



asgmwp.net

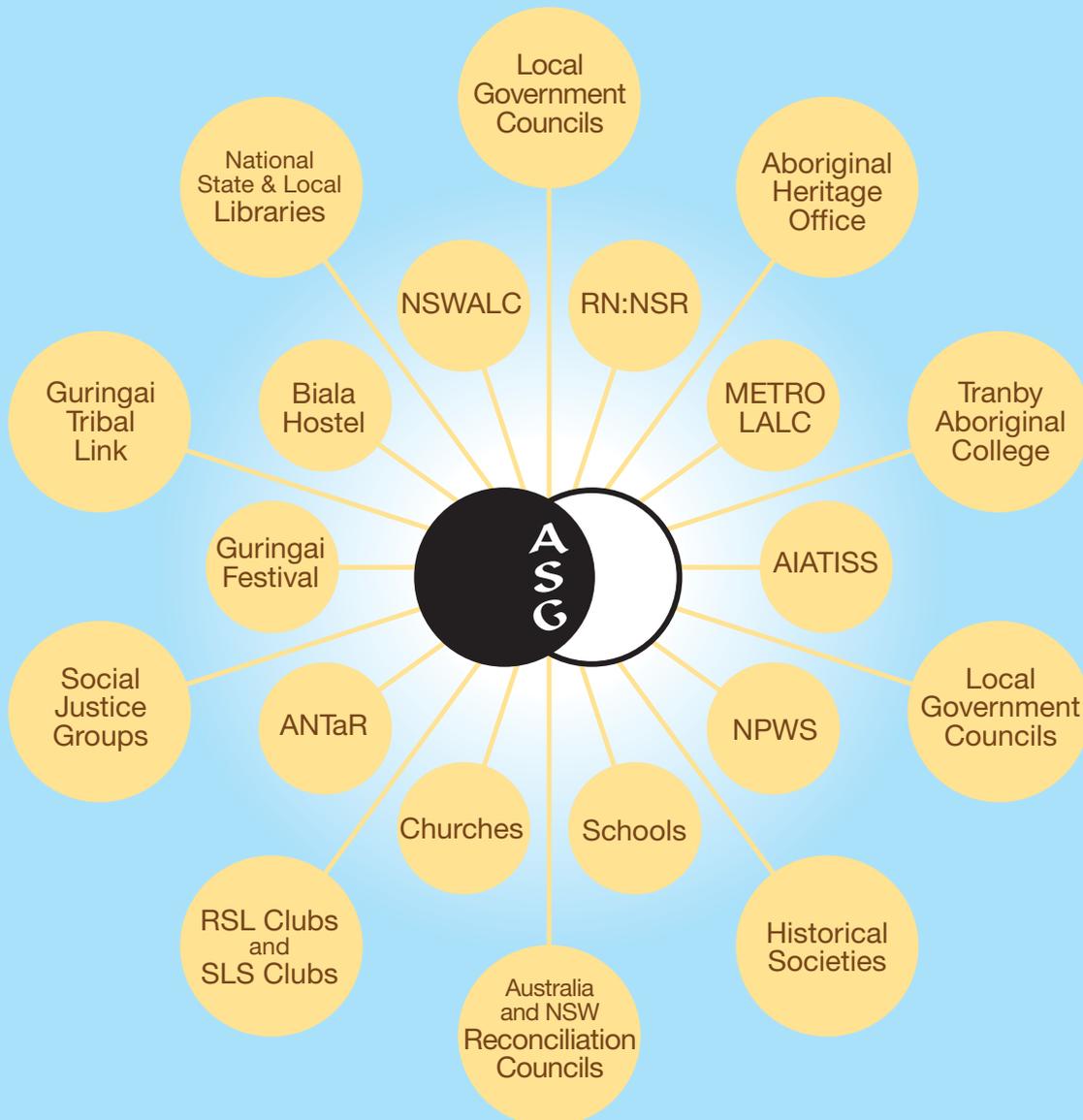
# Elimatta

Autumn 2012

Aboriginal Support Group – Manly Warringah Pittwater

ASG acknowledges the Guringai People, the traditional owners of the lands and the waters of this area

## NETWORK CONNECTIONS



# MILLIONS WASTED on Aboriginal job projects

Anna Patty January 5, 2012

“This makes me irate”... NSW Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Victor Dominello.

A landmark report commissioned by the state government has found that millions of dollars have been wasted on failed programs to help Aboriginal people find jobs and business opportunities.

The report by the Allen Consulting Group – the first independent review of NSW government-funded Aboriginal employment programs introduced since 1989 – said the programs were developed in an *opportunistic and unco-ordinated* way and many have failed to achieve results, despite significant funding.

The Allen Consulting report found that at least \$17 million has been spent on failed programs to help Aboriginal people.

It said there was no strategy or framework linking programs to the needs of Aboriginal people and there had been little monitoring or evaluation of money spent and outcomes.

The NSW Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Victor Dominello, said many of the 14 programs evaluated had been developed in an ad hoc way and appeared to have continued unchecked for more than 10 years.

The report recommends monitoring and evaluation of all programs and the introduction of a master plan to reduce duplication of services and co-ordinate long-term strategies linking early childhood, school and career opportunities.

I successive Commonwealth, state and territory governments, progress against Aboriginal disadvantage had been *mixed at best*.

The federal government spends \$3.5 billion a year on Indigenous programs but the report found *this major investment, maintained over many years, has yielded dismally poor returns*.

Before the report was commissioned, Mr Dominello was shocked to learn that Wilcannia, a community of

about 600 people, had 57 programs for a range of services including employment, education and health, with little evidence of results for Aboriginal people.

The Allen report contains a litany of similar failures, including a one-off \$200,000 grant for the Job Compacts program which did not generate or identify any job opportunities. The grant was spent on cultural awareness training for stakeholders.

“This makes me irate when a lot of money is spent without any evaluation of the program to see if it is working,” Mr Dominello said. “In the real world – if you are paying that kind of money you would expect some outcomes and expect the program to be monitored.”

Mr Dominello said he would refer the Allen report’s recommendations to the high-powered Ministerial

Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs, which includes the ministers for health, education, justice and Treasury, along with academics and Aboriginal employment experts.

The report says programs need to focus more *on the complete pipeline* from early childhood through to school and post-secondary education to sustained employment and career opportunities.

“Rather than just creating an identified position or undertaking a one-off or short-term business intervention, programs need to provide sustained levels of support,” it said.

Mr Dominello said he agreed with the recommendation and the need for an overarching master plan was critical. “We also want to have more engagement with the private and non-government sector,” he said. “There has not been enough government leadership on this in the past.”

Mr Dominello said the government had already started work on trying to rectify problems identified in the Allen report through the ministerial taskforce and its engagement with Aboriginal leaders and communities.



Photo: Adam Hollingworth

## NETWORK CONNECTIONS

<b>ANTaR</b>	Australia Native Title and Reconciliation	<a href="http://www.antar.org.au">www.antar.org.au</a>
<b>AIATSIS</b>	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	<a href="http://www.aiatsis.gov.au">www.aiatsis.gov.au</a>
<b>NSWRC</b>	New South Wales Reconciliation Council	<a href="http://www.nswreconciliation.org.au">www.nswreconciliation.org.au</a>
<b>NPWS</b>	National Parks and Wildlife Service	<a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a>
<b>AECG</b>	Aboriginal Education Consultative Group	<a href="http://www.aecg.nsw.edu.au">www.aecg.nsw.edu.au</a>
<b>RN:NSR</b>	Reconciliation Network: Northern Sydney Region	<a href="http://www.nswreconciliation.org.au">www.nswreconciliation.org.au</a>
<b>Metro LALC</b>	Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council	<a href="http://www.metrolalc.org.au">www.metrolalc.org.au</a>
<b>NSWALC</b>	New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council	<a href="http://www.alc.org.au">www.alc.org.au</a>



## 40TH ANNIVERSARY IN CANBERRA

# TENT EMBASSY

Participating in the 40th Anniversary of the Aboriginal *Tent Embassy* in Canberra proved to be an eventful and enlightening experience. My daughter, Cathy, and myself (Jan Kirk) left Sydney at 4.00 a.m. Australia Day to drive to Old Parliament House, Canberra to be a part of this momentous occasion.

We assembled at the ANU with a large crowd (the biggest march I've ever been on, which swelled to well over 1,000, by the time we reached Old Parliament House. The march appeared to be well received by the many cars that beeped and the onlookers that joined us on the way, over Lake Burley Griffin heading to Capital Hill. The feeling was very uplifting. I was personally very humbled by the number of well known faces from all different States, areas, and the banners representing so many injustices and inequalities throughout the years and continuing today.



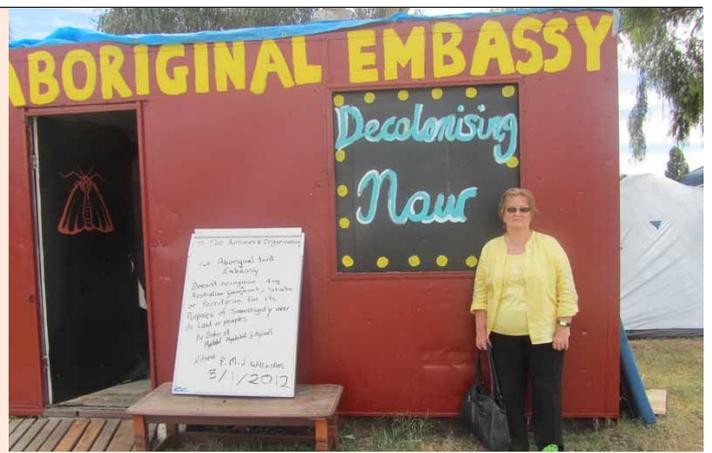
We arrived, a very colourful and passionate bunch to listen to the start of all the many speakers over the next three days. We looked around and there it was. Forty years later the *Tent Embassy* still survives in all its colour and honesty. We felt we were experiencing a very important era of the *First Australians* fight for justice.

On the 26th January, 1972 four young Twenty year olds, Michael Anderson, Bertie Williams, Bill Craigie and Tony Coorey planted an umbrella in the grounds of Old Parliament House, claiming land rights and Aboriginal Sovereignty. And so the *Tent Embassy* was born.

Michael Anderson, sadly, being the only remaining member of the original four, was an eloquent and inspirational speaker who had a gentle, charismatic way of uniting all the factions, handling media, police, internal differences with dignity and skill.

On the second day Jenny Munro read out a very long Honour roll of the participants of the original *Tent Embassy* in 1972 which included people like Jack Charles, Lyall Munroe Snr., Isabel Coe, Burnam Burnam, Chicka Dixon and Gough Whitlam and Malcolm Fraser.

After three days of discussion groups many ideas were exchanged and outcomes were achieved. Sovereignty became the vital ingredient for change today



Jan at the Tent Embassy

which was also the main reason for the forming of the original *Tent Embassy* in 1972. The land still belongs to *First Australians*, no *Treaty* or negotiation had ever taken place, the planting of the Union Jack was illegal. Michael contacted the UN and the African nations, receiving great support, especially after the Julia Gillard, Tony Abbott debacle. The last outcome was unanimous that Michael was to take his paper work to Britain and sue the Government for illegal occupation. The mandate was unanimous. The international stage was set.

Another outcome that was achieved by the discussion groups (divided into states) was that there must be a mandate before speaking for all Aboriginal people. Aboriginal views are at the moment not being properly represented without a mandate from all concerned and all states. There was a lot of anger about this and many well known names of importance were thrown around.

After three days of experiencing the struggle we went home (angry particularly at the distortion of incidences by the press) exhausted yet strong, anxious to bring back the stories of the struggle to the community at Michael's request.

Jan Kirk, ASG-MWP member

For more Photos visit [www.greenleft.org.au/node/49826](http://www.greenleft.org.au/node/49826)



## Glimpse at History



Wednesday March 28. 10-11.30am.  
Cutler Village Hall, RSL Anzac Village,  
Collaroy Plateau

You are invited to a talk by Author Nan Bosler and Bob Waterer about ***The Story of Bob Waterer and his Family 1803-2010*** and the research that led to this remarkable book. (Free)

RSVP Fri March 23 – Pat Frater 9971 0735



# THE AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTION

## – About Constitutional Recognition –

The Constitution was drafted at a time when Australia was considered a land that belonged to no one before European settlement and when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were considered a *dying race* not worthy of citizenship or humanity. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were excluded from the discussions about the creation of a new nation to be situated on their Ancestral lands and waters.

### What is the Australian Constitution?

The Australian Constitution is the founding document of our nation and pre-eminent source of law in the country. The Constitution sets down the powers of each of our three branches of governance – the Parliament, the Executive and the Courts. It creates the space in which all other domestic laws operate in this country. Politically, the Constitution was intended to unite Australia under the original and continuing agreement of the Australian people.

### How do we amend the Constitution?

The Australian Constitution can only be altered by referendum. In a referendum, all Australians of voting age vote yes or no for the proposed changes. To succeed, a majority of voters nationwide and a majority of States (four out of six) must approve the changes.

### Why does Australia as a nation need to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution?

The Australian Government honoured Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the *the oldest continuing cultures in human history* in the National Apology to the *Stolen Generations*. Yet the nation's founding document does not mention Australia's Indigenous peoples.

The Constitution ignores the presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples prior to European settlement. It is time for the Australian Constitution to reflect the Australian identity and recognise our Indigenous history.

The Australian Constitution also permits the Commonwealth Parliament to validly enact laws that are racially discriminatory and contemplates disqualifying people from voting on the basis of their race. During the referendum process the nation will be called to answer whether these provisions reflect a modern Australia.

### When have the discriminatory provisions in the Constitution been used?

The Australian Constitution currently contains no protections against racial discrimination and the Parliament is capable of suspending existing statutory protections. The protections under Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth) – the federal legislation designed to ensure equality of treatment of all people regardless of their race, have been removed on three occasions: each time it has involved Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues.

The Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER) that affects 73 remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory is clear evidence of the potential discriminatory effect of the Constitution. The NTER in its original application was not subject to the Racial Discrimination Act (RDA). The government can, if they choose to do so, disregard the RDA simply through subsequent legislation. The Constitution as it currently stands did not prevent the suspension of the RDA and remains ineffective in protecting a fundamental freedom of all Australians – freedom from discrimination.

In the 1990s there was a controversial dispute over the Hindmarsh Island Bridge in South Australia. The proposed bridge crossed over a sacred site of the Ngarrindjeri people, who objected to the construction. The High Court held that the 1967 referendum did not restrict the Commonwealth Parliament from making laws to the detriment of a particular race and that the parliament was able to expressly remove the Hindmarsh Island area from the purview of the Racial Discrimination Act and the Heritage Protection Act simply by passing the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Act of 1996.

### How will constitutional reform benefit non-Indigenous Australia?

There is nothing to be afraid of in extending recognition to the first peoples of this land; there is in fact a lot to be gained. Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution will:

- ✦ Enrich the identity of the nation as a shared identity;
- ✦ Improve the effectiveness of the nation's democracy by increasing the protection of the rights of all Australians;
- ✦ Make significant headway towards a reconciled Australia.

Constitutional reform will affect all Australians. At its core, recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution is about nation-building. Building a nation based on respect for the dignity and humanity of the first peoples of this land is something for all Australians to strive for. This process will encourage all Australians to examine what it means to be Australian and what place Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have in that collective identity.

### How will constitutional reform improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?

Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution has the potential to:

- ✦ Address a history of exclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the life of the nation;
- ✦ Improve the sense of self-worth and social and emotional well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples both as individuals, communities and as part of the national identity;

*Contd. Page 5*

Continued from Page 4

- ✦ Enshrine the principles of non-discrimination in to our Constitution;
- ✦ Change the context in which debates about the challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities take place; and
- ✦ Build positive relationships based on trust and mutual respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader Australian community.

These benefits will make significant progress towards overcoming Indigenous disadvantage and move Australia closer to Reconciliation.

### **Is constitutional reform merely a symbolic gesture with no practical outcomes?**

No. Removing the discriminatory provisions from our Constitution will have lasting practical affects through the protection of human rights. Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in a preamble is largely symbolic, but that does not diminish its importance in any way.

Symbolic and practical outcomes are not mutually exclusive. The power of symbols is that they can inspire action. This in turn can result in positive practical effects that lead to an improved quality of life for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Symbols are also an important part of building nations. They are reminders of a collective past and provide guidance towards a future all Australians can aspire to together. The Australian flag, the national anthem, and the green and gold colours of national sporting teams, are all symbols that connect Australians to the nation's identity and inspire feelings and actions about that identity.

### **Recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Australian Constitution**

The Australian Constitution does not recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The last few years have seen a growing feeling that the Constitution needs to be brought up to date to reflect the reality of Australia in the 21st century.

It is time for a genuine national conversation on the best option for constitutional recognition that will be supported by the majority but is also meaningful for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Australian Government, the Opposition, the Australian Greens and the Independent members of Parliament all support recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in the Constitution.

The Constitution which underpins our federal laws and institutions can only be changed by the people.

Be part of this once-in-a-generation opportunity to help shape the future of Australia. Find virtually all the information you need – go to [www.youmeunity.org.au](http://www.youmeunity.org.au)

### **Why does Australia as a nation need to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution?**

The Constitution demarcates the powers of each of our three branches of governance – the Parliament, the Executive and the Courts.

The current Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia, Chief Justice Robert French has said, 'the Constitution creates the space in which all other domestic laws operate in this country. It defines the extent of [Australia's] legal universe'.

I am convinced that building positive relationships based on trust and mutual respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader Australian community is critical to overcoming Indigenous disadvantage. I believe that constitutional reform is necessary to facilitate the building of these positive relationships.

## **PM backs change for Constitution**

Prime Minister Julia Gillard has urged all Australians to say yes when asked to recognise Indigenous people in the Constitution. Ms Gillard said changing the Constitution would recognise 'the unique and special place of Aboriginal people and strengthen our identity as a nation'. She made the call after receiving a report in Canberra last week from the Expert Panel on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, led by co-chairs Patrick Dodson and Mark Leibler. 27 January 2012



## **CONTACT**

*CONTACT* is a film constructed around one of the most extraordinary pieces of footage in Australian history: The group of 20 Martu people were unaware that there was a modern society beyond the 141,000 square miles of desert they called home. They were still living a traditional life ignorant of the fact that their country had been colonised for nearly 200 hundred years. In 1964 Yuwali was 17 years of age when her first contact with whitefellas was filmed. Now 62 she tells the story behind this extraordinary footage.

Screening information – see *Whats On* page 12 >>>



# ADVANCE AUSTRALIA FAIR\*

\* TERMS AND CONDITIONS UNDER THE CONSTITUTION:  
ABORIGINAL PEOPLE ARE IGNORED AND SUBJECT TO  
RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Your invitation to be part of a community Q & A on Aboriginal recognition in Australia's constitution.

The government has received the recommendations of an expert panel on amendments to the Australian Constitution to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Hornsby Area Residents for Reconciliation is holding a community forum on the proposals. Mick Gooda, the Aboriginal Social Justice Commissioner and a member of the expert panel will take part in our Hornsby forum, together with Philip Ruddock MP and a number of Aboriginal people, young people and community leaders.

You are urged to attend this free event on Friday 30 March 4pm at the PCYC Performing Arts Centre, Edgeworth David Avenue and Waitara Avenue Hornsby.

After some opening remarks from forum speakers, we will invite them to respond to questions submitted by the public.

You may forward your questions now to be put to the forum by e-mailing:

[hornsbys.area.residents.for.reconciliation@hotmail.com](mailto:hornsbys.area.residents.for.reconciliation@hotmail.com)

Information about the recommendations made by the expert panel on constitutional recognition is at [www.youmeunity.org.au](http://www.youmeunity.org.au) and at [www.antar.org.au](http://www.antar.org.au)

Refreshments and ochre tree painting after the forum.



## NSWRC AGM 2012

Saturday 18th February the NSW Reconciliation Council held its Annual General Meeting where members were asked make important decisions as to the future direction of the organisation. The AGM was held at the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence (NCIE) where the Management Committee was elected. They are:

Co-Chair..... Joan Tranter  
Co-Chair..... Kerrie Murphy  
Treasurer..... Megan Wallace  
Secretary ..... VACANT  
Ordinary Member..... Carla McGrath  
Ordinary Member..... Lachlan Macara  
Ordinary Member..... Dominic Wykanak  
Ordinary Member..... Judith Bellewood

To fill the vacant Secretary position, we invite applicants to send Expressions of Interest to Leanne Townsend (CEO) via email: [leanne.townsend@nswreconciliation.org.au](mailto:leanne.townsend@nswreconciliation.org.au). This position is a designated role for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person.

## HANDS CLAP FOR INDIGENOUS RISING STARS



She's Aboriginal and only missed one day of school in three years. She was runner up for best and fairest in netball, has black tips in taekwondo and has been invited to the championships in Canada.

Millicent North Primary School Year Seven student Sophie Bishop received an excellence award for attendance at the *Minya Deadly* ceremony which celebrates the achievements of Indigenous students in the South East. Surprised at receiving the award, Bishop said it held a bigger place than just on the mantle-piece. "I want to finish Year 12, and I'd like to encourage the other Indigenous kids to come to school more and help them with their work", she said.

Bishop was one of five students to receive an excellence award out of 63 nominations from all across the region for achievements in academic excellence, sporting excellence, and attendance. Aboriginal community member Elaine Kropinyeri greeted parents, teachers, community members and students with a welcome to country at the second annual *Minya Deadly* awards at Mount Gambier North Primary school.

Presentations followed where students who came from 18 different schools around the South East collected books and vouchers for their achievements.

Tribute was also paid to much-loved local Aboriginal identity Malcolm Anderson, affectionately known as *Wombat*, who died earlier in the year. Members of Anderson's family gathered to present a new award in his memory and his contribution to education which went to Tegan Saint-John for achieving well in singing and music.

*Tasha Impey 7 December, 2011*

Congratulations from the ASG-MWP!

# Push to Erase Racist Laws Dan Harrison, January 20 2012



"[We] will need fortitude, patience, staying power and fierce determination"... Patrick Dodson, co-chairman of the expert panel, presents its final report to the Prime Minister in Canberra yesterday.

A referendum to recognise indigenous Australians and remove racially discriminatory provisions in the constitution seems certain to proceed, with both sides of politics yesterday embracing the thrust of a report prepared by an expert panel.

After holding public meetings across Australia, the panel of 22 indigenous leaders, politicians and lawyers has recommended removing sections allowing people to be excluded from voting on the basis of race, and those allowing special laws to be made for people of any race.

The panel has proposed specifically recognising the prior occupation of Australia by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and acknowledging their continuing relationship with their traditional lands and waters, and their cultures, languages and heritage.

It also says the constitution should acknowledge the need to secure the advancement of indigenous people. And it proposes prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of race, colour or ethnic or national origin, and recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages as "the original Australian languages" and part of our national heritage.

Receiving the report, the Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, said it was time "to say yes to an understanding of our past, to say yes to constitutional change, and to say yes to a future more united and more reconciled than we have ever been before".

The Opposition Leader, Tony Abbott, also vowed that his aim was to achieve unity: "We accept that millions of Australians' hopes and dreams are resting on constitutional recognition of Indigenous people and the last thing I want to

do is do anything other than welcome this report today."

The government aims to hold a referendum on the issue at or before the 2013 election, but Ms Gillard said the history of Australian referendums was daunting for advocates of change.

Of 44 referendum proposals put, only eight have succeeded in attracting the support of an overall majority of Australians, as well as a majority in a majority of states.

Mr Abbott praised the panel, which included Ken Wyatt, a West Australian Liberal MP and the first indigenous member of the House of Representatives.

While Mr Abbott gave unqualified support to constitutional recognition of indigenous Australians, he said the Coalition had "some reservations about anything that might turn out to be a one-clause bill of rights".

The concern was dismissed by the prominent Melbourne lawyer and co-chairman of the panel Mark Leibler, who told the Herald: "The expert panel is not advocating a bill of rights and, in that respect, we agree with Tony Abbott."

Mr Leibler said he had "constructive dialogue" with Mr Abbott and the shadow attorney-general, George Brandis, "throughout this process and I have no doubt that we're going to be able to work something out".

The 300-page report follows more than a year of work, including 250 meetings in 84 locations, consultations with more than 4600 people and consideration of 3500 submissions.

A panel co-chairman, Patrick Dodson, said the path to constitutional change would "not be without its obstacles". "Those of us travelling it will need fortitude, patience, staying power and fierce determination," he said.

With history proving it was hard to change the constitution, the panel recommended the proposals only proceed to a referendum if they were likely to be supported by major political parties and a majority of state governments. Read more at:

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/push-to-erase-racist-laws-20120119-1q8jif.html#ixzz1jzoasgNe>

## ABORIGINAL SOVEREIGNTY DAY

### Draft Proposal

- 1 On the 22nd August 1770, Captain James Cook planted a foreign flag on an Island belonging to Aboriginal nations, now called Possession Island, taking illegal possession of our lands and its resources, without the permission or knowledge of any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- 2 We believe that no Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Peoples ceded or made treaties or agreements over their lands and all of its resources to any foreign nation or Peoples since time immemorial.
- 3 We believe that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples continue to maintain, to this day their sacred, spiritual, social, political and economic connections to their lands since time immemorial.
- 4 We call upon all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to claim this day, 22nd August as Aboriginal Sovereignty Day.
- 5 We propose that Sovereignty Day be a Day of celebration, ceremony and acknowledgement by all Aboriginal Peoples that our ancient connections to our beloved lands have never been ceded or broken by the tide of history or by any foreign nation or Peoples.

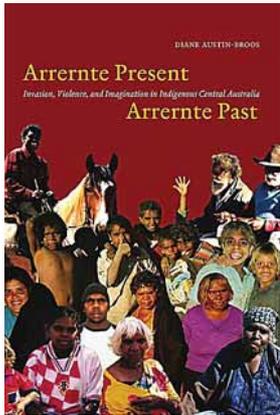
*Pastor Ray Minniecon  
26th January 2012*

email: raymin@me.com  
telephone: 0417 929 701



# Arrente Present, Arrente Past:

## Invasion, violence and Imagination in Indigenous Central Australia



**Diane J. Austin-Broos**  
**The University of Chicago**  
**Press, 2009**

The Western Arrente are the Aboriginal people of the desert region of central Australia, earlier known as the 'Arunta', a name which became familiar through Baldwin Spencer and Frank Gillen's classic account *The Native Tribes of Central*

*Australia*, (1899). That book made them the most iconic Aboriginal culture cited widely throughout academic and popular literature. They are also well known because of Hermannsburg, the German Lutheran mission, first established in 1877, and then started again in 1894 by Carl Strehlow, at a time when settler pastoral and mining interests had taken over the most fertile of the Arrente's country. Many of their culturally significant sites have been recorded for posterity in Albert Namatjira's landscapes, but the Arrente people themselves had long been driven from their lands and pushed back into an inhospitable desert area where the Hermannsburg's Finke River Mission was established to provide them with a refuge. They were forced into a sedentary lifestyle, because their fertile hunting areas had been invaded. To survive they became dependent on handouts from the mission and in return complied with the missionaries' requirements, to attend school, church and various work activities under the missionaries authority.

This was but the first of many devastating changes experienced by the Western Arrente which are described and analysed in the recent book by Diane Austin Broos, Emeritus Professor of Anthropology at the University of Sydney. She spent twenty years closely linked with knowledgeable older Arrente men and women, recording the oral traditions passed on to them by their grandparents who had experienced the beginnings of European contact. It is unique in providing an Aboriginal perspective of the past, showing how they fitted the new experiences including Christianity into their pre-existing cultural beliefs and values. It also delves into the writings and memoirs of the pioneering missionaries, Carl Strehlow, his brilliant son T.G. H. Strehlow, later Friederich Albrecht and other Lutherans who recorded historical events from their own perspective. The early German missionaries all became fluent speakers of the Arrente language and could communicate effectively, preaching what became known to the Western Arrente as pepe, *God's Law* (derived from *paper* referring to the Bible and Lutheran liturgy). *The Arrente became Christian by rendering Christianity*

*in an Arrente way...this process involved the Arrente's capacity to assimilate the mission to their own social imaginary.* (p86-87) Far from being passive recipients who were absorbed or assimilated, they responded at every stage from their own perspective.

However, as their story unfolds they experienced increasing marginalisation and economic deprivation, especially from the early 1980s on, after the mission had ceased to operate and Hermannsburg became Ntaria, a small administrative centre, while many Western Arrente moved to outstations and became welfare recipients. In later chapters the book documents the outstation movement and growing factionalism and the detrimental effects of bureaucratic governance. It is a story repeated in many other Aboriginal groups in northern Australia, leading inevitably to the crisis point of the 2007 Intervention, which is discussed in the final chapter. In her conclusion Austin Broos writes:

The specific changes that I have described were perpetrated by a state and society without consultation with the Arrente or other indigenous Australians. They involved the usurpation of land, the mission acting as an agent of state to hold people in the periphery, and then inadequate policies to address the transition, when it came, to market society. These patterned effects across a century stem from conflicting values and interests and from unequal power. Although I have sought to show that Arrente people worked at every point to mediate the impact of events, clearly these were not events that they simply could rebuff or instantly reshape. The upshot of this process was the extreme marginalisation of the Western Arrente today...

*The Western Arrente's initial economy was brutally undermined by invasion. Through the mid-twentieth century, they were held with the state's support on the society's periphery in the neo-colonial order of the mission, encouraged all the while to adapt to that circumstance. Far from being the major culprit in this regard, the FRM within its means, and especially during the period of Pastor Friedrich Albrecht, worked to develop apprenticeships and enterprise for the Western Arrente. They were, however, under resourced, a position that persists at Ntaria today. Finally with land rights and civil rights the Arrente were released back to remote Australia, supported mainly by government transfers in a welfare economy. Change has treated the Arrente and other remote Indigenous Australians badly and in a patterned way that denies them full benefits in the society and state of which they are a part.* (p263)

This significant study of an iconic Aboriginal society deserves to be widely read and understood.

Ruth Fink Latukefu  
 January 2012

## What if every Australian knew the truth about Aboriginal deaths in custody?

On 5 January 2012, Mr Briscoe, an Anmatyerre Aboriginal man living in Alice Springs, died while being held in police custody.

Mr Briscoe was taken into protective custody by Northern Territory Police after he was arrested for drinking near the local supermarket. In the early hours of 5 January, he lost consciousness alone in his cell at the Alice Springs watch-house and died.

NT Police are still yet to issue a public explanation of Mr Briscoe's death. Mr Briscoe is the 270th Aboriginal person to have died in police custody since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody handed down its findings more than 20 years ago.

The Royal Commission issued 339 recommendations – including abolition of the offence of public drunkenness (Recommendation 80) and the provision of alternatives to detention for intoxicated persons including specific care facilities (Recommendation 81) – to prevent Aboriginal deaths in police custody.

Despite a mounting death toll, Federal, State and Territory governments still refuse to implement many of the Royal Commission's recommendations.

It's time to take action.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander imprisonment rates have skyrocketed.

Since 1989, the rate at which people are being jailed has increased twelve times faster for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people than for the rest of the community.

Today, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are 14 times more likely to be in prison than non-Indigenous Australians.

What caused Mr Briscoe's death? Could his death have been prevented, if the 339 recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody more than 20 years ago were implemented?

Will his death be investigated with impartiality so that we will find out what really happened that night?

Each death in custody is a national shame. It destroys families and communities and undermines faith in the fairness and transparency of our justice system.

Together we have the power to persuade Governments to take urgent action to prevent more unnecessary deaths in custody. ANTaR has launched its urgent appeal calling governments to account for their inaction and setting out a blueprint for change to turn the tide on Aboriginal imprisonment. We are calling for:

- Change the context in which debates about the challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities take place; and
- Independent investigations into deaths in custody: an end to police investigating police.
- Independent inspections of all custodial facilities: WA is the only state with an independent inspector.
- National Close the Gap targets to reduce imprisonment.
- A Justice Reinvestment strategy to divert resources into diversionary, prevention and rehabilitation services.

Thousands of Australians have supported our campaign and emailed their Federal, State and Territory governments to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system.

Now we need to urgently raise funds to commission a powerful video message to stir our politicians into action, to spread the word across our communities and take the message to Police Ministers and Attorneys-General across the country that Mr. Briscoe's death will not be in vain - that no more Aboriginal people should die in Australian prisons.

We cannot accept another death in custody.

Your support is vital. [Feedback@antar.org.au](mailto:Feedback@antar.org.au)

## National NAIDOC Poster Competition 2012

Indigenous artists are invited to submit an artwork for the NAIDOC Poster Competition based on this year's theme:

***Spirit of the Tent Embassy: 40 years on.***

Entries close Friday 30 March.



## National NAIDOC Awards Nominations 2012

Do you know an Indigenous person who deserves recognition for their achievements?

Make your nomination today for a 2012 National NAIDOC Award. Nominations close Friday 27 April.

Forms are available online at [www.naidoc.org.au](http://www.naidoc.org.au) or from your nearest Indigenous Coordination Centre.

Following the storms and extensive flooding that caused a lot of damage in Katherine and the surrounding districts in SW Arnhem Land it was not possible to bring the Jawoyn mob to Sydney in February this year. As the North Palm Beach SLSC is about to begin extensive renovations the next planned visit to Sydney is scheduled for February/March 2013.

Terry Kirkpatrick and Warren Howard will be travelling to the communities for the Barunga Festival in June and will meet with the leaders of the Jawoyn Association and elders from each of the communities to review the program and to plan any changes to make OMTB that will make the cultural exchange and educational experience even more worthwhile for all those participating as well as making it relevant to the aims the Jawoyn leaders have for their young people.

The surf club is also planning to take a small group to the NT in August for the Walking with Spirits Festival. This is an amazing festival with everyone camping out overnight on the sands at Beswick Falls and enjoying music, dance and stories from the dream time. The landscape at Beswick Falls is truly awe-inspiring, even though the Festival is held in the dry season and the water level has dropped so far that the water does not cascade over the falls as it does in the wet season. It leaves a huge natural sandstone amphitheatre as a backdrop to the Festival and to share the experience with our Jawoyn friends is a real privilege.

The members of the surf club would like to thank Lizzie from the Aboriginal Support Group Manly Warringah Pittwater for nominating OMTB for the Community Event of the Year at the Pittwater Council Australia Day Awards. OMTB was the winner of this award for 2011 and the club really appreciates the recognition of the program as a worthwhile grass roots community undertaking. It has been pleasing for the surf club to witness the interest and help that has developed very widely across the Warringah and Pittwater communities to support this program.

If anyone would like more information about OMTB or would like to become more involved in the program please contact Terry Kirkpatrick:  
telephone 0402 967 026  
email [terry.kirkpatrick@bigpond.com](mailto:terry.kirkpatrick@bigpond.com)



**NT youth suicide rate getting worse**

**January 31, 2012.** Youth suicide rates in the Northern Territory are far higher than anywhere else in Australia and seem to be getting worse, a hearing has been told. The territory's Children's Commissioner Howard Bath revealed the worrying trend affecting Aboriginal youths in particular, at a hearing of the Select Committee on Youth Suicides at parliament house in Darwin.

Dr Bath, who is convenor of the Northern Territory Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee, said the suicide rate in the NT was far higher than elsewhere in Australia and appeared to be getting worse. Looking at hanging deaths alone, the rate in the Northern Territory was 18 per 100,000 young people, compared to just one per 100,000 young people in NSW, he said on Monday.

Among young Aboriginal people in the NT, the rate was 30 per 100,000, a staggering amount", Dr Bath said. In the 1980s there was no such discrepancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in the Northern Territory, and the youth suicide rate in the NT was about the same as in the rest of Australia, Dr Bath said. Dr Bath said stories, accusations and re-interpretations would circulate for years in the wake of suicides in some communities.

"These stories may involve bullying, for instance, or allegations of bullying, inter-clan conflicts, sometimes accusations of black magic being involved, sometimes complex totemic interpretations," Dr Bath said. Feuds and payback attempts could arise in these circumstances particularly in remote areas, which may not occur elsewhere in Australia. Childhood exposure to violence was also linked to high suicide rates, he said.

In the Northern Territory, Aboriginal people were hospitalised for assault at twice the rate of Aboriginal people in the rest of Australia, he said. Aboriginal women were hospitalised for assault at close to 80 times the rate of other women, he said.

\* Readers seeking support and information about suicide prevention can contact Lifeline on 13 11 14.

**Cadel Evans to highlight Aboriginal disadvantage**

**November 30, 2011.** Cadel Evans wants to raise awareness about the issues surrounding Aboriginal disadvantage.

*Tour de France* winner Cadel Evans wants to use his global profile to highlight disadvantage faced by Aboriginal people

On Tuesday Evans announced he was in preliminary talks with the Northern Territory government to develop a working relationship.

The Australian 2011 *Tour de France* winner was born in Katherine in NT and spent his early childhood in the small Aboriginal community of Barunga.

On Monday the sports star stopped in Darwin for a brief visit and said he knew complex social problems affected some Indigenous people. "It is something that unfortunately Australians don't consider enough and maybe they don't even realise enough, and if I can even help bring a bit more awareness that would really be something," Evans said.

He also said he wanted to help promote the long history Aboriginal people had in Australia. "Unfortunately I think many people around the world just aren't aware of one, the culture, and the history that Australia has," Evans told journalists in Darwin. Evans said he could also use his profile to promote NT tourism. He said working with the NT government or tourism authorities meant a lot to him personally.

"I am quite sure we can make a difference," he said.

NT Chief Minister Paul Henderson said Evans was a favourite son of the territory and while nothing specific had been worked out, a partnership had been started.

"We are going to work over the next weeks and months to put together a bit of a plan that is going to suit Cadel and his amazingly tight schedule, and we will certainly do something into the future," Mr Henderson said.

**Queensland miner disturbs Aboriginal artefacts**  
**November 30, 2011**

A Queensland miner has been fined for disturbing Aboriginal artefacts.

MCG Quarries disturbed approximately 30 to 35 Aboriginal artefacts, mainly stone items, while building a gravel track at the Moranbah Quarry, west of Mackay, between June 26, 2009 and August 25, 2010.

The company was fined \$80,000 and charged with one count of failing to comply with their cultural heritage duty of care under the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act. Natural Resources Minister Rachel Nolan said it was found the company did not take reasonable or practical measures to ensure their activities did not cause harm to Aboriginal cultural heritage.

"MCG Quarries did not undertake a survey to find the location or extent of artefacts, did not consult with local cultural heritage staff or the local indigenous community and did not have an approved cultural heritage management plan in place," Ms Nolan said in a statement.

"Moranbah Quarry is of high cultural significance to the local indigenous community and these artefacts represent a spiritual connection to the land."





**Monday March 12**  
7.30pm

**ASG-MWP Information Night**  
**FREE SCREENING of CONTACT** (see review page 5)  
Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Rd, Mona Vale.  
No booking required

**Thursday March 22**

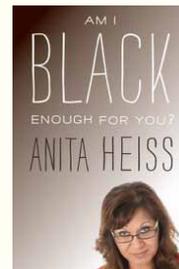
**National Close the Gap Day**  
You are invited to a special film screening and discussion session *Close the Gap*.  
For more information go to [www.antar.org.au](http://www.antar.org.au)

**Friday March 30**  
4pm start

**Aboriginal recognition in Australia's Constitution**  
PCYC Performing Arts Centre cnr Edgeworth David Ave and Waitara Ave Hornsby  
For more info see pages 4 & 5 – [Hornsby.area.residents.for.reconciliation@hotmail.com](mailto:Hornsby.area.residents.for.reconciliation@hotmail.com)

**Tuesday April 3**  
6-7pm

**AM I BLACK ENOUGH FOR YOU?**  
Join Robynne Quiggin in celebrating the launch of *Anita Heiss' memoir*  
Galleries, State Library, Macquarie St, Sydney.  
Bookings essential on: (02) 9273 1770 or [bookings@sl.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bookings@sl.nsw.gov.au)



**Monday April 9**  
7.30pm

**ASG-MWP Business Meeting**  
All members welcome. Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Rd, Mona Vale.

**Sunday April 15**  
12noon - 3.30pm

**Appin Massacre Memorial Ceremony**  
Remember the Dharawal people killed in the Massacre of 1816.  
Cataract Dam Picnic area. More information (02) 9605 4540

**Monday May 14**  
7.30pm

**ASG-MWP Information Night**  
All members welcome. Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Rd, Mona Vale.

**Monday June 11**  
7.30pm

**ASG-MWP Business Meeting**  
All members welcome. Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Rd, Mona Vale.

## Guringai Festival 2012

Incorporating events with ten Local Governments across Northern Sydney

**Sunday May 27**

**Sorry Day** Held at Bilarong Reserve Narrabeen.  
More details in next edition of *Elimatta*

**Wednesday June 13**  
10am

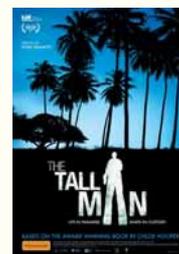
**The Tall Man**  
MOVIE SCREENING at Collaroy Cinemas – FREE

**Saturday June 23**

**Discovery Walk in Guringai Country**  
More details of these events in the next edition of *Elimatta*

**Monday July 9**  
7.30pm

**ASG-MWP Information Night**  
**Panel discussion** Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia "Will We Get it Right?"  
All welcome. Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Rd, Mona Vale.



## 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](http://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 [the\\_elimatta@gmail.com](mailto:the_elimatta@gmail.com)  
If you use any of the material it would be appreciated if the extract is set in context and the source acknowledged.



Editor: Neil Evers  
Proof Reader: Carol Gerrard  
Graphic Design: Mark Ansiewicz: (02) 9979-9112