

Meet some of our **Mates**



Cressida Fforde

>> **Dr Cressida Fforde** I am a 'mate' and delighted to have been accepted as one of this year's visiting fellows at the Museum. The Visiting Fellowships program encourages research relating to the Museum's collections and programs. My research is titled 'The search for Yagan' (an overview can be seen on the Museum's website). The story of Yagan is part of the 'Resistance' module in the Gallery of First Australians. I was part of the research team, along with Noongar elder Ken Colbung and archaeologist Peter Ucko, that successfully repatriated the remains of Yagan in 1997 from the United Kingdom. With over 15 years experience as a heritage consultant working for Indigenous communities in Australia, New Zealand and America on numerous museum and community heritage projects, my experience led to authoring the book *Collecting the Dead: Archaeology and the Reburial Issue* (2004). The book focuses on issues surrounding repatriation and the underlying relationship between Indigenous peoples and those who focus on them for scientific and academic enquiry. I am currently working at AIATSIS and have recently co-ordinated the 2009 AIATSIS National Indigenous Studies Conference: Perspectives on Urban Life: Connections and Reconnections held from 29 September to 1 October 2009.



Danny Morseu

>> **Danny Morseu** Hi! I'm Danny Morseu. I'm originally from Thursday Island and now work in Canberra at Centrelink's national office. The Museum has recently acquired my collection — which represents my international basketball career from 1976 to 2004. I'm glad this collection will be held in the National Museum of Australia because I know it will be there for generations to come. Years from now when people tell the story about the rise in popularity of basketball to become a national sport in Australia they will have these objects and be able to share my story about representing Australia in international arenas, including the 1980 and 1984 Olympics and the 1983 Commonwealth Games.

When I visited the Museum and walked into the Torres Strait Islander gallery it made me proud to see how our cultures are being presented. The Dhari a Krar exhibit is a real celebration of one cultural practice — masks and headdresses. But important to me was hearing the sound of the waddup (drums) as I entered the space and walking around it brought back memories and feelings of family, community and home.



Evelyn Whitelaw

>> **Evelyn Whitelaw** Hi, my name is Evelyn Whitelaw and I am working as an intern with ATSIP. I am doing my placement with the Museum as part of my Master of Liberal Arts (Museum and Collection Specialisation) with the Australian National University. While at the ANU I have developed a strong background in Australian social history and have recently completed a written piece about collecting Indigenous cultural material and practices of repatriation in museums. My internship with ATSIP is my first experience of working in a museum and it has been very exciting!

I have recently assessed an offer of four beanies from the 2008 Alice Springs Beanie Festival that has been made to the Museum. I've really enjoyed researching the history of the Beanie Festival and learning about its social and economic importance for the Alice Springs region. One of the best parts of my research was speaking with Adi Dunlop, the founder of the festival, and hearing her speak about it with such enthusiasm. I am really enjoying working with ATSIP and feel honoured to have been able to go to the Museum's repository to look at and handle objects in the Museum's collection that aren't on display to the public. By being actively involved at the Museum I have been able to gain new perspectives on Indigenous material cultures and histories, as well as a better understanding of museum practices surrounding Indigenous objects.



Veronica Perrurle Dobson

>> **Veronica Perrurle Dobson** I am a traditional owner at Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Theresa), 80 kilometres south-east of Alice Springs, and a respected senior Arrernte woman. I'm the eldest grandchild of Eastern Arrernte elder Alamparinja, a highly regarded, senior man whose responsibilities included the Ntwerle Homelands as well as cultural law and business. Alamparinja was a direct descendant of an early totemic ancestor from the Ntwerle Homelands and I remember an early bush lifestyle which was based on traditional Arrernte arrangements. For many years I have been an educator of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people working with the Institute of Aboriginal Development developing and teaching the first Eastern Arrernte curriculum taught in high schools as well as professional translation in legal and consultative situations, and cross-cultural awareness training for new health, education and government staff before they go out into the remote communities. I have also authored and co-authored several books with subjects including botanical, entomological, linguistic and cultural protocols and am an authority on the insects, plants and plant uses — including healing — of the Eastern Arrernte ranges. I recently visited the Museum to share some of my knowledge and talk about some of the events and programs at Ltyentye Apurte.