

ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER

news

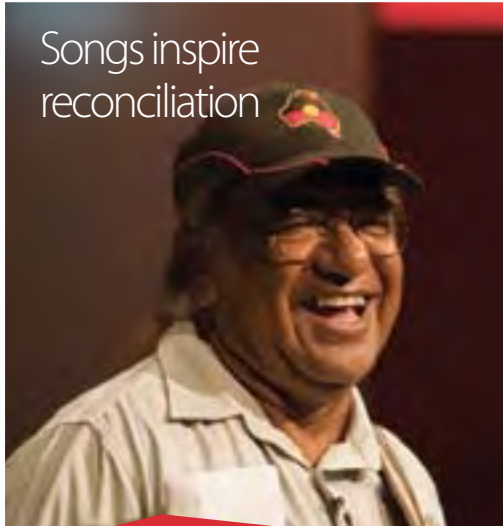
FROM THE NATIONAL
MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIA



Family
Festival Day



Songs inspire
reconciliation



Meet some
'Mates'

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Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander News

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Cover photos

Main: Ronald Prince and family at the Apology on Parliament grounds

Left: Jimmy Little at the Family Fun Day at the Museum
photo: Andrew Sheargold

Middle: Col Hardy performing a song about Dreaming
photo: Andrew Sheargold

Right: Janelle Marshall
photo: Anna Batholomaeurs

Gallery photos (these pages)

Left: 'Welcome Space' is a dance interactive

Middle: 'Time immemorial' exhibit in upper Gallery of First Australians

Right: Dhari a Krar' exhibit

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIA



Welcome, and I'd first like to acknowledge the Ngambri and Ngunnawal people of the Australian Capital Territory and region and, indeed, all of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners and audiences. Although physically located in Canberra the National Museum is indeed national in its interests, and the histories, cultures and lives of all Indigenous Australians are of significance to us.

This year has seen the Apology by the Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, on behalf of the Australian Government, to the people of the stolen generations. This emotional and significant event clearly touched all of Australia. The National Museum was pleased to be able to play a small part in this historic day when it was asked to provide a venue and screening of the Apology. The Main Hall of the Museum was full of visitors who came to watch the event.

The Museum's participation on the day of the Apology reminds us that while the Museum is well-known for its extensive exhibition and public programs, it is less well-known for its other day-to-day activities in providing continued behind-the-scenes support for the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and cultures, and to communicating the richness and diversity of Indigenous cultures and histories to special interest groups as well as a general audience. Museum staff actively provide advice to other government departments on issues of cultural heritage protection. We also provide training on Indigenous cultures and affairs to diplomatic staff from Australia and overseas, assisting them in their duties in embassies and commissions overseas. The Museum also supports the development of museums throughout the Australia-Pacific region. Much of this support will never be mainstream public knowledge, but rest assured it is there, driven by a commitment not only by the Museum, but also by individual staff.

I hope you enjoy this issue and I invite you to engage with the Museum's activities in the future.

Craddock Morton



Photo: Barbara Paulson



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL ADVISOR TO THE DIRECTOR AND SENIOR CURATOR (INDIGENOUS MATTERS)

Welcome to the ninth edition of the *Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander News*. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this area, and others who are now part of our Indigenous Canberra community.

The response to the first Museum-wide cultural awareness training is now up to over 120 attendees with 11 staff offering to be on the discussion panels. It is now an ongoing feature of the cultural environment of the Museum and the feedback has been very positive and encouraging. Many have commented on how they have a new awareness of what Indigenous employees are struggling to achieve and some of the barriers experienced working in institutions and ways around them.

Our three new Indigenous cadets have successfully completed their first on-the-job training stint at the Museum and are itching to get back here in their next break from studies.

The Museum's Visitor Services section continues to demonstrate its commitment to Indigenous employment by offering opportunities through the APSC Indigenous Entry Level Programs, mentoring programs and short-term engagements for those who 'try before they buy'. It is also exploring other possibilities such as setting up ASBA (Australian School Based Apprenticeships) traineeships and work experience placements as well as building relationships with ISA (Indigenous Success Australia) to utilise their services for mentoring programs and its Youth Program.

On the exhibition front, the *Papunya Painting: Out of the Desert* exhibition, which was guest curated for the Museum by the highly respected Dr Vivien Johnson, was a huge success, and the *Emily Kame Ngwarreye* exhibition opened in Osaka on 25 February and in Tokyo on 27 May before coming to the Museum late in August 2008.

Margo Neale



MESSAGE FROM THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PROGRAM DIRECTOR

G'day and welcome to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program (ATSIP) news. On behalf of the team I'd like to acknowledge the Ngambri and Ngunnawal people of Canberra and the region.

The past six months has been a hectic time for the ATSIP team. We like to refer to this as 'Business as Usual'. Of course the most significant event during this period has been the Apology by the Prime Minister to the stolen generations. The Museum was pleased to be chosen to broadcast this historic event from the big screen in the Hall, which was packed for the occasion. Another significant event was the Museum's Australia Day display marking the 70th anniversary of the 1938 Day of Mourning and Protest. That this display could be shown at this time, and without controversy, is testimony to the interest of Museum audiences in understanding all views of Australia's history.

The exhibition *Papunya Painting: Out of the Desert* was also a great success. The exhibition engaged diverse audiences, providing insights into Central Australian Aboriginal culture that many had not encountered. It was particularly pleasing to see the interest expressed by children. I'd like to make a special acknowledgement to the Visitor Services staff — the Hosts. The exhibition team excelled, of course. However I'm also convinced that the Hosts' friendly approach and engagement with both adults and children was a significant contributor to the exhibition's success.

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander visitors to the Museum also continues to rise. We are engaging with more and more agencies, both national and international, interested in finding out more about the richness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

This is just a small part of the total work undertaken by the ATSIP team. Check out the Museum website for more information about our activities.

I hope you enjoy this issue. Your comments are always appreciated.

Michael Pickering



Meet some of our **Mates**



Photo: Dragi Markovic

» **Hosts welcome you to the Museum** Hosts perform a very important welcoming role as the public face of the Museum. Most visitors will have some contact with a host during their visits through gallery talks, the operation of Circa and Kspace, guidance through the galleries, interpretation of the collection, or just a friendly person to talk to. The team as a whole is diverse and multitalented and comprises multilingual and multicultural hosts. Every day the hosts have the opportunity to learn more about each other as previously hidden skills and histories emerge.

To get the team working together effectively takes time as each team member learns about each others' skills and specialties. This is achieved by allowing members to talk about their experiences and expectations in their role at the Museum. The hosts feel they have a chance to identify themselves and be understood so they are able to work together to promote the Museum to the public. In summary the hosts work together to inform both themselves and the community. Hosts are the face-to-face interpreters of the Museum and of Australian society — yesterday, today, tomorrow. **Andrew Lloyd** Visitor Services.



Photo: Courtesy of Kulbarli Centre

Glen Stasiuk

» **Glen Stasiuk (Keen/Farmer/Hayward)** Indigenous storytelling and conservation of Aboriginal sites of significance are two of my passions — particularly utilising the modern media of film and multimedia. I am Director of the Kulbarli Centre at Murdoch University in Perth and an award-winning director of the documentary about Indigenous war veterans *The Forgotten* (2002). I am a maternal descendent of the Minang-Wadjari Nyungars (Aboriginal peoples) of the south-west of Western Australia while my paternal family migrated from post-war Russia. These rich and varied cultural backgrounds have allowed me, through filmmaking, research and writing, to explore culture, knowledge and diverse narratives. I had the pleasure of working with the National Museum of Australia on an important Indigenous project late last year (please see the article 'A young warrior' on page 14 of this issue). It was an enjoyable shoot and not only did an important part of Noongar history get documented and archived, but I also learnt and strengthened my knowledge of my ancestor's culture and way of life.



Photo: Anna Bartholomew

Janelle Marshall

» **Janelle Marshall** Hi, my name is Janelle (Leon) Marshall. I'm a descendant of the Gumbaynggirr people of the east coast of New South Wales, a small beachside town called Nambucca Heads. Mine is one of the baby faces that were often featured on the 1967 Referendum posters. I never became political. I have been asked why: I'd rather paint and that's where my heart is, in my art. My artwork now has moved all over the world and I'm so proud to be a part of this great race of people. I live with my partner Tony, and my two children Jamie and Calleen. My Aboriginal roots will always be my strength through my life.



Photo: Barbara Paulson

Troy Pickwick

» **Troy Pickwick** Hi! I'm Troy Pickwick and I am a Murri from Queensland. My mother's people are from Beaudesert (Mununjari) and my father's people are from Bundaberg (Gorang Goreng). I have three daughters who are now in their teenage years. At varying times of my daughters' earlier years I had time off full-time work (to write) and became a 'Mr Mum'. It is a somewhat hectic role but in saying that, it was all a wonderful experience and one which I highly valued then and now.

I have studied and worked with Indigenous people from all over Australia. During the 1990s I plugged away studying, achieving a Masters in Indigenous Social Policy. I have been fortunate enough to have worked in a number of varying positions pertaining to Indigenous people in the areas of education, policing, agriculture, and now more recently in cultural institutions. I am currently putting my knowledge and skill to use as a curator here at the National Museum of Australia.

Speaking out

The 1938 Day of Mourning and Protest

Many Australians know 26 January as Australia Day, or Invasion Day, or Survival Day. This year the National Museum of Australia celebrated this important day — but it also remembered another special anniversary that took place 70 years ago, the 1938 Day of Mourning and Protest.

This protest, by about 100 Aboriginal people mainly from New South Wales, was held in Sydney on 26 January 1938 at Australian Hall in Elizabeth Street. Not far away, Sydneysiders celebrated 150 years of British settlement. The organisers of the Day of Mourning chose Australia Day because of the belief that the celebration of white settlement should also be a time to reflect on the dispossession of Aboriginal people. Flyers sent out to communities in south-east Australia for the protest urged Aboriginal people to rally together, boldly declaring: *'Aborigines and persons of Aboriginal blood only are invited to attend'*.

At the protest meeting a 10-point manifesto for improved civil and political rights was endorsed, and for the first time an Indigenous-controlled newspaper was published. The paper, *Abo Call: The Voice of the Aborigines*,¹ featured stories from across the country by leading Aboriginal activists of the time.

With 2008 marking the 70th anniversary of this important event, the Museum put together a temporary exhibition which remembers the people who protested on that day. This includes the key organisers, William Cooper and Bill Ferguson, as well as less well-known, but just as important, protesters like the Ingram family.

If you want to find out more about the 1938 Day of Mourning and Protest, the display will be at the Museum during NAIDOC 2008 (6–13 July). Or, if you can't make it to Canberra, you could take a look at an online exhibition produced by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), at www1.aiatsis.gov.au/exhibitions/DOM/DOM.htm.

Kipley Nink Assistant Curator

¹ This title reflects the terminology of the period and would be considered inappropriate today.



On display in the Main Hall

Photo: Lannon Harley



Photo: courtesy Susan Ingram

The Ingram sisters

'We were there'

Esther (Ingram) Carroll and Olive (Ingram) Campbell are the only surviving members of the group of women and children identified in the famous Day of Mourning photograph. Their sister, Sylvia (Ingram) Scott, was the eldest of the Ingram children at the time of the Day of Mourning and still has strong recollections of the day.

2008 Family Festival Day

Celebrating Indigenous arts and culture



Photos: Andrew Sheargold

Roving Bogong Moth-stilt walker spreads her wings

Over 3000 visitors chose to spend Australia Day 2008 at the National Museum of Australia, enjoying the 2008 Family Festival Day celebrations. The major temporary exhibition on display, *Papunya Painting: Out of the Desert*, framed the setting for a rich array of programs and performances celebrating Indigenous arts and culture.

Matilda House-Williams began with a traditional smoking ceremony, imparting reverence and respect for a day where Indigenous and non-Indigenous people came to celebrate land, nation and people together. Member of the Yorta Yorta people Jimmy Little sees the Australian Aboriginal people as hosts of a nation of people from all over the world. He told ABC reporter Kathryn Roberts, 'I am the first Australian, enjoying the second Australians, the third Australians and everybody else who is proud to be Australian'.

An exciting line-up of performances engaged families and children on the day, including the ever-popular Jimmy Little, the a capella Ermara Singers and the Beizam Koedal Torres Strait Islander dance troupe. Local performers Wiradjuri Echo and storyteller Larry Brandy invited audiences to be part of their performances, while Warren Saunders and Paul House treated everyone to the sounds of the didgeridu.

Visiting Indigenous artists from Papunya, Linda Anderson and Punata Stockman, engaged families and children in the traditional art of boomerang and message stone painting. Linda and Punata enriched the experience of Australian Indigenous cultures for all, bringing inspiration from the Pintupi, Warlpiri, Luritja, Arrernte and Anmatyerr peoples to their artwork.

Right: The Hall alive with children's activities

Below: Paul House performing for the crowds



Below: Col Hardy sings for a packed studio



Above: Beizam Koedal TSI dance troupe

Left: Contemporary dance troupe Vicki Van-Hout and partner

Below: Animals of the Dreaming up close



Above middle: Artist Janet Fieldhouse demonstrates her clay sculpture

Above: Message stones and boomerang painting

A hugely successful boomerang throwing workshop was hosted by Phillip Yubbagurri Brown, who not only crafts the boomerangs himself, but has enthusiastic audiences lining up to try their own hand at throwing. The family fun activities included a jumping castle, pony rides and the stunning Roving Bogong Moth stilt-walkers, while artist Katrina Brown offered her popular children's Indigenous face painting.

Audiences were captivated by the Taronga Zoomobile's *Animals of the Dreaming* performance, featuring live, hands-on native animal encounters with echidnas, crocodiles, snakes and a shingleback lizard. Col Hardy performed songs about the Dreaming during the show and moved audiences with messages of reconciliation.

Jennifer Martiniello, award winning poet, writer, visual artist and academic of Arrernte, Chinese and Anglo-Celtic descent, demonstrated her work as a textile artist on the day. Jennifer summed up the significance of being an Indigenous Australian celebrating Australia Day to ABC television: *'Some people still reject it because there is still a lot of hurt and pain out there. Others are happy to take ownership of it as "Survival Day"... A lot of us think it's a good thing to try and build a bridge of understanding.'*

Alexandra Johnston

Senior Coordinator, Audience Development and Public Programs

Three generations of a family listen to the Apology



Many people carried photographs of family members who had suffered under policies of removal



13 February 2008

Photos: George Serras & Lannon Harley

Children from Ainslie Primary School in Canberra came to sing and celebrate



To the mothers and fathers, the brothers and sisters, for the breaking up of families, we say sorry



The Prime Minister's speech was broadcast live to staff and members of the public in the Museum's Hall



Some Aboriginal man I had never met just walked up to me and gave me a hug and said 'Isn't this a beautiful day, Auntie.'

Carmel L Taylor, Wiradjuri woman

The day was 13 February 2008. It was the day for the families whose children were taken away and who were made to feel their children were better off without them. Families who spent the rest of their lives with a bit of their heart missing. It was the day for those same children, grown up, who had had their birthright removed from them as if it had no value.

It was the day the Australian Government validated the experience of these people. It acknowledged that what to many had seemed a personal tragedy was in fact part of a national policy of removing Indigenous children.

It was a moment in time people would not forget. A day that needed to be recorded. So the Museum was there. Museum photographer George Serras took many photographs — some of them you can see here. Multimedia staffer Jeremy Lucas and his film crew filmed the events and talked to members of the stolen generations present that day. Some of these stories will eventually be on display in the Museum.

After the event some other members of the stolen generations came to the Museum to be filmed, talking in more detail about the day and how they felt about it. The day concluded with Peter Read presenting his original copy of the New South Wales Government booklet *The Stolen Generations* to the Museum. It was with the printing of this booklet in 1982 that the phrase 'the stolen generations' came into being. And it was Peter who connected the hundreds of stories of child removal he came across in the files from the New South Wales State Archives, and saw the pattern of removal behind the many individual events. In 1982 he co-founded, with Oomera Edwards, the first Link-Up organisation to bring removed people home.

For the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry.

To the mothers and fathers, the brothers and sisters, for the breaking up of families, we say sorry.

And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry.

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, 2008

Jay Arthur Curator, ATSIP

Losing our children

In the centre of the back wall in the lower Gallery of First Australians is a heart formed from ochre and human hair. Above it is a painting of a fractured heart with two faces, one black and one white.

This heart is the centrepiece of *Matters of Her Heart*, an artwork on the experiences of a member of the stolen generations. Pamela Croft has marked the painful steps from loss to recovery through the presentation of her most personal documents — her adoption certificate, personal photographs, her marriage certificate, letters to her adoptive and birth mothers and other personal markers of her life. Pamela's courage in revealing her life through these very private records has produced an artwork that speaks to many visitors. The Museum hosts find that it communicates to children in particular because they recognise these markers as part of someone's life.

This artwork is part of an exhibit that tells the history of the removal of Indigenous children, through the personal stories of those who experienced it.

On the left of *Matters of Her Heart* is the new 'Link-Up' case containing the stories of three removed people.

Barbara Nicholson's father had left her a boomerang, but by the time she found her way home to her community he had passed away and so she couldn't ask where the boomerang came from or what the marks on it mean. Removal has deprived Barbara of the cultural knowledge that was her birthright. Barbara has given this boomerang to the Museum where it can tell the story of the cultural loss experienced by removed people.

Joy Williams' hatband and bracelet in Aboriginal colours speak of her very painful life journey and her celebration of her identity. She was traumatised not only by removal but by the hiding of her Aboriginal heritage. Because she was fair-skinned, Joy was sent to a 'white' orphanage and not told of her heritage until she was 14 years old. She made these articles after Link-Up took her back to Erambie Mission, Cowra, New South Wales where her family came from.

Marie Melito-Russell was over 60 when she first met her mother — in the United States, where her mother had gone to live. Marie suffered in an abusive foster home, where the love of her foster sister was the only positive experience. Marie has loaned the Museum a precious book of Bible stories that her foster sister had given her. After meeting her mother, Marie wrote a poem about that moment. It closes with the words: '*We are so alike in looks and ways, I thank the Lord for the rest of my days I got to see the face of my mother I had the chance to say I love her*'.

Marie's mother has since passed away.

We also have a photograph of Beverley Marcusson giving her mother Dawn her first hug. On the other side of the artwork *Matters of Her Heart* is a case containing the story of Cecil Bowden. Cecil was removed at 18 months old and taken with his older sister and younger brother to Bomaderry Babies' Home. His other brothers and sisters, removed at the same time, were sent to other institutions. He was brought up in Bomaderry Babies' Home and Kinchela Boys' Home. In the centre of the case is a painting now in the Museum's collection, *There only Crime Was, Born Aborig'nal*, 2007, showing three faces behind bars. For Cecil, as for many other Kinchela men, the terrible experience of that institution shaped the rest of his life.

The Museum is working to find other objects to tell more stories of the stolen generations and the Australia-wide Link-Up organisations.

Jay Arthur *Curator, ATSIIP*

Left: Losing our Children exhibition

Middle: Matters of Her Heart by Pamela Croft 2004

Right: The Link-Up case, containing Barbara Nicholson's boomerang, Joy Williams's hatband and bracelet, and Marie Melito-Russell's book of Bible stories. The orange board is Marie's poem, written in her own hand.



Papunya Painting: A success

Almost 50,000 people recently turned out to see the stunning array of works displayed in the *Papunya Painting: Out of the Desert* exhibition. The exhibition explored the early history of the Western Desert art movement from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, before it had received the international recognition and commercial rewards that it enjoys today.

The exhibition featured a unique selection of rarely seen early canvases, boards and artefacts created by more than 30 acclaimed Western Desert artists.

The centrepiece of the exhibition was the giant *Yumari* canvas by Uta Uta Tjangala painted in 1981 and widely regarded as a masterpiece. The exhibition also included works by renowned painters Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri, Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula and Anatjari Tjakamarra.

Museum staff, including ATSIP curators Ian Coates, Peter Thorley and Nancy Michaelis, worked with Western Desert art expert and curator Vivien Johnson to put the exhibition together. The Museum was very grateful to have had the assistance and cooperation of Papunya Tula Arts Pty Ltd and the newly established Papunya-based Papunya Tjupi Arts centre.

The exhibition was enjoyed by a wide range of visitors, including Indigenous people, scholars, families and children. A highlight was the Tjitji (children's) Gathering Place, a space where children were given the opportunity to create their own compositions from the various motifs seen throughout the works displayed in the gallery.

The exhibition also featured previously unreleased footage by Ian Dunlop of life at the community of Yayayi, where many of the painters were living in 1974.

The opening of the exhibition drew a large crowd who were privileged to have present three of the surviving painters featured in the exhibition — Long Jack Phillipus Tjakamarra (the only original member of Papunya Tula who still paints), Charlie Tjapangarti and Pansy Napangarti. Bobby West Tjupurrula, the Chairman of Papunya Tula, spoke eloquently of his pleasure in seeing his father's works exhibited in Canberra for the first time.

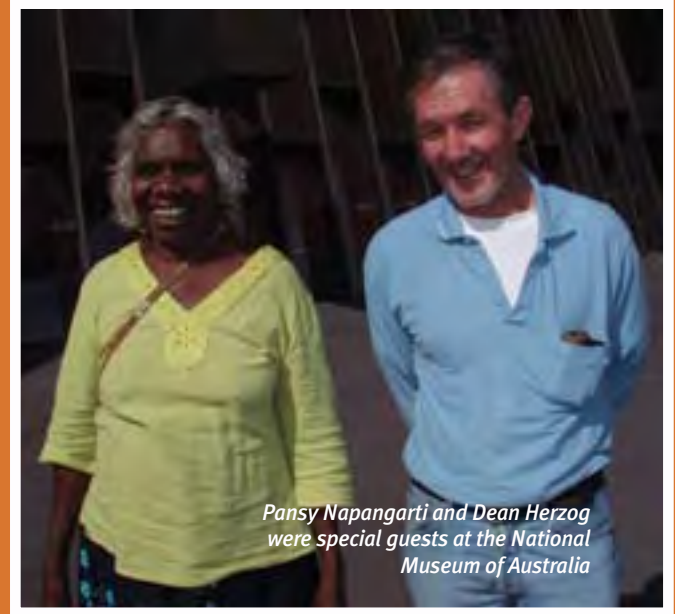
The Museum was excited to be able to produce an exhibition that attracted such a large audience who gained a rare opportunity to appreciate the magnificence of this body of art.

Peter Thorley and Ian Coates
Curators, ATSIP

Painted containers Snake dreaming at Tjuntina by Tommy Lowry Tjapaltjarri about 1978 and Lampintjanya by Shorty Lungkarta Tjungurrayi 1978

Visitors admire Uta Uta Tjangala's masterpiece, *Yumari*, 1981

Long Jack Phillipus Tjakamarra sits in front of his Making Spears, 1975



Pansy Napangarti and Dean Herzog were special guests at the National Museum of Australia

Reminiscences of the *Papunya Painting: Out of the Desert* exhibition

On receiving an invite to attend the *Papunya Painting: Out of the Desert* exhibition in Canberra, I left Alice Springs for South Australia where Pansy Napangarti, my partner, was visiting at a grandchild's home, spending quality time. After arriving in Port Augusta and taking in the usual formalities with family, we made ready for the second leg of our journey, plans for a road trip to the Australian Capital Territory with rendezvous instructions from Nancy Michaelis. The first leg (Alice to South Australia) was good — the same show on the road with trucks and tourists. It's always good to move about with new faces and places to see.

Port Augusta to Canberra went quite well without any hiccups. Two days down south and two days east to the Capital, four in all, split with a spell in between!

Pansy liked the Murray River way and was quite impressed with the size of the sprawling, meandering river system. We stopped at weirs and dams along the way, as one does, to rest up awhile and catch one's feelings before heading on, always in expectation of the forthcoming exhibition at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra, which met all our wishes with flying colours.

One cannot forget Pansy's joyful laughter which could be heard ringing out like a bell in the large reception Hall of the National Museum of Australia and the smiles of old men leaving in taxis to the airport — going back to Alice Springs.

Now begins the new journey back home — aah, the 'gypsy life': maybe some sort of remnant of a nomadic lifestyle, the road is good, South Queensland now, west tomorrow.

Dean Herzog



Charlie Tjapangarti



Artist Pansy Napangarti and Museum Director Craddock Morton



Children enjoying the Tjitji Gathering Place



Michael Pickering, Craddock Morton, Vivien Johnson, Long Jack Phillipus Tjakamarra, Bobby West Tjupurrula, Charlie Tjapangarti, Pansy Napangarti

The museum shows Emily on the big stage

Utopia: the Genius of Emily Kame Kngwarreye opened with much aplomb, Japanese-style, in Osaka on Monday 25 February. The opening ceremony was a formal affair with dignitaries lined up tidily in a row in dark suits with large red corsage badges and ribbons pinned to lapels — ‘like prize heifers and bulls at an agricultural show’, one Australian commentator observed. The Director of the National Museum of Australia, Craddock Morton, delivered an excellent speech in which he linked the exhibition of a distinguished Australian Indigenous artist with the recent Apology, seeing not only the Apology as a defining moment in Australian history but also the Emily exhibition as a fitting gesture at this time of celebration and achievement. The Australian Ambassador Murray McLean similarly spoke movingly about recent events in Australia. Members from the Utopia art community and fellow artists Gloria Petyarre and Barbara Weir were respectfully introduced. At the reception Gloria blessed the exhibition with some powerful songs and dance movements from Emily’s Dreamings. A contingent of Australians travelled to Osaka for the event, with many more planning to catch the Tokyo opening on 27 May.

The National Museum of Art, Osaka, recorded a larger than usual show of media and a 30 per cent higher than normal visitation in the first week, which bodes well for the rest of the tour. Emily is generally unknown in Japan so a lot of creative energy is going into promoting her through strategies such as a circle of celebrity supporters and by winning space on the highly competitive Tokyo television networks with some documentaries on the planning of the exhibition.

Viewers were amazed not only at the size of the exhibition, which took up 2000 square metres of gallery space over three floors, but also with the extraordinary array of works of such grand scale and masterpiece status. For most of the visitors this was their first experience of art from Australia — and what an introduction! Reactions ranged from ‘this is the best exhibition this gallery has shown in 30 years’ (the Chair of the Board of the Osaka gallery), to others making sensitive connections to Japanese screen panels, calligraphy and ceremony, which really heartened me. Throughout the curatorial journey I became increasingly aware of the many connections Indigenous culture has with Japanese cultural traditions such as ancestor worship, reverence for nature, ritual and the presence of the past in the present, that is, continuing traditions. There are certainly more commonalities with eastern philosophy than with the more individual-focused Western tradition. Obviously my absorption of these connections and the Japanese



Mayumi Uchida and Utopia artists Barbara Weir and Gloria Petyarre at the opening of the Emily exhibition in Osaka, Japan, 25 February 2008

aesthetic over a number of years found subtle expression in the display, drawing comments about the symmetry and sequences suggestive of shrines with contemplative spaces, all of which added power and relevance to Emily’s work in this new context.

Japanese viewers were intrigued by what they learnt in the Utopia Room, a large cultural component displaying mostly objects, photos, text, and film footage (by Ronin Films) aimed at showing the source and motivation behind Emily’s work, which is steeped in her connection to Country and community. Emily’s recently discovered grinding stone from Alhalkere, along with pieces of ‘Country’, was bequeathed to the show by custodians.

The cooperation and goodwill extended to this exhibition by the major public galleries and corporate collections, especially the Holmes à Court collection and the 60 private lenders here and overseas, was overwhelming — as was support from members of the Indigenous reference group.

Emily would have been truly proud of the reception her work is getting on the world stage, according to those who knew her well.

Margo Neale

Principal Advisor (Indigenous) to the Director, and Senior Curator

Professor Tatehata, co-curator of the exhibition and Director of the National Museum of Art, Osaka, being interviewed for Japanese television



Principal Curator, Margo Neale, and Director of the National Museum of Australia, Craddock Morton, sporting their official ‘badges’



Visitors from Kalkaringi

Photos: Peter Van de Maele



Jimmy Wavehill, Sharon Goddard and Patrick Jimmy at the Ernabella display in the Gallery of First Australians, National Museum of Australia

On 2 November 2007 I was contacted by Peter Van de Maele, a Canberra-based printmaker, asking if I would be available to 'make good' my offer of showing his two visitors from Kalkaringi in the Northern Territory around the Museum. 'They'd be here in 20 minutes!' he said. I'd met Peter, Gurindji elder Jimmy Wavehill and his son Patrick the previous evening at the opening of Peter's exhibition *Wave Hill Suite* at the Impressions On Paper Gallery, Canberra. Jimmy and Patrick had come to Canberra as part of the Wave Hill Cultural Exchange Project that included a three-day festival to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Wave Hill Station walk off in 1966. The 1975 photograph of Jimmy's brother-in-law, Vincent Lingiari, receiving a handful of earth from Gough Whitlam has become the iconic image depicting the successful outcome of the walk off.

Limited for time, I thought we'd start in the Gallery of First Australians. Jimmy and Patrick were both surprised and fascinated by the quantity and diversity of cultural objects on display. Recognition of objects from their homeland in the north-west of the Northern Territory brought smiles and a flurry of discussion, particularly from Jimmy who was keen to explain how his people had made and used some of the tools and weapons. This was a good thing because I didn't feel there was much I could tell them! Patrick found Kalkaringi on the map near the *70% Urban* exhibition, and was excited to show me his Country.

Just when I thought we'd finished our tour, Museum host Trevor Reid appeared and invited us to see the Open Collection of Indigenous objects. What a treat! Trevor has a wealth of knowledge and we were all impressed with his tour of the collection. Jimmy and Patrick also shared stories about objects they recognised. Peter commented that Jimmy had promised him a 'number 7' boomerang. This begged the question 'What other styles of boomerang are available? Perhaps Peter would prefer a number 3 or 5?' Jimmy winked and with a wry smile pointed to an object in the glass case — a hooked hunting boomerang *shaped* like the number 7!

All too soon, time was up and there was a plane to catch for the long trip home. For me the visit was an opportunity to make contact with people who rarely visit Canberra. Jimmy and Patrick seemed gratified to see their culture well-represented and the objects receiving the care and respect they deserve. According to Peter the visit to the Museum was a highlight of their stay in Canberra.

Sharon Goddard
Collection and Information Digitisation



Jimmy Wavehill in Open Collections, National Museum of Australia



Jimmy Wavehill, Peter Van de Maele and Patrick Jimmy at the Ernabella display in the Gallery of First Australians, National Museum of Australia

A young warrior: Ken Colbung tells Yagan's story

filming at Matagarup
(Heirisson Island, Perth)



Photo: Jeremy Lucas

An exciting new display is due to open in the Gallery of First Australians in 2008, and as part of this we were privileged to have worked with Noongar elder Ken Colbung MBE. Through a 'talking head' style film, filmed by Murdoch University's Kulbaradi Productions, Ken tells the story of his experiences of finding Yagan — a young Noongar man whose remains were brought home to Perth in 1997 after almost 160 years in England.

Yagan, who died in 1833, was probably in his late 30s when Perth was colonised by Europeans in 1829. He befriended many of the early settlers and was well-known in the Perth district. Stories about him often appeared in the Perth *Gazette* and in the diary of a local farmer. After a number of clashes over food and other resources, Yagan was declared an outlaw and forced to go into hiding. Tragically, on 11 July 1833, Yagan's friend William Keates shot Yagan for the £30 reward. Yagan was then decapitated and his head sent to England to be displayed as a scientific curio. For a long time

nobody knew what then happened to Yagan's remains. On the instruction of his elders, Ken Colbung began looking for Yagan in the 1950s. Finally, in 1993, Yagan's head was found buried in Everton Cemetery in Liverpool, England.

As part of telling this story through museum objects, we're privileged to have a kangaroo skin cloak made by Ken for the special occasion of Yagan's return. The cloak was used to wrap around the box which carried Yagan's remains safely home to Perth in 1997. This cloak is displayed in the exhibition because of its significant role in Yagan's repatriation.

Yagan's story fits within a bigger display in the Gallery of First Australians, called 'Resistance', which will look at different responses to the occupation of Indigenous Australia. This will include stories about non-violent protest and strategies of cooperation, and will be told through personal stories.

Kipley Nink Assistant Curator



Photo: Lannon Harley

Left: Cloak made by Ken Colbung to carry Yagan's remains home. The red painted zigzag replicates Yagan's distinctive initiation scar on his back



Ken Colbung

Photo: Jeremy Lucas



Photo: Jeremy Lucas

Left: Kulbardi Productions sound technician, Damian Smith, with Kipley Nink and Ken Colbung at Perth International Airport, 2007



Kulbardi Productions

The Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre (formerly the Aboriginal Education Unit) has been an integral part of the Murdoch University (South Street) campus since 1988. Officially opened on 29 November 1996, the centre stands as a tribute to the late Munyari, (Elder Ralph Winmar), who gave his respected counsel the name Kulbardi, meaning magpie.

The Kulbardi Centre is a beacon for Indigenous students wishing to access tertiary studies. It is designed to foster student interaction, group solidarity and cultural support.

Kulbardi Productions, an initiative of the Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre, is a media production house that is designed to document and archive Noongar culture, language and histories by utilising modern media.

Kulbardi Production's most popular documentary is *Noongar of the Beelias* (Swan River) which documents and celebrates the relationship of Perth's Swan River with the local Noongar people, before and after colonisation. It has played on Foxtel's NiTV (National Indigenous Television) station and is used by schools within the Western Australia State Education Department.

Kulbardi worked with the museum on the filming for the Yagan display.

'Ngulluk Wangkiny Koora, Yeye, Boorda'.

'We Speak of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow'.

Glen Stasiuk

Director, Kulbardi Productions

www.kulbardi.murdoch.edu.au

Summer school for teachers of Australian history



Theresa Napurrurla Ross talks about the Coniston Massacre

Teachers investigate Edward Albert's Second World War medals



Senior Indigenous Education Officer, Trish Albert, talks about using Indigenous objects in the classroom.



Some of the workshop team, left to right: Alan Maskell, Trish Albert, Theresa Napurrurla Ross, Theresa's daughter Mickaela Lankin, and David Arnold



In January this year the Museum presented an Indigenous-themed workshop to 120 teachers as part of the Australian Government Summer School for Teachers of Australian History. It was a great opportunity for us to meet with teachers from all over Australia and tell them about what we do.

Trish Albert, Senior Indigenous Education Officer, facilitated the workshop. She talked about how objects can be used to tell stories in the classroom — a common theme in Museum education programs. It was very moving when she used personal photos and objects to tell the story of her parents. One teacher commented, 'I was emotionally touched with Trish's picture of the Aboriginal couple who, as we were told later, were her parents ... at the injustice in the Australian community. It reminded me of some stories of what my parents encountered'.

A highlight of the workshop was having Theresa Napurrurla Ross, a Warlpiri woman, tell her story of the Coniston Massacre. She was told about the massacre as a child by her stepfather, Jack Ross, a traditional owner of the area where the Coniston Massacre took place and an eyewitness to the shootings. Theresa has since interviewed the last survivors of the Coniston Massacre and her story will be featured as part of the new 'Resistance' module in the Gallery of First Australians. Reflecting on Theresa's story, one teacher said, 'It was so interesting to hear the history from an Aboriginal person. It was great to be exposed to a person with personal experiences and knowledge of Coniston'.

ATSIP curators Peter Thorley, Jay Arthur, Kipley Nink and Troy Pickwick further explained the 'Resistance' module to the teachers and talked more generally about what it's like to create an exhibition at the Museum. The workshop finished with a presentation by David Arnold, Manager, Education, on the variety of resources the Museum has available to help teach Indigenous history in the classroom.

Following the workshop, Museum hosts Trevor Reid, Graeme Beveridge and Margaret Fox took the teachers on a wonderful tour of our galleries. We were also privileged to have curator Vivien Johnson available to introduce them to the *Papunya Painting: Out of the Desert* exhibition. The day finished with a dinner talk by senior curator Kirsten Wehner on the *Creating a Country* gallery currently in production.

Everyone had a great time and the teachers were full of praise for the program. As one participant said: 'This whole experience was mind-blowing! The whole day was fantastic'.

Alan Maskell Senior Education Officer

Indigenous cadets – working inside the Museum



Cadets with some staff at their 'back to uni' afternoon tea

The Museum's Cadetship program is in full swing. Coordinated by our Employee Relations and People Development team, the first three cadets got a taste of the internal mechanisms of a museum during their on-the-job training. Each cadet worked in several departments to gain insight into the differing services the Museum provides. They all worked in the Visitor Services section as hosts, where they got a chance to interact with the public within exhibition spaces.

Rebecca Richards is a student at the University of Adelaide, completing a Bachelor of Arts (Journalism and International Studies). As well as Visitor Services, Rebecca worked in both the Education and Public Programs sections. Rebecca said that 'working at the National Museum of Australia smashed all my preconceived notions about what a museum is and should do. I didn't know that there was so much going on behind the scenes that the public don't know about. The greatest thing was meeting so many amazing people and learning about the complexity and depth of our shared history. Every visitor, host, curator, or Indigenous programs tour that I attended was wonderfully different.'

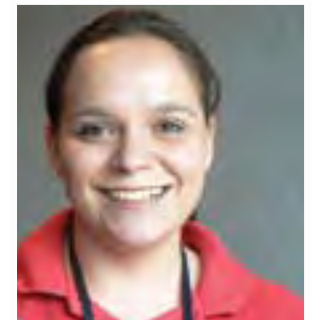
Ben Cruse is a student at the Australian National University, completing a Bachelor of Arts (Anthropology, Archaeology and Political Science). Ben worked in Registration and in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program — the curatorial section responsible for exhibitions in the Gallery of First Australians. Ben commented on his experiences here at the Museum saying that 'overall I enjoyed my work placement at the Museum.'



Kashia Collins



Ben Cruse



Rebecca Richards

The section I enjoyed working with the most this time around was the Visitor Services Hosts team. The hosts are a great bunch of people to work with and do an amazing job'.

Kashia Collins is a student with Griffith University, completing a Bachelor of Arts (History and Humanitarianism). Kashia also worked in the Education and Public Programs sections. Of her time at the Museum she commented that 'It's been incredible learning so much from our friendly and supportive co-workers. Allowing us to take the reins in some programs was great, as we're really contributing to the running of the Museum. The greatest experience was working in *Papunya Painting* and Gallery of First Australians. The renewed sense of pride I get when inside both was overwhelming.'

The Museum's Indigenous Cadetship Program supports the cadets in gaining their on-the-job work experience and completing their tertiary studies. We look forward to seeing a lot more of these of these guys around the Museum in the future.

Barbara Paulson *Curator, ATSIP*

ATSIP NEWS

All articles and photos by **Barbara Paulson** unless otherwise stated



The ATSIP team

The ATSIP team is made up of a group of curators, with diverse backgrounds and skills, who are responsible for representing Indigenous people, culture and knowledge in the Museum galleries and exhibition spaces. ATSIP produces and oversees the exhibitions in the Gallery of First Australians, and collects objects and stories that build upon the Indigenous content of the Museum's collection. Through these objects the social history of Australia can be told from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives. There are also several other programs, projects and initiatives that ATSIP puts into action, which are aimed at bridging relationships between the Museum and Indigenous people and communities across Australia. Next time you see any of us out visiting people and collecting stories and objects, come up and say 'Hi!' We love to meet you — especially if we are representing your history.

Some of the team: (left to right) Peter Thorley, Mike Pickering, Christine Hansen, Andy Greenslade, Jay Arthur, David Kaus and Barbara Paulson

Mike in Paris *Representing the Museum and Australia at the International Repatriation Symposium*

I was invited to participate in a symposium held at the Musée du quai Branly in Paris in March. The symposium, entitled From Anatomic Collections to Objects of Worship: Conservation and Exhibition of Human Remains in Museums, was convened to discuss issues regarding the treatment of human remains in museums.

Discussions at the symposium were strongly focused on the debates for and against the return of remains to Indigenous people. The practices and philosophies of various museums and governments were discussed at length. It was clear that Australia and New Zealand were world leaders in the repatriation of remains and it is to be hoped that the symposium influences other governments and museums to engage in the repatriation process.

Following the symposium I travelled to Brussels to meet with representatives of the Belgian Centre for Fine Arts. Then I went on to Utrecht, in Holland, to visit the Aboriginal Arts Museum, the only museum in Europe dedicated to Aboriginal art.



Photo: George Serras

Mike Pickering
Director ATSIP



Students in the Yurana Centre

Yurana Centre students utilise the Museum

Late last year Katrina Brown, a local Indigenous teacher from the Yurana Centre at the Canberra Institute of Technology, led a group of her students around the Gallery of First Australians. The student group was made up of Indigenous people of all ages from various parts of Australia who are participating in and completing their tertiary studies. Katrina uses the gallery as a teaching point for class discussions on Australian history, Indigenous politics and representation, and Indigenous arts and cultures. The Museum runs tours for visitors through both the Visitor Services and Education sections, but it is a rare treat to get a local Indigenous teacher who is well-versed in taking you through the Museum. You gain insights that aren't readily available to the average visitor—lucky students!



Redeveloping the *Facing our Futures* display

The redevelopment and refurbishment of the exhibits in the permanent galleries at the National Museum is an ongoing process. *Facing our Futures*, in the lower part of the Gallery of First Australians, is one display that is receiving a 'facelift'. *Facing our Futures* is a two-dimensional display featuring quotes from a diverse group of Indigenous people about how they see their roles both in contemporary society and in the future of Australia. Look out for them next time you visit the Museum. There may be someone you know whose voice is represented.

Grant Paulson and family were selected to represent contemporary family life

New Exhibition for the GFA Focus Gallery

A Different Time: The Expeditions of Herbert Basedow (1903–1928) will be the National Museum's main contribution to Vivid, the National Photography Festival, which runs from 11 July to 12 October. This exhibition, in the First Australians Focus Gallery, will show highlights from one of the Museum's main photographic collections, which comprises photographs taken by the medical practitioner, anthropologist and geologist Dr Herbert Basedow. Basedow is probably now best known for his anthropological writings, but in the course of his numerous travels in central and northern Australia he took more than 2000 photographs of Aboriginal people, landscapes, pastoral stations, and events and other people associated with his travels. Basedow's photographs will be complemented with information about the man himself, his science and his photography, as well as the story of Frank Feast, who travelled with Basedow on four expeditions in the 1920s.

David Kaus Senior Curator, ATSIP

Herbert Basedow on a riding camel named Buxton, photographed near present-day Granite Downs station in north-western South Australia on 21 April 1903. Alfred Treloar took this photograph using Basedow's camera



Photo: Basedow Collection, National Museum of Australia



Mark Bin Bakar visits the Radio Goolarri exhibition

Comedian and artist Mark Bin Bakar (aka Mary G) visited the Museum late last year and checked out the Radio Goolarri: 'Where the red earth meets the blue sea' interactive display. Mark was an integral part of the development and success of Goolarri Media Enterprises (GME), especially in the early years. GME produced *The Mary G Show* on radio, which became a hit on television and which recently toured nationally as a stage show. Mark has since moved onto other projects and visiting the exhibition gave him an opportunity to recollect the good times he had with GME. Andy Greenslade, the curator of the exhibit, gave him a personal tour of Radio Goolarri. Museum visitors who were fortunate enough to be in the Gallery of First Australians at the time of Mark's visit were treated to a special and hilarious Mary G radio broadcast inside the interactive.

Mark Bin Barkar and Andy Greenslade next to some of the awards received by Goolarri Radio Media on display in exhibition

Networking in the national capital

Aaron Clarke is a ranger from Brambuk National Park and Cultural Centre, located in Victoria. He was recently in Canberra attending a Museums and Cultural Centres training course. Such a course always provides opportunities for networking with other colleagues working in the same area, one of whom was his friend Abby Cooper, who used to work for the Museum. Abby gave him a personal tour of the Gallery of First Australians. Aaron was delighted to see Framlingham and his family represented by both Uncle Bill Edward's mission hut and Alby Clarke's Ride for Reconciliation stories. Aaron said, 'It's pretty great seeing your mob represented on a national level and it's always interesting to see how'. It was a wonderful opportunity for Aaron to meet with some ATSIP staff and tell us about some of the developments happening at Brambuk National Park and Cultural Centre, which is an Aboriginal owned and run organisation catering to locals, scholars and tourists. For information on the centre visit www.brambuk.com.au.



Aaron Clarke in front of the Framlingham display

Jackie Huggins donates fabric of history to Museum

Almost a decade ago Dr Jackie Huggins joined more than 25,000 people and walked across the Sydney Harbour Bridge in support of reconciliation. On the eve of the Apology to the stolen generations, the former Co-Chair of Reconciliation Australia donated to the National Museum of Australia the outfit that she wore to the Sydney Opera House on the evening of the walk.

'I know that the National Museum is about memory and about history; I'm truly grateful that those memories will be held forever here at the National Museum of Australia,' said Dr Huggins.

'I'm very honoured to make this donation because for me it's recognition of the work done for reconciliation in this country. I've worked long and hard on reconciliation — officially for 13 years — and have tried my best to keep it on the national agenda. I've seen some great signs of recognition and some great signs of Australians wanting to work together again,' she said.

Dr Huggins originally bought the canary yellow suit, navy blue blouse, pair of navy and gold earrings, multicoloured scarf, and pair of navy, yellow and white shoes to wear to the 1997 Reconciliation Convention in Melbourne. She also wore her favourite and most loved outfit to the Sydney Opera House for Corroboree 2000 after the big Sydney Harbour Bridge walk and in 2005 at the Reconciliation Workshop at Old Parliament House in Canberra.



Jackie Huggins hands her favourite suit to Ben Cruse for the National Museum's collection

Dr Huggins has also donated her Aboriginal flag pin which she wore on the lapel of the yellow suit at official reconciliation events. The suit, shoes and accessories are scheduled to go on display in the Gallery of First Australians in July 2008. 'Taking this dress into the Museum collection not only celebrates the life and achievements of a very special Australian but also reminds us that history is created by people and experienced by people,' said Curator Jay Arthur. 'Through the telling of personal stories the Museum makes national history personal and personal histories part of the national story.'

The donation was received by Ben Cruse of the National Museum's Indigenous Cadetship program during his placement in Registration. Ben said he really enjoyed his time in Registration working with the collection as well as working with a great bunch of people at the Museum's Mitchell premises.

Caroline Vero
Publicist, National Museum of Australia



(left to right) Jay Arthur, Michael Pick, Jackie, Mat Trinca, Ben Cruse, Caroline Vero, Samantha Lillie, Troy Pickwick

Esme Timbery Shellwork Harbour Bridges



These shellwork Harbour Bridges were made by Bidjigal woman Esme Timbery from La Perouse, New South Wales. The production of souvenirs by Indigenous women in Sydney dates at least to the late nineteenth century, with documents recording that women sold shell baskets at Circular Quay and Botany Bay as early as the 1880s.

With the establishment of the Aboriginal reserve at La Perouse in 1895, the production of artefacts became, in the eyes of the missionaries, a means to keep people busy and to exercise control. It is likely that the missionaries influenced the choice of objects that the women made — the shellwork baby shoes, jewellery boxes and replicas of famous landmarks reflected a Victorian sensibility for craft objects, drawing on shell crafts that were popular in Britain in the late nineteenth century.



Although the making of artefacts was considered to be a means of occupying the Aboriginal people living on the reserve, thus restricting their contact with other Australians, the result was the opposite — the souvenir industry became an important factor in the defeat of the segregation policy. A weekend outing to ‘the Loop’ as the tram terminal was known, became a fashionable pastime for both local and overseas visitors, especially after 1905 when the area was declared a public recreational space. Families would catch the tram to La Perouse and wander the headland, buying shellwork and other souvenirs to take home with them.

Esme is one of the few women from La Perouse who continue to make shellwork objects today. She learnt the technique, as well as the designs, from her mother Elizabeth. As a child and young woman she collected shells with members of her family on the shores of Botany Bay and Cronulla and the south coast of New South Wales. In August 2005 Esme won the inaugural Parliament of New South Wales Indigenous Art Prize, with her entry of a shellwork Harbour Bridge.

Christine Hansen
Curator, ATSIP

The Kasman Jungarrayi Spencer collection

Australian Football is a game played by a tiny percentage of the world's population. But look at the cultural gap it arcs.
Martin Flanagan, 2007



The Museum has in its collection a football jumper from Kasman Jungarrayi Spencer, who was the captain and centre half-forward of the Yuendumu Magpies team. Kasman wore this jumper when the team won the 2003 Premiership. John Lewin, for the online AFL BigPond Network of 15 August 2006, detailed the enormous success of Aboriginal football and the Yuendumu Magpies team in particular, declaring Kasman the most valuable player in this game. This jumper represents the significance of football for young Aboriginal men in the Centre, evidence of continued connection to land, culture and kin brought about by sport.

The history of the Yuendumu Magpies' black and white strip dates back to the first years of the Yuendumu Sports weekend which evolved in 1959. In 1960 the community wrote to the Collingwood Football Club seeking assistance in promoting the Yuendumu club. Collingwood's response was to send jumpers and so the team colours became the distinctive black and white (Lewin 2006).

In addition to the team jumper, the Museum's Yuendumu Magpies collection comprises copies of 92 annotated photographs of the relevant 2003 Premiership match, and a copy of *On the Ball*, the Central Australian Football League's handbook for the 13–14 September 2003 games. The strength of this collection lies in its connection to the annual Yuendumu Games, the famous central Australian sports weekend dubbed 'The Black Olympics'.

Yuendumu was originally a government settlement established in 1946 on the Tanami Highway. This Aboriginal town and associated outstation community of 150 Warlpiri speakers was augmented by Anmatyerr and Pintupi speakers, and the population steadily increased to 1000 residents by late 1980. The Baptist church mission, a government initiative, operated between 1947 and 1978 when the people received title to Yuendumu and, subsequently, the greater part of their land in the Tanami Desert. The game of football was introduced to Yuendumu in 1959 by the then Superintendent, Ted Egan, who is today the Administrator of the Northern Territory.

Nancy Michaelis
Curator, ATSSIP

Sipau Audi Gibuma's *Mayngu Dhoeri*



Artist Sipau Audi Gibuma specialises in making contemporary *Mayngu Dhoeri* headdresses. Born in 1942, Sipau Audi Gibuma is from the Boigu Island community in the Torres Strait and the headdress is specific to Boigu Island and its culture of dance. He has constructed this one using traditional methods — the perimeter of the pearlshell is drilled and tufts of cassowary feathers are inserted into each hole and secured. The headdress features the morning star painted in red surrounded by cassowary feathers and is the type used in the performance of the moon dance (also known as *meripal kulkan patan* which translates to 'blood covering the moon'). The dance is traditionally performed during a lunar eclipse. During the performance the Islanders recite the name of each of the islands of the Torres Strait in a continuing cycle. The island which is being named when the moon reappears is said to be the one at war.

Torres Strait Islanders possess a variety of dance traditions, which incorporate both traditional and dynamic elements. Dance is performed both for religious and secular festivals. Each clan and each island group has its own special costumes and set of costumes. Although artists may base their work on traditional themes and construction methods, they are innovative in their use of materials. Masks and headdresses incorporate organic materials gathered locally as well as factory made materials such as tin, metal, wire, rubber, plastics and bright enamel paint. Dance masks, headdresses and the dances that accompany them are a continuing source of cultural identity and pride for the Torres Strait Islander people. This headdress can be seen in the current *Dhari A Krar* exhibition located inside the Gallery of First Australians.

Katherine Henderson
Curatorial Intern, ATSSIP

The Lee-Enfield .303 rifle



Sally Patfield, Theresa Ross and Peter Thorley with 'The Lee'

The Lee-Enfield .303 rifle is an object with a chequered past. Best known for its military history, it was a version of this type of rifle that Australian troops carried ashore with them at Gallipoli in 1915. Throughout Australia, statues memorialise the glorious deeds of Australians who fought in battles on distant shores. In many Australian towns, a soldier stands above the streetscape looking down on passers-by, a Lee-Enfield .303 by his side.

But in 1928 the Lee-Enfield was to play a role in another violent encounter, this time on Australian soil.

The events which have become known as the Coniston Massacre were a reprisal for the murder of a white man, Fred Brooks, by a Warlpiri man on Coniston Station in Central Australia in August 1928. The policeman who led the Coniston shootings, in which over 60 innocent Aboriginal people were shot, was Mounted Constable George Murray.

Constable Murray was a Gallipoli veteran, having enlisted with the 4th Light Horse in 1914. Historians have likened his attacks on Aboriginal people to cavalry charges. The tactics used in the Coniston Massacre were said to have been similar to the Light Horse, with Murray leading the charge. The party would ride into Aboriginal encampments in a line, then dismount and shoot with rapid-fire rifles and pistols.

The Lee-Enfield .303 held a magazine of 10 rounds and had a rapid fire rate. Against such an onslaught, Aboriginal spears and boomerangs stood little chance.

The Lee-Enfield .303 shown here is a MkIII*. It was recently acquired for an exhibition module being put together for the Gallery of the First Australians about Indigenous resistance to European occupation. It was manufactured in 1920 and has no military markings — typical of the model used by Central Australian police in 1928.

Peter Thorley
Curator, ATSSIP

Josie Kunoth Petyarre's *Utopia Football Carnival*



Josie Petyarre demonstrates the connection between community and sport in this painting, where the excitement of the moment is palpable. Aussie Rules football plays a central role in maintaining a sense of community among the widely dispersed camps in the Utopia homelands, offering one of the few opportunities for socialising and fun available on a regular basis.

The painting depicts a match between the Arlparra Dockers and Mulga Bore Magpies; Josie and her family live in the remote camp of Pungalindum and her sons, grandsons and nephews play football for the Arlparra Dockers in the local league. Here the setting for the game is not the well-watered verdant oval of the southern states but rather the red-brown earth of the central desert. Radiating out from the central figure of the umpire with the ball raised in his hand, the players stand ready. Among the cheering crowd, many with arms in the air, are a collection of dogs, cars, trees and the score keeper's table, adorned with the gold cup trophy — a clue that we're watching a grand final. In a partisan spirit, Josie has captured the scene with the Dockers two points in the lead.

Aussie Rules football is hugely popular across the Northern Territory, where many AFL clubs search for new talent within the local leagues. Nearly all AFL teams now have a cohort of Indigenous players and the opportunity the sport affords young men in remote communities to achieve success on a national stage is unique. As one local commentator notes, 'It is hard for anyone who has not lived on communities to understand the intensity of occasion when footy takes place. Mothers, fathers, the girls and boys, uncles, aunts, cousins, grandparents — they're all there. Even the dogs seem to know what the score is. There are not enough things in life that matter to everyone like footy.'

The detailed and expressive narrative style used by Josie in this work offers immediate access to a rich and engaged world; the painting facilitates direct understanding of the experience of the match and in doing so articulates footy's importance in the community. In this way, the work provides a valuable primary source for contemporary social history. In its directness, it also reveals the connection between oral and visual culture that is fundamental to a 'traditional' Aboriginal way of life.

Christine Hansen
Curator, ATSSIP

Next issue highlights

- The Emily Kame Kngwarreye exhibition opening in Tokyo
- The Nurrara travelling exhibition
- NAIDOC Week events on Acton Peninsula
- More objects from our National Historical Collection
- Updates on new and continuing projects.

Meet some more of our Mates in the next issue due out in December 2008.



Mandjabu (fish net), 1930 Artist unknown

Bogong moths by Jim 'Boza' Williams and Mathew Harding



Photo: Jason McCarthy

Alby Clarke's Reconciliation Ride costume



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If you do not wish to receive future newsletters please let us know.

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Entering the Gallery of First Australians

