

## ANTaR NSW Membership application / renewal

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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Address _____		
Suburb _____	State _____	Postcode _____
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Please tick one of the options below

☐ **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP**

I enclose an annual membership subscription of:

- ☐ \$20 full rate  
☐ \$10 concession/unwaged  
☐ \$\_\_\_ additional donation

☐ **ORGANISATION MEMBERSHIP**

I enclose an annual membership subscription of:

- ☐ \$40 small organisations (e.g. local reconciliation groups)  
☐ \$100 large organisations (e.g. State-wide bodies)  
☐ \$\_\_\_ additional donation

Both types of membership are annual, and run from one Annual General Meeting to the next. Members must be financial to vote at General Meetings. If you are unsure of your membership status, please call the office.

☐ **CHEQUE / MONEY ORDER** payable to 'NSW ANTaR Inc.'

Thank you for your support for NSW ANTaR !

☐ **CREDIT CARD**

☐ Visa    ☐ Bankcard    ☐ Mastercard    ☐ Amex

Card No. \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of a local Reconciliation Group? YES / NO

If yes, which one? \_\_\_\_\_

If no, would you like to contact your local group? YES / NO

Are you interested in being an ANTaR volunteer? YES / NO

Special skills or contacts that may help ANTaR? \_\_\_\_\_

Return form to: NSW ANTaR Inc., PO Box 1176, Rozelle NSW 2039 Fax: 02 9555 6991 Tel: 02 9555 6138

## ANTaR's National Congress 2005

ANTaR's 2005 National Congress was held in Melbourne in July. It was attended by delegates from state and territory ANTaRs and NGO representatives from the ACTU, NUS, Amnesty International, ACOSS, Oxfam Australia and AAWL.

The National Congress is ANTaR's annual gathering to consider progress and discuss future plans.

Delegates were briefed on the extensive and varied activities of state and territory ANTaRs.

National activities over the past year focussed on the regressive changes in Indigenous affairs policy at the federal level. Highlights include a strong presence during last year's federal election; submissions to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Senate Inquiry on the Administration of Indigenous

Affairs; further development of ANTaR's Indigenous Health Rights campaign and contributing to the National Reconciliation Workshop in May.

Responding to post-ATSIC policy changes and the threats to land rights and native title rights are current national campaign priorities. The Congress was briefed on these issues by Indigenous Reference Group member Professor Larissa Behrendt and Deputy CEO of the NSW Aboriginal Land Council, Geoff Scott. Failure to redress Indigenous disadvantage through 'practical reconciliation' has not deflected the government's ideological approach, now focused on mainstreaming, mutual obligation and 'shared responsibility agreements'.

Recent inaccurate criticisms of Aboriginal communal title, under which land is held under land rights and native title legislation,

has raised the prospect of racist and discriminatory amendments. Disturbingly, it is ATSIC's replacement, the National Indigenous Council (NIC) that has pushed for the changes.

Delegates also heard of impressive progress on the stolen wages campaign in Queensland, NSW and nationally which will be boosted by coordinated national action during the coming year.

ANTaR's national campaign priorities include health rights, Indigenous policy (including mainstreaming and representation), land rights and native title, stolen wages, and reconciliation.

State issues with national implications were also identified, including: state/regional Indigenous representation, land rights reviews in NSW and SA, law and justice issues and the redevelopment of The Block in Redfern.



ANTaR New South Wales Newsletter

September 2005

# Wage justice... some people have been waiting for decades



Queensland Stolen Wages Campaigners prepare for a march.

Governments around Australia controlled wages, savings and benefits belonging to Aboriginal people for most of the 20th century. Much money held in trust was improperly withheld from its owners. Trust account funds were transferred to public revenue, or just "disappeared", along with many of the records.

Generations of families have been economically disadvantaged—yet governments still blame Aboriginal people for their poverty! The ACTU and Queensland Council of Unions fully support claimants in their fight for justice. If your wages or benefits had been withheld, lost, or stolen, you'd want them back too, at full value.

### What has been offered ?

#### Queensland

In 2002 the Queensland Government offered up to \$4,000 to people previously 'under the Act'. Families of deceased workers cannot apply. Claimants must sign an indemnity, waiving their right to recover their full entitlements.

The offer closes in December 2005. Less than half the anticipated claimants have applied. One-third of these were rejected because the government cannot find records to evaluate the claims. A recent Stolen Wages Working Group survey showed 94% of Indigenous respondents think the offer unfair, and 100% think

descendants of deceased workers should be included. These results will be tabled in state parliament late August after delegates meet with Minister John Mickel.

### New South Wales

The NSW government has apologised for practices of previous governments, and promised to reimburse money still owing, at today's value, with no 'cap' and no demand to surrender legal rights. The Aboriginal Trust Funds Repayment Scheme (ATFRS) will be advised by a panel comprising Aden Ridgeway, Robynne Quiggin and Sam Jeffries. Processing of claims will start soon, prioritising direct living claimants. If you have already filled out an expression of interest, you still need to find out about filling in a claim form. Contact the ATFRS (free call, 1800 765 889, Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm) for claim forms and keep checking <http://www.atfrs.nsw.gov.au> for updates.

The NSW government admits its records are incomplete and will give due weight to oral evidence where necessary. There are no clear avenues of appeal for claimants and we must maintain pressure on the new Cabinet. It is not yet known how the Tax Office will treat repayments, although it is believed Centrelink is keen that payments do not affect current and regular benefits. *continued page 2*

>> NSW Reconciliation Council Conference in October p10 >>

# ANTaR NSW

## President's Report



Two of my recent tasks were to chair the ANTaR NSW Forum: "Pressures on a Community Redfern/Waterloo" and a seminar, co-hosted with the Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning, on "The Future for Land Rights", held at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS). Both events provided much important information on these complex issues. Elsewhere in this newsletter are articles and links to the ANTaR and other websites for further details. One significant challenge for ANTaR NSW is to pass on this information to a wider network, particularly groups and individuals outside Sydney.

It was a great experience to work with Larissa Behrendt and Jumbunna for the UTS event and to celebrate with her the presence of three Indigenous speakers on the platform. There, and elsewhere, I have been inspired by Aden Ridgeway and warmed by his valedictory speech on his last day in the Australian Senate, where he acknowledged the support ANTaR has given him. We are committed to continuing to work with him in the new roles he is assuming.

ReconciliACTION and the Freedom Ride have provided me with inspiration and hope, particularly when listening to the testimonies of the young participants on their return. The testimonies of members of the Stolen Generations at the Sorry Day commemorative event provided a different inspiration. I am left determined that ANTaR NSW must continue to work for justice for both the Indigenous people so cruelly separated from their roots, and those suffering further injustices of stolen wages and other entitlements.

The Indigenous Health Rights Campaign working group has been assembling "good news" stories of Indigenous-controlled health initiatives. When reading them, I can see that another important challenge for ANTaR is to be constantly spreading such positive information to counter the regularly negative stories of the mainstream media. This newsletter is one way to do this – pass it on!

Anne Byrne  
President  
ANTaR NSW

*'Wage Justice', continued from page 1*

### Other States, and national

ANTaR Victoria members have met minister Gavin Jennings to discuss possible government assistance for record searches. The WA government is believed to be assessing its exposure. The role of the Commonwealth in the Northern Territory, and in defective distribution of endowment and pensions, needs examination.

No government has yet made a public account of its financial management, which so disastrously affected Indigenous lives in the past and today.

A National Report on Stolen Wages is being

compiled by support groups. Volunteer help is urgently needed – please contact your local ANTaR, and send data to Dr Ros Kidd (roskidd@linksdisk.com) by the end of November.

Lawyers acting pro bono are assisting over 200 Queensland claimants and 120 in NSW. We'd like this option in all states and territories. If you can assist, please contact Ros as above.

More information: Queensland: ANTaR Queensland 07 3844 9800, and see [www.antar.dovenetq.net.au](http://www.antar.dovenetq.net.au). New South Wales: ANTaR NSW 02 9555 6138, [www.antar.org.au](http://www.antar.org.au), and Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC), 02 9299 7833, email [piac@piac.asn.au](mailto:piac@piac.asn.au)

## New Minister for NSW

In the recent NSW Government reshuffle, Milton Orkopoulos was named as the new Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and Minister Assisting the Premier on Citizenship. Mr Orkopoulos, the ALP member for Swansea, just south of Newcastle, has been in parliament since 1999.

He replaces the long-serving Minister Andrew Refshauge, who has retired from Parliament. ANTaR wishes him well in his retirement and we understand he intends to continue his long history, in and out of parliament, of supporting Aboriginal rights.



### LOCAL GROUP PROFILE

## North Illawarra Reconciliation and Treaty Group

The North Illawarra Reconciliation Group grew out of the community consultation process for the Wollongong City Council Statement of Reconciliation in 2000. Two community forums were held at Coledale, with the late Uncle Ted Guboo Thomas attending the second.

It was decided by those present that support for the Koori struggle at Sandon Point was the most important reconciliation matter in our area. Sandon Point is the loose term for the open land between Thirroul and Bulli, which is subject to major development pressures.

In addition to protection of the burial site of a Kuradji (Doctor, clever man) there are other Indigenous heritage issues. A Sandon Point Aboriginal Tent Embassy (SPATE) was established, and a non-indigenous North Illawarra Reconciliation Group formed in support.

In 2003, "Treaty" was added to the group's name in recognition of unfinished business and the statements of coexisting Indigenous sovereignty by Koori spokespeople at SPATE.

A separate community picket (known as the Sandonistas) has also been established near the Tent Embassy, addressing a range of environmental matters but also providing financial and other support for SPATE.

NIRTG bridges both groupings, and links with the wider North Illawarra community. Kuradji/Sandon Point is a good example of a local people's movement and reconciliation in action.

NIRTG aims to make full use of cultural activities in an "art and activism" approach, as at the Braidwood 'Two Fires' Festival this year. We are affiliated to the NSW Reconciliation Council, and are considering incorporation.

NIRTG has made submissions on Indigenous cultural heritage for the new Illawarra Escarpment plan of management, and to the Sandon Point Commission of Inquiry, arguing for reconciliation as a planning constraint in the north Illawarra. We worked with SPATE on production of cards and t-shirts to raise funds, and on local events such as Kuradji Sounds and Songlines music recording (CD out soon!), a "Reconciliation Ready or Not" art exhibition at Wollongong City Gallery in Reconciliation Week, and an "Illawarra Reconciliation Yarn

Up 2005" which, thanks to the participation of Aunty Barbara Nicholson, sent a message to the National Reconciliation Planning Workshop in Canberra. A first newsletter is forthcoming.

Coming events include, on Sunday 18 September, a "Re-igniting the Sacred Fire" concert and gathering at SPATE (see events calendar elsewhere in this newsletter for details). A Treaty seminar and production of local reconciliation and cultural awareness materials are also planned.

Like other local reconciliation groups with scarce resources, NIRTG is looking for ways to ensure effective communication, prevent volunteer burnout, and provide a sustainable local healing process.

The NIRTG core group meets on the last Sunday of each month at SPATE (3pm in winter, 4 pm in summer). All people interested in reconciliation are welcome to attend.

We have some beautiful cards for sale (design by Dootch Kennedy - see illustration), at two for \$5, or five for \$10, plus \$1 postage; orders to NIRTG, PO Box 313, Thirroul NSW 2515 or email [reyburn@mpx.com.au](mailto:reyburn@mpx.com.au)



Image used with permission from an original painting by Dootch Kennedy.



# The National Indigenous Council's Land Rights 'Principles'

The following article is extracted from two recent critiques of the National Indigenous Council's 'Land Tenure Principles':

- A major article by Jason Behrendt, a solicitor with Chalk & Fitzgerald, presented as personal views in a talk to a recent ANTaR Sydney forum on the threat to Land Rights and Native Title. His full article can be viewed on the ANTaR website: [http://www.antar.org.au/\\_ntitle\\_index.html](http://www.antar.org.au/_ntitle_index.html)
- A talk by Larissa Behrendt, Professor of Law and Indigenous Studies at the University of Technology, Sydney, given at a Sydney forum organised by the Indigenous Labor Network (ILN). The talk is available at [www.jumbunna.uts.edu.au/research/alpin\\_13\\_07\\_05.pdf](http://www.jumbunna.uts.edu.au/research/alpin_13_07_05.pdf), and the ILN can be contacted via Phil Lockyer – phone 0412 180 281 or email: [phil\\_lockyer@hotmail.com](mailto:phil_lockyer@hotmail.com).

We are grateful to Jason and Larissa for permission to present their work in this form.

## 'Mandatory leasing' – a new attack on Native Title and Land Rights?

Aboriginal people have long advocated for reform of native title and land rights. One of our primary complaints has been that those regimes do not give adequate benefit to Aboriginal people. This, however, should not be done through a scheme of mandatory leasing, a notion recently proposed to government by the National Indigenous Council (NIC).

This notion of mandatory leasing is dangerous, racist and flawed. The NIC delivered five 'principles' (see opposite) to the Inter-Departmental Taskforce on Indigenous Affairs. Principle 4 advocates mandatory leasing of land. It states that:

- "the consent of the traditional owners should not be unreasonably withheld for requests for individual leasehold interests for contemporary purposes;
- involuntary measures should not be used except as a last resort and, in the event of any compulsory acquisition, strictly on the existing basis of just terms compensation and, preferably, of subsequent return of the affected land to the original owners on a leaseback system basis, as with many national parks."

A number of points can be made in relation to Principle 4:

- Mandatory leasing in this form is fundamentally discriminatory. It would not be contemplated that the Commonwealth would compel any other class of property owners – non-Aboriginals – to enter into a lease of their property against their wishes. Nor would such an imposition be tolerated by non-Aboriginal people.
- Creating an interest in a particular individual

or family deprives any other person with an interest of their enjoyment of that land. This can only lead to providing wealth to one individual at the expense of another. This is a colonist's response to economic development and wealth creation if ever there was one.

- While there is acceptance in the Australian legal system of compulsory acquisition of land for public purposes, to do it so that a private property interest can be created is extraordinary. It is not a principle that the Commonwealth would impose on any other property holder.
- If compensation is to be payable for a compulsory acquisition, it is an interesting question as to who will pay for the compensation.
- An obligation to obtain consent of traditional owners is a basic requirement in respecting the human rights of Aboriginal people. There is no reasonable basis for the NIC to propose principles that depart from the need to obtain the consent of traditional owners of land.

Given these problems with Principle 4, NIC Principle 5 is of considerable concern. It states that governments should review and redesign their existing Aboriginal land rights policies and legislation to give effect to these principles.

Principle 5 is an open-ended NIC endorsement for the Government to rework policies and legislation, including the Native Title Act and the Northern Territory Land Rights Act. It does not identify any specific legislative change. It is left to the Commonwealth to determine what legislative change may be required.

The motivation for the NIC to put forward such an invitation is not apparent. It is more than probable that any changes to the Native Title Act (NTA) would not be limited to the matters that the NIC want to promote.

Given the likelihood that the Government will revisit the NTA now that it has a Senate majority, it is perplexing that despite advocating legislative change, the NIC has not identified any failure of the existing NTA to provide for leases for individuals and families on native title land.

The focus on this issue of mandatory leasing ignores other means by which native title holders have been denied economic benefits from their country. Economic development in rural and remote regions depends on primary production and access to natural resources. The main policy response of Governments since recognition of native title has consistently been to ensure that non-Aboriginal people's exploitation of natural resources on Indigenous land can continue.

Government policy and legislation since the 1992 Mabo decision in the area of land and resource management have not developed to adequately include Indigenous people. They have instead sought to maintain the status quo, which is premised on the doctrine of terra nullius. Water reforms in NSW have continued to the exclusion of Indigenous interests. Share-market fisheries have been created without regard to involving Aboriginal people in the industry. National parks have been created without regard to impacts on Aboriginal economic activities.

The reluctance to concede any right to Aboriginal people in the ownership and exploitation of natural resources has been reflected in the approach of Governments to the litigation of native title cases. Governments have strenuously opposed any right of Aboriginal people to trade in, own, or commercially exploit natural resources.

It is notable that the NIC has not recommended that the Commonwealth rework its policy in relation to litigating native title claims. It is a pity that in purporting to develop principles for improving 'social and economic' outcomes for Aboriginal people from their land, the NIC has chosen to ignore this fundamental issue. It is imperative that there is a focus on these issues to find a more practical, equitable and less racially discriminatory manner in which to deal with resolving the failure of native title and land rights regimes to distribute benefits to Aboriginal people.

## The National Indigenous Council

This year, the Commonwealth Government abolished the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), a set of elected bodies at local, regional and national level, which was the only structure available to represent all people who identify as Indigenous.

In place of ATSIC the Government has appointed a National Indigenous Council (NIC) of its own choosing. It appears that so far, the Government, rather than the NIC membership has set the NIC agenda.

For details of the NIC's membership, and information about its role, see [http://www.oipc.gov.au/About\\_OIPC/new\\_arrangements/NewGovAdvStructures.asp](http://www.oipc.gov.au/About_OIPC/new_arrangements/NewGovAdvStructures.asp)

### The NIC's 'Land Tenure Principles'

Amid signs that the Commonwealth Government may be intending to dismantle national land rights legislation in the near future, the NIC recently published the following set of five 'Land Tenure Principles':

1. The principle of underlying communal interests in land is fundamental to Indigenous culture.
2. Traditional lands should also be preserved in ultimately inalienable form for the use and enjoyment of future generations.
3. These two principles should be enshrined in legislation, however, in such a form as to maximize the opportunity for individuals and families to acquire and exercise a personal interest in those lands, whether for the purposes of home ownership or business development.
  - An effective way of reconciling traditional and contemporary Indigenous interests in land (as well as the interests of both groups and individuals) is a mixed system of freehold and leasehold interests.
  - The underlying freehold interest in traditional land should be held in perpetuity according to traditional custom, and the individual should be entitled to a transferable leasehold interest consistent with individual home ownership and entrepreneurship.
4. Effective implementation of these principles requires:
  - the consent of the traditional owners not be unreasonably withheld for requests for individual leasehold interests for contemporary purposes;
  - involuntary measures not be used except as a last resort and, in the event of any compulsory acquisition, strictly on the existing basis of just terms compensation and, preferably, of subsequent return of the affected land to the original owners on a leaseback system basis, as with many national parks.(emphasis added)
5. Governments should review and, as necessary, redesign their existing Aboriginal land rights policies and legislation to give effect to these principles.

# Redfern-Waterloo Forum

On June 25th, ANTAR NSW held a public forum on Redfern/Waterloo issues.

Geoff Turnbull, from the REDWatch community group, outlined recent developments. In January, the NSW government created the Redfern Waterloo Authority (RWA), and gave it control of all government land, about a third of the area. The RWA is responsible for development, employment creation, and reorganization of all human services in the area. The Minister for Redfern-Waterloo, Frank Sartor, is sole government spokesperson.

The RWA is not funded from the NSW budget and must fund itself from property sales, land development, and other sources. It has declared some of the area (including the Block, a core area of Aboriginal housing) as 'State significant', which means the government can bypass normal development controls.

Frank Sartor has reaffirmed that he wants no more than 19 houses on the Block, but is prepared to provide the balance of the 62 houses proposed in the Aboriginal Housing Company's Pemulwuy Project (for redevelopment of The Block) in other parts of Redfern

and Waterloo. He will sit down with the AHC only if they agree to this.

The AHC has indicated that they would participate in the Minister's working group if it focused on how the Pemulwuy Project might be improved, rather than assuming that housing on the Block could not be made to work.

For information about Redfern-Waterloo and the RWA, join an email news list via [turnbullfamily@stassen.com.au](mailto:turnbullfamily@stassen.com.au), or see the REDWatch website: [www.redwatch.org.au](http://www.redwatch.org.au).

Colin Rice, for the Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC), outlined the Pemulwuy Project, which provides for 62 home units, a public civic space and retail/commercial area, hostel accommodation for students and Aboriginal people, an Indigenous Business College, and a sports facility.

The project has attracted broad local support from Sydney City Council, non-Aboriginal neighbours and the local business community. The AHC had been working closely with the Premier's Department and the Government Architect, yet now the Government has backed

away.

For more about the Pemulwuy Project and the Minister's opposition, see AHC's website at [www.ahc.org.au](http://www.ahc.org.au); the Media News page has Frank Sartor's June 15 interview on SBS radio.

Rob Welch, spokesperson for the Redfern Organisation for Aboriginal Unity, and Chair of the Metropolitan Aboriginal Land Council, said "Metro Land Council support for the Pemulwuy Project remains 100% ... [Metro has] 120 families on our housing waiting list. Adequate housing is essential for a stable family life. Without it, it's almost impossible to find and hold down a job, and to keep children healthy. It's also very difficult for those children to do well at school if they don't have a proper place to study.

"The Pemulwuy Project would also give jobs to Aboriginal people and opportunities to Aboriginal businesses ... why would anyone oppose it? The answer is that the focus of the Redfern Waterloo development is not on need, but greed."

The full text of Rob Welch's speech to the forum is in the July 13, 2005 issue of the Koori Mail newspaper.

## 'Around the Kitchen Table' - a new Reconciliation resource kit

The Women's Reconciliation Network has produced a new resource for use in schools, communities and work places.

The *Around the Kitchen Table* video documentary, originally produced in 1998, is now paired with a 140-page printed document that helps you extract the full learning value of the video, and is well-stocked with insights and information.

The 26-minute video, filmed literally 'around the kitchen table', features lively and thought-provoking discussions among three groups of women (Indigenous, migrant, and anglo-celtic). The booklet takes an audience - of one or many, male or female - through both the video's content and the broad concepts of Identity, Belonging,

Law, Protocol, Stereotypes, Healing and Action, bringing out participant's own feelings about areas we all take too much for granted. It is structured as a flexible set of learning modules around those seven headings. This jaded old reviewer found his interest held and imagination prodded.

The kit is designed for use by local reconciliation groups, adult education groups, senior high school students, in-service and pre-service training for professionals, and private and public sector work places.

Costs vary for purchaser category, with a community group price of \$100. Full details are available from Frennie Beytagh, 02 9909 0203, email [frennie@tpg.com.au](mailto:frennie@tpg.com.au)

# Freedom Ride film screenings

On July 9, helped by a \$500 grant from Strathfield Municipal Council and encouragement from Local History librarian Margaret Roberts, the ANTAR Lowe Action Group sponsored an important video screening at Strathfield Library.

Blood Brothers was made by Rachel Perkins in 1993, about the Freedom Ride of 1965, in which 30 Indigenous and non-Indigenous university students spent three weeks travelling through rural NSW towns, protesting peacefully against racism. The video includes original footage from news broadcasts, plus later interviews. Rachel's father, Charlie Perkins, who instigated the Ride, recalls highlights and shocks of the

trip, and sympathisers from the towns visited also share their memories.

We then heard from three members of the ReconciliACTION Network, Claire McLiskey, Tom Tilley and Sylvie Ellsmore (Executive Officer of the NSW Reconciliation Council), who were participants in a Freedom Ride re-enactment in February 2005. A full documentary is in preparation, but meanwhile the group are using film clips to illustrate their experiences, which show that while some things have improved, others remain the same. Some audience members were able to share their own experiences of harassment in shops and

on public transport, and show that racism is alive and well in Sydney as well as in country towns.

ANTAR Lowe urges local groups to share the 2005 Freedom Ride experiences with members of ReconciliACTION. Their stories and film are fascinating. Such an event would be particularly valuable for Year 10 History students, for whom the 1965 Freedom Ride is part of the syllabus.

ReconciliACTION can be contacted through Sylvie Ellsmore on 02 9219 0719. ANTAR Lowe Action Group can be contacted via [brennan@pip.com.au](mailto:brennan@pip.com.au) or on 02 9719 8773.

## NEW BOOKS

### Genocide and settler society frontier violence and stolen indigenous children in Australian history

Edited by A. Dirk Moses

When Dirk Moses established a new course in Comparative Genocide Studies at Sydney University in 2000, he could not find any book to use as a text on the subject for Australia (Henry Reynolds' *An Indelible Stain* did not appear until 2001). The concept for this book thus pre-dates the Windschuttle/Reynolds debates. The various chapter authors present new research and analysis that challenges the "white blindfold" view. The first section establishes a theoretical and historical context for the subject - genocide comes in many forms, and different legal, ethical, and historical definitions are relevant. The second section addresses frontier violence, and presents new research on Tasmania, Queensland, and Gippsland. The third section covers the stealing of children and forced family relocation and break-up as instruments of government policy and white cultural ascendancy. This is a textbook, and not light reading, but is an important new step in establishing the truth of our recent past.

*Berghahn Books, New York/Oxford, 2004.*

### Where are the Sorry Books?

In 1998 Sorry Books were created to allow people in Australia express their sorrow at the injustices done to Indigenous people removed from their homes and families under Government policies - the 'Stolen Generations'. 1000 Sorry Books were circulated around Australia at the time.

Currently, about 480 of them are held in Manuscript Collection of the AIATSIS Library and they would be happy to receive others from the community or record where they are being held.

If you have information contact:

Pat Brady  
Collection Manager  
AIATSIS Library  
GPO Box 553  
Canberra ACT 2601

Ph: (02) 62461189

Email: [pat.brady@aiatsis.gov.au](mailto:pat.brady@aiatsis.gov.au)



# Parliamentary Black Power



Barbara McCarthy (Arnhem)

The recent return of the Northern Territory's Labor Government saw a record number of Indigenous parliamentarians (five) take their seats in the NT Legislative Assembly.

New members Alison Anderson and Barbara McCarthy, joined Matthew Bonson, Elliot McAdam, and Marion Scrymgour in the largest group of Indigenous members (all ALP) ever in an Australian parliament, and the last two are ministers. Eleven Indigenous people have now served in the NT parliament.

Carol Martin, who was in 2001 the first Indigenous woman elected to a state/territory parliament (MLA, ALP), held her seat of Kimberley in last year's WA election.

Kathryn Hay in Tasmania (MHA, ALP, Bass) is Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier and was not only the first Tasmanian MP from an Aboriginal



Aden Ridgeway

background, but also our first black Miss Australia.

Wiradjuri woman Linda Burney in 2003 became the first Indigenous person to sit in the NSW Parliament, as ALP MLA for Canterbury. Linda is well-known for her work in teaching and education and her advocacy for Reconciliation. She is a member of ANTaR's Indigenous Reference Group.

Queensland has only ever produced one Indigenous State parliamentarian, Eric Deeral, the National Party member for Cook from 1974-1977.

Outside of parliament, but still firmly in politics, is Warren Mundine, who will commence his 12-month term as ALP National President next January, the first Indigenous president of an Australian political party.

Broadly representative parliaments are always essential, but since the demise of ATSIC the



Alison Anderson (Macdonnell)

importance of Indigenous representatives has become more critical.

At state/territory level, the ALP has supported good Indigenous candidates through preselection and campaigning, but only the Liberal Party and the Australian Democrats have so far succeeded in getting Indigenous candidates elected federally.

The late Neville Bonner was a Queensland Liberal senator from 1971-1983. Aden Ridgeway left the Senate in June after six years, during which he became the first Indigenous person to hold a leadership position in a Federal political party as Deputy Leader of the Democrats. Aden is now heading Indigenous Tourism Australia, chairing the NSW Aboriginal Trust Fund Repayment Scheme, and is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Technology, Sydney. He also remains a member of ANTaR's Indigenous Reference Group.



Linda Burney

Linda Burney, MLA for Canterbury (ALP) has been handpicked as Parliamentary Secretary Assisting the NSW Minister for Education and Training, Carmel Tebbutt. Linda is a Wiradjuri Woman.

Linda will be working to develop policy and other support for the portfolio. Her background in education will stand her in good stead, dating back to her teaching days in Mt Druitt. "That's where my passion for politics came from", says Linda.

For more information on the Indigenous vote in Australia, see the Australian Electoral commission website:

[http://www.aec.gov.au/content/How/education/resources/history\\_indigenous\\_vote.pdf](http://www.aec.gov.au/content/How/education/resources/history_indigenous_vote.pdf)

or call AEC Public Awareness Programs on (02) 6271 4460.

## Federal Government Attacks Indigenous Education

As this newsletter goes to press, two Bills are about to be voted on in the Senate – the Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Amendment Bill 2005, and the Skilling Australia's Workforce Amendment Bill 2005. If passed, there could be a substantial funding cut to Indigenous-run education providers, including Tranby Aboriginal Co-operative College in Sydney. Money which was earmarked for these institutions will be moved into mainstream programs so that

Indigenous providers will have to compete with non-Indigenous. The total amount of funding is also being cut – \$3.7 million less to be spent on Indigenous education.

Tranby has been delivering education since 1958. The Government's latest 'mainstreaming' effort attacks the unique contribution of institutions like Tranby and their significant role in the retention of Indigenous youth in education programs, the re-integration of

older people into adult education, and the overcoming of Indigenous disadvantage in education and training.

Let your Senators know that you value the contribution these institutions make and are not prepared to see their decades of good work undone by cost-shifting in the funding of essential programs.

**Phone, email or write to Senators urging them to reject these unjust Bills.**

## Regional roll-out call for 'no sniff' petrol

A group of organisations in Central Australia have called on the Federal Government to expand a petrol sniffing prevention scheme.

The group includes the Ngaanyatjarra - Pitjantjatjara - Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Womens Council, The Central Australian Youth Link-Up Service (CAYLUS) and General Property Trust (GPT, which owns much of the Yulara resort infrastructure). They have called on the Federal government to provide an additional \$8 million per year to 'roll out' the non-sniffable fuel "Opal" right across Central Australia, effectively creating a sniff-free zone. They plan to use part of the \$8 million to extend youth services.

Opal fuel, developed by BP, is a better substitute for ordinary petrol than the other no-sniff option, av-gas, which was in use in some centres but was unpopular because it damaged car engines.

Opal is not a stand-alone solution. However, removing access to sniffable petrol is a key element in an holistic solution that provides Indigenous communities with the infrastructure, services and resources necessary to tackle the root causes of petrol sniffing.

The proposed extra \$8 million per year seems all the more affordable when you look at the costs of sniffing. In the Northern Territory portion of Central Australia alone, the care costs of brain-damaged sniffers will top \$9 million per year in the near future. The Commonwealth Government

currently spends more than \$2.4 billion dollars per year in fuel subsidies to mining companies and others through the Energy Grants Scheme. The proposed regional roll out would make a significant difference to the epidemic levels of petrol sniffing and substance abuse. It would markedly improve quality of life for young people and their families in remote Central Australian Communities.

For further information contact CAYLUS on 08 8951 4236. See also website of the NT Select Committee on Substance Abuse In The Community report: *Petrol Sniffing in Remote Northern Territory Communities*, Oct 2004: <http://www.nt.gov.au/lant/parliament/committees/substance/Subabuse.shtml>



CAYLUS' car sticker promoting Opal fuel.



# Coming events

## September

**5 September** (Mon): 'Syndrome X' – The plague threatening the health of the world's oldest continuous culture. Guest speaker: Jeff McMullen, former ABC Foreign Correspondent and Four Corners reporter. Jeff is Director of Ian Thorpe's Fountain for Youth Trust and committed to improving Indigenous health and education. 7.15 for 7.30pm. Angophora Room, Nelson Heather Centre, cnr Jacksons & Pittwater Rds, North Narrabeen (carpark entry Boondah Rd). Details: Aboriginal Support Group – Manly Warringah Pittwater, (02) 9918 2594 or [www.asgmwp.net/Info.night%20Sept05.htm](http://www.asgmwp.net/Info.night%20Sept05.htm)

**7 September** (Wed): 'Black and White Films': The Cinema of Conflict and Reconciliation. Presented by Dr Mark Byrne PhD. An exploration of race relations in Australian films over the past fifty years, includes slides and film clips. After an historical overview, the focus is on films indicating positive relationships. Mosman Square Seniors Centre, Mosman Square, Spit Junction, 6pm for 6.30. Contact: Mosman Reconciliation Group, Frennie (02) 9909 0203, [frennie@tpg.com.au](mailto:frennie@tpg.com.au).

**18 September** (Sun): Women's Reconciliation Network Spring Luncheon. Venue: Rasme's at Casula, 1pm. Please bring a plate of eats or a drink of your choice. Contacts: Sally (02) 9564 2935, Frennie (02) 9909 0203 or Elaine (02) 9560 9876 re venue and transport options.

**18 September** (Sun): 'Re-igniting the sacred fire' concert and gathering at Sardon Point Aboriginal Tent Embassy (SPATE), off Point Rd, Thirroul, from noon. To celebrate rebuilding after the fire that destroyed the first Embassy and

to rekindle our spirits for future challenges. Organised by North Illawarra Reconciliation and Treaty Group. Contact: Dootch Kennedy 0434 366 374, or Bruce Reyburn [reyburn@mpx.com.au](mailto:reyburn@mpx.com.au)

**21 September** (Wed): Inaugural Indigenous Biripi Bularng concert. Jack Neal Oval Cowper St, Taree, 6pm-9.30pm. FREE community event put on to celebrate Indigenous music and culture. Includes Australia's number one R&B act Shakaya, leading country artist Troy Casser Daley, the beautiful folk/soul vocals of Emma Donovan, music legends Archie Roach and Ruby Hunter, rising Hip Hop stars Local Knowledge and local heroes Zebyah, plus Indigenous dance by the Blacqseedz Dancers. MC is comedian Sean Choolburra. Organised by Biripi Aboriginal Medical Service. Contact: Michael Hutchings 0408 085 139, [mhutchings@buzzsaw.com.au](mailto:mhutchings@buzzsaw.com.au)

**30 September–6 October:** 'Connexions in Time' Exhibition – Manly. A photographic project linking young people in Brewarrina and Warringah Shire. Manly Vale Community Centre, 10am-4pm (incl. long weekend). Details: Warringah Council 9942 2603 (ask for Events and Cultural Services).

## October

**14 October** (from Fri): 'Connexions in Time' Exhibition – Brewarrina. A photographic project that links young people in Brewarrina and Warringah Shire. Brewarrina Tourist Centre (Monday to Friday only). Details: (02) 6839 2152 (Fran Carter) or email [bretourism@bigpond.com](mailto:bretourism@bigpond.com)

**14-16 October** (Fri-Sun): 5th annual Wollumbin Festival, Bundjalung Country: community celebration of the preservation

of the ancient forests of Wollumbin (Mt Warning) and reconciliation focusing on Indigenous recognition and respect. Elders' circles, workshops, music, stalls. Family affordable and friendly with entry at just \$50 adult, \$20 teen, 12 and under free, INCLUDING onsite camping. The festival runs from noon Friday to sunset Sunday and is an ALCOHOL, DRUG and PET FREE ZONE. Tyalgum Showground, Tyalgum, Tweed Valley hinterland. Contacts: Johnny Roberts and Glen Brown (02) 6622 0200, 0434 161 257, [yabyul@nor.com.au](mailto:yabyul@nor.com.au), [www.wollumbindreaming.org](http://www.wollumbindreaming.org)

**29–30 October** (Sat-Sun): NSW Reconciliation Council Annual Conference. Darlington Public School, Abercrombie St, Darlington, Sydney. For all those involved in reconciliation activities across the State through Local Reconciliation Groups, local government, education, health, juvenile justice, social services, youth, multicultural affairs, business and NGOs. NSWRC AGM will take up part of the day on Sunday. Contact: NSW Reconciliation Council, Sylvie Ellsmore (Executive Officer), (02) 9219 0719, [nswrc@daa.nsw.gov.au](mailto:nswrc@daa.nsw.gov.au), [www.nswrecon.com](http://www.nswrecon.com)

**29 October** (Sat): NSW Reconciliation Council and ANTaR NSW Community Information Sharing Event hosted by Redfern Residents for Reconciliation including NSW Land Rights Act, SRAs, Natural Resources, Stolen Wages, What's happening in Redfern. Redfern Community Centre, Hugo Street, Redfern, 1.30 for 2pm start until 4.00pm. All welcome. Contact: Janene (02) 9555 6138, [janene@antar.org.au](mailto:janene@antar.org.au)

## November

**2-6 November** (Wed-Sun): Bangarra Dance Theatre in 'Spirit'. A contemporary celebration of beauty, ritual and music inspired by Dreamtime creation stories from North East Arnhem Land. Choreography by Stephen Page and Frances Rings. Glen Street Theatre, Belrose. Bookings: 9975 1455.

**4-6 November** (Fri-Sun): Around the Bush Campfire: A weekend of reconciliation in action. Shades Of Brindle, Inana Community and the Women's Reconciliation Network invite you to the first of a series of four weekend workshops. Discussion and artistic expression sharing between Indigenous and non-Indigenous women. Venue: The Inana Community, Bucketty (2hrs north west of Sydney). Concession \$80.00, Waged \$100 (don't let money exclude you, please talk to us). Arrive Friday evening for Saturday. Children welcome. Limited places. Registration and info contact: Helen (02) 6249 127, [shadesofbrindle@hotmail.com](mailto:shadesofbrindle@hotmail.com) or Hanna and Vicki (02) 4376 1195, [inana@hunterlink.net.au](mailto:inana@hunterlink.net.au)

**7 November** (Mon): 'Dhakiyarr vs The King' documentary by Northern Beaches' writer and director Tom Murray. The inspiring story of remembrance and healing of two laws, two cultures and two families coming to terms with the past. A true collaboration. 7.30pm. Angophora Room, Nelson Heather Centre, cnr Jacksons and Pittwater Roads, North Narrabeen (carpark entry from Boondah Rd). Contact: Aboriginal Support Group – Manly Warringah Pittwater, Lizzie Landers (02) 9918 2594.

## Tribute to Mr W Rubuntja Pengarte

Australia has lost a senior Indigenous statesmen and artist, and a great ambassador for Reconciliation.

Mr W Rubuntja Pengarte's extraordinary life was celebrated in Alice Springs at a State Funeral in July, the first ever in the Northern Territory to commemorate an Aboriginal person.

Mr Rubuntja was amongst the first members of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (CAR) appointed in 1991, and served two terms.

An Arrernte man born in the early 1920s, he grew up around the tiny township of Alice Springs amongst elders who remembered the first arrival of Europeans. He worked for the army during World War II, and spent stints as stockman, cook, butcher, brickmaker, and racehorse trainer.

He had little formal education, but was renowned as an orator and communicator, and for his personal dignity, authority, wit and humour. A leader in the struggle for Northern Territory land rights, he is given personal credit for influencing then Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser, to pass the Northern Territory Aboriginal Land Rights Act (drafted under the Whitlam Labor Government) with few amendments.

Mr Rubuntja was Chairman of the Central Land Council from 1976-1980 and 1985-1988. His status was such that he met with every Prime Minister after Whitlam, and with the Queen and Pope John Paul II.

He embodied respect -- for traditional law and culture, for other cultures, and for the rights and dignity of individuals. He was a highly respected artist, using both the dot painting style and the

watercolour style pioneered by his uncle, Albert Namatjira. He co-authored an autobiography *The town grew up dancing with Jenny Green*.

He played a key role in building community organisations in Alice Springs, including the Tangentyere Council and Yeperenye independent Aboriginal school, and served as Chairman of the NT Aboriginal Sacred Sites Authority.

He was well loved. Many have quoted his words on Reconciliation:

*Today there are lots of people living in this country, people who have come from all over the world. We don't call them foreigners. We don't ask, where's your country? Where's your father from? They have been born here. Their mother's blood is in this country. This is their country too now. So, all of us have to live together. We have to look after each other. We have to share this country. And this means respecting each other's laws and culture. We have to work out a way of sharing this country. But there has to be an understanding of, and respect of our culture and law.*

More information available from: a parliamentary speech by NT Senator Trish Crossin, [http://www.trishcrossin.com.au/html/speech\\_2005\\_08\\_16.html](http://www.trishcrossin.com.au/html/speech_2005_08_16.html). You can order Mr W Rubuntja's autobiography through the Institute for Aboriginal Development, Alice Springs: <http://www.iad.edu.au>.



Central Land Council logo