

Elimatta

autumn 2010

www.asgmwp.net

Aboriginal Support Group – Manly Warringah Pittwater

Lavina Warner – From Charleville to the Big City

My name is Lavina Warner. I am the fourth youngest in my family of thirteen. My parents were Aboriginal. Both were alcoholics. My childhood memories took place in Charleville, Queensland. In those early days I was always hurt, bruised and cut. I remember being scalded by a pot of tea which went down my back.

The memories I have of my mother are both sad and joyous. Sad, because she was often in jail. I remember seeing her sad eyes looking through the bars at me. Apparently, she used to walk up the street drunk, singing *Rain drops keep falling on my head*. Joyous memories, because one night she took me home from the pub and I cried because I wanted to stay with her. She kissed me good night and gave me twenty cents.

One day, my parents took me and my sisters and two younger brothers to the police station. We had to wait out the back and then we were on a train bound for who knows where. We arrived the next day in a big city called Toowoomba. We were taken to a Salvation Army Home and placed in cottages, given a bath, scrubbed and de-liced. I remember the Home as being a really happy place. We were fed, clothed and cared for. There was a pool and trampoline. My older sister Mary wouldn't put her head up at the dinner table, it was because she was ashamed. She was fifteen. Mary said to me 'Come out so I can do your hair each day before school'. I went out the next day and she wasn't



there. I found out later that they had sent her to Kalimna in Brisbane, a maximum security centre for young girls, just because she hung her head in shame.

I was fostered out to a family in Goondiwindi for three and a half years during which time both my parents died. My father died in a house fire and my mother was putting paper into a fire when she got really badly burnt. I went to see my mother in hospital before she died and I stood looking at this woman who I didn't really even know, but felt a connection when I looked into her sad eyes – those same eyes I had seen looking through the jail bars.

I left Goondiwindi to go back and live in the Home between 1977 and 1981 by which time I had finished Year 10 and then started working in a nursing home. After working for nearly four years I left Toowoomba and travelled to see family, not really knowing where to settle. I moved down to Sydney. Its beaches, people and work kept me living here, it was beautiful.

In 1987, I had my first child Jaime and in 1989 my second Nicholi. I wanted to bring my girls up knowing who they were, that they didn't have to follow the generational line of abuse in any form. I joined Christian City Church in 1991.

Continued Page 2

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

Continued from Page 1

Jesus helped me raise my girls and the support I received from friends and the church fellowship helped give my girls a great start in life. They are confident, trustworthy, bold, beautiful girls. Jaime has done two years at the School of Ministry at Christian City Church and travelled to America and Canada doing summer camps. Nicholi is doing an Arts degree and is in her third year.

In the time of raising my girls, I

have done an Advanced Diploma in Community Services at Christian City Church and have just finished an Advanced Diploma in Applied Aboriginal Studies at Tranby College, Glebe. I want to help my people know they don't have to accept their circumstances. There is a way out.

Lavina Warner

Lavina is a child care worker in the babies room at the Dee Why Children's Centre. At last year's ASG *Sorry Day* commemoration Lavina

and her colleague Kym Moody talked about their role in creating a more suitable environment for Indigenous children in local child care centres as well as educating children on Indigenous culture. Lavina then spoke movingly about her life and the struggles she had faced.

Kym and Lavina worked with the children present to paint on a colourful canvas image of Narrabeen Lagoon which was to be hung in the Dee Why Children's Centre.



THE INTERVENTION! ASG INTERVENTION STATEMENT

The Aboriginal Support Group – Manly Warringah Pittwater is concerned by the continued suspension of the Racial Discrimination Act which allows welfare payment quarantining (Income Management) of Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory.

There are worrying reports of impending federal legislation which may shortly extend Income Management to welfare recipients across the entire country. This expansion will not make the Act any less discriminatory. The vast majority of people currently subjected to Income Management will stay on the Basics Card. Most of those being drawn into the scheme will be Aboriginal. Income Management has degraded Aboriginal people and the proposal to degrade some non-Aboriginal people does not make it any more acceptable or any less racist.

JEFF McMULLEN SPEAKS OUT

At the ASG Information night in the Mona Vale Memorial Hall on November 9, 2009, attended by over one hundred people, the distinguished journalist Jeff McMullen gave a riveting account of the state of play in Aboriginal and Islander Australia. The central point he made was that until we trust Aboriginal people we won't see change.

In many communities, including Kalkaringi where Vincent Lingiari led the walkout from Wave Hill, nothing has changed. The Northern Territory Intervention, with its imposed solutions, has been a spectacular failure. Yet, where Aboriginal people have been involved in measures to improve the situation, encouraging things have happened.

At Minyerri, Elders have been crucial in achieving 95% school attendance. Chris and Grace Sara's *Strong and Smart Institute* trains school principals to engage Aboriginal children in their

own education and this has been generously supported financially by the Commonwealth Department of Education at the behest of the Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard. Jack Bancroft's *Australian Mentoring Experience* has recruited over one hundred undergraduates as mentors for Aboriginal high school students. Jeff emphasised that education is the key. The punitive nature of the Intervention with its quarantining of 50% of welfare payments for all NT Aboriginal families, irrespective of their level of responsibility, the mandatory health checks of children and insistence on forty year leases of Aboriginal land is blatantly discriminatory and has been condemned as such by the United Nations and high profile Australians including Ian Thorpe (*Fountain of Youth*). Worst still, it is humiliating, demoralising and disempowering. Promises to reinstate the Racial Discrimination Act have not been honoured.

The result is feelings of shame and hopelessness leading to

suicide, alcoholism and smoking. ANU researchers say that at the present rate of progress, it will take one hundred years to bridge the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal health and welfare. Noel Pearson's punitive measures, sanctions against parents in cases of truancy, have not been successful in Cape York. But it should be feasible to achieve parity in education within thirty years and this would profoundly improve progress in other areas, particularly health. Only Aboriginal custodianship will save the land and threatened species.

The audience showed their appreciation by giving Jeff a standing ovation. Questions and comments followed including an impassioned call for justice. There was a lot of discussion over tea and coffee afterwards.

This was one of the best Information Nights organised by the Support Group that I have attended.

Andrew Macintosh





POSITIONS VACANT

EDITOR(S) for **ELIMATTA** to start early 2011. Please contact Anna **9913 7940** or Pat **9971 0735** to find out more about this challenging and rewarding position. Distribution team as listed on page 12 will continue.

ABLE BODIED PEOPLE to help with the ASG *Sorry Day* commemoration to be held at Bilarong Reserve, North Narrabeen, on Sunday May 30. Please contact Clair Jackson **9913 9922** if you can assist in any way.

ASSISTANT TREASURER with knowledge of and access to MYOB Quickbooks or similar. Requirement to construct a set of accounts eg twelve income, nine outgoing plus two bank accounts. Report capability is needed for 'progress' bi-monthly, GST quarterly and yearly summary for audit. Treasurer would email journal details monthly. In 2009 there was a total of 100 entries. A cinch! If this is for you please contact David Harrison **9971 4160** or email davidandleonie@sctelco.net

OUTBACK MEETS THE BEACH 2010



On Thursday February 11 several members of the Support Group went to the North Palm Beach Surf Life Saving Club to help welcome the visitors from the Jawoyn communities of Barunga, Maryallaluk and Wugularr in the Northern Territory. They had come a very long way to visit with the members of the surf club who have been running this program for three years.

Uncle Bob Waterer did a *Welcome To Country*. He also showed the visitors the large laminated map of Australia showing all the Aboriginal Nations which they were very interested in never having seen this map before. It was decided that the Support Group would get this map from ANTaR and send it to the Jawoyn communities.

There were seven Elders and ten young people in the group, the Elders being very happy to talk to us even though the young ones were very shy.

I told them that was okay because I was shy too. We had a very enjoyable dinner with all the visitors and were made to feel very welcome. We were told about some aspects of life in the visitors' communities. They were really looking forward to the activities that Terry Kirkpatrick and his colleagues had arranged such as surf lifesaving, visits to Taronga Zoo and the Opera House.

On Saturday February 20 a group of us went to the Newport home of Ruth Latukefu so that we could again meet with three of the Elders. Unfortunately the other Elders had had to return to Katherine urgently due to family business. With Lisa, Sybil and Anne Marie we enjoyed the morning tea that Ruth kindly provided and had a really nice and relaxed time sitting at her home overlooking the ocean. Thanks to Ruth for arranging this morning.

There was to be a farewell dinner at the surf club on the Sunday evening at about 6pm as the visitors were returning home on Monday. However I received a phone call from Terry Kirkpatrick just after 4 to say that the boys were getting ready to do some dancing and so to get there ASAP. I arrived just after they had started dancing and Uncle Bob was also able to be there in a hurry. Unfortunately some other people were not contactable and, while coming later, missed the dancing and singing.

After dinner the visitors performed a song in Creole they had written about their trip to North Palm Beach and also sang a farewell song. They then went off to watch a water polo game. I felt that everyone, those from the NT and those from the surf club and other visitors, had really enjoyed being together and are looking forward to next year's *Outback Meets the Beach*. My personal thanks to Terry Kirkpatrick for inviting me and the Aboriginal Support Group to be involved – a very pleasant experience – and I have asked him to let me know when there is a trip to Jawoyn country later in the year. This is something I would really love to do if I am able.

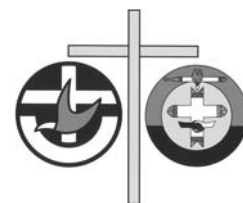
Carol Ritchie

South Narrabeen Surf Life Saving Club has a *Bush To Beach* exchange program.

This summer fifty Aboriginal children, aged between three and fifteen, enjoyed four days of activities organised by club members and supporters. The visitors came from Brewarrina which, after ten years of drought, was declared a natural disaster area following recent flooding.



Understanding Indigenous Issues



I have been asked to write about the formation and functioning of a small sub-group of St. David's Uniting Church Dee Why. The group calls itself *Understanding Indigenous Issues*.

Since wandering into a business meeting of the Aboriginal Support Group-Manly Warringah Pittwater thirteen years ago I have been enriched by the dedication of its core members, the insights of its guest speakers and the generous financial support of its total membership.

Also enriching has been my association since 1976 with St. David's Uniting Church Dee Why and its sub-groups which support projects such as Kaddy's free transport for people who are frail-aged or wheelchair-bound, funding to Mary Mackillop Institute to establish schools in East Timor, plus more traditional community and Mission projects. In my view though, due partly to leadership changes, only patchy attention has been paid to disturbing issues facing Aboriginal Australia. Opportunities to more fully appreciate Aboriginal culture and customs weren't happening either.

Australia's mainstream religious organisations have, at national and state levels, units devoted to justice issues and to Aboriginal wellbeing. However, unless a congregation has meaningful engagement with Aboriginal people, serious Aboriginal issues are unlikely to receive much attention. Some might ask '*Does this matter?*'

A few members of St David's thought it should. For starters, our Church building is on traditional Aboriginal land. Compensation? What form? When? And, although well-intentioned, churches' missionary zeal over nearly two centuries has extensively dismantled Aboriginal culture and been party to separation of families. The result in many instances has been severe and often traumatic dysfunction and disadvantage.



So, in April 2008, nine St David's members gained their Church Council's approval to establish an *Understanding Indigenous Issues* group, with the aims:

- to develop the group's and church's understanding of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress
- to appreciate Australian Aboriginal culture and spirituality and how these can contribute to a more gentle and sustainable Australia.

Talk is easy, productive action less so, but a process which has helped has been to meet at 7.30am on a middle-of-the-month Saturday morning (not much competition then!) with a self-serve breakfast, set on a sideboard.

We have a learning segment, plan coming events, review noteworthy political developments and consider relevant new-release books for the group's self-serve library *The Top Shelf*. When necessary there is a discussion about the implications of the Uniting Church National Assembly's resolution re amendments to its Constitution preamble which includes *The First Peoples had already encountered the Creator God before the arrival of the colonisers; the Spirit already was in the land revealing God to the people through law, custom and ceremony. The same love and grace that was finally revealed in Jesus Christ sustained the First Peoples and gave them particular insights in God's ways.*

This local involvement is against the background that in 1985 the Uniting Church's National Assembly established the autonomous Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress with national and state structures, an Aboriginal Church within a Church. The recommended preamble amendments referred to above are a logical extension.

And why delay until 2008 for this local group? Probably it was just that early 2008 saw a conflux of some newer people at the *right* time, notably among them incoming minister Reverend Meredith Williams.

Although not claiming regular membership of the group, Meredith's empathy for the cause, her experience and her insights have been most beneficial for the group's progress.

Jointly the Catholic, Anglican and Uniting Churches fund and assist Nungalinga College in Darwin where life skills and employment-empowering courses augment theological studies. As Nungalinga is on our support list our group helped stage a local fund-raising dinner recently and will assess future possibilities.

Business is serious but members, disparate in some senses though homogenous otherwise, enjoy robust cut and thrust but don't take themselves too seriously. Motivations for joining are varied. Half the church group members belong also to the Aboriginal Support Group-Manly Warringah Pittwater whose objectives differ somewhat.

All members are enjoying expanding their knowledge of Aboriginal culture, history and events and are keen to encourage other folk to do similarly. Age, health (and, probably, likely skill deficiencies) preclude hands-on involvement in Aboriginal settlements afar. However, St David's *Understanding Indigenous Issues* group provides opportunity locally for appreciating Aboriginality and stimulating community interest toward *closing the gap* regarding health, housing and education outcomes for Australia's First People.

As of puddings, the proof of our convivial monthly breakfast and stimulating meetings might well be in their consumption.

So, why not come one morning? Welcome assured! No notice necessary. 7.30am on a Saturday mid-month at St David's Dee Why Uniting Church (next to Dee Why Police Station).

Confirm dates with David **9971 4160** or Grahame **9971 4348**

David Harrison

A GIFT TO THE NATION

November 28, 2009 was a *red letter* day at the National Museum here in Canberra. Women of the *Stolen Generations* from all over Australia met to gift to the nation a most beautiful Namitjira painting.

The Friends Lounge was filled to capacity and echoed with laughter and tears as the *Cootamundra girls* shared times past, and the moment together. To me, it seemed such an appropriate place for the celebration. The lounge is where the U3A Indigenous Reading Group meets monthly to discuss the very personal stories written by Indigenous Australians. It is in this Group many women and men have learned the 'other' history of their country for the first time.

The event was very emotional. I sat with Jean Begg and Nancy Hill Wood, two long-standing ASG members who, in 1982, told their story to help the Group understand the *Stolen Generations*. Craddock Morton, Museum Director, addressed the gathering saying '...I'm sorry for what we have done to you. Personally I feel deep sadness and shame, but there is joy as well at your strength in confronting your situation and your resilience in coming through it.' He delivered a personal apology.

Some of *the girls* remembered vividly Albert Namatjira's visit to the Cootamundra Aboriginal Girls' Training Home in 1956. He was very touched by the girls and went back to country to paint a picture especially for them. It hung in the Home's main dormitory.

A very lovely water-colour of a gum tree set in the Centre, it is painted in Namatjira's inimitable colours and style. The Museum presented a framed copy to each woman.

The Welfare Board was dissolved in 1969. The Department of Community Services took over the Home and the painting went missing until 1994. Lola Edwards, one of *the girls*, recalled that she had been at a DOCS meeting leading up to the Inquiry into the *Stolen Generations* when the Records Manager said he had found the painting. It was hanging in the executive meeting room.

Lola recounted how she 'almost fell over in shock when I saw it. I saw my life flash before me. I said, you've got to get it out of the welfare offices. There'll be hell to pay if the girls find out where it is'. She said she could hear still the women's gasps when they first saw the painting again. In 1996 it was officially handed back to Ms Edwards, representing the *Cootamundra girls*. Then it went into the Kingswood Archives in NSW for 10 years until the women finally decided that they would like to give it to the Museum in perpetuity. A wonderful gift to the nation.

In the midst of the excitement, laughter and tears, remembrances, speeches and chatting, Jean Begg scribbled out a poem which she read to the gathering, and which she gave to me to share with you in the pages of *Elimatta*.

M-J Jill Perkins

THE PAINTING OF LIFE

*Orphan girls who were taken away
from their families and forced to
melt into a white society.*

*A society who threw away their brushes along
with the colour black, to keep the canvas of
life completely white.*

*Exclusion, missions, jails and orphanages became
the black reality.*

But don't cry a tear for us.

Cry a tear for the people who cannot cry.

*Cry a tear for a kind and gentle man whose
heart reached out to ease the pain*

And gave the girls a beautiful painting.

*A painting whereby the canvas was neither
black or white*

*But painted in vivid, lovely colours
for both societies to see.*

*The picture on the canvas was painted by
Albert Namatjira.*

Jean Begg



Nancy Hill Wood (front) and from left, Ailsa Randall, Judith Darcy and Elaine Randall

Going Bush

Adventures across Aboriginal Australia with Olympic champion Cathy Freeman and actor Deborah Mailman. Two episodes will be screened followed by discussion.



Warringah Council and the Support Group have arranged this *Seniors For Reconciliation* event as part of NSW Seniors Week.

Wednesday March 31 from 10am to 11.30
Warringah Council Chambers, Dee Why
Morning tea will be available from 9.30. FREE

Bookings essential, contact Pat Frater 9971 0735

By Edmund Campion. David Lovell Publishing 2009



Ed Campion's biography captures the life and in some small measure the person that Ted was. I first met Ted in the seventies and

spent time living in the presbytery with Ted, Mum Shirl, the Kooris and men and women who had joined Ted in the struggle for justice at Redfern. In many ways the stories from those pivotal days gave an insight into how Ted's life was turned upside down in his uncompromising stand with the poor and his constant agitation with the church hierarchy.

Ted opened his heart and his home to the broken, the ostracised, the dispossessed. St Vincent's was always a welcome place to those looking for solace and support. His love of Aboriginal people is legendary among the Aboriginal communities throughout Australia. Ted had a deep respect for the littlest of his bothers and sisters and this was reflected in his great love of the radical gospels. He not only formed a relationship with the Kooris at Redfern but knew their families and their history. To travel with Ted was an experience in that he would know people in every Aboriginal community the length and breadth of Australia.

Campion reflected on the relationship with Mum Shirl where he stated that without her 'help' his work would have been substantially diminished. Ted would have seen it differently. He always referred to Shirl as his teacher. Shirl challenged the church, the state and the values of mainstream society. She challenged Ted to stand in solidarity with them and listen and learn.

Ted's insights from this magnificent love between two people was the evolution of his liberation theology as was the life and work of Dorothy Day and her theology of hospitality to the poor. Ted was also challenged by the strong feminists at St Vincent's over the years and by the late Veronica Green and her environmental theology. His liturgies were magnificent with deep reflections on the gospel that were always profound, challenging and centered on justice. His love of poetry was a gift that he often included as a reflection.

His funeral was a testament to the wide network that he traveled with. Judges, politicians, leading figures in the Law, Medicine, Academics and many priests including a handful of brother priests who loved him. Significantly the tent on the block where he was buried from was full to capacity with mainly Aboriginal people. Their love for this man who loved them was simply overwhelming in the emotion they shared.

Chris Geraghty prayed at his funeral 'raise up an army of Kennedys... to bandage the wounded, to bury the dead, to share the fruits of your earth, to protect the weak and welcome the stranger'.

The story of Sister Nora is not accurate and it is a shame it was reflected as it is in the book. It is disappointing that Campion did not include an index or references or interviews with Aboriginal people who are still at St Vincent's today. Ted was a man of great strength, an intellectual thinker and writer, compassionate and loyal.

His pain at the installation of the Neocatechumenal Way priests at his beloved St Vincent's was a terrible blow to him. His latter years were not easy with his deteriorating health and he struggled emotionally with the unfolding of events imposed by George Pell.

I believe Campion's book is the first of several. He has given an insight and a taste of the life and work of Ted Kennedy. There is much more to be told and that has to be done. A magnificent man and a great friend. I loved Ted and found the flaws Campion spoke of as the humanness of Ted. For what Ted did best was love the brokenness and flaws of humanity.

Rhonda Ansiewicz

Is the Stolen Generations a myth?

It seems incredible that despite the *Bringing Them Home* Report and the apology by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, on February 13 2008, there are still historians who seriously question the very existence of the *Stolen Generations*. Foremost among them is Keith Windschuttle who has recently published another

volume, *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History: the Stolen Generations, 1881-2008*, 2009 Macleay Press, in which he attacks what he calls 'politically motivated' historians such as Peter Read, Henry Reynolds and political scientist, Robert Manne for exaggerating and distorting the allegedly racist and genocidal objective of government policies in the 1930s. He rejects claims that as

many as 50,000 Aboriginal children were forcibly removed in the 20th century and has himself estimated that only 8250 were placed in institutional care. These removals were almost always justified; 'Rather than attempting to destroy Aboriginal culture, institutions for these children performed a temporary care function for disadvantaged and dysfunctional families, the same as welfare

Continued Page 7



Is the Stolen Generations a myth?

Continued from Page 6

institutions for white children' and that 'rather than acting for racist or genocidal reasons, government officers and missionaries wanted to rescue children and teenagers from welfare settlements and makeshift camps riddled with alcoholism, domestic violence and sexual abuse.' (Keith Windschuttle, 'Flawed history keeps myth alive,' *The Weekend Australian* January 30-31, 2010).

The other alleged myth which Windschuttle sets out to demolish is the notion that there was a government policy to remove children 'to breed out the colour' by overseeing the marriage of mixed race Aboriginal women to white men. Though he admits there was such a proposal by the Northern Territory Chief Protector Dr Cecil Cook and Chief Protector A.O. Neville in Western Australia during the 1930s, he insists that it was never given legal authority by their ministers or parliaments, nor did it have any connection with child removal. Yet recent historians and commentators have persisted in describing this proposal as 'a massive exercise of social engineering and an instrument of genocide.' He singles out Professor Robert Manne as one of those who maintains it was Commonwealth policy and says he is mistaken. Professor Robert Manne had responded to similar earlier attacks on the *Bringing Them Home Report* by right-wing commentators with a lengthy rebuttal: *In Denial: The Stolen Generations and the Right, Quarterly Essay 1, 2001*.

Windschuttle's views gained considerable media prominence, especially in the *Weekend Australian* during the Howard years, first through the publication of a 35,000 word essay in three issues of the conservative magazine *Quadrant* in 2000, where he argued that British settler massacres in Tasmania were largely a left-wing myth. Then he set about correcting what he alleged were the distorted views of black history held by other historians,

especially Henry Reynolds, whom he accused of misguided political motivation, though he denied that he himself had any political agenda. His self-published *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, Macleay Press 2002, expanded the earlier controversial essay by questioning the extent of settler violence against Aboriginal people in Tasmania and argued that their near extinction within seventy years of colonial contact was due to their susceptibility to introduced diseases, to Aboriginal men trading their women to white men and to the Aboriginal people's non adaptive, dysfunctional culture. He insisted that orthodox historians had grossly exaggerated British settler-Aboriginal clashes, but as well he argued there had been more killings of British settlers by Aboriginal people than of Aboriginal people by settlers. He was determined to prove the falsity of the so-called *black-arm band* view of Indigenous history which Prime Minister Howard also rejected. A vigorous debate ensued which became known as the *Australian History Wars*. In 2003, Robert Manne edited a book of essays critical of Windschuttle and those who supported him – *Whitewash: On Keith Windschuttle's Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, Schwartz Publishing, 2003 with contributors with expertise on the Tasmanians and their history.

After Windschuttle's latest attack on the notion of the *Stolen Generations*, the *Australian History Wars* have once again ignited and Robert Manne has launched another counter-offensive on Windschuttle's *Flawed history keeps myth alive* with a reply *Sorry litany of misinformation* in the following weekend's issue of *The Weekend Australian* (February 6-7, 2010) which was an abridged version of his longer critique *Comment – Keith Windschuttle* by Robert Manne which appeared in *The Monthly*, February 2010. Manne felt that Windschuttle's latest writings should not be ignored because 'the question of the *Stolen Generations*

has been one of the most important fronts in the Australian History Wars. Windschuttle's book is the most ambitious statement of the right-wing case we are ever likely to see.' (*The Monthly*, February 2010, p.8)

Manne begins by attacking Windschuttle's inadequate research and scholarship, noting that his only real archival work was done in New South Wales, which leaves him largely ignorant of the evidence and practice of Aboriginal child removals in other States since he failed to use their archives. He shows no evidence of having read many relevant articles, books and doctoral theses, and also ignored a 40,000-word document collection on the *Stolen Generations* which has been available on *The Monthly* website. In addition he has not bothered to read any of the 340 Indigenous oral history testimonies held in the Australian National Library nor numerous memoirs dealing with child removal, published in recent years by many Aboriginal authors. Manne regrets that 'In Windschuttle's *Fabrication, Aboriginal voices are effectively silenced once again and consequently what he has provided is an apologetic pseudo-history of Aboriginal child removal written almost exclusively from the removalists' point of view*'. (*The Monthly*, p10)

Manne deals with many false or misleading conclusions drawn by Windschuttle through his limited and selective research. The numbers of child removals to institutions which he calculated as being less than 9000 are considerably underestimated, as he neglected evidence of the active policies pursued by some Aboriginal Protectors such as Walter Roth in Queensland who was able to remove children from their Aboriginal or half-caste mothers, under a law enacted in 1865, the Industrial and Reformatory School Act under which a Protector could charge a child with being neglected simply because of the race of the mother.

Continued Page 8



Is the Stolen Generations a myth?

Continued from Page 7

In conclusion Robert Manne says 'By contrast, because the question turns on the blind spot in the national psyche – the stunning injustice and racism meted out to the Indigenous people the British settlers dispossessed – for twelve years the

struggle over the interpretation of the episode called the Stolen Generations has provoked one of the fiercest battles of the Australian History Wars.'

Despite Keith Windschuttle's ongoing campaign to deny the Stolen Generations' existence and defend past policies towards Indigenous

Australians, it is impossible to ignore not merely the existence of this sad episode in our recent past, but also to see its continuing detrimental effects on the many Aboriginal families who suffered under past policies of enforced separation and were uprooted from their loved ones, some never to meet with them again.

Ruth Fink Latukefu

REVISION OF ADVANCE AUSTRALIA FAIR

The launch of new multi-cultural lyrics to the tune of *Advance Australia Fair* during a Cultural Concert at the Victorian College of the Arts late in 2009 was organised by Aboriginal opera singer Deborah Cheetham with support from the Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development.

An emotional night featuring talented Aboriginal singers and musicians rose to fever pitch when Judith Durham and Kutcha Edwards sang the alternative words for *Advance Australia Fair* in a thrilling act of national Reconciliation. This was followed by huge applause, a standing ovation and jubilant repetition.

With the lyrics projected on to a large screen, the enthusiastic audience joined in singing heartily and sang together with passion and joy, expressing their heartfelt pride in this young country and its First Nation heritage.

An immediate recognition of the spirit of togetherness in this bountiful country and acceptance of the contribution by Aboriginal people was warmly shared.

After an excited discussion over supper, universally proclaiming the merits of our much improved National Anthem, people headed for home singing in the street.

Rob Martin (Victoria)



JUDITH DURHAM'S ADVANCE AUSTRALIA FAIR

... A lyric for contemporary Australia

Australia celebrate as one, with peace and harmony,
Our precious water, soil and sun, grant life for you and me.
Our land abounds in nature's gifts to love, respect and share,
And honouring the Dreaming, advance Australia fair.
With joyful hearts then let us sing, advance Australia fair.
Australia, let us stand as one, upon this sacred land.
A new day dawns, we're moving on to trust and understand
Combine our ancient history and cultures everywhere,
To bond together for all time, advance Australia fair.
With joyful hearts then let us sing, advance Australia fair
Australia, let us strive as one, to work with willing hands
Our Southern Cross will guide us on, as friends with other lands
While we embrace tomorrow's world with courage, truth and care
And all our actions prove the words, advance Australia fair.
With joyful hearts then let us sing, advance Australia fair.

CODA:

And when this special land of ours is in our children's care,
From shore to shore forever more, advance Australia fair
With joyful hearts then let us sing, advance ... Australia ... fair

Words by Judith Durham OAM (2008), Peter Dodds McCormick (1878)
Kutcha Edwards, Bill Hauritz OAM, Camilla Chance, Lou Bennett

Words, Piano arrangement & Orchestration Copyright 2008 Musicoast
(APRA > AMCOS) PO Box 555 South Yarra Victoria 3141.

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The Spring/Summer 2009 issue of *Elimatta* featured the lyrics of *Advance Australia Fair* by Peter Dodds McCormack with the Dharug (Darug) translation by linguist and teacher Richard Green.

Continued Page 9

Continued from Page 8

Also in that issue next to the words of *Advance Australia Fair* was an article about the new Qantas promotion. Additional information follows:

Peter Allen's hit and Qantas theme song 'I Still Call Australia Home' has been given an Indigenous makeover in the new Qantas TV ad: it is sung in Kala Lagaw Ya, the language of Mabuig and other Western and Central Torres Strait islands.

Ngoey rangadhau lag ubika udaigi

– I travel from home with this feeling of being free

Goeyga mul kalanu uzari

– the sun is over the water as I leave it behind

Ngau ngannakap ina ukar sikau kuthanu

– my heart lies waiting over the foam

Ngau inab lag Australia mudh – my home is Australia.

Permission to use the language was granted by Adhi Dimple Bani, a chief of the Wagadagam tribe on Mabuig Island, who are custodians of the dialect. Kala Lagaw Ya is one of the healthier Indigenous languages in Australia with between 3000 and 4000 speakers.

Reprinted from *Voice of the Land*, newsletter of Federation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages (FATSIL) with the authority of linguist Rev Elder Patrick Whop, a language custodian of the Kala Lagaw Ya Mabuig dialect.



WIRADJURI LANGUAGE RESOURCES

Orange Aboriginal Land Council has launched a CD and booklet about the local Wiradjuri language. *Girinyalanha Wiradjuridya* or *Talk Together* will be a teaching resource for schools, TAFE and community members interested in learning the Wiradjuri language.

Its objective is to encourage greater participation rates in Wiradjuri language programs in Orange which have been running for three years. Since the introduction of the language program five Orange schools have added Wiradjuri classes to their curriculums.

LIVING LANGUAGES – Guringai FESTIVAL 2010

Living Languages is the theme of this the tenth Guringai Festival, a celebration of Aboriginal culture and heritage across the Northern Sydney region. Listed below are festival events on the Northern Beaches.

- May 21–Jun 13 Saltwater Country**, an exhibition by photographer Sally Mayman and painter Dale Kentwell in collaboration with people of the Dampier Peninsula exploring their connection to country. Manly Art Gallery & Museum: **9976 1420** www.manly.nsw.gov.au/gallery
- Sat May 22 Special Events at Glen Street Theatre**, corner Blackbutts Road and Glen Street, Belrose
11am - **Forum: The Future of Indigenous Performing Arts**
2 pm - **PAGE 8** - A moving story about David Page's life. Special Guringai Community tickets \$25
3.45 pm - **Official Launch and Cocktail Party**
For more information about these Warringah Council events contact Janine Turnbull **9942 2502**
- Sun May 30 Sorry Day Commemoration** – Meet members of the Support Group and friends at 2.30pm at Berry Reserve, Narrabeen for *Welcome to Country* then Remembrance walk to Bilarong Scout Hall, Wakehurst Parkway, arriving 3pm. An opportunity to come together to learn and have fun. Entertainment, Aboriginal speakers, bead making and sausage sizzle. FREE. Contact Clair Jackson **9913 992**
- Wed June 16 Fire Talker**, a documentary about Aboriginal political activist Dr Charles Perkins aka Charlie Perkins who led the *Freedom Rides* in the 1970s, will be screened by the Support Group at Collaroy Cinema. Made in 2009, this biopic is directed by Ivan Sen and narrated by Rachel Perkins. 10am Gold coin donation to *The Charlie Perkins Trust for Children and Students*. This event is made possible with the support of the Mustaca Family of Collaroy Cinema. Enquiries: Lizzie Landers **9918 2594**
- Sun June 20 Living Language** discussion with damper around the campfire at St Anthony in the Fields, Terrey Hills. 10.30 - 2pm. Admission by donation. Contact Anne Lanyon **0408 279 871**
- Mon July 12 Aboriginal Heritage in the Guringai Area** with Guest Speaker David Watts, Manager, Aboriginal Heritage Office, and staff will present an outline of the work of the AHO within eight of the Guringai Northern Sydney councils. Mona Vale Memorial Hall next to Pittwater Library. Aboriginal Support Group festival event. 7.30pm. Enquiries: Lizzie Landers **9918 2594**. FREE.

For further information visit www.guringaifestival.com.au. Programs will be available prior to the festival.



NSW RECONCILIATION CONFERENCE 14.11.2009

SPEAKERS:

1 Professor Larissa Behrendt

(Director of Research, Jumbunna House of Learning, University of Technology Sydney)

Setting the scene: An overview of current issues in Aboriginal affairs

Intervention:

- recent report shows social economic downturn in the NT
- recent research by Jumbunna shows that people feel very little positive change as result of the *intervention* but feel very heavily the negative impacts

Report as result of the human rights consultations:

Very unhappy about the results in relation to Indigenous rights:

- report states that not enough Indigenous people came to the consultations to talk to the commission; therefore hard to find out what the issues are – this shows a lack of understanding how consultations with Indigenous people work
- observation in the report: Australians are in general rather unhappy about Indigenous rights; the mandate of the commission is to make popular suggestions – therefore Indigenous rights were not put on the table
- for some of the concepts of Indigenous rights the Indigenous people didn't give a clear enough example about what the issue is, therefore these rights could not be protected – when asking an average Australian about his right to privacy: will he/she provide a precise definition? Would anybody take this as a reason to deny the right of privacy?
- *The Declaration On The Rights Of Indigenous People* is the only international instrument on human rights NOT included in the list of instruments that could form the content of a Charter of Rights.

2 Jason Glanville

(CEO, National Indigenous Centre for Excellence)

An Exploration of the New National Indigenous Representative Body

- general acceptance of the new body from community is good
- heavy criticism received for ethnic council (but this is intended to set standards for others)

- further criticism received for requirement of gender balance (but this is justified taking into account the role of women in culture)
- currently waiting for government response to recommendations
- meeting of committee of 12 people to finalise the last technical/legal details of the selection process for the interim board
- next steps: selection of interim board (can be done soon), then national congress > first representative board
- details of new structure are very complex
- further information (including details from the meeting) available from HEROC www.humanrights.gov.au/social_justice/rebody/index.html

3 Priscilla Brice-Weller

(Campaign Manager, ANTaR)

Digital Media: Building the peoples movement online for Reconciliation

- how ANTaR was/is using digital media
- *Sea of Hands* online
- goals of online campaigns: clear purpose, understanding our target, willingness to experiment, using a variety of tools
- *facebook* important for ANTaR (good relation between effort and effect)
- example: [respect campaign www.antar.org.au/respect](http://www.antar.org.au/respect)
15,000 people signed up. Feedback showed that some people felt the campaign was offensive
- current campaign: a better way (on NT Intervention) – see www.antar.org.au/issues_and_campaigns/nt_intervention

4 Program change: Brian Dowd

(General Manager, Black on Track)

Getting to Know 'Black on Track'

- small grassroots Indigenous independent organisation based originally in Newcastle
- provides several programs in the area of self-healing, empowerment, education support, motivation, community development
- in 6 years 750 participants, 99% completion rate

Continued on Page 11

Continued from Page 10

- currently struggling financially for survival (last engagement 3 months ago, big government organisations say they have no money)
further information: www.blackontrack.com.au

5 Gregory Andrews

(CEO, Indigenous Community Volunteers)

- getting proposals for projects from communities
- searching for volunteers to realise projects
- politically very close to government
- quite huge budget
- further information: www.icv.com.au

In the evening *Samson and Delilah* was screened followed by Q&A with writer and director Warwick Thornton.

NSW RECONCILIATION COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 15.11.09

Reports:

- looking at new technology to attract younger people.
- schools initiative to raising awareness, includes competitions (eg postcard design, songwriting), presentations by schools in *Reconciliation Week*.
- small grants program revived; applications must be sent by end of January.

Elections:

- for almost all posts there was only one (or no) candidate; most of the posts without a nominated candidate were filled by spontaneous nominations from the floor.

Other motions:

- endorsement of the planned national protest on 13.2.10 see www.stoptheintervention.org.au
- support for Indigenous people on the coasts trying to get/keep fishing rights.

Technical problems and complex legal procedures caused a huge delay, therefore the working groups had to be shortened.

Working groups discussed (very briefly)

- Aboriginal flag as third flag on the Sydney Harbour Bridge (broad agreement for this idea)
- NSW Reconciliation Week Theme 2010
- Building membership including working with schools

Hans-Josef Mauve

FATSIL Young Indigenous Writers Initiative

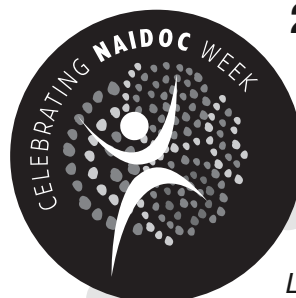
If you are an Indigenous person between the age of 16 and 35, have a passion for writing and interest in language and culture, you are eligible to apply for the Young Indigenous Writers Initiative.

Please email admin@fatsil.org.au to register your interest.

REGIONAL RECONCILIATION NETWORK

The Support Group is a member of the Reconciliation Network: Northern Sydney Region (RN:NSR) which is the newly adopted name for the regional network of local Reconciliation groups. The Network meets bi-monthly in different local government areas.

The recent AGM was hosted by the Support Group at the Coastal Environment Centre thanks to the support of Pittwater Council who also provided a delicious lunch. Contact Kerrie McKenzie 9428 1197 for further information.



2010 NATIONAL NAIDOC WEEK

NAIDOC Week will be celebrated from Sunday July 4 to 11. This year's theme is *Unsung Heroes – Closing the Gap by Leading Their Way.*

Many unsung Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have made huge contributions to Australian society. *Unsung Heroes* recognises the part played by the quiet achievers in the Indigenous community.

The theme asserts Indigenous ownership of *closing the gap*. The gaps that need to be closed include gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians and gaps in knowledge and understanding.

Nominations for the 2010 National NAIDOC Awards close on Friday April 30. The awards provide the opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be recognised for the difference they make in the lives of others.

Further information visit www.naidoc.org.au

WordStorm 2010

WordStorm, The Festival of Australasian Writing will be held in Darwin from May 13 to 16. This event has cemented a unique place in Australia's writers' festival scene with its strong focus on Indigenous and South East Asian writers.

On May 12 and 13, to coincide with *WordStorm*, will be the Indigenous Writers and Educators Conference. The aim is to talk about what's working and what's not in the Indigenous writing industry and to provide professional development and a network opportunity for Indigenous writers and educators.

For further information visit www.ntwriters.com.au





- Wednesday March 31** **GOING BUSH**, a road trip with Cathy Freeman and Deborah Mailman, will be screened at the Warringah Council Chambers. 10am to 11.30. FREE. Details on page 5.
- Monday April 12** **ASG Business Meeting** at Mona Vale Memorial Hall next to Pittwater Library. 7.30pm. ALL WELCOME. Enquiries: Anna **9913 7940**.
- Monday May 10** **ASG Information Night – AUTHOR TALK** with Max Dulumunmun Harrison, an Elder of the Yuin people. Uncle Max will share his cultural knowledge and wisdom. Copies of his recent book *My People's Dreaming* (cost \$40) will be available on the night. Mona Vale Memorial Hall. 7.30pm. FREE. Enquiries: Lizzie **9918 2594**.
- Saturday May 22** **GURINGAI FESTIVAL SPECIAL EVENTS** at Glen Street Theatre, Belrose. Details on Page 9.
- Wednesday May 26** **NATIONAL SORRY DAY**
- May 27 to June 4** **RECONCILIATION WEEK** – the theme is *Reconciliation: The Road Ahead*
- Sunday May 30** **SORRY DAY** commemoration with the Support Group at Bilarong Reserve North Narrabeen. Join the walk from Berry Reserve at 2.30pm. Details on Page 9.

THERE WILL BE NO ASG BUSINESS MEETING IN JUNE DUE TO THE LONG WEEKEND

- Wednesday June 16** **FIRE TALKER**, a documentary about Dr Charles Perkins, Aboriginal political activist. Collaroy Cinema, Collaroy Beach 10am. Details on Page 9.
- Sunday June 20** **LIVING LANGUAGE** at St Anthony in the Fields, Terrey Hills. Details on Page 9.
- July 4 to July 11** **NATIONAL NAIDOC WEEK** – Details on Page 11.
- Monday July 12** **ABORIGINAL HERITAGE IN THE GURINGAI AREA** – Guest Speaker David Watts, Aboriginal Heritage Officer. 7.30pm. Mona Vale Memorial Hall. Details on Page 9

Congratulations to

Alanna Raymond for her excellent HSC results and her acceptance by University of Technology, Sydney – Kuring-gai Campus for primary school teaching.

Rachel Perkins, director of *Bran Nue Dae*. Since its January release, *Bran Nue Dae* has become Australia's most commercially successful film with an Aboriginal theme. Set in 1965 it is a joyous coming-of-age story that never takes itself too seriously. Toe-tapping music. Great entertainment.

Uncle Bob Waterer who has been honoured with a 2010 *NSW Seniors Week Achievement Award*. Bob, a valued and highly respected member of the Support Group, is the only known sixth generation Guringai person living on the Northern Beaches of Sydney. Since discovering his Aboriginal heritage in 2005 he has volunteered his time unstintingly to speak to schools, community groups, businesses and government organisations creating awareness and a growing understanding of Australia's Aboriginal heritage.



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 annadbel@bigpond.net.au

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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