

Bunbilla yarnteen ngurra-yelleeke (Listen everyone and take note)

Wurreker

Newcastle Aboriginal Support Group

Newsletter No. 113
October 1998

A new start or more of the same

Mr Howard has stated that in this second term of office his Government would seek reconciliation with the Aborigines. This is heartening, but lest we think that there are no problems to face or campaigns to be fought, let us remember those issues that must be addressed before reconciliation becomes a reality not a meaningless catch-cry.

Native Title legislation. The final draft of the bill though removing the sunset Clause and allowing some rights to negotiate through the States, makes it possible for Governments to compulsorily acquire any residual property rights from Aboriginal people, pay them financial compensation and then enhance the rights of other property holders. This is a major departure from the legal tradition that property could only be compulsorily acquired for public purposes.

The right to negotiate with property developers will become a State matter, and will depend on the current policies of State Governments.

The fact that Aboriginal communities were not only hunters and gatherers but carefully farmed and cared for the produce of the land and sea, has been ignored in considering proprietary rights. All rights to manage their own affairs were taken from the Indigenous peoples, and the limited powers given back in later years through ATSIC and Land Councils have been constantly attacked and now are in danger of being handed to white boards of management, in a direct return to paternalism.

The Federal Government's erosion of the joint management of our two major Heritage Parks, Uluru and Kakadu, through the Environment Protection and Bio-Diversity Conservation Bill of 1998 ignores the importance of traditional law and lessens the Aboriginal input into these areas. Indigenous delegates from the Northern Territory Parks management boards met at Uluru and expressed their dismay at the lessening of their influence and stated that "any diminishing of land owners' rights to control and manage their country is totally unacceptable".

Information for the above came from Koori Mail 06.08.1998 and the Covenanting Newsletter August 1998.

The Hindmarsh Case, the Ten Point Plan, the promise of 'bucket-loads of extinguishment', the treatment of Yvonne Margarula and the Mirrar people show that talk of Reconciliation rings as false today as it has previously. Let us hope that the new Minister for Aboriginal Affairs is more sincerely concerned for justice than the previous incumbent. Now would be a good time to start up a letter campaign.

Pat Keating

Aden Ridgeway

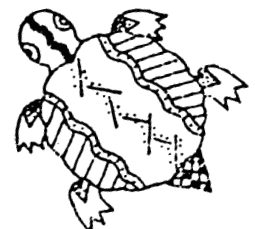
Aden Ridgeway seems to be well-positioned to take his place in the NSW Senate and thus become the second Aborigine to serve in the Federal Parliament. He is young, intelligent and speaks with authority on a great number of subjects, as well as possessing the honesty and integrity sadly lacking in some politicians.

He is a member of the Gumbayngirr people of northern NSW and was born on a Government Reserve in Bellwood. This has given him an insight into poverty and a knowledge of the effect disempowerment and deprivation has had on his people. This understanding has caused him to crusade for a better deal for the needy and neglected and to oppose any measures that will further polarise our society.

He moved to Redfern at an early age and was educated at a Catholic boarding school in Lismore. He has packed an amazing amount into his life since. He is a prominent member of the National Negotiating Team for Native Title and Wik, has served five years as Executive Director of the NSW Land Council, is currently Chairman of the National Indigenous Working Group, and has formerly served as Assessor of the NSW Land and Environment Court and as an executive member of the Sydney ATSIC Council.

In addition to all that, he has had several administrative posts in the Public Service and once worked as a ranger for the National Parks and Wildlife Service. He was recently elected as the new chairman of the Bangarra Dance Theatre Company, is a member of the Australian Museum Trust and is a director of the NSW Public Service Credit Union. So not only has he worked constantly for his people, but he has had experience in the Arts, in environmental, financial and administrative departments. What a wonderful background for a politician! Congratulations to the Democrats for choosing such an outstanding candidate to head their ticket. Aden is an inspiration to all our youth and most especially a great role model for the young talented Aboriginal kids we see all around us. We look forward to seeing more of them entering politics and leading our country in the new millenium.

Pat Keating



August Meeting

Native Title was the theme for our August meeting and we were very lucky to have three speakers all of whom are working on the actual process and who each have differing fields of expertise.

The first speaker, Louise Campbell is well known to our group. She is from the Dunghutti people of the Nambucca area, but being one of the Stolen Generation, lived with foster parents and in institutions, ending up in the Cessnock area. She was educated at St Joseph's, Lochinvar, and now is the Aboriginal Education officer for the Catholic school system in the Hunter. She was one of two people who acted as mediators with more than a hundred Land Councils, interpreting Mabo and Wik, dealing with Land Claims and conflicts arising from the NSW Land Rights Acts.

As well as being a negotiator in the co-existence process, Louise deals with conflicts in claims under the NSW Land Rights Acts. Though the Crescent Head victory was heartening, she fears that Land Claims in NSW will be processed slowly and with difficulty. She has been involved with facilitating the work of Bonita Mabo, Noel Pearson and Aiden Ridgeway, as well as working with young people through the Awabakal Co-op, the schools and the Church. She has a huge work-load and we are grateful that she can spare time for groups like ours.

Cheryl Kitchener is also Dunghutti and, coming from Crescent Head, participated in that splendid victory. Her family moved to Armidale to get work and she grew up there on the Mission. She had her first child at 14 and her mother encouraged her to finish school. She ended up with a degree in archeology from the University of New England and now is employed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service as an expert in anthropology, dealing with sacred sites and places of importance to Aboriginal people. She teaches in the Catholic schools as well as lecturing at Uni. She now has six children and a granddaughter, and we would like to know how she has retained those youthful good looks.

Cheryl is concentrating now on problem solving in Land Claims. She is one of a group of six mediators who travel throughout the State, sitting down with the Land Councils, hearing their stories and looking at solutions to overlapping claims and gathering facts to bring about solutions. The Wik Bill has meant that many claims have had to be renegotiated. The claims come from the Nations, not individuals, so the search is for consensus among the people. Then as the negotiations move to the wider community, more complications arise. Groups like the NFF do not consider the Aboriginal negotiators as "players" to be considered. They will communicate but not negotiate.

The third Speaker, Sharon Claydon, belongs to a group who are working with pastoralists to overcome their objections to Native Title claims. Meetings are arranged where pastoralists and Native Title claimants are brought face to face, in many cases listening to each other for the first time. This "Common Ground Initiative" has been used with great success for two years in the Flinder's Ranges. Sharon spoke of the success of a meeting at Charters Towers in March, where 120 people met to discuss differences, to dispel fears and to reach amicable settlements. News of these and similar initiatives throughout the country seldom reach the outside press and the negotiations are kept low key. Camilla Cowley's breakthrough agreements with claimants on her property made headlines, but few know that at least six pastoralists in her area have now followed her example. Problem solving can be more successfully concluded in face-to-face meetings at the grass roots level rather than edicts brought down by politicians.

City Indigenous Issues

The Newcastle City Council

Indigenous Issues Advisory Panel

On 16 November 1993, the then Newcastle City Council adopted a commitment to Indigenous Australians. The current Council resolved "to revise and renew that commitment". Accordingly, over many months, Indigenous Australians met to produce a draft revised document.

In May 1997, Council resolved to place the draft revised document "A Commitment by Newcastle City Council to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of the City of Newcastle" on public exhibition and invite comment. Council also resolved that the draft document be presented at The Australian Reconciliation Convention by Newcastle City Council's delegates to the Convention as a demonstration of a continuing, and at the same time, evolving commitment.

On 8 July 1997, Council adopted the wording of its renewed Commitment. Representatives of the Indigenous Communities of the Newcastle Local Government Area and Newcastle City Council signed the document at the Council meeting of 14 April 1998. That signing, and the affixing of the seal of Newcastle City Council marked the final adoption of the document by both parties. Preceding the signing was a ceremony in which a traditional dance performed on the steps of City Hall culminated in a symbolic demand for admission by the Aboriginal dancers who rapped loudly on the closed doors of City Hall, behind which the Councillors and Council staff and public attending Council on that evening were gathered.

The document ratified at that meeting concludes with the following statement:

"Newcastle City Council, in negotiation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, will develop an action plan to redress disadvantages and attain justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this community."

It was proposed that the setting up of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel would provide a forum and process for this and other aims of the Commitment to be addressed. Draft terms of reference were developed with representatives of Indigenous peoples and put on public exhibition. On 15 September 1998, Newcastle City Council resolved to adopt the draft terms of reference and endorsed the setting up of The Newcastle City Council Indigenous Issues Advisory Panel.

The selection panel will comprise the Lord Mayor and the Chairpersons of two incorporated organisations of Indigenous peoples based in the Newcastle local government area, initially the Awabakal Land Council and the Awabakal Aboriginal Co-Operative. Nominations for membership must also be endorsed by an incorporated organisation. Two Councillors and the General Manager or the General Manager's nominee and up to two other Council officers nominated by the General Manager will be non voting members of the panel.

Newcastle City Council looks forward to giving practical effect to its commitment through the Advisory Panel and the communication channels it will open and relationships it will promote.

Margret Henry

Obituary
Annie Kelly
1909-1998

Annie Kelly was born in 1909 at Callaghan Swamp Station in the New England tableland. Annie was the eldest of five children of Billy and Annie Wright of the Dungutti clan. From an early age Annie cared for her sisters and brother and young cousins in her father's parents' extended family household at Nowendoc. In her late teens she worked as housekeeper and carer for a young family in Walcha.

Annie married Dick Kelly at Bellbrook Aboriginal Reserve in 1934. They lived there till the birth of their third child. Annie spoke of how a psychic had told her that after her young life in a narrow valley she would spend her later years in a wide valley.

In 1940, hoping to give their children a better life than what appeared likely in the segregated society around Kempsey, Annie and Dick moved to the wide valley of the Hunter. Their youngest child, Shay, was born at the Walcha Aboriginal Reserve during that journey. For the next eleven years they lived at Mount Hutton and put the children through primary and secondary school. In 1955 they moved to the house at Glendale where Annie lived on after her husband's death in 1962, except at intervals when jobs took her further afield. Fiercely independent, Annie was cared for by Shay over the last decade.

It was at the house in Glendale some years ago that I first met Annie and since then many times enjoyed the dignity and warmth of her welcome. Annie passed away on 4 September. Whether it be wide or narrow, gentle or steep, Annie, go in peace through the next valley. Members of the NASG executive offer their deepest sympathy to Annie's family and friends. The December Wurreker will carry a detailed account of Annie's life and background researched by Shay Kelly.

Moya Farrell



Native Title Deal

The State's first comprehensive agreement between a local council and native title claimants was signed at Byron Bay yesterday, with the Premier as an official witness. Under the agreement, which took two years to reach, the Arakwal people will have a say in Byron Shire Council planning through a consultative committee which will recommend how the council should handle development proposals. Broome and Stradbroke Island have similar agreements.

Sydney Morning Herald, 17.10.1998



Indigenous People, the United Nations and Human Rights

by Sarah Pritchard — *Federation Press*

This book, a collection of essays by Sarah Pritchard, Mick Dodson, Garth Nettheim, Hilary Charlesworth, Phillip Alston, Elizabeth Evatt, and Michael O'Flaherty, arose out of a conference held in Sydney in 1995, which was designed to increase awareness of the United Nations human rights system, especially among indigenous Australians.

Editor Sarah Pritchard had said the 'Howard' Government had had some difficulty in coming to terms with international human rights scrutiny.

"Last year in relation to the proposal to include a human rights clause in a framework trade agreement with the European Union, the Prime Minister referred to the impertinence of international bodies sticking their noses into Australia's sovereign affairs," she said.

Contributor Mick Dodson said that whether our political leaders liked it or not, national issues such as the 'race debate' were occurring within a framework of international standards and expectations.

"Despite accusations of 'disloyalty' when we speak out about Australia's human rights record internationally, there are situations in which those whose rights are violated have little choice but to seek relief at the international level" Mr. Dodson said.

The book has been described by Central Land Council director Tracker Tilmouth as a 'do it yourself guide to using the UN to safeguard human rights, a valuable tool for Aboriginal peoples and organisations.

Pat Cameron

Acknowledgment



My sincere thanks to those who have contributed to this newsletter, in particular to Pat Keating and Pat Cameron, to Margaret Henry and Moya Farrell, Jean Talbot and Marion Giles, Sue Hodges, Lorraine Robertson and Donna Meehan, Richard Buchhorn and Rodney Knock. To Ross Edmonds and Dawn Lewis for their commitment to printing the letter and to Anna Kaemmerling whose continuing kindness allows this newsletter to survive.

Anne

Newcastle Aboriginal Support Group...

was formed in September 1980. It meets bi-monthly and sends out a newsletter shortly before each meeting. Membership of the Support Group is open to all who share its objectives:

- Promoting better understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.
- Giving support to initiatives proposed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups both locally and nationally.

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Update on Jabiluka

The last few weeks have seen a concerted effort to raise the public profile of the anti-Jabiluka mine campaign around the nation as an election issue.

The blockade (now packing up for the oncoming wet season) hosted a week of Strong Country Celebration where buses from around Australia brought hundreds of supporters to Kakadu specifically to heighten protest action in the lead up to the election. Unfortunately media coverage of activities in this week was lame. Again the media has proven that mass non-violence is not as “newsworthy” as one off crazy acts by disturbed individuals.

Nationally co-ordinated election materials were produced and used throughout all endorsed Jabiluka actions designed to promote consideration by voters as to how their vote could influence the future of Kakadu. Care was taken to promote the issue rather than endorse any particular party though the distinction was made, in no uncertain terms, that unlike the Liberals the Labor Party was at least offering the possibility of closing the mine. However conditional, Labor’s limited mine policy offered a glimmer of hope in an environmentally blind period of government.

Locally our efforts were concentrated on the marginal Patterson electorate and though the scale of this area seemed overwhelming to our limited people resources, it was a small victory that the Liberals lost this seat.

It is not hard to be utterly depressed by the coalition’s election win. It is hard to contemplate the level of cultural and environmental destruction that this government seems intent on.

Probably this is an important time not to feel totally defeated. To acknowledge the power that 3000 supporters, who have been part of the blockade to date, have added to the campaign. To hear the international protest of people in Germany and Amsterdam adding their voice to ours. To present a united, strong body to the World Heritage Inspection team to visit Kakadu in the next months and to stand by those amongst us who will face court.

Newcastle Jabiluka Action Group will be working on maintaining a strong presence in this region. We will still be meeting Monday nights at 7.30 – now at the Pod in Auckland Street, Tel contact: 4929 4295, everyone is welcome. We will be mustering all our remaining energies to keep informing the public, raising campaign funds and targeting shareholders – Norths and Westpac as well as the government. We will continue to join with the Mirrar people in their ongoing struggle. No government will sway our conviction that this struggle is justified.

Marion Giles

Northern Territory law removes the right to negotiate

- The Northern Territory has removed Aboriginal’s rights to negotiate on future developments, becoming the first state or territory to pass its legislative response to the amended Native Title Act.

- Aboriginal groups have condemned the legislative package as the closest thing to native title extinguishment the Federal law allowed and proof that the NT was not worthy of statehood.
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission accused the NT Government of moving without consultation, to minimise native titleholder’s rights.
- “Native title holders in other states and territories are likely to get a considerably better deal”, ATSIC commissioner Josie Crawshaw said.
- Shane Stone has gone as close to extinguishment as he can within the law.

In the period leading up to the election on 3rd October, many protesters returned to the Blockade camp for a week of action to bring the Jabiluka issues to the attention of the media. Over 100 ‘John Howards’ were arrested at the mine site, which must bring the total of arrested to more than 500 since the blockade began. In spite of these efforts, the issue of tax seemed to override almost all others in voters’ minds, as the Coalition presumably intended it should.

Meanwhile, some of the cases of earlier arrested, such as Mirrar elder Yvonne Margarula and Jayne Weepers of the NT Environment Centre have already been heard, and readers will already know that, in spite of good legal representation, Yvonne was found guilty of trespassing on her own land. Jayne and other prominent organisers of the blockade campaign have put forward good arguments, eg: that they had Mirrar permission to walk on the land; that they were protecting the Mirrar and their descendents from future harm etc. They were nonetheless also found guilty.

On December 1st, as part of an influx of arrested returning to answer trespass and other charges in December/January /February, the “Three Newcastle Grannies”, Marion Armstrong, Dianna Mannigel and I, will appear in court in Darwin. All arrested are urged by the NT Jabiluka Alliance to carry through with the charges (rather than failing to appear, which has its own stiff penalties) as “a powerful political statement of refusal to abide by unjust laws, even if you are found guilty.” The three of us agree that it is important to do this. We are hoping to organise a film night at the Regal next month to help cover our costs.

Meanwhile, protest organisers have announced their intention to close the Blockade Camp by the end of this month, and to focus the protest on the corporate targets in the cities. This announcement did not go unremarked by the authorities. Mike Reed, NT Police Minister, was reported (ABC 7/10/98) to have said “the ferals” showed no real commitment to the cause because the environment they were trying to protect was “getting a bit warm for them”.

The intemperate and discriminatory nature of his remarks betrays his irritation that the Blockade has in fact succeeded in its major objective of delaying work on the mine. Furthermore, it has cost \$500,000 to maintain a police presence in and around the mine site for the duration of the blockade, which was always, I understood, planned to end before the beginning of the wet season, when work on the mine becomes more difficult.

Though a woman on polling day told me “you’re not strong enough to stop the mine”, the struggle isn’t over yet. The Government’s majority is slender, and the World Heritage Commission has yet to make its inspection. In the period leading up to the Olympics, world scrutiny will be on us.

Jean Talbot

Perceptions

Colonial Perceptions are Persistent!

On 2 November last Channel Nine screened their documentary, "Cape of Dreams" in Newcastle and some other cities. In it, the Aboriginal people of Cape York, the Merkins, were described as a "notorious tribe of cannibals. There were hundreds of cases of miners being killed and eaten along with their animals... they had no second thoughts about eating men, instead of wallaby or fish. Reports from the time said the Chinese were considered the best eating.. In a black camp, half a dozen Chinese miners were found alive, hung on a tree from their pigtails, waiting for their turn to be clubbed, roasted and eaten."

When this program was screened in both 1990 and 1991, the producers were provided with the results of research which showed the evidence for such statements was on a par with that for alien abductions: and that while there were detailed reports and inquests from that area and time, there was not a single credible account of even one Chinese or European miner ever having been eaten by the Merkins.

In the era of colonialism, "those people are cannibals" could usually be translated: "we want their land". That pre-conception, together with fear and fertile imagination, coloured partial observations of burial rituals: they led to exaggeration and fabrication of evidence, and turned suspicions into assertions.

A lot happened between then, and this repeat screening. A National Conference on the Media and Indigenous Australians in 1993 led to the formulation of Advisory Notes and Statements of Principle to guide the media. Then in 1996, Pauline Hanson spoke of Murriss on the Palmer River on Cape York eating Chinese miners, and a year later, her book, "The Truth", enlarged on the myth.

In the ensuing debate, input to talk-back radio and letters pages of newspapers revealed a widespread attachment to, and dependence on the myth to justify persisting colonial perceptions and attitudes towards Aboriginal people. On the other hand, a number of feature articles, reflecting recent research, debunked the myth and explained its role.

All this did not deter Channel Nine from its cavalier decision to screen Cape of Dreams again last November.

Later that month, three former Labour Prime Ministers said that "Hanson's allegations of Aboriginal cannibalism carried an awful resonance of the depiction in Nazi Germany of Jews as sub-human species". *Der Stürmer*, edited by Hitler confident Julius Streicher, was one vehicle for Nazi propaganda. It was displayed throughout Germany on bulletin boards erected for that purpose.

The issue for 1 May 1934 helped keep alive the centuries old "blood libel": that Jews killed gentile children to obtain blood for use in their rituals. The cover illustration showed eight children hanging upside down, the blood from their cut throats being collected in a dish by two Jews.

That image finds an awful resonance in the equally fictitious scene of the Chinese miners hanging by their pigtails, waiting to be cooked and eaten, as described in Cape of Dreams.

The Australian Broadcasting Authority received a complaint that, using the terms of the relevant Code, the program was likely to offend the cultural sensitivities of Aboriginal people, and stir up serious contempt and severe ridicule against them.

Their response demonstrates how deeply entrenched such racist myths have become. They drew on material, which had been included with the complaint to demonstrate the role of the myth, to declare it was obvious (?) that there was evidence (a new name for anecdote and assertion?) to support both sides of the cannibalism argument. They said the program (like Pauline Hanson's original statement) did not refer to Aborigines in general; that there was no suggestion that it was a continuing practice (thank heavens!); and that there was no intention on the part of the producers (so what?) to create any ill-will towards Aboriginal people.

Had Channel Nine been operating in 1930's Germany, would they have used the cover illustration from *Der Stürmer* and helped keep the blood libel alive? Would they have used it years later, after its role had been exposed? Had the ABA been around to handle a complaint about it, would their finding have differed from their one on Cape of Dreams?

It remains a matter for concern that racist colonial myths persist, and are used to express hostility and ridicule Aboriginal people: and of greater concern that so many are predisposed to believe, propagate and protect such myths.

Richard Buchhorn



Our next meeting: 7.30 pm Wednesday 28 October 1998 at Wollotuka

Guest speaker will be **Donna Meehan** – Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, (Newcastle)

Presenting: "Youth Voices" A panel of Youth who seek to gain confidence and increase their leadership skills through performance, speech and other activities.

Sue Hodges: Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer (Lake Macquarie) and Lorraine Robertson will present the Yamuloong book ... "Them's Deadly Ay!". (Allowing for all deadlines to be met.)

Everybody is welcome and a supper is provided.

NEGOTIATION *and* COOPERATION *are* POSSIBLE

Three Aboriginal corporations, known as the Gumala group, have been launched in the Pilbara area of Western Australia with the promise of at least 50 jobs for Aboriginal people.

The group was created from the Yandicoogina land agreement of 1997 between mining giant Rio Tinto and three indigenous groups.

Gumala Aboriginal Corporation chairman Charlie Smith said that through the creation of Gumala Construction (contract earth moving services), Gumala Hire (provides site services to project contractors), and Gumala services (provides camp management and catering), "we feel a strong sense of ownership and pride in what we have achieved".

"Many Aboriginal people have not been involved in this type of initiative before, and are finding out it is both challenging and rewarding to achieve economic independence through self-determination", Mr. Smith said.

Rio Tinto Aboriginal Relations vice-president Paul Wand said the creation of the Gumala companies highlighted the possibilities which exist for mining companies to work alongside Aboriginal groups to achieve mutual goals.

"Both sides have benefitted-Hammersley Iron (a subsidiary of Rio Tinto) which is bringing their iron ore mine into operation ahead of schedule, and the Gumala communities through jobs and business opportunities.", Mr. Ward said.

In the mid 1990s, Rio Tinto was seeking to develop the \$700 million iron ore body at Yandicoogina, owned by Aboriginal people from three different language groups, the Banjima, Niapaili and Innawonga people.

The groups united and formed Gumala Aboriginal Corporation to negotiate with Hammersley Iron, and by May 1997 the two sides had decided on the Yandicoona Agreement. This agreement provides a trust to benefit the traditional owners, and a commitment by Hammersley to economic and business development for the Aboriginal people.

Pat Keating

Return of Mutawintji land to the traditional owners

On 5th. September, 1998 the Mootwingee Historic Sight, Mootwingee National Park and Coturaundee Nature Reserve were handed back to the traditional owners. This was the culmination of a long struggle by Aboriginal people.

The Mootwingee Historic sight was gazetted as a protected area in 1927, and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife service began managing the area in 1967.

The Coturaundee Nature Reserve was gazetted in 1979 and in 1982 the NPWS bought the Gnalta and Mootwingee sheep stations and added them to the historic site to create the Mootwingee National Park.

Aboriginal action to win ownership of the site was stepped up in 1983 and although unsuccessful, major changes such as restricted access to traditional sacred sites were achieved. The areas original visitor's information centre also became the Mutawintji Cultural Centre.

In 1996, law changes led to the opening of negotiations between the NSW Government and family representatives of Mutawintji's traditional owners to construct a lease, which was finalised in June last year.

Koori Mail

Aboriginal health

Aboriginal health is an area of concern for all responsible Australian citizens, so that it was pleasing to read ATSIC Commissioner Steve Riley's assessment of the work of the Minister for Health Dr. M. Wooldridge, just prior to the election.

"Dr. Wooldridge has brought new political will to the issues of Aboriginal Health, as well as recognising the need for partnership in problem solving, the recognition of success rather than failure, and the place of ethics in dealing with health issues."

It is to be hoped that Dr. Wooldridge will be given the scope to pursue this attitude to Aboriginal issues in whatever area he is placed in the newly elected Government. Equally it is hoped that others in the Howard Government might adopt similar principles.

Pat Cameron

Fundraiser for the three Grannies

Regal Cinema

Friday, 13 November 1998

6:00 pm for drinks

6:30 pm film start

Tickets \$12, concession \$10

Films

One Hand Clapping

and

The Sweet Hereafter

Raffle tickets at the door. Any donation of items for the raffle would be much appreciated.

The great south land

Clarencetown public school

In September at Clarencetown Public School an unusual and challenging production took place. Michael O'Suullivan, (Principal and Producer) and Anne Frost the director, with other school and community members created "a moment of magic".

On the banks of the river sit the people, watching to see who or what approaches in the strangest looking craft. It is dusk and there is a stillness in the air, the wind has dropped, the only sound is the rhythmic splash as the thing draws closer. On the bank emotions are mixed, surprise, fear, excitement, further up the bank another group sits, surprised and excited, proud and awed at the achievements of their children.

The children of Clarencetown PS and their audience were transported back to 1788 for three nights during Education Week. As the Eora people, the governor and his officers, as convicts and their guards the children danced and sang their way through a powerful portrait of life in the early days of the colony.

A magnificent Rainbow Serpent of kindergarten and infants children made an impressive entrance setting the scene for a look at Aboriginal life before the invasion. Dancers from Newcastle HS performed a kangaroo dance and a traditional totem dance as the Eora people sat around in their gunyas. Some students from Dungog HS helped out with the narration and the role of the governor. The children's singing was enthusiastic, and special praise must go to talented Robert Elliott of year 5 for his great singing. There were lots of laughs as the young convicts and soldiers entertained an audience larger than the population of Clarencetown.

The show was a successful and challenging look at our nation's past and it was exciting to have the author Chris Robinson in attendance. It is great to see public schools confronting the challenge to tell our students and their parents the truth.

Barbara Greentree, Newcastle District Officer

It was particularly pleasing to know that so many members of diverse district communities found the play so worthwhile. I quote :- Lionel Ridgeway . " I am proud to live in Clarencetown and to have the community so involved.

People stop me in the street and the feedback they give me, makes me have tears of pride in my eyes."

Belinda Wright – AEA Newcastle HS "This is magic. What wonderful teachers. The kids were great."

Leonne Calligham – Aboriginal Liaison Officer – Dept. Health. "Excellent show, well done."

Donna Meehan – ACLO Newcastle District Office. "A powerful history lesson".



RADIANCE — a new film

"Radiance" is a new film currently showing in Sydney, although it made its debut at the Sydney Film Festival where it won an award as the most popular film. Radiance is not just a new production but its attitudes are new. About the lives of three Aboriginal women, sisters, it has been described as "about everything that is bold and fresh in Australian culture, but it does not ignore the past."

The film was adapted from the Louis Nowra play after it had been seen by Trisha Morton-Thomas who was "blown away" by it, partly because it was the first time she had seen a play about Aboriginal life which didn't preach at her. "People often think that if it's an Aboriginal film it must be worthy and serious. But this one has jokes, people can laugh!" The women whose story it is are women, not "social problems."

It is a first film for its director Rachel Perkins, who is the daughter of Charles Perkins. Since its release she has received increasing recognition, both in Australia and overseas.

It is an optimistic film which Morton-Thomas says is typical of the attitude of Aboriginal people. " You can have a family with so many stuff-ups, and then one little person will say I'm not going to lie down and die. I've had enough of feeling sorry for myself. I'm going to get on with it."

Pat Cameron

✂ Membership Subscription Form

Members of the NASG receive the bi-monthly NASG newsletter, Wurreker, and agree to support the stated objectives of the NASG.

Membership: what you can afford, eg \$20 - \$25 for waged, \$5 - \$10 for unwaged, organisations \$30 - \$50. Bulk orders: 5 copies for \$30 per annum, 10 copies for \$50 per annum. Non-member subscription: \$25.

Non-member: individuals or organisations may subscribe to Wurreker for \$25 per annum. Send renewals or non-member subscriptions to: NASG, PO Box 79, Broadmeadow 2292.

Name: Date:

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Enclosed \$ for NASG Membership Bulk order Wurreker Subscription only

Bits and Pieces

The RSL Captain Reg Saunders Scholarship (for 1999)

This annual Scholarship is open to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who are eligible to commence a suitable degree course of study at an Australian tertiary institution, either full time, part time or external.

The Scholarship is in the form of a \$3,000 cash grant, payable in each year of satisfactory progress in the selected course, for a maximum of four years. Only one scholarship is offered each year.

Applicants must plan to undertake a tertiary course of study which will major, or specialise in, the Substance Abuse Area in one of the following target courses:

- Bachelor of Psychology
- Bachelor of Nursing
- Bachelor of Applied Science
- Bachelor of Social Work
- Bachelor of Health Education

or another course of study that can be shown by the applicant to be relevant.

The Closing Date for the 1999 Scholarship is Friday, 5 February 1999. Further information can be obtained from the RSL Project Officer at the address: GPO Box 303, Canberra, ACT 2601. Tel: (02) 6248 7199. Fax: (02) 6247 7637.



Wollotuka Page cancelled

The Wollotuka Page is cancelled for this edition of the newsletter as all students are busy preparing for final exams.

National Aborigines' and Torres Strait Islanders' Week School Performance

Aboriginal Programs, Student Services and Equity Programs, Department of Education and Training is coordinating a lunchtime concert as an extension of the National Aborigines' and Torres Strait Islanders' Week Celebration at Martin Place Amphitheatre. Friday, 6 November 1998, from 12.15 pm to 1.45 pm.

Ten schools at the primary and secondary level from across NSW will be selected to participate (5 country and 5 city schools). This is an annual event and has proven to be an excellent way of showcasing initiatives undertaken in schools during National Aborigines' and Torres Strait Islanders' Week. Schools will present performances in dance, song, mime and drama.

It is a great event where students have the opportunity to perform in front of the lunchtime audience at Martin Place.

Enquiries: Rhonda Toole, Aboriginal Programs, Sydney Institute of Technology, Ultimo Campus, PO Box 707, Ultimo.

Wet weather venue: Cleveland St High School, Park Road, Alexandria. Tel: (02) 9698 1967. Broadway NSW 2007. Tel: (02) 9217 4848. Fax: (02) 9217 4046.

Praise Corroboree

The Great Hall Parliament House Canberra
National Day of Prayer and Fasting
Friday 6 November

We invite you to join us in proclaiming this day 6 November 1998 a National Day Of Prayer for the healing of the land. We ask that you observe this day in whatever way you feel. Maybe public prayers at your State Parliament or council headquarters. Maybe a special service or combined church prayer meeting. We invite you to join us in the Great Hall at Parliament House in Canberra for the Praise Corroboree Wednesday 4th to Saturday 7th of November 1998, to celebrate this day of Prayer with us.

Ps Peter Walker, President Praise Corroboree

Contact Details: PO Box 3691, Weston Creek, ACT 2611. Office Tel: (02) 6288 1722 Fax: (02) 6287 1979, A/H: (02) 6286 7779. Wollongong Office Tel: (02) 4226 4066 Fax: (02) 4228 5247

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Wurreker October 1998

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