pearl shell under the guidance of my tribal Elders who were custodians and creators of significant traditional artefacts such as the riji symbols. The riji symbols are distinctive guan carvings which are used

for trade, ceremony and personal adornment. This was a pivotal time as it helped to inspire the direction of my work. I learned how to carve and engrave pearl shell and make artefacts from native local ebony (birimbirr). I love being creative and enjoy carving and if you have a steady hand it is relatively simple.

It was in my early 20's that I begun dabbling in jewellery making and enjoyed it so much that I decided I wanted to get serious about jewellery as a job. In 2005, I was lucky to have the opportunity to take part in comprehensive training in Jewellery Design and Craftsmanship at Atelier Pindan and

Linney's Pearls in Broome under the guidance of experienced, skilled jewellers. During this period, I was given the opportunity to work with precious metals and gems and I learned a lot about jewellery manufacture and how to create beautiful pieces. In 2008 I decided that I wanted to extend my knowledge and enrolled in a Certificate of Jewellery Manufacture in Sydney, travelling over east four times a year over three years to complete the course. This, coupled with my training, provided me with an excellent foundation, expanded my technique and gave me a lot of confidence.

And because of that...

I started manufacturing my jewellery and artefacts in the community workshop here at Lombadina. Over the years, I have bought the necessary equipment to enable the production of my work. My work includes jewellery, sculpture, native ebony and pearl shell inlay works and mother of pearl engravings. It took me a couple of years to perfect the art of making the calibre of jewellery I now produce. I source all my materials locally either from here in Lombadina or surrounding pearl farms such as Blue Seas or Cygnet Bay. I also buy wholesale precious metals from Linney's Pearls in Broome if they are available. I incorporate gems, silver and gold into many of my pieces. I make both contemporary and traditional pieces. I have entered my work in several exhibitions over the years and in 2009, I won an award in the Kimberley Land Council Cardi Jawi Ranger Logo Competition.

I enjoy creating beautiful things, especially if it brings a smile to someone's face! If you are making jewellery



Starfish ring

for someone that you know personally, that is pretty special too. I often produce pieces on commission as I am currently doing for the Australian Society of Authors (ASA); three pendant medals which are awarded biennially in recognition of outstanding contribution to the Australian writing community. This is an ongoing contract that started in 2008 when my brother Darrell Sibosado and I made a series of mother of pearl carvings and silver medals.

I am guided by the traditional cultural practices of my people and my work is always influenced by my strong links to the ocean. A lot of my pieces represent creatures of the sea, their relationship with the tides and ancestral stories and customs from Bard Country. The pieces are made to reflect the natural environment and they all have different meanings. Most of the pieces are connected to a story. One particular piece is called Goowid (The Nautilus Shell) and it is based on a traditional story handed down through the generations.



Goowid (Turtle) and the Turn of the Tides



"I am guided by the traditional cultural practices of my people and my work is always influenced by my strong links to the ocean. A lot of my pieces represent creatures of the sea, their relationship with the tides and ancestral stories and customs from Bard Country."



Silver, yellow sapphire and diamond ring

When the Goowid is disturbed, it spits out pearls to distract its predator. The pearls fall to the seabed and quickly disappear into the shifting sands before the predator is able to gather them. In doing so, the nautilus escapes to safety and the predator is left frustrated. This piece can be worn as a brooch (with a pearl headed pin) or a pendant.

And since that day...

my work keeps me pretty busy. I work both on my jewellery and as a tour guide with the Lombadina community tourism business alongside my brother Robert. As our community has a thriving tourism business, we are fortunate to have many visitors come to Lombadina.

One of the tours we run is the Community tour where people learn about Lombadina's history and view ancient footprints and traditional artefacts with a local guide. I provide visitors with an insight into

Indigenous culture both when on tour and through my creative works. Several of my artefacts and jewellery pieces are displayed at the Lombadina Art and Craft Centre and as the traditional pieces I make are all based on ancient stories, I can show visitors my work and explain the heritage and story behind the pieces at the same time. It is a great way to share my culture with people.

My work is available to purchase from the Art and Craft Centre and as Lombadina is aiming towards self-sufficiency, all profits made from both my works and our tourism ventures go back into the community.

I have several plans in place for the future and one of them is to exhibit my work at an upcoming exhibition in Sydney that will be held next year for artists who specifically work with shell. I aim to display both contemporary and traditional pieces. I am also going to put one of my bigger pieces up for auction on the Indigenous Stock Exchange (ISE). It is a two metre saltwater crocodile (Linygoorr) comprised of 120 pieces of pearl shell, ebony and ochre which is currently on display at the Broome Visitors Centre. I am really keen to get my work out there and ultimately become a recognised artist. I believe I have a unique product and my hope is that I can create a name for myself. I love living in Lombadina; it's an amazing part of the world and I am happy I can share my heritage through my work.



Linygoorr (Crocodile)

SOMETHING ABOUT MARK AND MARY

CONTACT PERSON:

Mark Bin Bakar

EMAIL AND WEBSITE:

www.maryg.com.au

KEY STAFF / PEOPLE INVOLVED:

Mark Bin Bakar, Tania Bin Bakar, Mary G

KEY WORDS:

Entertainment, laughter, reconciliation, education, TV, comedy, cabaret, Aboriginal, radio, Aboriginal rights, reconciliation, health, wellbeing, empowerment, celebration, music, Broome, Kimberley, Kitja, events, Stolen Generation



Mark Bin Bakar

Once upon a time...

I was born in Derby. I am a Kitja man. My family comes from two areas of the Kimberley. My grandmother's family were traditional owners from Moolaboola area, Margaret River Station (Southern part of Kitja country) Halls Creek area. My mother was taken away from Halls Creek area when she was three years old under the child assimilation policy and sent to the orphanage in Broome where she grew up. Sadly, she never really connected to her mother or her extended family again, until recently. My childhood was strict and disciplined, but extremely grounded. My father was a strong Muslim man of Malaysian origin and my mother practised her Catholic faith. Their idea of showing love was through discipline as

About Mark Bin Bakar...

Mark is a Kitja/Gooniandi man who has been a major contributor to the Kimberley, Western Australia and Australia through the Arts and Media. He is a committed person and has a state and national profile through his character Mary G. He also has a passion for the Stolen Generations movement and is involved at all levels, from local, state and national.

About Mary G...

Mary G is a Kitja woman from a place called Margaret River station in the Kimberley. She was taken away from her mother as a little girl and never met her family again until she was older. A lot of people say that this did not happen or that it was for our own good. What good was that she asks... Mary's dream is for recognition and reconciliation by Australia for our Indigenous people and also the recognition that Australia was built by multi-cultural people. Mary is also known as the Big Black Queen of the Kimberley and is the closest thing to Royalty in the country as she is the unofficial Queen of Australia and the Queen of the people of the Kimberley.

they only knew how. Although I came from a strict upbringing it taught me to remain grounded. I went to a Catholic kindergarten, Broome District School until Year 6 and then to Nulungu College which was predominately for Aboriginal children. I also completed my upper school education at both Saint Patrick's College in Geraldton and Mount Lawley High School in Perth. After finishing high school, I completed an apprenticeship as a Boiler Maker/Welder. Although I now had a trade, my first love and passion was music, so in 1986, I set up an Aboriginal music school from my home in Perth and called it Abmusic. I was motivated to set up Abmusic on the back of a period of feeling frustrated because as an emerging up and coming musician, I quickly realised there were no opportunities for Aboriginal musicians in Perth. I applied to the Aboriginal Arts Board, Australia Arts Council for a grant to get Abmusic off the ground and they provided me with a cheque for \$15,000 which I carried around in my pocket for two and a half weeks. I had the money but I had no idea how to set up the organisation or a bank account to



"I have based a lot of Mary's character and personality on those wonderful women from the Stolen Generation of which my mother is a part. They are serious, but they can joke and laugh at the drop of a hat."

put the money in. I got in touch with the Ethnic Music Centre in West Perth and met a lady who helped me with the constitution and together we established Abmusic as an incorporated organisation supporting and nurturing Indigenous musicians in Western Australia. The first office space was in my house for nine months. We then moved to 176 Wellington Street within the Aboriginal Child Care Agency and then I shifted it to Clontarf in Waterford as they had established an Aboriginal College.

And then one day...

after several years establishing Abmusic, I left the organisation and came home to Broome. Abmusic was taken over by likeminded people who grew the organisation to another level. I think I was a bit ahead of my time in regards to founding Abmusic because people thought I was mad but I'm proud to say the organisation is still running today. I am not involved anymore but being the founder, I am now honoured as the patron. I still get young people approaching me to this day to tell me they have graduated from Abmusic and to thank me. I get a great buzz out of that! The reason I made the decision to come home is because I was feeling disillusioned. I had spent around 12 years in Perth and I had started to question my identity and I went through a phase of depression. After a conversation with my grandfather who advised me to come home, I realised it was time. So in late 1990 I returned home. Playing music was a constant theme in my life and something I loved to do so I formed a band called Footprints with some fellow Broome musicians.

Before returning home I had decided I needed a break from working for Aboriginal organisations but that didn't last long as I was approached to be a member of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Day Observance Committee of Broome (NAIDOC) not long after my return. I then got invited to be involved with the Broome Musicians Aboriginal Corporation (BMAC) and I eventually took over the organisation as Coordinator. I had a



Mary G

vision of putting together a Kimberley Arts Cultural Festival which would showcase some of Australia's and Kimberley Indigenous artists. I wanted to do something significant so I approached the board with my idea to organise a world class festival and they were 100 per cent behind me.

So, Wayne Barker came up with the name Stompem Ground and it became the first regional Indigenous event in WA to be broadcast live across Australia on national TV and simulcast on Triple J. It was never done before and it was held during the 60th year anniversary of the ABC as part of their celebrations. David Hill, the chair of the ABC at the time was the driving force behind the collaboration. Stompem Ground was held in Broome and headlined by Yothu Yindi who were at their peak, but still offered to perform for free. It was a special, exciting and fulfilling time. I organised two more Stompem Ground Festivals in the following years which again attracted both a live broadcast and simulcast and became nationally acclaimed. It was a proud accomplishment for me.

Then in 1992, my wife Tania was working at Broome Aboriginal Media Association (BAMA) and they asked me to be a volunteer radio presenter and I agreed. Arnhem Hunter, who is a fellow musician, was working for BAMA as a trainee and we started broadcasting our own show called the Gedarrdyu show - we were the Goonbi Brothers. However, Arnhem left me on my own as he had to go on tour with his band, so during this period I became a one man show and out of boredom I started to talk to myself in a woman's voice. I'd say "Hello darling, what's your name?" and then reply "Oh my name is Mark" and I'd flirt with myself. I made up the name Mary spontaneously on the spot with no thought and because the show was called the Gedarrdyu



Mary and Mark

show, her name became Mary G. It certainly got people talking as the whole town was wondering who this woman talking to Mark was. People were saying "she can't talk to Mark like that" and ask him personal questions on radio. No one knew it was me for around 18 months! However, by this stage it was going out live to Beagle Bay, One Arm Point and Bidyadanga through the PAKAM network so it started to get quite a following and eventually people found out. I did it for the fun of it, nothing beyond that, but then the radio station asked me if I minded stepping back and letting Mary G take over. So in essence, I got sacked from my own radio show! So that was the end of Mark, and the birth of Mary G. I became the producer but Mary G became the dominant force and her character grew organically through radio and she started to build up a loyal following.

And because of that...

it grew like wildfire. In a short time frame it was broadcast on National Indigenous Radio and started to spread nationally as well. At this point the penny dropped for me. I realised that people listened to what Mary G was saying. She had this ability to get people to really listen by using wit, humour and music as a way of getting her messages across. I quickly learned that Mary G was a powerful tool and when I realised this, I made a decision that I would use her to make a difference in the community. I was passionate about my people and culture anyway and Mary was the tool to allow me to be an advocate and share my point of view. I view Mary as a way to create change for Aboriginal people, for Indigenous Australians and for reconciling our country. As Mark it was always a bit more challenging to do that. Then, after a while, people wanted to see Mary G live and I thought, "Oh no, I'm not an actor-how do I do this?" But it was a challenge I was up for - so I shaved my beard and

moustache off, got the biggest bra I could find, grew my hair and chose the colours that would become trademark Mary G. As I was a singer/ songwriter and I'd always wanted to be a famous musician, it was logical that Mary G became a singer too so I wrote all my songs under the Mary G persona. She started a band called the G Spots- and Mary has five of them. I started touring the Mary G show and have toured the country ever since. I've been to some of the most isolated places in Australia; places I never thought I'd ever see or go to in my life and I've been lucky to be able to travel for free and perform throughout Australia so I'm very fortunate. I have based a lot of Mary's character and personality on those wonderful women from the Stolen Generation of which my mother is a part. They are serious, but they can joke and laugh at the drop of a hat. They are a beautiful cocktail of personalities who connect, make people laugh but are still straight down the line and have the ability to share messages. It also crosses over; white and Aboriginal people can enjoy it.

When Mary G became really popular I had to deal with a bit of innuendo about my sexuality. Questions such as "Is he gay? Is he coming out of the closet?" were posed. Some people were uncomfortable with a man dressing up as a woman so I had to deal with some untoward attitudes. I had come from that macho era where men don't dress up as women but I've always viewed people as human beings first whether they are gay, lesbian, disabled, a victim of bullying; whatever it may be. I've always been passionate about empowerment and believed that you shouldn't have to live your life according to how someone else wants you to live. As my mother was from the Stolen Generation, she grew up with her life dictated by other people. I have a strong admiration for her and all the Stolen Generation women who were around as I was growing up. My mother is a very strong woman, born from her institutionalised upbringing, and a great mentor and inspiration for me to draw from, although she's not aware of it.



"Stompem Ground became the first regional Indigenous event in WA to be broadcast live across Australia on national TV and simulcast on Triple J."



“The ability to have a voice that can touch people, travel with my wife, perform on stage-everything I have wanted to do since I was a child, it all happens because of Mary G.”

Due to her history and what I have learned from that, I don't like to see people being disempowered. Twenty years later and I am still performing as Mary G. People religiously still listen to her and she is still a dominant force. Throughout the years, people have asked me why I don't change Mary's hairstyle or clothing but I'm not trying to make a fashion statement with Mary. She's an icon and it's important she is recognisable so her look and image need to remain the same.

And since that day...

given my mother's history, I was always passionate about the impact of the removal of children from their families, so one of the other organisation's I decided to establish is The Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation. This organisation was formed initially as The Holy Child Stolen Generation to be a voice for Beagle Bay and Broome Stolen Generation people. When I approached the Kimberley Land Council (KLC) to get the organisation incorporated, they suggested I form a Kimberley Stolen Generation which would encompass people from all over the Kimberley. So I started an organisation that represents members of the Stolen Generations. It is a space where they can call home, feel safe and connect with others. I am the inaugural Chairperson of the organisation and have been in this role for the past 15 years.

Although I am the inaugural chairperson of the Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation (KSGAC), I am also involved on a national level, and proud of my role in the establishment of the National Stolen Generation Alliance (which is a nationally focused Stolen Generation and justice body). I am also honoured to have been involved in the working party leading up to the national apology, the WA state body currently being developed and was my recent appointment on the National Healing Foundation Reference Committee to Stolen Generations. I remain involved as I firmly believe in the Stolen Generation people's plight and the injustices they have suffered. We recently won a major contract with Link Up which provides opportunities for clients to reconnect with their families. My hope is that one day some of the younger generation will step up and eventually take over so I can one day step down as chairperson. However, I remain committed to the Stolen Generation movement because the Elders want me involved and I think the abuse of Aboriginal people in this country and in this specific case Aboriginal women, is one of the greatest scars

on Australia's history. In 2008, I was involved in engineering the apology that took place on National Sorry Day. We argued that we wanted it on the 26th of May 2008 which was our Sorry Day but we were told the date is non-negotiable and it would take place in February. On the day, I suggested to the then Minister Jenny Macklin that a memo be sent to the ABC and SBS to ask for the apology to be broadcast live, which she did and they agreed. I also proposed that a memo go out to all the commercial stations but the Minister said she didn't have any control over the commercial stations. I suggested she should do it anyway because whether they broadcast it or not was irrelevant, it was about leadership. To her credit she did and every station ended up broadcasting the apology live. So, that's my contribution to the national apology which became a significant moment on the Australian political landscape. It really was an Australian story-not just an Aboriginal story.

One thing I really treasure from my upbringing is the values of honesty, respect and integrity instilled in me and the ability to keep my feet on the ground. Where ever I was or whatever I did- that has remained a constant. I learned very quickly that my credibility is worth more than any money in the world. I can walk proudly in my life with my head held high. Mary G has been the greatest gift and I wouldn't change anything. I find that through Mary G I can go to just about any Aboriginal community in Australia or to different tribal boundaries and they all know her. They will say Whaddaya? Gedarrdyu, Mary G, all these different names for the same character and that's the impact and reach she has had and the credibility she has established. Tania and I are fortunate to travel Australia together and it's great to be able to work together-Mary G has been the catalyst for making our relationship richer and stronger. The ability to have a voice that can touch people, travel with my wife, perform on stage-everything I have wanted to do since I was a child, it all happens because of Mary G. She is my livelihood and my life revolves around her; both of our lives, for that matter. Meeting people all around Australia and being an entertainer and advocate for both good and bad is a great privilege. I am sure my children are very proud of my work and my legacy as my mother and wife are.

THE LURUJARRI HERITAGE TRAIL

ORGANISATION NAME:

The Lurujarri Heritage Trail

CONTACT PERSON:

Phillip Roe, Richard Hunter, Frans Hoogland

EMAIL AND WEBSITE:

www.goolarabooloo.org.au

KEY STAFF / PEOPLE INVOLVED:

The Goolarabooloo Family

KEY WORDS:

Country, culture, trail, cross-cultural understanding

About the storytellers...

This story was told by the Goolarabooloo family.

About the Lurujarri Heritage Trail...

We are the Goolarabooloo people. As you know, every country has laws. Here we have our own Traditional Laws. Our Laws come from Bugarregarre, the Dreamtime. One of the major responsibilities of the Kimberley Law Bosses (the Elders) is to ensure that Traditional Culture (Law) is passed down to succeeding generations, in order to keep the Country and its people safe. The Goolarabooloo Law Bosses hold the responsibility for the continuity of the Songline and its capacity to sustain life in its fullest. This includes keeping the coastal land clear of any development that would interfere with their law and culture, or damage their song cycle, places and sites. 27 years ago, Paddy Roe, with the support of his Goolarabooloo community, established the Lurujarri Heritage Trail - A nine day cultural walking journey along the Song Cycle, which involves leading visitors throughout this 80km stretch of saltwater coastal terrain, travelling as a group and sharing their heritage.



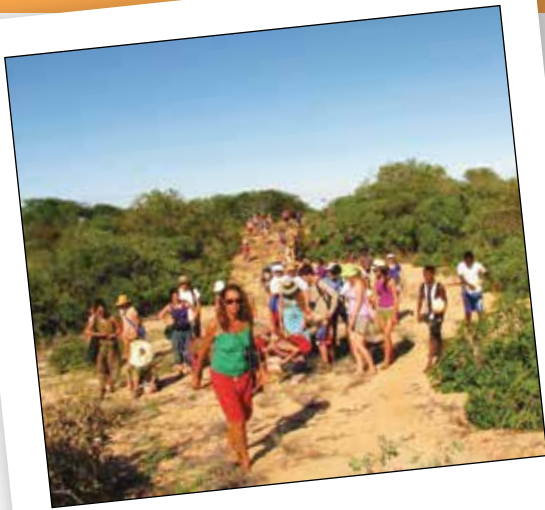
The Walkers!

Once upon a time...

in the 1980's, Law Boss of the Goolarabooloo people in the West Kimberley, Paddy Roe, was becoming concerned about how to look after the Country that had been entrusted to him by his Elders. This Country, which spans 90 kilometres along the northwest coast of Western Australia on the Dampier Peninsula, begins at Garijian and ends at Njellenjellengun (Dampier Creek). It is a spectacular stretch of coastline, comprised of a pristine turquoise ocean and expansive red cliffs further north at Walmadan. This is the Country (Buru-physical and spiritual land) of one of the oldest living Song Cycles and cultural landscapes of the Goolarabooloo people.



It is also, and has been for the last several decades, under the threat of development from both private investors and the state government. Most recently, the WA Government has been pushing to build a gas precinct at Walmadan, but as far back as 1987, noises were being made about future developments and Paddy Roe knew he needed to establish ways to protect his Country. It was in this uncertain environment that Paddy Roe's vision for the future was inspired. His dream involved sharing his living culture with non-Aboriginal people to improve understanding about Country and culture. His concept was to share the knowledge and wisdom handed down to him by his Elders and expose people to this beautiful, diverse Country. Paddy believed that if people experienced his Country first hand, it would encourage a greater understanding



Walking the Trail

of why it is so vital to the happiness and wellbeing of Aboriginal people and the necessity to protect it from development.

And then one day...

In 1987, the opportunity arose for the Goolarabooloo people to apply for a grant to begin a heritage walking trail. The grant proposal was successful and he, his grandson Phillip Roe and their family started the trail which was named the Lurujarri Heritage Trail. Lurujarri means coastal dunes, which describes this particular stretch of Country. The walking trail was to have a dual purpose, to inspire members of the Goolarabooloo community to walk the Country again to stay connected with their heritage and traditional skills and to share Country with non-Aboriginal people to promote reconciliation. The trail was mapped throughout all the traditional camping areas and the first walk began as a three day trail. The first few walks were held over three days, which gradually expanded to six and then eventually became a nine day walk-which it still is today.

We chose to have the walk over nine days as it works best for the travellers. It gives them a few days to unwind and acclimatise to their new environment and plenty of time to enjoy their walking experience. Although the walk is called a walking trail, we don't make pathways or change the natural environment. Our walk takes us along the traditional landscape using the Song Cycle system to guide us. The Song Cycle is an oral heritage map. Its songs contain codes of behaviour fundamental to sustaining the

balance and well-being of the land and its people and are still sung today. The birthplace of the Song Cycle starts to the north of One Arm Point and finishes at Bidyadanga which is the exit place. The Goolarabooloo people are responsible for taking care of the entire Song Cycle and to ensure its continuity. The Song Cycle is made up of different interconnected places and sites. Some of these sites include ceremonial grounds, seasonal camping places, mayi areas (where you find medicinal plants and bush tucker) and 'increase' sites. 'Increase' sites are areas where people can 'sing' for more tucker such as fish. Our walk takes us on a journey to traditional camping places through the bush and along the beach as mapped out by the Song Cycle system. We begin the walk in Broome and travel along the coast heading into the sunset and camp at Millibinyarri the first night. The next day, we walk to Willie Creek. We walk for a day then we have a day to rest at our camping site. The walkers can learn to make artefacts, collect

"Paddy Roe's vision is well and truly alive through the Lurujarri Heritage Trail. The family will continue his legacy by keeping a door open for people to access the culture in order to cultivate awareness and understanding for everyone."



Goolarabooloo Law Boss and Storyteller Richard Hunter



The Goolarabooloo Family

bush tucker, share ideas and reflect. We sit around the fire at night and listen to traditional stories from Bugarregarre (Dreamtime stories). The walking and the story telling is the easy part but logistically the walks are an incredible amount of work to organise. The Goolarabooloo family needs to ensure there are enough essential supplies for around 100 people for nine days.

And because of that...

vision Paddy had all those years ago, the Lurujarri Heritage Trail has now been running for 27 years. The entire Goolarabooloo family from young to old are involved with each trail in different capacities which ensures a unique experience for the walkers because of the wealth of knowledge available to them. There are usually up to 60 walkers who participate so our walks often encompass over 100 people. Our aim is to shift the 'us versus them' mentality and create an atmosphere where everyone is in it together; walking in solidarity; which is the real beauty of our walks. We hope that during the walks, people wake up their 'feeling' (which we call Liyan) for Country. Our Country is first and foremost a spiritual place inhabited by RAI (spirit beings who can give us dreams, show us and teach us things).

On an intellectual level, everyone can see the Country all around them but if they don't connect to their visual experience then it is still just theory. A lot of people do experience dreams or visions when out walking on Country. It's a great form of meditation. At the start of the walks, everyone is talking, then after a day or two people become finely tuned to their surroundings and really begin to enjoy being out in the cultural, natural environment which is the essence of the experience. This is what keeps people coming back. We have never advertised but through word of mouth, the trail has grown exponentially. Initially the majority of our walkers were students from RMIT in Melbourne and then later, both Monash and Sydney University. The students partake in the

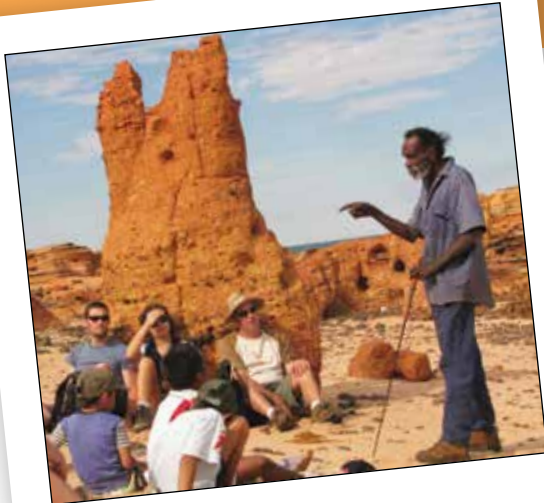


Spearfishing

walks as part of their undergraduate courses. Over the years, the demographic of our walkers has grown to include people from all over Australia and the world. We have had people who originally joined the walk as a couple then the next year they brought their first child and came back several years later with two children. We have people of all ages on the walk; old people and babies alike. This region also attracts both national and international researchers because there is a lot of outside interest in the landscape and coastline on the Dampier Peninsula. It is a rich and diverse natural habitat and the location of intact marine areas, breeding grounds for humpback whales, the home of ancient dinosaur pathways, tropical savannahs and a botanical paradise. For this reason, many researchers will spend months conducting their studies and we are always happy to assist visitors with information pertaining to cultural knowledge.

"The walking trail was to have a dual purpose, to inspire members of the Goolarabooloo community to walk the Country again to stay connected with their heritage and traditional skills and to share Country with non-Aboriginal people to promote reconciliation."





Storytime with Richard Hunter

experience. For nine days they become a part of large harmonious family structure. They are able to spend time with a good mob of people in magnificent Country! Paddy Roe's vision is well and truly alive through the Lurujarri Heritage Trail. The family will continue his legacy by keeping a door open for people to access the culture in order to cultivate awareness and understanding for everyone.



“The Song Cycle is an oral heritage map. Its songs contain codes of behaviour fundamental to sustaining the balance and well-being of the land and its people and are still sung today.”

And since that day...

the level of interest in the trail continues to grow. This year we have had 280 expressions of interest so in theory we could run eight trails in 2014. Last year we held four separate walks which were all a great success.

The trail was never set up as a tourist venture. It was started to enable the young people to be involved in their culture and back on Country again learning and sharing that knowledge with outsiders. The opportunities for the walkers over nine days are endless. They can learn how to fish, where to find bush tucker and what plants to use for medicinal purposes. There is a wealth of cultural knowledge waiting to be discovered if people are open to it. At the beginning of the walks people always ask us to share Dreamtime stories but we encourage them to keep walking to see what they pick up and experience first. That way, when the stories are shared they make more sense and take on new meaning.

Overall, the trail has been an extremely successful venture. What people love most about the walk is its simplicity but also the feeling of unity they



Making new friends

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*To learn more about the Lurujarri Heritage Trail or to register for a Walk go to:

<http://goolarabooloo.org.au/lurujarri.html>

Three years after Paddy Roe established the Lurujarri Heritage Trail he was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for his facilitation of cross-cultural understanding.

This is a Bugarregarre story of the Naji, our ancestors, as told by senior law boss Richard Hunter.

One of the main responsibilities is looking after the three emanation sites or birthplaces. The first site, Dabberdabbergun which is located in Minyirr Park, is where the first Naji people (spirit beings) took form and made their first sound and during that process the landscape was also created. The second place is Bilingur (Hidden Valley) and the third place is Nunnungurugun (Coconut Wells). Our ancestors came out of this land.

One of the first Bugarregarre Dreamtime stories starts here at Dabberdabbergun.

When the first Naji people took form and made their sound, they travelled early morning eastwards leaving one crippled man, Didirr and his wife Djukakun, here at Minyirr –Djugun. They travelled a long way, creating Country and making life. Then one day they came to the place that they had seen in their dream, a Jila (water source) but when they arrived, there was no water because a Muururu (danger rock) had taken all the water inside itself. So they had to break open the rock.

They formed a semi-circle, with two Marban in front and centre, one with a Naulu (throwing stick) the other Marban behind, and the people behind him singing. He threw the Naulu and it hit the rock but it bounced off and fell flat on the ground. Now the Marban changed positions and while the song was sung he threw the Naulu. This time it broke in two. Now they knew they were in trouble. So they sent a Darp (message stick) to the next mob at Bilingur. This mob, following their tracks, came to the place where they already knew that everyone was dead. They saw them laying in all different shapes and forms. Now they had to get the water so they performed the same ceremony as the first people.

The first Marban threw the Naulu and whack! - a long crack appeared from the belly of the rock all the way from top to bottom. The Marban changed positions. He threw the Naulu and it broke the rock into many pieces. The water flowed out and formed a lake, touching the dead bodies that had now turned into Dingelmarremarre (little trees). The people continued travelling east until they first reached Uluru and then Nagula (saltwater) where the sun comes out.



THE DOG BOX PROGRAM

ORGANISATION NAME:

Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation

CONTACT PERSON:

Sarah Starkey, Ray Christophers, Chicky Clements

EMAIL AND WEBSITE:

rchristophers@nirrumbuk.org.au sarah@nirrumbuk.org.au www.nirrumbuk.org.au

PROGRAM/PROJECT PARTNERS:

Communities of Ardyaloon, Djarindjin, Lombadina, Beagle Bay and Bidyadanga and their Councils, One Arm Point Remote Community School, Sacred Heart School Beagle Bay, La Grange Remote Community School, Department of Health, FaHCSIA, Broome Veterinary Hospital

KEY STAFF/PEOPLE INVOLVED:

The environmental health team at Nirrumbuk

KEY WORDS:

Indigenous health, environment and health, dog health

About the storytellers...

This story was told by Ray Christophers, Director Nirrumbuk Environmental Health & Services, Chicky (William) Clements, Manager Environmental Health Operations, Sarah Morris, Manager Environmental Health Technical & Tenancy Support and Unja (Alec) McCarthy, Environmental Health Worker.

About Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation...

Nirrumbuk Environmental Health & Services Pty Ltd has operating bases in Broome, Halls Creek and Kununurra to provide services to Aboriginal people and communities that promote health, maintain infrastructure and assets, provide support towards self-sufficiency and increase employment.

Once upon a time...

we were concerned about the amount of dogs being born in the Aboriginal communities of Ardyaloon Beagle Bay and Bidyadanga in the state's north west. In 2008, we implemented a dog de-sexing initiative in the communities and held three rounds of de-sexing over two years as part of our Dog Health program. This was a highly successful dog management pilot project, which was measured and had some very good outcomes overall. For example, the numbers of dogs per house decreased, the dog's body and skin condition improved and the communities' awareness was raised. Although we have continued to build on and deliver this project consistently over the last several years, we have recently identified a further need to address dog health and specifically, awareness of how to care for community dogs.

Dogs are a big part of community life and it's important that the community know how to manage them so they are not posing an environmental or health threat. If there are too many dogs that are not being cared for or fed properly, they are prone to diseases-which can be passed onto people. So, as a component of our project we decided we needed an education program in schools. The reason we wanted



to target children is because we had previously spoken to the kids at school and found their level of interest on this topic to be very high. Historically, Aboriginal people have always associated dogs with dingoes but dingoes don't pose the same issues as domestic dogs. So our focus was to teach children about the differences between the two breeds, particularly in relation to female dog breeding cycles.

And then one day...

we devised a series of lessons to be delivered in schools to educate community people about the detrimental impact of having too many dogs in the community. Originally we went into the classrooms and spoke to the kids, but we found that it worked better to educate them through structured lessons.



The Team (front) Sarah Morris, Russell Spargo (Back l-R) Unja (Alec) McCarthy, Ray Christophers, Chicky Clements

Our team delivered a series of pre-prepared interactive, activity based lessons which were taught by either the Environmental Health team member or the school teacher (they can also co-teach). The lessons have been designed with the input of a couple of different teachers and are devised to line up with the school curriculum. The school teachers run the lessons as a special project during the term and meet their educational outcomes through doing so.

We have now delivered this component of the dog health program in Ardyaloon (twice), Beagle Bay and Bidyadanga – and we are about go to Kalumbaru. The education focuses on dog owner responsibility, dog health/community health interface, dog ages and stages and needs through using resources inside our 'dog box'. The dog box contains 10 lesson plans which include the following topics; recognising dog body language; dog ages and stages; what food is healthy/unhealthy for dogs and comparing diets with people; playing with your dog; what to do when your dog is growling about food/scared of noises (positive ways to correct behaviours); dog health and people's health; flea and tick shampoo recipe; making dog toys; basic commands/training your dog. It also includes a board game, flash cards, Moody Mutts dog cards, colouring sheets, parasite and symptom matching activity (science) and a dog breeding activity (maths). It is a fun and educational way to teach the kids about dogs in their community which also has a positive flow on effect to other family members.



“Historically, Aboriginal people have always associated dogs with dingoes but dingoes don’t pose the same issues as domestic dogs so our focus was to teach children about the differences between the two breeds, particularly in relation to female dog breeding cycles.”

And because of that...

the message is working. The children in the community have a higher involvement with the dogs than the adults do which is why they are the focus of our education strategy. It is a common sight to see dogs running along behind the kids when they go to the beach or on bush walks.

When we de-sexed the dogs, many of the kids watched on with curiosity and asked the vet's numerous questions. The kids often head home bursting with new information and discuss everything they have learned with their parents and other family members. In effect, the kids are educating their parents, instead of the other way around. We delivered the lessons in a way which ensured the children got involved in every aspect of the program.



The Dog Box



One of the resources used in the lesson plans

We used highly visual picture cards to teach them as we think pictures are a much better way for young people to grasp concepts than just reading.

For example, the school kids categorise the pictures to work out how many times the dog may have bred. The resources combine both maths and science skills as well as dog education/health behaviours. We held a hydrobath dog wash day where we incorporated dog washing, discussed skin infections and why it is important to wash your dog and also discussed dog training regarding positive reinforcement in animal owner relationship. We also taught the kids how to train puppies.

During the lessons we discussed ages and stages and what the dogs needs are and how to build positive relationships with them so that they are not exhibiting aggressive behaviour. It's essential that kids learn this basic information; to treat their animals well, not to tease them and to feed them the right foods on a consistent basis. Throughout the lessons we aimed to instil how important it is for households to have two dogs maximum. We believe any more than this and the ability to look after the dog properly starts to diminish.

And since that day...

when we finished the education project we completed a house to house survey and it was really obvious that the kids were taking home what they

had learned. A lot of the parents were discussing how excited the kids were to be involved in the dog box program and the different things they had made as part of their dog box education. They had made up little dog tags and dog toys and folding water bowls that they could take home. This was fantastic to hear as it is what we set out to achieve.

Looking ahead, we are hoping that our resources are used within the schools on a more consistent basis because we are really pleased with the outcomes so far. It would be great to see our dog box education implemented every year in community schools. We'd also love to see it spread wider to encompass more communities and also appoint a dedicated person to run the lesson plans. It's really important that the schools get on board with this program because a big part of what we do is community education, and we see this program as an effective way to implement community awareness. Our other hope is that once armed with all the new information about caring for dogs, when the kids become tenants themselves and are living in their own houses, they will incorporate what they have learned into daily life.



Microchipping



ICEA FOUNDATION - RECONCILIATION INSPIRED BY YOUNG PEOPLE

ORGANISATIONS NAME:

ICEA Foundation

CONTACT PERSON:

Lockie Cooke

EMAIL AND WEBSITE:

www.iceafoundation.com.au

KEY STAFF/PEOPLE INVOLVED:

Lockie Cooke

KEY WORDS:

Reconciliation, youth, connecting, relationships, respect, experience, understanding

About the storyteller...

Lockie Cooke is the CEO of ICEA Foundation. In 2006, a visit to One Arm Point in the Kimberley inspired 16 year-old student Lockie Cooke to do something positive to improve education and opportunities for young people in remote communities. Lockie founded the then-named Indigenous Communities Education Appeal (ICEA) in 2007 and after a process of consultation with community leaders, began implementing incentive programs designed to increase attendance levels in Sacred Heart School Beagle Bay, One Arm Point Remote Community School, and Djarindjin/Lombadina Catholic School.



ICEA Founder Lockie Cooke



Once upon a time...

back in 2006 when I was at high school, I played football with a lot of Aboriginal guys from the Kimberley and Pilbara and some Noongar guys from the Southwest but outside of sport, I didn't really have the opportunity to connect with Aboriginal people. I knew very little about their culture. We weren't taught anything about Aboriginal people at my high school, Christ Church Grammar. However,

About ICEA...

The ICEA (Indigenous Communities Education & Awareness) Foundation is a youth-driven not-for-profit organisation that works closely with young people in remote Indigenous communities in North Western Australia and High Schools in the Perth metropolitan area. ICEA's overarching purpose is to achieve reconciliation through mutual respect for all Australians. This purpose guides our day-to-day operations and long-term strategy. ICEA's staff, volunteers, advocates, programs and activities are united by a shared recognition of the value of harmony, reconciliation and respect.

in Year 11, the school did provide the opportunity for me to attend an all Indigenous leadership camp at One Arm Point (Ardyaloon Community) on the Dampier Peninsula for a week. I was one of the only whitefellas on the bush camp and my eyes were opened to a whole new world. I learned about a way of living that had been passed down from generation to generation for thousands of years and it made me realise that there is so much more to Australian history than the world I had grown up in. While I was there I visited several communities on the Dampier Peninsula and saw some of the facilities at the schools or in this case, lack thereof. I'd grown up with an abundance of opportunities and had continual access to facilities such as libraries, computers and sporting equipment. These kids from



Teaching the kids to surf

the communities, particularly in Beagle Bay, didn't have a library or anywhere they could go to borrow books. It's my belief that everyone has the right to access these basic educational resources and I really wanted to help. I came back to school and got a few mates together; told them about my experience and we came up with the idea to approach several organisations to donate books for a potential book drive for the Beagle Bay school kids. The following year, through a series of fundraisers, we raised \$6000 and set up a library in the Sacred Heart School at Beagle Bay. It was a practical way to have an immediate impact. Being a young person in the driver's seat, we found that people really got behind this initiative and were willing to help. They were encouraged by what we were doing and incredibly supportive.

It was during this period of travelling up to the communities that I met a Yawaru leader named Michael Albert who took me under his wing and introduced me to other Aboriginal leaders, Elders, young people, headmasters and teachers. I started to ask myself the question of how I, as a non-Aboriginal person, could connect to Aboriginal people and culture and what my role was in this space. I spoke to people and asked what was the best way a whitefella from Perth could help the kids. They told me that finding a way to increase school attendance is a priority. So we came up with a simple but effective scheme to provide incentives to get kids to attend school. We focussed on the Sacred Heart School Beagle Bay, One Arm Point Remote Community School and Djarindjin/Lombadina Catholic School. We provided different kinds of sporting equipment and gave out prizes if kids attended school on a

regular basis. The level of participation and interest from the community was overwhelming. This scheme has evolved over the past eight years and we now also provide opportunities for the school kids to go out on Country and practice their culture.

And then one day...

after being involved in something so effective and positive, we knew we had to take it further and focus on kids in the Perth metro area as well. In 2007, having completed high school, I was aware that there were a lot of Aboriginal kids at boarding schools in Perth and living away from home.

I did some research and discovered there was hardly any support for these kids schooling away from their families. I also realised that I needed to start a legitimate organisation if I really wanted to help. A former headmaster advised me to decide on a name and establish a registered organisation and a friend who is a graphic designer offered to help with the branding. As we started out doing a community education appeal through the book drive, the organisation became ICEA, which stood for Indigenous Communities Education Appeal. Our logo was designed and is the Aboriginal flag upside down. It stands out and is now a powerful brand and our marketing was also incredibly strong; a young person going out and doing what he believes to affect and create positive change.

ICEA eventually became the Indigenous Communities Education & Awareness (ICEA) Foundation; a youth-driven not-for-profit organisation that works closely with young people in remote Indigenous communities in North Western Australia and high schools in the Perth metropolitan area. We essentially became an advocating body for Indigenous kids to ensure they



"The bigger picture in ICEA's purpose is reconciliation inspired by young people. It's not just supporting young Aboriginal people; it's the Australian collective community moving forward and progressing together. It's about both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people collaborating."

were being supported and felt safe in their unfamiliar environments. We started out by approaching schools and advocating for Indigenous kids to be supported and recognised culturally. For example, we proposed that the schools recognise NAIDOC week, and acknowledge National Reconciliation Week and celebrate these important cultural events. We also suggested that they employ a full time Reconciliation Officer in the school to facilitate these events and provide mentorship for the Indigenous kids. The schools were very receptive and keen to collaborate. ICEA is also a safe space for young people to come together and become connected to other people and their environment through Aboriginal culture. Our mission is to be the force driving mutual respect in the community through creating positive experiences, fostering strong genuine relationships and raising Australians understanding of Indigenous culture.

We have a three year funding agreement with Shell Australia (which has recently been extended for a further three years), a CEO, a full time Operations Manager, a Fundraising Manager and many volunteers and mentors. We run three primary programs; Marja Mob, ICEA Waves and Remote Communities. The Marja Mob program focusses on increasing awareness of Indigenous culture within the Perth metropolitan community. It engages more than 150 young leaders aged 15 – 17 to assist with organising youth-centric social and awareness-raising activities. The ICEA Waves Program focuses on engaging Indigenous youth with surfing culture and encouraging the wider community to understand and appreciate Indigenous perspectives of environmental connectedness and sustainability. The program also uses sport to break down cultural barriers and develop familiarity with the ocean, providing a great opportunity for mutual respect building between young Australians. Our third program, Remote Communities focusses on youth-run activities in remote communities to increase education and opportunities for young people. We run incentive schemes and mentoring programs in local schools and also assist with the organisation of cultural programs and leadership camps.

And because of that...

every program has coordinators and a committee. ICEA has a leadership team of 30 great young guys and girls who run our programs (and act as mentors) and an executive team including a Board. The Marja Mob organise cultural activities twice a



Leighton Beach

month and they are always well attended. We put on cultural days with Aboriginal themed music, give the kids didgeridoo lessons, teach them how to sing Dreamtime stories and get the kids to create their own stories. They mingle, meet new people and are able to participate in a social and cultural event with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal kids. We have held the ICEA Classic annually for the past four years in September at The Cove in Cottesloe which is a surfing competition open to anyone under 18. The Classic is a fantastic cultural event that just gets bigger and better every year. Our team cooks food, lights fires and facilitates several cultural opportunities while the surfers put on a show. It is a resounding success and so much fun for all the young people involved, whether watching or participating. Our portfolio continues to expand and we currently offer surfing lessons, social events, leadership camps, dance demonstrations, musical performances and art exhibitions. All our activities are designed under the guidance of young program champions, cultural advisors and community leaders to help engage young people and generate awareness in the general public about Australia's rich and diverse Indigenous culture.

The community schools on the Dampier Peninsula now boast some of the highest attendance rates in the Kimberley which is awesome. We are getting more kids to attend school and we are also providing more avenues for young people to connect with their culture by incorporating activities into their school curriculum. It is our hope that in 10 years time, kids going through the school system will see their peers who have been involved with ICEA, who have finished university and are working in large companies or in their community and are dynamic,



Lockie getting ready to facilitate the Waves Program



Keen budding surfers!

engaged people. We want kids who are in high school looking up to these guys and thinking I can do that, I can graduate from high school, I can go to university and I can get these great jobs.

ICEA has also been a big driver in creating more avenues for collaborative support for the kids who are at boarding schools in Perth. We are here today, eight years since we first started and now there is an abundance of support, and we've actually been advocates and supporters in that sector. ICEA is continually evolving and changing but we are still meeting outcomes. We are rousing people's curiosity around learning and experiencing Aboriginal culture and we are winning.

What ICEA do is important because we create clear avenues and opportunities for young Australians from all backgrounds to be able to easily access and connect with Aboriginal people. We also enable Aboriginal youth to become connected to their communities and with all members of our society in the spirit of reconciliation.

And since that day...

our vision is clear; reconciliation inspired by young people, however the ways we go about achieving this vision is continually evolving. The next step for ICEA is focussing on addressing the inherent prejudice that exists in Australian society, towards people of colour and ethnicities, particularly Indigenous Australians. Initially ICEA was formed to support kids to become dynamic leaders, which we will always continue to do, but our future lies in education to address ignorance and change attitudes. We believe there is a reconciliation healing journey that needs to

happen and it's got to be a hand in hand approach. The inherited prejudice which gets passed on from generation to generation doesn't get broken down until you drive systemic change through continued education. Ultimately, we are trying to change people's perceptions around Aboriginal people and culture so they are not identified as 'separate' Australians. Our vision is that every Australian identifies with Aboriginal culture and the pride and identity associated with it, similar to the relationship New Zealanders have with the Maori people. We want to be the organisation that drives change. The bigger picture in ICEA's purpose is reconciliation inspired by young people. It's not just supporting young Aboriginal people; it's the Australian collective community moving forward and progressing together. It's about both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people collaborating.



"Our mission is to be the force driving mutual respect in the community through creating positive experiences, fostering strong genuine relationships and raising Australians' understanding of Indigenous culture."

GOOLARRI MEDIA

ORGANISATION NAME:

Goolarri Media

CONTACT PERSON:

Jodie Bell

EMAIL AND WEBSITE:

www.goolarri.com

KEY STAFF/PEOPLE INVOLVED:

Jodie Bell, Kevin Fong, Mr Stephen Albert, Ms Dot West

KEY STAFF/PEOPLE INVOLVED:

Media, culture, community, music, TV, events, training

About Goolarri Media...

Goolarri Media assists the development of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communications in the Kimberley region, supports the enhancement of Indigenous musicians throughout Western Australia, creates and produces valuable event activities for the entire community and delivers nationally accredited training in media and events management.

About the storyteller...

Jodie is a descendant of the Butchella and Jagera people of South East Queensland, but has spent most of her life living in Western Australia. Jodie has been with Goolarri Media Enterprises, a community-owned Indigenous media company, since early 2008, following 12 years as CEO of the largest Aboriginal Resource Centre in the Kimberley region. Jodie's qualifications include a Bachelor of Arts (Political Science) degree. Jodie is a Director on the Boards of Bandaral Ngadu Pty Ltd and KRSP Pty Ltd, two successful Indigenous companies, as well as RAMU Productions Pty Ltd, Goolarri's Production Company. Jodie has produced a number of productions for Goolarri Media including the Talking Country Series 2, the short films Telling Our Story and In the Air, as well as a 2 x 26 min documentary for NITV, Characters of Broome, and a number of shorter form pieces for broadcast on Goolarri Media's community television station, GTV.



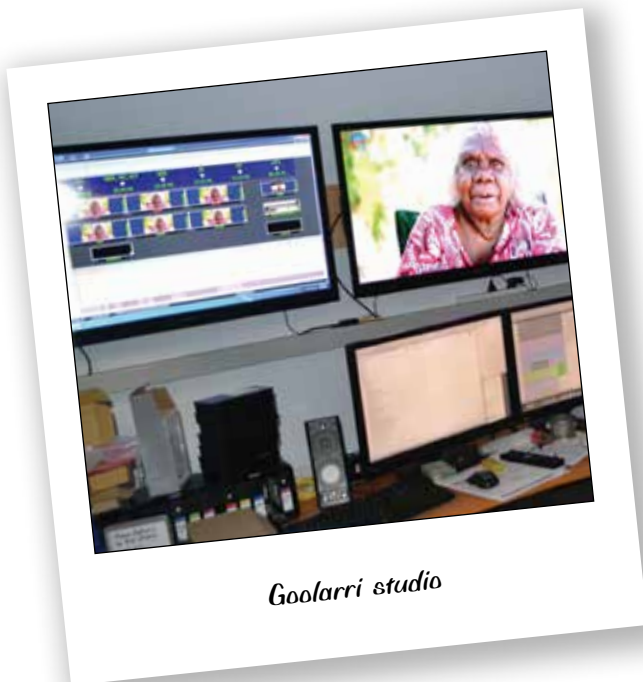
Once upon a time...

In 1989 after ten years of community discussion about the need for an Indigenous media service for the rapidly growing town of Broome, the Broome Aboriginal Media Association (BAMA) was launched. BAMA was the brain child of a group of local Broome Aboriginal musicians who formed several bands in the 1980's including Kuckles, Footprints and Broome Beats.

These musicians wanted to hear their own music on the radio so when the opportunity arose to have some air time that was designated to Indigenous music on ABC Regional Radio; they jumped at the chance and started broadcasting as Radio Goolarri 99.7 FM Radio in August 1991 with a one hour a week magazine program.



Filming for Goolarri TV



Goolarri studio

Within a few years Radio Goolarri (Goolarri means “West Side”) was broadcasting 25 hours per week on the ABC until the opportunity arose in 1997 to obtain a community radio license, quickly followed by a narrowcast TV licence, hence the birth of Goolarri Media Enterprises.

Goolarri Media Enterprises (GME) is a fully owned subsidiary of the Broome Aboriginal Media Association (BAMA) and has three directors, one from the organisation’s executive, one from the BAMA Board and one independent Indigenous filmmaker.

And then one day...

Goolarri started out running 55 minute radio programs three times per week and eventually started broadcasting radio and TV programs five days a week, 24 hours a day. We now broadcast live on the radio for 14 hours a day and the rest of our programs are either pre-recorded or streamed content from other networks such as the Kimberley and Pilbara Aboriginal Media (PAKAM) network, the National Indigenous Radio or the Service of the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) network. Goolarri hosts the remote Indigenous media hub for PAKAM who, although autonomous, sit under our umbrella. We facilitate their day to day management and auspice their funding. Over the years, we have branched out into all different aspects of media including events management, interactive online content, film

and video production and marketing and music development with Indigenous artists.

Goolarri forms partnerships with local community and government organisations to discuss particular issues affecting the community. For example, Pat Dodson comes in to talk about reconciliation and constitution matters and we also broadcast a regular health segment provided by the Broome Health Service which specifically targets Indigenous people. It’s an ongoing service that is not provided by commercial radio or TV services.

Goolarri has 25 staff based in our Broome office and around 40 staff members altogether. 14 of those staff are based out in the remote communities. Our volunteer presence is strong and although we encourage Indigenous volunteers, as we are a community radio station, we are happy for anyone to be involved as long as the content they produce is diverse, which it always is! The programs range from music to sports and everything in between.

And because of that...

we have grown steadily over the years which is a reflection on the community and its needs. We continue to expand our services every year, for example, we are now running numerous events. Goolarri has two venue facilities, The Gimme Club and The Goolarri Amphitheatre which host our numerous live events. One of these events is the Kullarri NAIDOC festival which we run annually for the entire Broome region including the communities from the Dampier Peninsula. One of our other events which we are extremely proud of is ‘Kimberley Girl’ which started out as a couple of days during the year and has expanded to a six week event/program. Since its inception 10 years ago, we have had over 300 girls participate and it is now an internationally recognised event. ‘Kimberley Girl’ is open to young women from the greater Kimberley region and we hold a similar event in the Pilbara as well, ‘Pilbara Girl’.

Last year we also trialed a tourism event called ‘A Taste of Broome’ which is a unique live musical/pictorial show with cuisine experiences created around the distinctive Indigenous culture within Broome’s multicultural community. It is held at The Goolarri Amphitheatre and runs from May through to September. ‘A Taste of Broome’ also showcases and incorporates Broome’s history. This show is proving to be extremely successful so we will run it again this year, once a month during tourist season.



“Goolarri provides Indigenous people with the opportunity to produce content that tells their stories in their own way so we have an Indigenous perspective rather than a mainstream view. We believe the ripple effect from people sharing their own stories is that it helps to combat feelings of isolation people may have. Instead of feeling as though they are living on the periphery of society, people feel as if they are living in the core of it which brings a sense of connectedness.”

We have a large Indigenous listenership and viewership so we are Broome's first port of call for people and organisations to spread their community messages. We produce community stories about local upcoming events, corporate videos for mining companies who may want a video produced about their Indigenous employment program, or videos on various social marketing campaigns. For example, government departments often approach us to produce information videos. We also make high end productions to broadcast specifically on the ABC and NITV. These particular productions don't get broadcast on our network for a few years after production due to broadcasting licence restrictions but are eventually handed back to us for our use.

We run an independent accredited training program which we term The Goolarri 'reality based' training program because of its hands on approach. Students, volunteers or prospective staff can attain anything from a Certificate II to Diploma Level qualification in Screen and Media. We also conduct a Certificate III in Events course. Our courses are all conducted on site however we can tailor programs and deliver in other locations as the need arises. For example, we are piloting a radio broadcasting course (Certificate III level) at the West Kimberley Regional Prison in Derby later this year. We train about 15 to 30 people annually. In the last year we have established a partnership with Swinburne University TAFE in Melbourne to develop our online training capability.



Jodie Bell, CEO

In the past we have partnered with the Broome Senior High School to offer a Certificate II in Live Production, Theatre and Events for young men who are at risk of disengaging from the education system. The aim of this program is to re-engage the boys with the school or other training opportunities. We run special one-off media focussed programs for the youth on site and provide mentorship and education to the Broome youth who need it the most.

Unfortunately...

the challenging aspect of running a business which relies largely on funding (whether it be grant funding or government fee for service) is that we are sometimes at the mercy of the national economic climate. If there is an economic downturn the first thing Government departments cut is their marketing and promotion budgets which are the umbrella that we fall under. Keeping Goolarri afloat can be a bit of a juggling act at times because feeding a 24 hour TV station is a huge job.

As we have a small broadcast footprint, we don't have a huge advertising income base so we rely on commercially paid work from media organisations such as ABC and NITV. At the moment the only ongoing funding we receive is for our radio station through the Indigenous Broadcasting Program which is administered by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.



Designing our sets

And since that day...

we continue to provide an essential service for the community. Goolarri Media is important to the Kimberly region for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is a community service so it provides important information for local Broome people that commercial stations don't. It allows people to participate in the media, in both radio and TV. If people from the local community have a story to tell that they would like broadcast we are always happy to run it as long as it fits within our broadcast guidelines.

We endeavour to produce and broadcast as many community stories as we possibly can. For example, if an old girl is turning 100 years old we will try to cover her story, which is not something that commercial television broadcasters would necessarily be interested in. We feel that it's imperative to cover community stories and give people a voice and an opportunity to have their stories heard. We are also a space where non-Indigenous and Indigenous people can come together.

Goolarri provides Indigenous people with the opportunity to produce content that tells their stories in their own way so we have an Indigenous perspective rather than a mainstream view. We believe the ripple effect from people sharing their own stories is that it helps to combat feelings of isolation people may have. Instead of feeling as though they are living on the periphery of society,

they feel as if they are living in the core of it-which bring a sense of connectedness.

I have been the CEO of Goolarri for the past five years and I find the role challenging, interesting and ever changing. It's encouraging how many young people want to be involved in media production and it's fantastic to watch the young people undertake our media training. With the advent of smart phones everyone is a video maker or a photographer these days so getting these kids involved with Goolarri is a great way to harness all that creativity.

Our vision for Goolarri is to work on expanding our broadcast footprint. We often have remote communities asking us how they can watch Goolarri TV in their communities so to be able to reach a greater audience is one of our primary aims. We would also like to become financially sustainable and not rely on continual funding to keep us afloat.

Goolarri plays a very important role in capturing personal stories and using those stories to connect with community people who may have lost their family connections. Through our videos, radio programs, community events and training, we also teach our young people to have a stronger sense of cultural awareness and to help them to understand where they come from at a more profound level. We are much more than just a media organisation; we are the heart of our culture and identity.



Filming on location

THE STORY OF A YOUNG INDIGENOUS ROLE MODEL

CONTACT PERSON:

Albert Wiggan

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alwigg1@live.com.au

KEY WORDS:

Culture, Country, music, self-determination, language, role model, leadership

About Albert Wiggan ...

Albert is a Bardi /Nyul Nyul man and a young traditional owner from the salt water country of the western Kimberley region. He is a songwriter, musician and activist, a spokesperson for his Country and people and a role model for Indigenous youth.



Once upon a time...

I was born at Derby District Hospital in 1980. My mother is a Gidja woman who was raised and has lived most of her life in Beagle Bay and my father was a Bardi man from One Arm Point. I am a Bardi Nyul Nyul boy and the Dampier Peninsula is my home. I went to primary school at Saint Mary's in Broome and then my parents sent me to a private all male boarding school in Perth called Mazenod College for five years. It was an interesting experience as I was the only Aboriginal person amongst 2000 white students. In Year 8 and 9 I was frequently subjected to racism but I wasn't really familiar with the concept or experience of racism so I viewed it as humour not criticism, and it didn't really impact me that much.

The longer I lived in the city and as I progressed through high school, the more I began to comprehend what racism was and I began to form a better understanding of how it was used to hurt people. When I finally understood this, it had more of a negative impact on me. My high school years were important growth years in my development and I was given many opportunities which provided a good foundation for my future.

I played a lot of sport and A Grade football in particular and was listed to be on the AFL draft but I didn't pursue a football career. I dabbled in acting for both Barron Films and Grundy TV Productions during high school. After graduating high school I was accepted into UWA into a marine science degree. I had long held aspirations of being a marine biologist which stemmed from growing up on saltwater Country. I spent nearly a year at UWA but I found it was hard for me to stay focused. Instead I got together with some friends, jumped in a Holden and travelled around Australia which was an important rite of passage for a young man!



Albert Wiggan

And then one day...

I came home in 2000 and have been involved in many different ventures over the past 14 years. I spent many years working on pearling boats, research vessels and fishing boats; anything that kept me close to the ocean. Us saltwater people-our ties run deep! During this period my father passed away. My father was a revered, honoured cultural traditional man of the Bardi people, who people respected and loved. He was a true leader and someone I really loved who I felt I lost too young. This was a pivotal point in my life and I went through a tricky period of feeling extremely angry. I felt that I couldn't live up to my dad's expectations of me. I felt like I wasn't close to the man he was and couldn't step into his shoes as I didn't feel worthy. I put a lot of pressure on myself, was depressed and bitter. I was fortunate to have good people and family who didn't indulge my selfish behaviour; instead they made me take responsibility for it. It was the saddest time in my life but I grew a lot from this experience.



*“Words are powerful.
If I tell you that a tree on my
Country is a sacred tree, it doesn’t
necessarily mean a great deal to you,
but if we can establish a dialogue where
you can appreciate exactly what that tree
means to me as an individual, and as an
Indigenous person, not just simply a tree
in the ground, then we are getting
somewhere.”*

My father had worked a lot as a cultural advisor with the late Malcolm Douglas on his original nature documentaries. He introduced Malcolm to the Kimberley and shared a lot of cultural and environmental knowledge with him. So, it was very fitting that I also worked with Malcolm as a camera man and editor on his documentaries. Malcolm and I became very close and we went out on Country a lot together and ironically, he began to teach me a lot of things my father had taught him. It was a very interesting period in my life where the knowledge that I perceived that I’d lost from my father; I was relearning through a white man, who loved the Country just as much as my dad did. Although Malcolm was perceived to be a media personality, to me, he was so much more. He was like an uncle and he cared deeply about our culture and Country. We shared a lot of time and knowledge together. I was very fortunate as events had really come full circle and I felt as though my journey as a man really began at this point. It was at this time, I made a decision that I wanted to be a spokesperson for my Country and culture - to stand up for my people and use my time on this earth to educate people about why our culture and sustaining it for future generations is so important. But I had to find a way to do that.

And because of that...

I’d had quite a bit of experience in public speaking in high school and naturally fell into the role of representative/spokesperson for my people. I became involved in various leadership groups and as an advocate for Indigenous issues as a means to get my message out there. When I was at university the federal government invested in a Youth Suicide Prevention Policy program at both the state and federal level. I was part of the establishment of the Youth Suicide Prevention Board and in 1999 became their WA spokesperson. This appointment opened many doors for me in different capacities. I was part of founding an awareness group dealing with sustainable development in the Kimberley which

was established on the back of the James Price Point gas precinct proposal by the state government. I’m on the governance board for the community of Beagle Bay and am also the coordinator of an annual musical festival. Everything I have been involved in, ties in with my desire to promote culture and sustain Country (including the Youth Suicide Prevention program). Without these two things, it’s hard for Aboriginal people to remain grounded and happy. I also became very active in campaigning to keep the Dampier Peninsula free from development and in particular a major oil resource development - this was my first foray into campaigning. Around this time, I helped to establish an awareness group called Save the Kimberley with four other people. We had the opportunity to travel to Canberra to meet several Federal Ministers under Julia Gillard to discuss alternatives to the gas proposal and outline our case for appropriate development in the Kimberley. Overall, it was a good experience, however I met with a few politicians who did not seem to understand our cultural perspectives.

Even though I was angry about this lack of awareness, I responded by offering some education about our people. I explained that in the Kimberley there are many Indigenous people who have worked for the last three or four generations, such as my grandfather and my mother. I explained that there are many positive examples of Aboriginal people who are productive and trying to bring about balance and change within our community but because they don’t have a bottle in their hand or because they’re not neglecting their children, they’re not being recognised by the media. They’re the teachers, nurses, shire workers; they are the people doing many different things on different levels. I really hate being perceived as a bunch of people living in poverty and in third world conditions. Obviously that is happening in some of our communities, but I believe those people are the minority who are finding it hard to adapt to mainstream society. At the end of the day however, we have the ability as people to create our own future. It was an interesting lesson for me because the people who I perceived that could bring about the change within our society, our leaders, they didn’t seem to understand our culture. It really hit home that at the end of the day it comes back to our people. We need to empower our people on the ground to provide self-determination. That word gets used a lot for bureaucratic purposes but I believe self-determination needs to be defined in our own terms as Indigenous people and one of the ways we can do that is through communication. Words are powerful.



Albert at home in Beagle Bay

If I tell you that a tree on my Country is a sacred tree, it doesn't necessarily mean a great deal to you, but if we can establish a dialogue where you can appreciate exactly what that tree means to me as an individual, and as an Indigenous person, not just simply a tree in the ground, then we are getting somewhere. This is a challenge I know, but this is where environmental awareness and cultural awareness go hand in hand. If you can use the environmental significance of something and discuss it in reference to cultural importance, you begin to appreciate that it has twice the value.

And since that day...

I spent years campaigning for this important cause but eventually had to withdraw because it became really emotionally stressful. Even though it's happening around you, it eventually ends up inside of you, and it's difficult to deal with. I had to identify an alternative way of maintaining my personal vision as a young Indigenous advocate for my Country. So, I started writing songs and focusing on a serious music career. I saw music as a tangible alternative to politics and a different way to get my message across. I started to write songs, secure gigs and tours throughout WA at various festivals. Singing and playing music is a great form of personal therapy for me. I released my first EP in February 2012, after writing songs and doing some low key local performances for a number of years. In 2012 I had my first major public performance at the Nannup Festival, performing with some great friends. So, given this, it made sense for me to take over running the annual Beagle Bay Keep Culture Fest which is held every July. The premise of the festival is to maintain our cultural knowledge through song and dance. We gather the traditional knowledge from our cultural practices and



The initial Keep Culture Fest flyer

celebrations from all over the Kimberley and bring them together in Beagle Bay. As Beagle Bay was the primary area for the assimilation process to occur in the Kimberley, it's the perfect location for a cultural festival. Many children were taken under this policy, assimilated and taught nothing about our culture, so the idea of the festival is to reintroduce it into our communities. In essence, it's a healing celebration for our people. The first part of the program focuses on promoting and celebrating children and sharing cultural knowledge. For instance the circus runs a two hour workshop with the kids, followed by Dreamtime dancing in order to incorporate Dreamtime values in a fun, positive way. After the kid's program we showcase lots of music by Kimberley artists. We invite dance groups, such as the Bardi dancers, the Nyul Nyul traditional dancers, the Torres Strait Islanders, and the Gidja Corrobarree dancers.

It's an incredibly positive festival. Last year's festival was a complete success with around 500 people attending. Although it's a drug and alcohol free event, the community doesn't have any restrictions so the police were concerned about antisocial behavior prior to the event. However, we didn't have any issues at all. It just goes to show, if you create the right environment and you use the right tools to celebrate, then people will respond in a positive way. Last year was the first festival I had managed but it had been running for a few years prior to that. It was originally started by musician Kerriane Cox, and it was developed to advocate against domestic violence. Although it was at a standstill for a while,



the corporation was still active so I revived the festival with a new name and focus. Last year the festival was organised in a very short time frame so I didn't have time to outsource the funding to run it. Hence, I personally contributed \$9000 to ensure it took place. Surprisingly, our budget was \$35,000 and Cygnet Bay Pearls and the other festival coordinator also contributed funds. Although I didn't recoup that amount, I donated the money to help run the festival because that's how much I believed in it.

I'm more prepared this year and have already begun submitting applications. I'm hoping Country Arts and Lotteries come on board as I am really committed to raising the profile of Keep Culture Fest. My goal is to grow the festival to a level where it can be held in different locations throughout Australia. Although I am fortunate to have some great friends in the music world, such as John Butler and Missy Higgins, who were also very active in the campaign at James Price Point, I don't want to draw on those connections as I think it's important to show that we don't necessarily need to rely on other people's success in order to achieve our own. I want us to do it as a community and to prove to our mob that we can build something from a grassroots level that can be highly successful. I want young people in my community to believe that they can achieve anything they set their minds to. My message is 'get up and do it yourself' but I have to lead the way and put my money where my mouth is, which is why I invested in the festival as I wanted people to see that I'm not all talk, I'll actually wear my heart on my sleeve. On a personal level, I'm still trying to find the best way to manage and look after our Country and be a productive, positive role model. I want to be a living breathing example of change. I see myself as a young student; there is still so much knowledge I need to acquire in order to be qualified as a leader. I am a long way from that. We learn something new every day so we're students until the day we die.

Thanks to my education, I've collected enough skills in a white man's world to survive in both worlds and hopefully, with my motor mouth, I can continue to have open dialogue with people. Someone has to do it, to put their foot in it, to make mistakes, and then learn from them. With these mistakes, I can go back to my mob and say, you know, rather than going on record and saying five words that mean nothing and don't do your people or your cause any justice, use these five critical words instead to really draw attention to yourself. What I have learnt over time is to be true to yourself and always be genuine in what you do and say. Indigenous people need to be like that, we need to be genuine with ourselves. My greatest source of protection and strength is staying on Country, staying true to my Country and staying loyal to my culture and identity. That gives me strength. I just want my mob to believe in themselves as Indigenous people and then they can't go wrong. That's where their strength needs to come from; self-belief.

"I am still trying to find the best way to manage and look after our Country and be a productive, positive role model. I want to be a living breathing example of change. I see myself as a young student; there is still so much knowledge I need to acquire in order to be qualified as a leader. I am a long way from that."



LOMBADINA COMMUNITY TOURS

ORGANISATION NAME:

Lombadina Community Tours

CONTACT PERSON:

Robert Sibosado

EMAIL AND WEBSITE:

www.lombadina.com

KEY WORDS:

Culture, fishing, whale watching, tourism, heritage

About the storyteller...

Robert Sibosado is a Bard man from the remote Dampier Peninsula Community of Lombadina.

About Lombadina Community...

Lombadina is a working and thriving Aboriginal community aiming for self-sufficiency through various community ventures. The community owns and operates a thriving tourism business, providing serviced accommodation for visitors to the Peninsula, cultural tours, kayaking and snorkelling outings, mudcrabbing and boating charters. Lombadina has a general store, a workshop, a garage, a souvenir and gift shop and a community school. There is also an historical heritage listed Church built from local timber in 1934.



Robert takes visitors sea kayaking



Once upon a time...

back in 1990, my parents decided they wanted to start a tourism business at Lombadina Community where the family calls home. As Lombadina is rich in natural wonders, remote, pristine, and boasts an abundant array of sea life, the logical step was to open it up to visitors and share it with people from both Australia and around the world. The remote Dampier Peninsula community is situated near Kooljaman at Cape Leveque in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. Lombadina is located at the northern end of the Dampier Peninsula and is a five minute walk from the spectacular coastline; a haven of white sandy beaches and clear turquoise waters. The closest regional town centre to Lombadina is Broome. The first thing my family did was to build a self-contained cabin to accommodate up to 12

people. We then formed a partnership with Over The Top Adventure Tours (OTT) (a Broome, Western Australia based company), and the now defunct Ansett Australia, offering tourism packages to visitors from Melbourne. The first deal included return flights from Melbourne to Broome and a four day package at Lombadina which included accommodation, fishing, four wheel driving and whale watching tours. Ansett promoted our tours package and took care of booking the flights. It was a successful partnership and the beginning of our now thriving tourism business. I learned the ropes going out on the boat tours with my dad and older brothers as a deckhand and then in 2007, after completing my Coxswain's ticket, I took over as skipper.



Spearfishing at Lombadina



“Lombadina Community has now been running as a thriving, independent, not for profit organisation for the past 25 years and we are proud of our ability to offer a unique experience for people that keeps them coming back.”

all swimming together. We also sometimes catch a glimpse of a dugong.

We also offer a mud crabbing tour which is again determined by the tides. We walk through the mangroves when the tides are out, teach people how to catch crabs and share cultural knowledge and information about the mangroves and the natural environment. The best part is making a fire on the beach, cooking and eating a delicious feast of fresh mud crabs. It's a gourmet experience made all the more enjoyable because the food has come straight from the ocean.

One of the other tours we offer is the Bard Country Tour which is a driving tour that takes people around the top end of the Peninsula from Lombadina to Cape Leveque and all through Bard Country. This tour gives people the opportunity to experience the expansive and beautiful coastline and the magnificent Bard Country we call home. We stop for a swim at one of Dampier Peninsula's beautiful beaches and visitors can also enjoy a delicious lunch at either the Cape Leveque or Cygnet Bay restaurant.

And then one day...

slowly but surely we expanded our accommodation options to lodge up to 40 people. The community now offers a range of serviced, self-contained, air conditioned accommodation. The community offers visitors several facilities including a local store, bakery, workshop, craft shop and a conference centre. We run several different tours; a mud crabbing tour, whale watching, fishing charter, Bard Country 4WD tour, an ancient footprints tour, Garr Kayaking tour and a community tour. Each tour offers something a little different.

The fishing tour, which is our most popular, can be either a full day or a half day and the destination is dictated by the tide. The visitors absolutely love it because we go to one of the islands off the coast and stop at a remote beach to have lunch. We also go swimming so if there is a family on board and someone doesn't want to fish, they can still enjoy the overall experience. The remote beaches are really spectacular and there is not a soul in sight and the visitors often comment on how special the experience is. We are pretty lucky with the amount of fish in our waters and we are yet to experience taking people fishing and not catching anything! The most challenging aspect for budding fishermen and women are the strong tidal currents, which can be difficult to navigate if you are unfamiliar.

Our spectacular whale watching tours are very popular as the number of whales we see seems to be increasing every year and it's not only whales, the ocean is rich with all species of sea life in this part of the world. There are not many places you can see dolphins, turtles, manta rays, stingrays and sharks



The Whale Watching Tour

And because of that...

our tours offer a cultural experience; something that is unique and different and visitors come from all over Australia. The feedback we get about what people love the most is the opportunity to go out on Country and the sense of freedom that it offers. People can learn about cultural knowledge if they are interested and we are always open to answering their questions.

Our peak business period runs from June through to October and sometimes through November as well. As our accommodation options are air conditioned, people are happy to come and stay a bit later in the year when the weather is heating up. We are always busy during the Easter school holidays too. We find we don't have to do too much advertising as our best promotional tool is word of mouth, especially for the fishing tours. However, we did attend the Caravan and Camping show in Perth this year to promote our tours through brochures and chatting to people. We also have a website so people can book tours directly. During the tourist season we often run at around 60 to 80 per cent capacity but if our tours are only running at 50 per cent we are still happy with that! The wet season, which runs from November to March, is our quiet period so our bookings are generally lower.

As Lombadina is aiming towards self-sufficiency, all profits made from our tourism ventures go back into the community.

And since that day...

we have been fortunate to win several awards since 2009 including the WA Tourism 'Indigenous Business Award', the Western Australian 'Indigenous Small Business Award' and the Kimberley 'Tidy Towns' award. We have also been listed as 'one of Australia's 10 great Indigenous cultural experiences' by Travel Australia.

I have now been doing this for 19 years and I really love my job. It gets me out on the ocean and I am able to do all the things I love such as fishing and crabbing. It can be tiring being out in the salt air and sun for eight hours straight but it's worth it to be able to share our lifestyle and all the natural wonders at our doorstep. I enjoy meeting new people and listening to their perspective on things. It's particularly interesting when people from different cultures come through and get to experience our culture, although language can sometimes be a barrier but we always manage to communicate one way or another.



Lombadina Community

On a personal level, I'd eventually like to hand the reins over; we just need to find the right person to do the job well. The hard bit isn't finding someone with the required skills; it's finding the right person with excellent people skills that will be challenging because talking is a big part of the job!

The aim over the next five years is to get the business running smoothly, upgrade our accommodation and increase our capacity to accommodate 60 people. We are happy to keep the capacity at 60 as one of the things decided by The Board when we first started was that we didn't want the business to grow to a point where it would compromise our family orientated lifestyle. Lombadina Community has now been running as a thriving, independent, not for profit organisation for the past 25 years and we are proud of our ability to offer a unique experience for people that keeps them coming back.



"The remote beaches are really spectacular and there is not a soul in sight and the visitors often comment on how special the experience is."

For more information...

or to book a tour visit:

www.lombadina.com

TOMORROWGIRL

ORGANISATION NAME:

Tomorrowgirl

CONTACT PERSON:

Ros Baxter

EMAIL AND WEBSITE:

www.tomorrowgirl.com.au

PROGRAM / PROJECT PARTNERS:

A range of education departments, schools and community partners

KEY STAFF / PEOPLE INVOLVED:

Judges: Danika Nanya, Sue Woolfe, Damian Amamoo

KEY WORDS:

Short stories, Indigenous, girls, remote, hope, change the world

About the storyteller...

Ros Baxter is an author, mother and public servant who has worked most of her professional life in and around Indigenous policy.

She has watched good efforts to generate positive changes flounder because they were imposed from the outside and did not foster hope and heart in trying to generate commitment and drive action. Specifically she became interested in why some people and places were flourishing, while others were not.

Most recently, Ros worked in government communications, and is fascinated with the power of storytelling to spread hope and lead to positive action. She wanted to harness women's power to change the world by giving young women an avenue to tell stories, and hear the stories of other young women in similar situations.

Please contact Ros on 0420 933 741 or tomorrowgirlaustralia@gmail.com to discuss the project or offer support.

About Tomorrowgirl ...

Tomorrowgirl is a short story competition for Indigenous high school girls in or from remote communities. It was a big success in 2013, and in 2014 it asks girls to tell stories on the theme of "Big Dreams". The stories can be true or imagined, and the winners receive a writer's support package with a laptop, book vouchers and membership to a writer's association. The stories may be shared with other remote communities, and across Australia.



Once upon a time...

after working in government organisations in Indigenous policy for a number of years, I became interested in the idea of different communication methods. I had come across many innovative approaches that were taking place outside of the sector I worked in, which focussed on encouraging people to tell their stories in their own words. At the same time, I was immersed in the writing world. I had become a published novelist and was surrounded by storytellers. It was during this period that I developed a strong belief that telling stories in

your own words is a really powerful way to shape your future. I also had a strong passion for Indigenous people, women and girls in particular, and a belief that women are the key to change in their communities. An idea began to form in my mind about a short story competition for Indigenous girls. I wanted to create a platform for young women to express their desires for their own futures. I also wanted to find a way to connect the short story competition to education and learning outcomes.



*Shania Willett
Inaugural Winner*

I believe it's important to ensure that positive stories are being shared with other people – Indigenous or otherwise – across the nation, because generally we only hear negative stories coming out of Indigenous communities. In my career I have met a lot of wonderful and inspiring people in remote communities but those people are not viewed as newsworthy by the mainstream media, so I think it's very powerful for people to be sharing their positive stories of hope and change.

And then one day...

in early 2013, I started exploring lots of different avenues to set up Tomorrowgirl including sponsorships and support from charitable organisations. Although I had many generous offers of support from friends and colleagues, after much searching, I realised that the company was something I needed to set up on my own. To that end, Tomorrowgirl became a labour of love. I established Tomorrowgirl as a limited charitable company so that it can grow organically in the direction that it needs to.

The premise of the short story competition is to provide Indigenous girls from all over Australia with an opportunity to write a 500 (or more) word story in either fiction or non-fiction about anything dreamed, imagined or real. The only criterion is they have to be an Indigenous high school girl living in a remote community. I chose the theme of 'My Beautiful Tomorrow' for the first year, 2013. The theme's concept was to encourage the girls to think explicitly about the kind of future they wanted to choose for themselves. So the theme was forward-looking and positive and centred on

women building a future together and connecting with each other. The first thing I did was to contact the Education Department and Indigenous Education Units that deal with remote regions and ask them to spread the word. My approach was to work through schools and community organisations to get people to encourage young Indigenous girls to enter Tomorrowgirl. Several jurisdictions were happy to jump on board to help. As I'd worked both at a senior level and with a lot of Indigenous people before, I had good referees and several people vouching for the credibility of the project, so that helped to get the ball rolling.

I sent out information packs to schools in the remote communities throughout Australia asking the schools if they would be willing to incorporate the story competition into their English curriculum as part of their terms work. I really wasn't sure how many entries we would get in the inaugural year, or how successful the competition would be as I know that many remote Indigenous kids have lower levels of literacy than in other areas. I was also aware that Indigenous girls in remote regions are a very hard group to connect with.

And because of that...

we opened up the competition and gave the girls a timeline of three months to get their entries in. I was actually amazed and surprised by the number of entries that we received in those three months! I had decided if we received 20 entries I'd be absolutely thrilled and we got 22 in the end so I was extremely happy. I was impressed with the calibre and the range of the entries we received. The submissions ranged from very small personal stories to much bigger stories about land, community and family. There were also very powerful stories about belonging and friendship. We were lucky we had one particularly active teacher at the Halls Creek District High School who really encouraged the girls to enter and gave them the support they needed to write their stories.

I had people asking me along the way – how much support is okay? I suggested they approach it by considering what level of support they would provide their son or daughter and use that as their point of reference. Judging by the number and quality of entries we had from the Halls Creek District High School, I think the girls were well supported, but also encouraged to find their own voices. What always impresses me about Indigenous girls is their natural storytelling ability, that even if the syntax or grammar



“What always impresses me about Indigenous girls is their natural storytelling ability; that even if the syntax or grammar is not perfect, a natural voice rings through which is strong and powerful.”

is not perfect, a natural voice rings through which is strong and powerful. Some of the entries were really amazing and it's fascinating how different entries resonate with different judges. I was very fortunate to recruit a fantastic panel of three judges who are all voluntary (I made a specific decision to not be a part of the judging panel). Sue Woolfe is one of Australia's living treasure novelists and her latest novel *The Oldest Song in the World* is set in a remote Indigenous community. Damian Amamoo is CEO of Inception Strategies, a communications company who specialise in the development of social comics and apps for Indigenous communities, and Danika Nanya is a talented, young Indigenous journalist who brought a beautiful spirit to the judging.

The winner of Tomorrowgirl 2013 was 14 year old Shania Willet from Halls Creek. Shania won a laptop computer and book vouchers. Sophia Gumpoltsberger, also from Halls Creek, was named our inaugural runner-up for her story about family breakdown. She received book vouchers and both winners were also provided with a membership to the Australian Society of Authors. In addition, we awarded one of the storytellers, 16 year old Kesha Bedford, of Junjuwa community in the Fitzroy Valley, a Founder's Encouragement Award. Kesha submitted a story that I thought had a wonderful, storytelling voice to it. All three judges commended the high quality and originality of the girl's stories and agonised over the decision making process. In the end they chose Shania Willett's poignant, heart-warming tale about friendship and loss.

And since that day...

a big part of what we want to do with Tomorrowgirl is to build an anthology of the stories that are being submitted. We are considering building a joint anthology of the first two years of the project so we can share these stories with a greater audience. We are being supported by a couple of publishing houses who are interested in being involved, however we will need a couple of years of entries under our belt to really get the anthology established. In the future, as we grow as an organisation, I would really like to establish a mentoring program whereby girls who have previously entered would be able to provide support to other young girls who want to be involved. If I had a wish list number one would be to set up a mentoring program and two would be to send female Indigenous storytellers out to communities to work with the girls to encourage book reading, writing and story craft. I think the

Tomorrowgirl project is really important for our country because there are stories that we just don't hear, particularly from remote Indigenous girls. It's like a missing piece of our voice. It appears that one of the most common ways to work with remote Indigenous kids is through sports orientated programs. Sport can be a fantastic way to engage kids but it doesn't interest everyone and may not appeal to all girls. I'm concerned that due to lack of programs aimed specifically at girls, their voices are not being heard.

I believe really powerful changes in communities are often driven by women. It's frequently women who initiate and implement change so it's important to start with young women. On a personal level this project means a lot to me as I'd been thinking about it for many years and I didn't want to let another year go by and not establish something I felt so passionate about that would hopefully make a difference. No one is just a drop in the ocean, we all have the capacity to have a positive impact and to change the world and I think it's important for people to think very carefully how they use their time and resources and how they focus on things that they care about in the world.

Tomorrowgirl is about hearing fresh voices of hope and resilience and about helping Indigenous girls to learn from one other. As well as providing girls with a chance to be published, it also gives them the opportunity share their stories with their communities. These girls are the leaders and mothers of tomorrow. It's essential that their voices are heard – by their communities and by each other. Tomorrowgirl launched its second competition in April 2014, asking girls to write their stories based around the theme of 'Big Dreams'. I am very much looking forward to reading more tales from the rich, inner world of our budding writers.

ITCHY FEET: THE STORY OF AN INSPIRING ABORIGINAL HEALTH WORKER

ORGANISATION NAME:

Boab Health Services

CONTACT PERSON:

Russell Bandy

EMAIL AND WEBSITE:

www.boabhealth.com.au

PROGRAM / PROJECT PARTNERS:

Closing the Gap/Kimberley Pilbara Medicare Local

KEY WORDS:

Primary Health Care

About the storyteller...

Russell Bandy is a Wajarri man who works for Boab Health Services in Kununurra as an Aboriginal Health Worker.

About Boab Health...

Boab Health Services is a not-for-profit Primary Health Care organisation servicing communities across the Kimberley region. Services provided include Allied Health, Mental Health, a 'Closing the Gap' team and a range of projects and health promotion programs.



Boab Health Services

'Partners in Health to Grow Strong, Live Well'

Once upon a time...

I was born in Mount Magnet in 1956. My father was a Wajarri man from Meekatharra. My mother's from Payne's Find which is in the Geraldton region. I don't know that much about my father's history and when he died in 1968 I was still trying to find out about his family. To this day I still don't know where he was born.

During my early childhood I spent some time out on the stations. Then I was sent to Tardan Mission in Mullewa for a couple of years. Most of my memories from that time at the Mission aren't very good. After a few years, I left Tardan and I went to Kyarra Hostel in Cue where I spent several more years. From there, I headed down to Perth to attend boarding school in Rossmoyne. After a few years I left school and got a contracted position laying carpets and vinyl. At this time, I felt I needed to get back to the land, so I drifted back to my own area and worked around Mt Magnet and Morawa on the mines. I also worked on a few farms in WA including Dalwallinu, Corrigin, Hyden and Kulin. I did a lot of farm work such as ploughing, harvesting and working in the shearing sheds. I decided at this point that I wanted to go back to the stations and I worked alongside my step-father sheep shearing. I moved to Queensland and joined the Army for a while where I started training at Kapooka in Wagga Wagga. The Army then sent me to Ennogra 6 RAR Barracks in Brisbane where I stayed for 12 months.



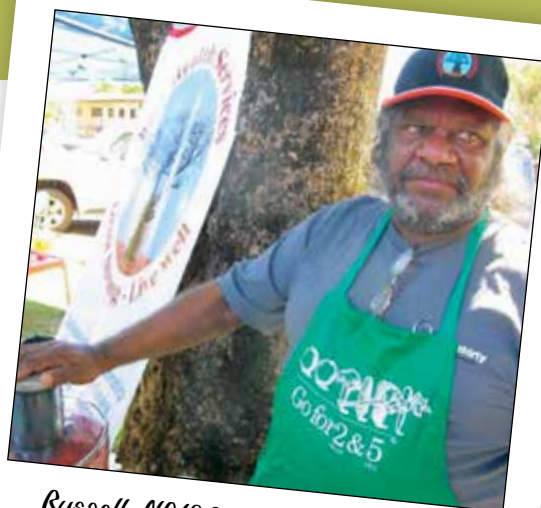
Russell in Warman doing health promotion activities



Although it was great to experience the east coast of Australia, I didn't like being away. I missed home-I was too far away. I decided to come home and in 1980 I joined the Police Department in Wiluna. My position was as a Liaison Officer between the Police and the locals and I stayed in that position for several years. I found the work interesting but quite tough at times though there were a lot of people that I got to know really well. Part of my job was to conduct background checks which revealed that many of these people were actually related to me...and that was the hardest part.



*The Kununurra Agricultural Show,
promoting healthy eating*



*Russell, NAIDOC week celebrations,
Kununurra*



And then one day...

in 1987-88 I completed the Aboriginal Health Workers Course in Broome through the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services Council (KAMSC) which enabled me to secure work in the health field. I started working in health at the Kalgoorlie Medical Service where I worked with a Doctor named Chris Dunn. The job often took me to Coolgardie and once a month we flew to TjunTjunTajra which is a community on the border of South Australia. Sometime in 1988 I moved to Alice Springs to work for Ngannantjarra Health at Tjakula community. I then completed further training as a Health Worker and was employed at the Congress in Alice Springs. I attended Batchelor College and completed my formal Health Worker training which included completing several different courses. This led me back to Alice Springs Hospital where I worked as a Liaison Officer. At that time, we had four other ladies who worked with me who spoke the local languages. There are around 14 languages in that area alone.

And because of that...

the training I undertook as a Health Worker enabled me to gain more opportunities. I was offered a job in Bathurst Island where I lived and worked for two years. I moved around a lot and ended up working in the renal unit in Nightcliff in Darwin under the manager, Jim Goran. Jim offered me a job as a renal aid and while I was working in that unit, I completed the renal course. I was then placed back at the Bathurst Island units to manage the satellite renal unit which was the first in Australia at the time. I stayed for a while before I went back to the Nightcliff renal unit. Then I was fortunate enough to get a position in the Katherine renal unit and during this period I also worked out in the communities, such as Port

Keith and Bayluin, Sun Rise, Berwick community and Oenpelli community. I really enjoyed these times.

My next stop was Broome where I worked with KAMSC/BRAMS in the dialysis renal unit. From Broome, it seemed Derby was the next logical step! I worked at the Derby Aboriginal Health Service in the renal unit. At this point, I decided I wanted to complete another course so I travelled back to the Northern Territory, did some more training and went to work out in the communities. As you can tell, I like to move around quite a lot! I worked in Miwati Aboriginal Health Services Gove, Grout Island on Umbakumba and Tennant Creek. My main role in these many different places was generally in men's health but I eventually moved into chronic disease.

I then spent some time in Jabiru. It was here that I got sick and had to have a triple bypass. I decided to take it easy for a while and have some time off to recover. After a period of time, Boab Health in Kununurra offered me a job, where I am working to this day. My job is to assist people with chronic disease and help with education. This involves organising transport for people between Perth and Darwin from the communities of Balgo, Warmun, Wyndham, Kalumburu, Halls Creek and all the communities in between. I also refer clients onto specialists. I still go out to the communities and talk to the patients and staff at the clinic. I have a good relationship with the doctors and nurses at the clinics and we all provide a lot of support to the patients.

At times when our clients have to travel to Perth and they get lonely we try to have someone go with them. It can be stressful for people from here when they have to go all the way to Perth or Darwin. Even when they just go to Broome, they miss their family a lot.



Boab Health staff breakfast



“My advice to young Aboriginal people would be to make sure you get a good education and work hard. Anybody can do it. Also, always follow your heart. Listen, look, respect, and ask if you are not sure what people say.”

And since that day...

I've now completed quite a few more courses in health including renal, chronic disease, mental health, acute disease, first aid and the new certificate in chronic disease. I've also completed the Quit Smoking course. I think I have enough certificates now to light a fire. I really enjoy the work at Boab Health and the staff are really great and supportive. I work five days a week with no overtime hours. It's great. Also, I don't work nights, which is good for me as I've worked enough by now, and it's time to look after my own health. I think I've recovered from my heart operation but I still get aches and pains. It was difficult on the old clinic runs. You're on the ball all the time, working all hours of the night.

Earlier this year during world anti-poverty week, we organised an anti-poverty campaign. With the team from Job Pathways, we helped the pensioners to clean up their yards. Staff from East Kimberly Environmental Health, Adult's Correction and Environmental Wildlife and Parks teams, all helped out. There were about 15 people in total who were involved. We also had support from Grab A Bargain, Coles and Tucker Box Store, who all supplied vouchers for the workers, The Youth Centre let us use their kitchen to do the cooking, and Waringarri Radio were also very supportive.

They brought us in for an interview and they notified the communities of the programs that we were running. We focused on the old people in town. We raked up yards for the pensioners, trimmed bushes, and cleaned footpaths and driveways where cars get bogged or washed away. We made a footpath in Emu Creek for two patients who are in wheelchairs. We cleaned up about 10 houses altogether. All the rubbish was placed in donated bags from Kununurra Toxfree. Boab Health organised a skip bin which we used. It was a great community rally. Unfortunately we only had a week and we are still doing little odds and ends even now. At the end of the week, we had a BBQ for all the workers and invited everyone who participated in the work group. I think what we did made a difference in the community, even though it was only a small thing.

As for my life outside work, I have family in Mount Magnet but I don't see them often as I've been drifting around. That's all I do. I've been in many relationships and I have two granddaughters who I hope to see one day soon before they get too big, and I also have other children in the Northern Territory. Early in my youth I spent a lot of time with my three sisters who took on the role of being mothers. They would always be there for me and today they are still caring – but for their grandchildren. My brothers are all over the countryside and have their own families and also care for their grandchildren.

My advice to young Aboriginal people would be to make sure you get a good education and work hard. Anybody can do it. Also, always follow your heart. Listen, look, respect, and ask if you are not sure what people are saying.

BUILDING THRIVING COMMUNITIES

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KEY STAFF / PEOPLE INVOLVED:

Katrina Nissen

KEY WORDS:

Healthy eating, community garden, school garden, nutrition, community engagement

About the storyteller...

Katrina Nissen is a Project Manager at the EON Foundation and is based in Kununurra.

About The EON (Edge Of Nowhere) Foundation...

The EON Foundation provides practical support to remote Indigenous communities with a focus on chronic disease prevention, particularly Type 2 diabetes. Poor nutrition is heavily evident in these communities and is a major known cause of chronic disease. EON provides resources and education programs to improve nutrition in a “hands-up not hands-out” way.

Once upon a time...

In 2005, the EON Foundation was created with the aim to provide practical support to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people in remote Indigenous communities in Western Australia. As Indigenous children in remote communities are more susceptible to diseases due to poor health and diet, the EON Foundation started a Thriving Communities Program to help address this issue. The community based program is designed to assist local communities to live a healthy lifestyle and uses practical strategies such as planting gardens to grow fresh produce. The Aboriginal community of Kalumburu, due to its remoteness, is a prime candidate for unhealthy eating habits. Fresh fruit and vegetables are extremely costly to get into the community. The two local shops sell a lot of convenience foods such as fast foods and soft drink.

In the dry season, produce can come via trucks but it is at best a 12 hour trip from any major supermarket. There are times when visiting tourists buy all the fruit and vegetables in a few days, leaving the locals with none until the next delivery, which is often weeks or months away. Locals have learnt to make do, but to the detriment of their health. There has been a history of over 500 meat pies being bought in the community in one day (when the population of Kalumburu was about 500). Several years ago, EON was approached by the local Kalumburu Council asking for assistance to establish a garden at the local school in an attempt to get the children eating and accessing more fresh produce.



EON Foundation Inc.

The Aboriginal community of Kalumburu is one of Western Australia's most remote and isolated communities. It is located at the very northern tip of the State near the mouth of the King Edward River.



Coolio Bundamurra – doing a great job looking after the tomatoes



Lloyd James – enjoying delicious fresh food



*Thelma Evans – planting more silver beet,
Liarah Ryan*

And then one day...

in February 2013, EON signed a five year partnership agreement with the Kalumburu community and the Kalumburu remote community school. This agreement was for the establishment of a Thriving Communities program. The program incorporates four main areas; to establish a community edible garden, to teach healthy eating habits and provide information about having a healthy home and general education and training. The overall objective is to provide the community with an opportunity to create long term sustainable outcomes over the five years. EON provides a project manager to work with the community and the school. There has been lots of planning and we identified a space for the edible garden on the school grounds, with good access for the community. This location was previously a garden space and many people have fond childhood memories of growing fruit and vegetables and the sense of self sufficiency that came with it. By involving the school children in the establishment process, support from the community is increasing. Ownership and participation by the community is vital for long term sustainable outcomes.

Everyone involved at the school highly supports the program. However school attendance and engagement is an ongoing challenge so having this program as a resource is great. The kids are encouraged to come to school, they are learning important life skills and health and nutritional education, and reward for their effort is encouraged. We also offer a breakfast club so they are fed breakfast if they haven't eaten before arriving at school. It's difficult for some kids to attend school consistently because of the many social issues which affect community life. If there are social issues in the family it affects the kids, which in turn impacts school attendance and diet. These factors eventually affect

their long term health and opportunities. However, when they do attend, they get to eat delicious fresh food! We provide nutritional information when we do our cook ups. The children start by identifying fruit and vegetables and then we discuss how to grow and when to harvest them. The kids will ask "is it cooked Miss?" They have fun learning and gain practical skills at the same time. When they have seen, felt and tasted the food, it makes it easier for them to read and write about it. The kindy kids are also helping to plant the seedlings. We send them on treasure hunts to find the sweet potato and through fun activities, it's incredibly easy to get them involved. You are never too young to learn. I don't have to tell them how good the food is, they love to eat it! A strategy that works well with the younger children in terms of nutritional education is to handle and identify the food that we've grown in the garden, discuss colours and make delicious snacks such as fruit kebabs.

And because of that...

the project manager travels to Kalumburu fortnightly from Kununurra. On Tuesday's a garden inspection takes place, progress plans and garden tasks are identified with the school gardeners and training or construction activities are planned and carried out. Community consultations occur with the council and individuals who have shown interest in the program but also with the Tamalla Strong Women's group. Wednesdays are spent at the school where we focus on healthy eating and gardening. A number of classes are run that day, with the Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers (AIEO) providing critical support to the teaching staff and links to the community. The topics vary between gardening, healthy eating and healthy homes. The program is flexible and incorporates what is



“Initiatives such as the Thriving Communities Program are a vital link to making a community self-sufficient, empowered and healthy again.”

happening with the garden establishment and what produce is available. It's great because the kids are in a structured environment with good learning outcomes where they get to be active and have a lot of fun. Our school gardeners have been benefitting from the ongoing and regular training and support provided by EON's project manager. They are learning how to maintain the gardens and the school grounds, keep the shed clean and organised and ensure the lawn mowers and tools are all working and put back where they belong. The gardener's dedication to the garden shows, as they even check on the plants on the weekends for signs of progress. They are invaluable to the program; they are role models to the younger kids and represent positive community engagement. Another important goal for this project is to grow local fresh produce that will, ideally, become available through the local community store. At present, the food supply situation is not effective or sustainable because fresh food is transported by the barge and a pallet of heavy items such as watermelons is expensive and costs around \$1200. So unfortunately, fresh produce is a luxury in the community.

And since that day...

we have just finished filling the garden beds and installing the watering system. We still need to build a shade house, create a full sun growing area, plant fruit trees and continue training and education. We will hold more healthy eating workshops and more community liaison. We have big plans for the next few years of this project. It's not just about getting the kids to eat well, it's about community engagement and participation. The program is at its most effective when there is input from all sectors of the community. The Tamalla Strong Women's Group are keen to provide opportunities for the community, by growing plants for community projects, like the women's shelter and for healthy homes. The ladies have started taking cuttings and growing their own plants, which was fun and they learned a lot. We hope to continue to involve more community people as the word spreads. There has been discussion about the development of a cultural food wheel for the language groups of Kalumburu. Other communities have worked with EON and created similar food wheels. This project has a wonderful link



The Kalumburu Remote Community School Kids

between culture, bush tucker and local languages. It's a great way to pass on traditional knowledge and get the children involved in culture. Other ideas include cooking and preparing fresh meals within the store which would then be available to purchase cheaply, including all the school lunches. We are also in partnership with the community ranger groups to work with the high school kids in the garden, and in the community, learning about the duties of a ranger as this is a potential genuine career path for the older kids. There are also prospective paid positions for community gardeners through the Community Action Plan (CAP) but it's up to the community to nominate who they want and where they want to invest their CDP payments. There are a lot of opportunities for Kalumburu, especially through the CAP scheme. In about four years, we would like to see more people engaged in meaningful employment to make this thriving community sustainable. EON's ultimate aim is to help consolidate everything and identify and train people so the project manager's role eventually becomes redundant.

Our hope is that the community can have a long term sustainable garden and programs that support healthy eating and healthy homes. There is an abundance of resources and many good people who just need consistent support to flourish. Initiatives such as the Thriving Communities Program are a vital link to making a community self-sufficient, empowered and healthy again. Many communities in the Kimberley have come from a pastoral background due to colonisation and have lost a lot of their culture and language and places where they can walk, sing their songs and access their bush tucker. They have been bestowed with all these modern conveniences and many of them are unhealthy. It's incredibly important for the community to reconnect with their culture and maintain a holistic healthy lifestyle.

*Have you
got a great
story?*

*Would you like
to contribute to the
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and encouraged.*



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