

Elimatta

spring 2010

www.asgmwp.net

Aboriginal Support Group – Manly Warringah Pittwater

Adam Cryer Project Officer – Aboriginal Child, Youth & Family Strategy

My name is Adam Cryer and I am the Aboriginal Child, Youth and Family Strategy Project Officer for the Northern Sydney Region. I have been in this position since November 2009. I am based at Hornsby Council but spend a lot of time getting out and about as the area I work in stretches from the beautiful Northern Beaches right across to the Harbour and up to the river country of Wisemans Ferry and Brooklyn. I am currently the Co-Chair of Reconciliation Network: Northern Sydney Region and also convene the Northern Sydney Koori Interagency.

I am an Aboriginal man who has grown up in Hornsby and have strong ties to the Northern Sydney area. I have spent 10 years working in community services in both local government and non-government organisations. I have spent a majority of this time working with young people and families. My work experience has included youth refugees, working in schools as an Aboriginal Education Assistant and I also had the opportunity to work as the Recreation Officer at Biala Aboriginal Hostel.

My current role is to work with organisations in the Northern Sydney Region that provide services to Aboriginal families. This involves ensuring that the Aboriginal Community are able to access services and have a say in how these services are provided.

I have Community Consultations planned for October that will allow the local community to talk directly to services and let the services know about how they could provide better access for Aboriginal people.

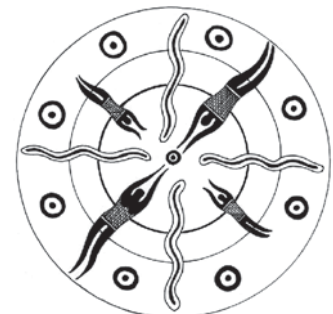
This project is also responsible for organising projects such as *Christmas in the Bush* and other community events. *Christmas in the Bush* will be on again this year and it looks like it will be held at Taronga Zoo on Sunday 28 November. We are also planning some smaller community get togethers to ensure that families are supporting each other in the area.

In my time in this role I have been able to make really good connections with Aboriginal staff in the area and am enjoying being back working with our mob after a time of working in mainstream services. It's good to be able to help our young ones and know that we can help make our future strong. I am passionate about community development and look forward to working further to develop the community in the Northern Sydney Region.

I hope to get out and meet as many community members as possible in the coming months.



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**Proud communities
Strong families**

Adam Cryer

The Aboriginal Support Group - Manly Warringah Pittwater acknowledges the Guringai People, the traditional owners of the lands and the waters of this area.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY of the ABORIGINAL HERITAGE OFFICE

On 24 March I was a guest of the Aboriginal Heritage Office at the 10th anniversary of its inception and the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Manly, North Sydney, Pittwater, Ryde, Warringah and Willoughby Councils.

It was a really miraculous occasion. Many local Mayors were present, as were the General Managers of their Councils.

Pat Reilly, Mayor of Willoughby, really summed up the feeling of those present when he said that it was inconceivable 30 years ago, even 20 years, that the idea of an Aboriginal Heritage Office was possible and yet 10 years ago, with David Watts at the helm, the Heritage Office began.

It was fitting that Jenny Munro (past Chairperson of Metro) should *Acknowledge Country* because, when the Support Group first met David, he was employed as Heritage and Sites Officer for Metro.

David has always had the support of the ASG. It is his dream that Aboriginal Heritage should be identified, respected and managed in the Northern Sydney area.

Well done David Watts and the staff at the Aboriginal Heritage Office. You have shown that from *Little Things Big Things Grow*.

Lizzie Landers

PEOPLE OF GURINGAI LANGUAGE COUNTRY

Launch of a series of three historical posters concerning the
Aboriginal history of northern coastal Sydney
on 23 August at Gawura Aboriginal Learning Centre

Another celebratory event for the North Side!

We began our celebration with a Smoking Ceremony by Les De Jong and *Acknowledgement of Country* by Lois Birk and *Welcome to Country* by Uncle Bob Waterer.

This event, at Gawura Aboriginal Learning Centre, Northern Sydney Institute of TAFE, Brookvale, was the appropriate setting for the launch of the three detailed, very historically-to-present informative and beautiful posters, which are part of the People of Guringai Language Country historical project, funded by the University of Sydney History Department. This is our Northern Beaches section of the larger project, which will record the Aboriginal history of the whole of Greater Metropolitan Sydney.

This information, photos, maps, timelines, will be available to all on the project's website: www.historyofaboriginalsydney.edu.au

The northern Sydney section will be accessible by the time this *Elimatta* is printed.



Chris Evans (left) and Jessica Birk
photo courtesy of Clair Jackson

Speakers were Uncle Bob Waterer, longtime resident on the Northern Beaches and senior Guringai descendant of Sarah (Biddy) Wallace, who in 1803 was born into the clan

led by Bungaree; Lyn Stewart from Ulladulla, Guringai descendant whose mother grew up on Marra Marra Creek in the Hawkesbury; Julie Janson, artist, dramatist, teacher, historian, longtime Northern Beaches resident, and creator of the three posters; Prof Peter Read, historian, author, co-founder of *Link-Up* and senior partner on the Aboriginal History of Sydney Project; Kevin Keller, College Director, Brookvale TAFE; Caroline Glass-Pattison and Julie Hendicott of the Guringai AECG, who co-hosted this event.



Julie Janson and Peter Read
photo courtesy of Clair Jackson

Julie introduced Macdonald Hamilton, a descendant of the Flood Family from Dubbo, the techno-whiz who brought her poster creations to print. Jessica Birk, local renowned young artist, did the evocative artwork for the posters. Sheena Kitchener, film maker, filmed the event and is the video maker for the project.

Caroline presented Julie and Peter with framed posters of this year's 10th Guringai Festival.

Many thanks to ASGMWP for assistance with food preparation.

Clair Jackson



Recently there have been questions raised about the authenticity of the word Guringai. The Support Group is guided by the following statement from the Aboriginal Heritage Office.

Does using the term Guringai add to the injustice?

For the northern coastal area of Sydney it has generally been considered to be Guringai country, whereas land west of the Lane Cove River is commonly known as Darug lands. The coastal areas were traditional lands of coastal clans who spoke a different dialect and had different customs to those of the 'hinterland'. Australian Museum archaeologist, Dr Val Attenbrow, has done extensive research on this matter over many years and notes: *...because of the history of events that has taken place in the Sydney region, the present composition of the groups using the language names and the boundaries within which they operate are, in some places, quite different to those of the past.*

(Sydney's Aboriginal Past, 2002)

The AHO has discussed this issue with Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, the recognised custodians for this area, as well as members of the local Aboriginal community. It is generally agreed that the term Guringai may not be

the original name for the area, tribe or language. However, given the lack of any credible alternative, it is considered to be an appropriate and convenient term to represent the area as distinct from other parts of Sydney. It is a sad fact that much of the traditional knowledge of this area was wiped out in the smallpox epidemic of 1789 and subsequent impacts of the invasion. This is part of the story of this area.

It is interesting to note that it was the English who brought smallpox and other diseases, who took the land, and who made such a poor job of recording the language. It was the new colonists, and later 'Australians', who banned Indigenous languages and created policies of assimilation designed to remove the cultural heritage of Aboriginal survivors. It has been academics and amateur historians who have tried to reconstruct the past, generally for their own ends rather than for the betterment of Aboriginal people, then argued and theorised and changed

their interpretation of the past without much thought of the impact that this would have on Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people have just got on with the job of trying to survive and trying to maintain their culture. The word Guringai has become incorporated into the region's history and landscape, whether right or wrong.

Does using the term Guringai add to the injustice? No!! The injustice is non-Aboriginal people making assumptions of what Aboriginal people want or need without bothering to ask.

Aboriginal Heritage Office, July 2010



Aboriginal Heritage Office

Dear Readers

This is the last Elimatta that we will be editing. Autumn 2004 was our first issue as co-editors and as expected, working on the newsletters has been both a challenging and enjoyable experience.

Neil Evers, a member of the Support Group, has offered to take on this role and produce the newsletter electronically. His co-editors will be Carol Gerrard, a long-standing member of the Group who is a regular contributor and the present proof-reader for Elimatta, and Marj Belessis, recently retired journalist with The Manly Daily.

Thankyou to all who have contributed to the newsletter and given us much needed encouragement and support over the years and to the dedicated distribution team including Jackie O'Hare who, even after her move to Dubbo, continued to supply and print the address labels.

The Dee Why RSL, through its annual CDSE grants, has covered the printing costs of Elimatta since 2006 and we thank the Club for its ongoing support.

Our best wishes to the new co-editors of Elimatta.

Yours sincerely

Anna Bell and Pat Frater

The first newsletter of the Aboriginal Support Group-Manly Warringah Pittwater was produced in March 1982.

The 1987 Winter edition was named Elimatta for the first time.

Elimatta is included in the Pandora Website, Australia's Web Archive set up by the National Library of Australia.

In one Aboriginal language Elimatta means our home.

In naming our newsletter this way, we express our dream for this country – a real home to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and later settlers.

That depends on us being at home with each other and to each other.

Please turn to page 16 and see what steps to take so that you will continue to receive *Elimatta*

BIALA REPORT

Hello everyone

How fast this year has gone. My thanks to everyone who supported the push to keep Biala Hostel open during the end of 2009 – it seems that all is well at least for now thank goodness.

We have had a pretty good first half of this year – a few upsets but we are coping with these.

There have been some comings and goings with girls, as is usual for girls coming so far away from home – some get so homesick that they do not stay. However, most of last year's students are here.

We have ten girls at present which is a good number. Teoka Ellis is our most senior girl in Year 11 and she is determined to do the HSC next year and is going very well. We also have in Year 9 Ainslie and Janie, in Year 8 Siehenna, Tahlia and Leilani, and in Year 7 Tayler, Nadia, Tallulah and Amanda.

The Advisory Committee to the hostel is working well with representatives from Aboriginal Hostels Limited (AHL), Mackellar High, AECG and Carol Ritchie. AHL has come up with some new plans for NSW secondary hostels which should be very helpful for the managers, staff and students.

Ainslie and Teoka have been playing hockey and Siehenna, Tahlia, Tayler, Kahlia and Leilani have played netball on Saturdays which they all enjoy. Girls are also involved in school sport and Amanda, Leilani, Ainslie and Janie play soccer after school.

Ainslie and Janie have just returned from a Year 9/10 school trip. They stayed at Jindabyne and went into the snowfields every day, also having skiing lessons. They both had a really enjoyable time with their school friends.

Homework centre is going well. The girls are going to *Youthreach* at Brookvale during the week and also we have our volunteers come in to sit with the girls. We also often do homework on Sunday afternoons and members of the Jewish community are coming to help with this.

We are all very excited to be hosting the AHL student graduation in November for all NSW hostels. Mackellar High has kindly agreed for us to hold this in the school hall, for which we are grateful.

The school took the girls to the Manly Art Gallery to see the *Saltwater Country* Exhibition during the Guringai Festival and Carol took some girls to the Aboriginal Art Experience at St David's Church, Dee Why. Here they saw a demonstration by students from Tempe High School who had done some beautiful work. The girls also did some art work while there.

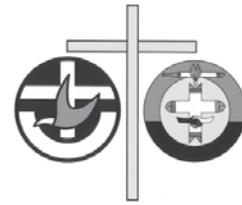
On the June long weekend the girls who had not gone to stay with relatives went with Carol to the city. They saw Uncle Max Eulo and his group at Circular Quay, the Opera House and went into the Botanical Gardens. They all had a nice day and Carol took lots of photos, copies of which she gave to the girls.

The girls also enjoyed the Support Group's *Sorry Day* commemoration – sorry we got there late – especially as Teoka's father, uncle, brother and cousin were performers.

That is all to report for now I think – the girls are going pretty well with their school work and are looking forward to the warmer weather, as we all are after such as cold winter.

Thank you for your continued support.

Lara Rutley
Biala Hostel Manager



ABORIGINAL ART EXPERIENCE

On Sunday, 23 May I took several girls from Biala to St David's Church Dee Why, on the invitation of Ruth Sutton and David Harrison, members of the Church's *Understanding Indigenous Issues* group.

Students and staff from Tempe High School were exhibiting some of their beautiful art works. These students are part of the gifted and talented stream at the school.

Some of their work was available for purchase and funds from sales were to finance the Koori Room at the school. The Koori Room had been burgled and damaged recently. It was a delight to see the Tempe students' art works and I think they made quite a few sales.

During the evening the Biala girls also did some painting which they took away with them.

The students and staff were great to meet and it was a pleasure to be with them, talk with them and see their art work.

Carol Ritchie

BLs BLAST OFF #5

BLAST OFF is a competition run by Barton Lynch for surfers aged 14 years and under. This year's event will be held at Palm Beach on September 27, 28, 29 and 30.

The money raised from the raffle will again be donated to the Aboriginal Medical Service at Redfern to help develop its surfing program for inner-city Aboriginal youth.

See footage of the 2009 Blast Off at www.blblastoff.com.au

ANNOUNCING THE DEATH OF AN ABORIGINAL

'We have to announce the death of his Aboriginal Majesty King Boongarie, Supreme Chief of the Sydney tribe. He expired on Wednesday last at Garden Island, after a lingering illness of several months. He will be interred at Rose Bay, beside the remains of his late Queen.' Obituary from The Sydney Gazette, Saturday 27 November 1830.

On 26 July Woollahra Municipal Council unveiled a commemorative plaque and dedicated a beautiful terraced garden at Rose Bay in honour of Boongarie (Bungaree) and one of his wives, possibly Matora. The suggestion to install the plaque and name the garden, which is on the corner of New South Head Road and Rose Bay Avenue, was made to Council by the Woollahra History and Heritage Society.

My cousin Laurie Bimson and I were invited to attend the ceremony. Laurie and I are fifth generation descendants of Bidy (Sarah) Wallace who was born around 1803 into the Broken Bay clan led by Bungaree and we believe that Bidy was related to Matora. It was a privilege to be there at the dedication made by the Mayor of Woollahra Cr Andrew Petrie. On behalf of all the descendants of Bungaree and Matora I thanked Council for naming the garden Bungaree Reserve.



photo courtesy Neil Evers

Bungaree was born around 1775 and first came to prominence in 1798 when he accompanied Matthew Flinders on a coastal survey as an interpreter, guide and negotiator with local Aboriginal groups. He later accompanied Flinders on his circumnavigation of Australia between 1801 and 1803 and made history by being the first Australian to circumnavigate the continent.

He was also a key person in Governor Lachlan Macquarie's plans to *civilise* the Aboriginal population. In 1815 Bungaree was placed in charge of 16 families at Georges Head who were to farm 15 acres of land with agricultural implements supplied by the government and with help from convicts who were *'obliged to teach them agricultural skills'*. Commodore Sir James Brisbane was particularly partial to King Bungaree.

According to historians, Bungaree was witty, intelligent and a diplomat who used his skills to get what he wanted and was able to straddle both black and white societies.

Visitors to the colony often commented on Bungaree who made it his business to greet anyone important who had newly arrived in the colony.

As well as the commemorative plaque, new seating has been placed in the reserve for local residents to enjoy – to sit and wonder what Bungaree and Matora would think of the area and the so-called progress that has been made!

Neil Evers

Book Launch:

THE STORY OF BUNGAREE

A large crowd attended the launch of *The Story of Bungaree* at the Gunners Barracks Tea Rooms, Middle Head, on 20 May. Middle Head was the site of the farm on which Bungaree and other members of the Broken Bay tribe were settled by Governor Macquarie in the hope that they would adopt the agrarian practices of the colonists, a hope that, perhaps unsurprisingly, was not realized. Mr. Kevin McCann, Chairman of the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust, introduced Governor Marie Bashir who launched the book with a well researched and gracious speech which included a special mention of one of our members, Bob Waterer, a descendant of the Guringai people.



The Governor of NSW Marie Bashir with Bob Waterer and his daughter Dianne Piotrowski
photo courtesy John Ogden

At the conclusion of the formal proceedings the audience descended on a spread of scones, jam and cream, while Patrick Fletcher, the author of the book, and the Governor generously signed copies.

Tony Dawson

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A REFLECTION ON SINGING THE SPIRIT HOME

a film portraying the Aboriginal History of Christianity in Australia and the People of Brewarrina Mission

This documentary film was screened at the ASG Information Night on 8 March. It centres around the story of three Aboriginal women – *the Bre Sisters* – who have embraced the Christian faith.

And they sing together. Particularly do they sing at funerals giving expression to an Aboriginal custom in which the spirit of a dead person is brought to its *home* through the singing. My understanding is that this practice of *singing home* is essentially an Aboriginal one but, in the case of *the Bre Sisters*, the Aboriginal practice has been Christianised. Christian words/images are used in the songs. Or should I say that Christian metaphors have been Aboriginalised?

As soon as I express my question I can hear the anthropologists and Christian theologians trying to explain to me that my confusion is precisely that – confusion. But these days I am happy to stay with my confusion, having found that confusion is often creative.

It is at this point in my reflections that I reveal my hand. I am using this occasion to offer an insight about a pre-requisite for reconciliation. My assessment is that with regard to reconciliation the Australian nation is still at the pre-requisite stage. The history of Australia would seem to support my contention and there is little evidence to suggest that anything seriously significant has actually been achieved in the recent past except big spending and a lot of talking.

If you are still reading this Reflection I can imagine that some of you are wondering what was I doing when Kevin Rudd said 'sorry'.

The answer is that I was glued to the television set experiencing delight that a Prime Minister was at last able to say these words.

But the fact is that the delight is effervescent and specially so when I read in the press, on the day after the Support Group screening of this film, a report that a prestigious Sydney School has had to deal with a group of its students for their involvement in posting racist comments about Aboriginal people on a website. The headmaster was 'appalled and horrified.'

By any objective standard little has been achieved in reconciliation and in my judgement there is not yet an acknowledged pre-requisite for achievement. That pre-requisite is expressed in the confusion of Aboriginalised Christianity or Christianised Aboriginality as seen in the three singers using Christian theology to *sing the spirit home*.

To understand the worth of each other's point of view is the pre-requisite. Or to quote Martin Buber, the Jewish philosopher 'dialogue/reconciliation takes place when the truth and being of one addresses the truth and being of the other.' That mutual address is the pre-requisite. That mutual openness to be addressed is the pre-requisite.

That mutual longing to be addressed is the pre-requisite.

Let us work for an intervention on the *Intervention* in the Northern Territory and improve the health of Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people. But all that is window dressing unless there is a beautiful and creative confusion of spiritualities. *The Bre Sisters*, for me, are an expression of beautifully confused mutuality and the pre-requisite for reconciliation.

And, more particularly about the film itself, I did wonder if the task was too big for the time allotted. The subtitle suggests a scope that creates too many expectations for a film of this size and budget.

However, grateful acknowledgement is made of the magnificent work that was done by Steve Hodder and his team in creating the film. And thanks to Ruth for her detailed introduction. That set the scene for the viewing perfectly. Also her response to questions after the screening was incredibly helpful. The sharing of her personal experience and knowledge is always beneficial.

One further thought. It would be good for The King's School to view the film and have a chance to talk with some Aboriginal people. Steve, I read somewhere, is keen for the film to be used as an educational resource. Now, is that a project for the Support Group?

Grahame Ellis

JIMMIE BARKER AND JANET MATHEWS

Recording the Past During the 1960s-70s

When the film *Singing the Spirit Home* was screened dealing with Aboriginal Christians in NSW and particularly in Brewarrina, one of those interviewed was Roy Barker who spoke about the early days at Brewarrina 'Mission' from stories he had heard his father Jimmie Barker tell. Fortunately, Jimmie's stories were recorded by himself on 110 tapes through meeting Janet Mathews,

who later wrote the book *The Two Worlds of Jimmie Barker – the life of an Australian Aboriginal 1900-1972* as told to Janet Mathews, Aboriginal Studies Press, 1977. I was curious to find out how Jimmie Barker came to make his recordings and who Janet Mathews was.

The answers are provided by historian Dr Martin Thomas, who also

became interested in Janet Mathews' recordings and published an article which I am using as a source.^[1] Janet Mathews, who was born in Wollongong in 1914, trained in music at the Sydney Conservatorium and became a concert pianist during the 1930s, then a piano teacher.

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She married Frank Mathews, the chief engineer at the Wollongong steelworks, who happened to be a grandson of R. H. Mathews, the surveyor who was an amateur anthropologist and collected information from Aboriginal people in NSW on their customs, beliefs and languages. His research remains important because it provided an account of Aboriginal cultures that have long since disappeared. There is renewed interest in his many papers and publications^[2].

In 1964, when the Institute of Aboriginal Studies in Canberra (now known as the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies) was established, largely through the efforts of W.C. Wentworth, the federal member for Mackellar, he thought it imperative that surviving Aboriginal cultures and languages should be recorded before, as he then believed, they would inevitably disappear. Wentworth, who knew Janet Mathews as a friend and practising musician, invited her to make recordings of Aboriginal songs and languages for the Institute. She began her work in 1964 and continued to do so for the next decade, gradually broadening her research to include oral accounts of older people's life stories. All her recordings are now kept in Canberra at the AIATSIS archives. After her husband retired in 1968, the Matthews bought a block of land at Bayview Heights where they continued to live until Frank's death in 1982.

Janet travelled around with a tape recorder, recording hundreds of hours on her visits to Aboriginal communities in La Perouse, the wider Sydney area and south coast of NSW. She found she was accepted more easily by Aboriginal people on the south coast when they realised there was a connection, at least through marriage, with R.H. Mathews who was still remembered and had been given the name *Mirranen*, meaning *good or well-liked man*.

It was on a trip to Brewarrina in 1968 that she first met Jimmie Barker who had learned the Muruwari language as a young boy. He was reluctant at first to let her record him but she describes how, as she was leaving: *'Jimmie went into his hut and brought out a small, old-fashioned tape-recorder. He told me that he had bought this machine so that he could record an English-Muruwari dictionary. It had cost him fifty dollars, a large sum for him, which showed that he had a real interest in his language. He was worried about the price of tapes and asked if I could help him'*.

Through the Institute of Aboriginal Studies, she arranged for Jimmie to be supplied with tapes and they paid for him to make recordings, which are now part of the AIATSIS collection. When Martin Thomas listened to his original tapes for an ABC broadcast about Jimmie's life^[3] he found out that Jimmie had a long-standing interest in making sound recordings, as Jimmie himself explained: *'Forty years ago at the old local Aboriginal station I managed to engage several old men and women to record for me their songs, or words and songs, in the local dialect, Ngemba. I used an old dictaphone. Of course they were the wax cylinders and I had quite a collection. Most of the old people were against me recording their voices, saying they did not want to be singing when they were dead. Throughout the years anyway I've lost all the records – they've been broken – much to my regret now. Today with a modern recorder, I hope to contribute and add something of value.'*

So that was how Jimmie Barker came to record his life story on tapes, which five years after his death were edited and transcribed by Janet Mathews, and first published in 1977. Janet Mathews herself retired to Mosman where she died in 1992 but her valuable contribution through the recording of older Aboriginal people's memories of their lives and culture

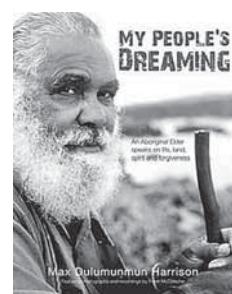
during the 1970s should not be forgotten.

Ruth Fink Latukefu

[1] Martin Thomas, *To you Mrs Mathews: the Cross-Cultural Recording of Janet Mathews 1914-1992*, 2003 Australasian Sound Archive No 29, pp46-59.

[2] Martin Thomas has been working on the writings of R.H. Mathews for several years and has completed a biography which is to be published by Allen and Unwin in 2010.

[3] ABC Radio Eye, broadcast, 2000, Martin Thomas *This is Jimmie Barker*.



UNCLE MAX'S DREAMING

At our Information Night on 10 May, which was very well attended, we had a real treat from Uncle Max. Uncle Max Dululunmun Harrison is an Elder of the Yuin people, whose country is the NSW South Coast. His *Dreaming* is the legacy of his ancestors, passed on to him as he grew up by his extended family and many aunts and uncles.

His education was not in school, which he tells us was not allowed, but was in his immediate bushland environment where he learnt through observation, listening and feeling. There he learnt life's most important lessons about living and respect.

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UNCLE MAX'S DREAMING

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Growing up in the 40s and 50s he heard his Elders speaking their traditional language. They made it clear that Max would not learn their tongue, their way of ensuring he would not be removed and become another member of the *Stolen Generations*. Later in life he persuaded his mother to teach his children some language. She was reluctant, cautious, but agreed to teach them, *but only bits and pieces*, so strong was her need to protect them from the risk of removal.

Central to Uncle Max's credo for living is forgiveness. He has doubtless had many reasons to be angry and

resentful. One illustration he gave was being done for drunkenness when stone cold sober, inevitably followed by the *crimes* of resisting arrest and offensive language. Uncle Max learnt early on *resentment only contaminates the spirit*.

He led us on to see how precarious is our elevation of modern science and technology above the observation of nature. In this way we have caused global warming simply because our convenience and comfort have come at the cost of not treating Mother Nature with respect. Changes post invasion have seen deterioration in health with the loss of traditional lifestyle, which had provided the *supermarket* and the *pharmacy* within the natural environment.

Uncle Max ended with some advice to all present – the importance of being open to the energy around us, from the natural environment and from other people. Learning to value and use connectedness between people by trusting our own feelings and being more true to ourselves.

Janet Hurley

Uncle Max's book *My People's Dreaming*, Finch Publishing 2010, is available from Next Chapter, Centro Warriewood. RRP \$40.

See Page 16 for details of *A Weekend Down the South Coast with Uncle Max*, 19-21 November.



ABORIGINAL HERITAGE IN THE GURINGAI AREA

Presentation at the ASG Information Night, a Guringai Festival event on July 12, by David Watts and his team from the Aboriginal Heritage Office

Guringai country covers the area the Guringai people inhabited before white

settlement – four major clans of around 100 people each. The Aboriginal Heritage Office (AHO) is the joint initiative of eight local Councils – Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Manly, North Sydney, Pittwater, Ryde, Warringah and Willoughby.

David has been the Aboriginal Heritage Manager for the past seven years. He has extensive experience in managing, surveying and assessing development impact on Aboriginal sites and has participated in many excavations and assessments of potential Aboriginal sites.

For many years he has been involved with Aboriginal site care and has provided specialist management and cultural tourism advice, including the development of several Aboriginal

Heritage walks within the Northern Sydney Region. For over ten years, he has delivered Aboriginal Cultural Awareness programs.

David cleared up the concern about the name Guringai by quoting a statement from Dr Val Attenbrow, Australian Museum: *'Guringai may not be the original name for the area, tribe or language, however given the lack of any credible alternative, it is considered to be an appropriate and convenient term to represent the area as distinct from other parts of Sydney.'*

He then told us how AHO started. March 2000 and David is given a laptop and desk in a cubicle in a Council depot.

He decided on the first day to work from home which he did for the first three months. Phil Hunt started work and the AHO was provided with an office in the Ranger depot at Manly Dam. The office then moved to a condemned building in Chatswood for two years before obtaining its present office at Northbridge.

There are now seven staff, all of them are council staff, not consultants.

There is a large display area and museum at the AHO where tours and education groups are held. Education is an important part of the program with a series of talks, walks and other activities for school groups and the general public.

AHO oversees and protects Aboriginal sites that are not part of Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW (formerly National Parks and Wildlife Service).

There is great support from the General Managers from all involved Councils.

AHO preserves and protects over 1,000 sites of Aboriginal culture and heritage across the Northern Sydney Region. It oversees daily monitoring of Aboriginal sites and create long-term plans for their conservation. It also aims to establish open lines of communication between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to address any issues and concerns.

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Aboriginal sites are under threat from development, vandalism and natural erosion and this important program will ensure they will be preserved for generations to come.

The Aboriginal Heritage Office not only protects the heritage of the Guringai people who first inhabited the area but also aims to find out more about their way of life before colonisation. Aboriginal people have lived in Australia for more than 40,000 years.

If you thought Aboriginal heritage was just about rock art, think again. Aboriginal culture is much bigger than this. It's a living, ongoing thing. It's deeply linked to the entire environment – plants, animals and landscapes.

The land and waterways are associated with Dreaming stories and cultural learning that is still passed on today. This cultural learning links Aboriginal people with whom they are and where they belong.

Protecting Aboriginal heritage means far more than looking after sites in parks or artefacts in museums. Aboriginal people need to be able to access land to renew their cultural learning. And they have to be involved and consulted in the conservation of the natural environment.

David then introduced his team – Phil Hunt, Archaeologist; Athena Mumbulla, Aboriginal Heritage Officer; Geoff Hunt, Geologist; Viki Gordon, Archaeologist; and Emma Lee, Archaeologist. Emma, a Palawa person, is working with the AHO as Aboriginal sites officer trainer. Emma is known to the Support Group for her research and writing of *The Tale of a Whale* with the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council.

The night was full of interesting information from an enthusiastic and caring mob.

Thank you David and your team for a great night and we at ASG look forward to you all coming back in the near future.

There is a huge amount of information about AHO on their website www.aboriginalheritage.org

Sue Evers

VOLUNTEERING WITH AHO

Become a volunteer – what's involved?

- Training is given for a couple of hours in the evenings or one full day
- You go one day a month or every two - three months on to a site that will be appointed to you
- Record and photograph
- Pick up rubbish, leaf litter
- Report online

AHO needs more volunteers – contact office - Phone : 9949 9882 email info@aboriginalheritage.org

Congratulations to...

COREY KIRK of Avalon for her inspiring performances of the National Anthem in the Darug language. Recently Corey has sung at the Sydney event for the opening of the FIFA World Cup, the NRL State of Origin game at ANZ Stadium and at The Dreaming Festival at Woodford. She also sang it at Gawura Aboriginal Learning Centre for the launch of the Guringai Language Country posters and at the last two ASG *Sorry Days*. Linguist and teacher Richard Green translated the words of *Advance Australia Fair* into Darug.

PETER SUTTON, author of *The Politics of Suffering: Indigenous Australia and the End of the Liberal Consensus*, the winner of the second John Button Prize for the best piece of writing on politics and public policy in the past year. An anthropologist in Aboriginal communities for more than 40 years, Peter wrote the book 'partly out of grief and anger' at the state of life in remote Indigenous communities.

BANGARRA DANCETHEATRE on winning three Helpmann Awards in the best ballet or dance work categories. Two of these awards were for *Fire* – a celebration of 20 years of contemporary dance.

JESSICA BIRK of Cromer for designing the Aboriginal-themed jerseys worn by the Sea Eagles Rugby League team in its game against Melbourne Storm on Saturday, 7 August. This match was to celebrate World Indigenous Day which fell on the following Monday. Jessica took inspiration for the design from the many rock engravings of fish, sharks and whales on rock platforms on the Northern Beaches. See page 16 for details of Jessica's art exhibition, *Holistic Landscapes*.

SEA EAGLES for commissioning these special jerseys and also for the financial support the club is giving to 16 year old Aboriginal athlete Kyle Plant of Toongabbie. Kyle, who hopes to represent Australia in the London Olympics, recently broke his ankle. He is now part of the Sea Eagles' mentoring program and will be doing rehab with the squad.

KEN WYATT on his election to Federal Parliament as member for the seat of Hasluck, Western Australia. Ken is the first Aboriginal person to serve in the House of Representatives. Senator Neville Bonner was the first Aboriginal person to be elected to Federal Parliament. He served from 1971 to 1983.

At a forum at the Steyne Hotel, Manly, organised by Amnesty International Manly Group on 24 March and attended by about 50 people, Associate Professor Sarah Maddison, Research Director, Indigenous Policy and Dialogue Research Unit, University of NSW, spoke eloquently about what a disaster the NT Intervention has been. *The Little Children are Sacred* report on sexual abuse in Aboriginal communities sparked the response. There was no consultation or involvement of the communities themselves. Whilst not denying the abuse, Professor Maddison pointed out that there is no evidence that it is worse than abuse in the wider community – one in four girls and one in six boys are abused in non-Indigenous Australia. She then went through the effect of the components of the Intervention.

Alcohol restrictions have been of limited effect – many addicts simply moved to the nearest town where the restrictions do not apply.

Income management through quarantining a portion of welfare payments, which could only be spent on food and groceries at designated stores, has been welcomed by some women but others resent the long distances they have to travel and the discriminatory and demeaning nature of the system.

Compulsory health checks for children were initially to detect sexual abuse but this led to an outcry from doctors on privacy and dignity grounds. The general checks that followed merely confirmed the shocking state of health of many Aboriginal children, something that was well known.

Converting native title to leasehold was meant to facilitate Aboriginal home ownership but was seen by Aboriginal people as a land grab.

New housing was promised but has not materialised. More than two years later, not a single house has been built.

Concentrating services in 20 larger towns threatens the autonomy of remote communities and is seen as a retrograde step by many Aboriginal people.

Strengthening the police presence in dysfunctional remote communities has improved law and order in many places – one of the few advances as a result of the Intervention.

Permits for entry to Aboriginal communities were abolished but were largely reinstated by the Rudd Government as a means of controlling the flow of alcohol.

The banning of X rated pornography and other measures has had no discernable effect on child abuse – the convictions for child abuse actually increased from 15 in the two years prior to the Intervention to 22 in the two years since. Yet the signs in each community banning pornography, alcohol etc stigmatise everyone, especially the men who do the best they can by their families.

The Intervention has been roundly condemned by the UN and Amnesty as contrary to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (DRIP) both of which have been ratified by Australia.

The Federal Government has undertaken to restore the provisions of the Racial Discrimination Act (suspended to enable the Intervention) but has elected to do this in an Orwellian fashion by legislating to apply the income management provisions to the whole of the Northern Territory and eventually to the whole of the country. The Minister will have discretion to declare prescribed income management zones. White dysfunctional families will escape this sledgehammer approach. The high hopes for a new beginning engendered by the Prime Minister's Apology to the *Stolen Generations* on 13 February 2008 have been well and truly dashed.

Ken Walsh of Amnesty International NSW added that the Intervention has focussed every effort on about 45,000 Aboriginal people in mainly remote communities, leaving the pressing problems of the remainder (nearly 500,000, 70% of whom are living in the cities and towns of Australia) largely unaddressed.

The original *Intervention* was a flagrant breach of Article 19 of the DRIP, which stipulates that Governments shall consult with Indigenous peoples in order to obtain their consent before adopting laws and policies that may affect them, and consultation since has been inadequate.

These presentations and the question and answer session that followed were a very useful discussion of a vexed subject and were greatly appreciated by those who attended.

Andrew Macintosh



THIS IS WHAT WE SAID

Compiled and published by concerned Australians

Using photographs and quotations taken from footage of actual Northern Territory Intervention consultations in 2009, *This Is What We Said* provides an account of the depth of frustration and despair of many Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory. These views differ vastly from what is often portrayed in the media.

This book, which includes a brief introduction to the Intervention, follows the report *Will They Be Heard?*. It is a wonderful opportunity to receive authentic information on what Aboriginal people really think about the Intervention and reveals a desire for locally based solutions rather than applying a *top down* approach.

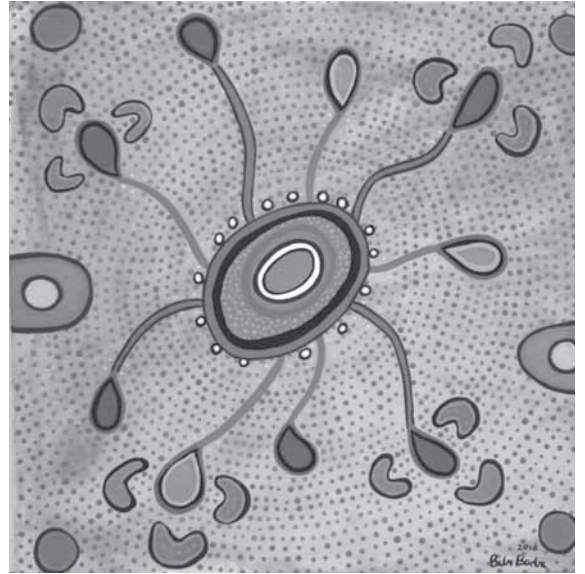
Sabine Kacha

This Is What We Said, a 71 page hard cover book, can be purchased from the Support Group. RRP \$15

Guringai FESTIVAL 2010

LIVING LANGUAGES

This year's festival brochure, which was produced by North Sydney Council, featured beautiful artwork by Bibi Barba. The images depict the themes of the past festivals, 2001 to 2010, with translations of each theme given in Guringai and Darug languages. The Guringai translation was done by Tracey Howie and the Darug translation by Terry Lee and Aunty Edna Watson.



Artwork by Bibi Barba

GURINGAI FESTIVAL FORUM

Saturday May 22

The Future of Indigenous Performing Arts

This informative and inspiring forum, at Glen Street Theatre, Belrose, was chaired by Susan Moylan-Coombs, Co-Chair of the Guringai Festival Committee. The members of the Forum were Emma Donovan, Gumbainggir Singer/Songwriter; Neil Armfield, Artistic Director Company B, Belvoir Theatre; and Lydia Miller, Executive Director, Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander Arts, Australia Council.

The theme of this year's Guringai Festival was *Living Languages*. As Susan emphasised, of the 250 languages spoken at the beginning of colonisation now only nine languages are seen as safe and a further 30 are at risk. Our multilingual land is losing its diversity.

Neil spoke of the cultural renaissance of the 1990s which coincided with the Keating Redfern Speech, Mabo and the beginning of the Reconciliation movement. He mentioned many of the landmark movements – Black Theatre at Redfern, Bangarra, The Festival of the Dreaming in 1997.

Lydia, who has been a successful performer and now an advocate for Indigenous Arts, recalled the original Black Playwrights Conference in 1977 and the second in 1989. Her vision was that stories would be told truthfully. And they are now – and sometimes in language. This reveals an identity for Australia not as a country with a history of 200 and something years but a history of identity and language of more than 60,000 years. It cannot be a euro-centric identity. We can be more than this.

Emma spoke of growing up in a musical family. She speaks little of her Gumbainggir language.

The Language Centre at Nambucca Heads, where her mum is involved, has encouraged her to tell her stories in song in Gumbainggir. Emma is not fluent but her songs for children bring her joy as children sing them in language. She hopes to produce an album in many languages. Presently she is a member of Black Arm Band (32 in the group, 18 Indigenous). Their last show used 14 different languages. Emma believes that Indigenous artists have a responsibility to participate in the expansion of language retrieval.

Neil encouraged performers to make a stand, to say *This is who I am*. The mainstream strangely bends to this.

Lydia spoke of the great possibilities of Indigenous music. It is recognised internationally. Singing in language is becoming mainstream.

Susan asked about the right to tell stories in song, art, theatre. Lydia explained that under copyright if you render a story into tangible form you own the copyright. Respect for a story is shown by asking for permission. Sometimes ownership may be communal, several groups or clans. Copyright gives financial rights to owners as well as moral rights. We have not been ingenious enough to deal with Indigenous rights.

All agreed that the future is bright, a work in progress. Arts give a window to the realised ideal possible for all to achieve. We all benefit. Lydia finished by saying 'Chase the Energy'. The energy passion was later shown to us all in David Page's gift of *Page 8*. It was an honour to be part of the audience for both the Forum and for *Page 8*.

Lizzie Landers



PAGE 8 by Louis Nowra and David Page, directed by Stephen Page

Glen Street Theatre Saturday 22 May

With pleasure I review this play. I love theatre and I once enjoyed a wonderful traditional dance class instructed by one of David Page's brothers. I enjoyed many events in 2009 Guringai Festival – an important community celebration for all North Sydneysiders.

The excitement in the foyer and nearly full auditorium preceded an emotive, humorous, clearly told and beautifully presented story of David Page's life and family – a wonderful play all should see and enjoy.

Whilst the friendly audience buzzed, a spot, front centre-stage, shone quietly on a wrapped gift. Stage lights up and David Page entered with the presence of a natural performer. It was therefore no surprise when he proudly revealed that his present was a fabulous new Super 8 movie camera – from his two mothers when he was 15, something with which to document the family. From this point, as the sole performer, David sang and told of significant moments, people and places in his life which have guided him to where and to who he is.

The set, by Robert Cousins, was a simple family home with a wooden cupboard up-stage which doubled as a movie screen on which David's home-movie footage was played. The performance was live captioned with screens either side – a reminder to me that for many of our *First Nations* people, the play was in their second

language. David introduced us to the ten people living in the Page's Queensland family home – four boys, four girls, mum and dad. We met his mob through his film footage and portrayals. So mesmerising was the first of these – the sensitive evocation of the spirit and figure of his grandmother – a Munaldjarli woman from Beaudesert. He sang as she would in her language. Bravely, he played his father, 'feelin' sorry for himself...charged-up drunk' and proceeded to transform, perfectly and comically at times, into others such as his sisters, until he showed how imitating others became an art of his own. We learned how as a young lad he performed floor-shows, wanted to be Michael Jackson (*the black one that is!*) and was noticed by family, locals and even a talent scout for his performing abilities. This led to a recording contract and career as 'another person' – the part he seemed most nervous about playing – himself – the *Sweet Sixteen* crooner *Little Davey Page*. David Page's voice is captivating to this day.

David's life was heavily influenced by sometimes living with Auntie Tess, his other mother, who thought of him as her guardian angel and by the music that seemed to be in his family. There were turbulent times – he lost his record contract, he came-out, he became disenchanted. His rendition of *The Man with a Child in his Arms* was poignant and, from that point



in his narration, self-acceptance and life changes began as his family encouraged him away from family caretaking and darker days, back into music – now his career stronghold. He closed his totally unashamed story, revelling in all that makes and is him by bursting into a glorious, glamorous and celebratory drag show. This was his final gift to us – a rockin' and rollin' message to be proud of and know who you are and where you come from, a place in which he had finally found himself.

I loved the light humour – the show was playful as was props-use. I was taken by David's beautiful singing voice, his fitness and agility and his ability to transform himself quickly between very different characters. It was a great prelude to the launch of the Guringai Festival. Thanks to the support of Warringah Council for subsidising tickets to this matinee as a Guringai Festival event.

Juliette Webb

GURINGAI FESTIVAL LAUNCH

The Guringai Festival Launch followed *Page 8*, hosted by Warringah Council and held in the foyer of the Glen Street Theatre which was adorned with a gallery display of Aboriginal artworks featuring Aboriginal people and culture.

We walked from a wonderful show into a community gathering backed by sounds of *Freshwater* – a four part female vocal group consisting of ex-members of the well-known *Stiff Gins*. Along with drinks, we were served bush tomato quiches, riberry damper and kangaroo filo triangles by the helpful staff of Thulli Bush Tucker Catering.

There was a smoking ceremony before Susan Moylan-Coombs, Guringai Festival Co-Chair, acknowledged the partnership between Councils and the Festival Committee in forging greater understanding and then Michael Regan, Mayor of Warringah, welcomed all to the Festival in the Darug language (a highlight for me). The event was attended by Warringah Councillors and representatives from other Northern Sydney Councils.

It was a fantastic opening to a community festival.

Juliette Webb

SORRY DAY

On Sunday, 30 May the Support Group commemorated *Sorry Day* at Bilarong Reserve, North Narrabeen. Helpers were there early to set up the Scout Hall. Thanks for the great effort! The hall looked welcoming for the arrival of the walkers from Berry Reserve – a journey of healing and a silent remembrance of those *Stolen Generations* of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

In the hall Corey Kirk sang beautifully the National Anthem in Dharug language accompanied by her mother Cathy on clap sticks. Eric Ellis then played the yadaki while his brother, son and grandson danced *Wake up the Spirits*. Waratah spoke and sang *They Took Us Away* and read a poem *I'm Sorry*. She invited the children to sit out front and join in the singing. Then we had a special

dance for Eric's daughter Teoka who is a student at Biala Hostel. Teoka demonstrated the *Emu Dance* and others joined in. There was food and drinks including delicious barbecued sausages donated by Devitt Wholesale Meats. Gill Moody introduced a film by Adrian Wills *Bourke Boy*, a very special story. Lizzie spoke about the Guringai Festival and Julie Janson spoke about her research and the development of the Guringai Language Country website and posters.

A special thankyou to Clair Jackson for all her work in organizing the event and to all who shared in the occasion. A grant from Pittwater Council made the day possible.

Helen Ford

SALTWATER COUNTRY

ART EXHIBITION

Mackellar Girls High School organized an excursion to the Manly Art Gallery & Museum to see the *Saltwater Country* exhibition, a Guringai Festival event. Lara Rutley asked me if I would like to attend with the girls from Biala Hostel and I was happy to do so. The artists exhibiting their work were Sally Mayman and Dale Kentwell.

The photographs by Sally Mayman were really beautiful with very inspiring notations accompanying each one. The paintings by Dale Kentwell were vibrant portrayals of people and their country.



Painting by Dale Kentwell

These works were created during a visit to Aboriginal families living on the Dampier Peninsula, Western Australia. All showed the peoples' connection to their country, even though their culture is being put under great pressure at these times.

A wonderfully inspiring and colourful exhibition which I really appreciated seeing.

Carol Ritchie

LIVING LANGUAGES

St Anthony in the Fields Church Terrey Hills on Sunday 20 June

This Guringai Festival event continued the ongoing *Sharing the Story, Sharing the Land* project between the local Aboriginal community, the parish of St Anthony in the Field and the wider community.

We were called together by the sound of talking boomerangs being clapped in rhythm, with words from an ancient language, sung out with great energy. We did not know the words but we easily understood the message: 'Come, join with me now, share with me the spirit of my people.' We followed Richard Green into the church and listened to his story and how he came to his life's work – that of sharing and teaching the language, culture and history of the *original* people of Australia.

We moved outside to sit in a circle, a mixed group of about 20 people from different backgrounds, and were privileged to have several other Aboriginal people with us including Nancy Hill Wood, a member of the *Stolen Generations*. We witnessed the intimate connection of our *original* people to the land, water, fire, plants and animals and heard of their deep spirituality in a culture dating back tens of thousands of years. We were told of a people whose life was thoroughly disrupted in more recent times.

After some time we shared a meal and were able to visit with each other individually. I loved every minute of this very special day and was particularly touched by being called *auntie*.

Ginny Schmidt

Frenchs Forest Parish Social Justice Group

FIRE TALKER THE LIFE AND TIMES OF CHARLIE PERKINS



The screening of this wonderful Ivan Sen film on June 16 was a Guringai Festival event organized by the Aboriginal Support Group and made possible by the

generosity of the Mustaca Family of Collaroy Cinema. Before the film was shown, Lizzie Landers told those assembled of various coming events, some as part of the Guringai Festival and others of interest to all committed to Aboriginal culture and wellbeing. Bob Waterer, local resident and descendant of the Broken Bay tribe, made the *Acknowledgement of Country* and then we all sat back to appreciate *Fire Talker* on the big screen.

Charlie's story is movingly narrated by his daughter Rachel. The film began with haunting black and white images of Aranda people in Central Australia at the time of their dispossession of their lands and went on to unfold the life of Charlie Perkins whose Mum Hetty was an Aranda woman. His Dad was a Kalkadoon man who left the family when Charlie was only two. Born in 1936 in the old Telegraph Station in Alice Springs, Charlie went on to become a great champion of Aboriginal Rights. His early school days in Alice Springs were happy, as

were his initial school experiences in Adelaide until a change in senior personnel unleashed the full force of racial nastiness on him. He and the other Aboriginal kids at the school found happiness through sports at which they excelled. Sport proved to be Charlie's salvation as he proved to be a first class soccer player and found personal acceptance in the *New Australian* community. He went on to play for the English Club Everton and in England at that time found the hand of friendship that was impossible in Anglo-Celtic Australia. He was a non-drinker but his English mates were happy to have someone sober but gregarious look out for their interests.

But the call of home was strong and Charlie returned to Adelaide to be Captain/Coach of a Croatian soccer team in Adelaide where, at a soccer social function, he met his beautiful wife Eileen Muchenberg. After their marriage they decided to move to Sydney so Charlie could further his education and in 1965 Charlie graduated from Sydney University with a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in government and political science. By this time the family had grown to five following the births of two daughters and a son.

1966 saw the famous *Freedom Ride* when Charlie and a group of fellow university students travelled around the country towns of New South

Wales highlighting the blatant racism practised there against Aboriginal people. In April 1967 Charlie and Eileen travelled to the United States where he met a number of African American leaders who were involved in the momentous Civil Rights struggle. However, there was no mention in the film as to whether he met Native American people.

In 1969 the family moved to Canberra for Charlie to take up a position in the new Office of Aboriginal Affairs. Charlie's public service career was always fraught because so often he could see that on the ground nothing was happening and his anger at injustice forced him to speak out. Charlie's kidneys collapsed in May 1971 and he later received a kidney transplant which enabled him to resume normal life. At the time he died in 2000 he was the world's longest surviving kidney transplant recipient.

Whilst there is still a very long way to go for non-Indigenous Australia to make restitution to the Aboriginal people of this country, it is largely as a result of Charlie Perkins' efforts that we have come as far as we have and for that we are all hugely in his debt.

Carol Gerrard

Proceeds from this event were donated to the *Charles Perkins Trust for Children and Students*.

Thankyou. . .

- **Dee Why RSL** for two 2010 CDSE grants for Elimatta and towards the book *The Waterer Family Story 1803-2010* which will be published by the Support Group next year.
- **Pittwater RSL** for a CDSE grant for guest speakers and films at Information Nights and other events.
- **Pittwater Council** for its grant for the commemoration of *Sorry Day* at North Narrabeen.
- **Devitt Wholesale Meats Narrabeen** for donating the sausages for the barbecue at the *Sorry Day* event.
- **Warringah Mall Community Club** for the donation to Biala Hostel.
- **Forestville RSL Club** for a Youth Grant also for Biala Hostel.
- **The Mustaca Family** of Collaroy Cinema who provided for the ninth year the theatre to screen the film during the Guringai Festival. This year the film was *Firetalker* which is reviewed above.



ANTaR LOOKS AT JUVENILE JUSTICE IN NSW

The Annual General Meeting of Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation (ANTaR) NSW was held at the Mechanics' School of Arts, Sydney, on March 20. It was preceded by most interesting presentations by the Minister for Juvenile Justice, the Hon Graham West, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Human Rights Commissioner, Michael Gooda.

Mr West made the following points:

- 48% of young offenders are Indigenous
- 15% come from Sydney's west – mostly from poor and dysfunctional families
- those who offend in the age group between 10 to 18 years are 99% more likely to re-offend
- 50% in custody are on remand
- school is offered in the juvenile detention centres but no other form of support is provided other than a voluntary program that seeks to engage the family and community in their rehabilitation
- it costs \$542 a day to incarcerate a juvenile offender
- separate remand centres are planned
- problems are compounded in rural areas
- boot camps dispensing harsh discipline do not work and love and empathy are largely absent in juvenile detention centres.

Mr Gooda said that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are 28 times more likely to be incarcerated than non-Indigenous people. Despite the high rates of incarceration, security has not improved. Accountability to the community is vital. Governments are not engaging with Indigenous leaders and parents. A bipartisan approach is needed. We need enablers not gatekeepers. The retiring President of ANTaR, Bob Makinson, referred members to his written report outlining the year's achievements but pointed out some worrying trends, including Tony Abbott's denigration of *Acknowledgement of Country* at public events, the continuation and expansion of income management in the NT and the deletion of reconciliation from the ALP's platform. Mr Makinson said that ANTaR has a vital role in presenting the Indigenous point of view to non-Indigenous Australians.

After ten years in the chair, Bob Makison has stepped down. He was presented with a richly deserved Certificate of Excellence. The meeting went on to elect the office-bearers. In general business, it was agreed that ANTaR should write to those denigrating *Acknowledgements of Country*, pointing out the importance of such symbolic acts.

Andrew Macintosh



NSW SENIORS WEEK (21-28 MARCH) ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

It was pretty inspiring to be in the audience for this occasion on Sunday, 21 March, in the beautiful Recital Hall at Angel Place in the heart of Sydney. We gathered to celebrate the life and diverse community achievements of sixty older members (Seniors) of our community. They had all shown by their actions that to *Live Life* is exactly what they do.

Bob Waterer, a member of the Support Group, was the last recipient of an award and it was given for Intergenerational Understanding. Bob discovered very late in life that he is a direct descendant of Sarah (Bid) Wallace (1803 –1880), a member of the clan led by Bungaree and his wife Matora. He embraced his new knowledge with both hands and began a journey to find all he could about the history and heritage of his Aboriginal ancestor.

In his work with community and schools Bob has encouraged his listeners to develop respect and knowledge about the lives of Aboriginal people in the Northern Sydney Region where the Traditional Owners are known as the Guringai.

Congratulations to Bob!

Lizzie Landers

An Invitation to join us

Aboriginal Support Group Manly Warringah Pittwater

Founded 1979

Membership is \$25 per year

(02) 9913 7940 (02) 9982 1685

P.O. Box 129 NARRABEEN NSW 2101

www.asgmwp.net

Elimatta is the newsletter of the Aboriginal Support Group Manly Warringah Pittwater.

Articles are welcome with the understanding that editorial changes may be made and that contributors agree that the material will be archived by the National Library of Australia.

Contributors to **Elimatta** are from many different cultures and backgrounds. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editors or members of the ASG.

Please email articles where possible to asgmwp@gmail.com

If you use any of the material it would be appreciated if the extract is set in context and the source acknowledged.



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**September 20
to December 12**

MARI NAWI (big canoe): ABORIGINAL ODYSSEYS 1790-1850 exhibition at the State Library of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney. FREE. Enquiries **9273 1414**

**Saturday Sept 25
to October 15**

HOLISTIC LANDSCAPES, an exhibition of artwork by Jessica Birk at 31 Victor St. Chatswood. Enquiries: Alison Clark, Willoughby City Council **9777 7972**.

**Saturday Sept 25
to November 7**

NAMATJIRA, a dramatic tribute to a great Aranda man and artist, co-directed by the playwright Scott Rankin and Wayne Blair. Belvoir St Theatre. Bookings **9699 3444** or belvoir.com.au/namatjira

Tuesday October 5

ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONSULTATION at Brookvale TAFE from 11am to 3pm. Other sessions at Ryde (Sept 29), North Sydney (Oct 6) and Hornsby (Oct 8) Details Adam Cryer **9847 6585**.

Monday October 11

ASG Business Meeting at Mona Vale Memorial Hall next to Pittwater Library 7.30pm. ALL WELCOME. Enquiries Anna **9913 7940**.

Friday October 22

CELEBRATION OF ABORIGINAL CULTURE AND HERITAGE featuring the visual and performing arts. A free event organised by the Reconciliation Network: Northern Sydney Region. Refreshments provided. 7 to 9.30pm at The Dougherty Centre 7 Victor Street, Chatswood. Enquiries: Kerrie **9428 1197** or Allan **9484 5693**.

Monday November 8

ASG Information Night at Mona Vale Memorial Hall next to Pittwater Library 7.30pm. ALL WELCOME. For full details contact Lizzie **9918 2594**. FREE.

**Friday November 19
to Sunday 21**

A WEEKEND DOWN THE SOUTH COAST WITH UNCLE MAX – Exploring traditional Aboriginal spirituality. Details sscentar@optusnet.com.au Tel: Robyn **0400 195 621**

Sunday November 28

CHRISTMAS IN THE BUSH at Taronga Zoo from 10am to 3pm. Lunch provided and a visit from Black Santa. FREE for members of the Northern Sydney Aboriginal Community. Enquiries Adam **9847 6585**.

Monday December 13

ASG Business Meeting at Mona Vale Memorial Hall next to Pittwater Library 7.30pm. ALL WELCOME. Enquiries Anna **9913 7940**.

2011

Monday February 14

ASG Business Meeting at Mona Vale Memorial Hall next to Pittwater Library 7.30pm. ALL WELCOME. Enquiries Anna **9913 7940**.



Future Issues of Elimatta

All further issues of *Elimatta* will be published electronically.
It is therefore important that you send your current email address to

elimatta@asgmwp.net

For those without email please telephone (02) 9913 7940
to let us know that you would like a hard copy of *Elimatta* posted to you.

We look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Thankyou

