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Beyond Sorry

ANTar ACT member Janet Hunt was at Parliament House when Prime Minister Kevin Rudd apologised to Australia's Indigenous people.

February 13th was an historic day for all Australians, when the new Labor Government gave the long-awaited Apology to the Stolen Generations. As I arrived in the early morning at Parliament House the emotion and

expectation in the air was palpable, and as the PM gave the sensitively worded Apology, tears of joy, grief and sheer relief were released among the crowd.

Symbolic it may have been – but it changed lives that day as people felt their pain had been heard and responded to.

The apology signalled a fresh start in relations between the Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. But it was, as the PM acknowledged, a 'first step'. There are many more steps on the pathway to justice and reconciliation.

The Government has set a number of targets for early childhood programs, education, employment, and health, under the broad banner of "Close the Gap" policies.

However, the particular situation of the Stolen Generations requires more specific

measures.

According to research carried out for the Ministerial Council on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (MCATSIA), Aboriginal people removed from their families suffer from poorer outcomes than other Indigenous people on a range of indicators.

For example, they have higher rates of disability, and are more likely to have been a victim of violence. They also have lower education and employment levels compared to other Indigenous people.

In Opposition, the ALP promised to 'provide a comprehensive response to the *"Bringing Them Home Report"*, which documented the forced separation of Aboriginal children from their families.

(continued p 2)



Crowds watched the apology on video screens from the lawns of Old Parliament House

**David Hunter 2008
Memorial Lecture**

**6:30 – 8.30 pm
Thursday October 16**

**with Grant Paulson
(assisted by
Sondra Paulson)**

See p 6 for details

“Our Government has made a great start in righting the wrongs of the past, but it has to take more steps before the task is completed.”

Beyond Sorry (continued)

What might a response to the Stolen Generations look like?

In 2005, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the van Boven principles, which are intended to guide states in their response to gross violations of human rights, such as the policies of forcibly removing children.

In summary, the principles call for:

1. Acknowledgement and Apology
2. Guarantees against repetition
3. Measures of restitution (such as assistance to Stolen Generations mem-

bers to return to their country and recover languages)

4. Measures of rehabilitation (such as provision of healing and counselling services to help overcome intergenerational trauma)
5. Monetary compensation.

ANTaR supports and advocates for the establishment of a Healing Foundation to address rehabilitation. The Government has announced additional funds for more Link-Up counsellors to help people re-connect with their lost families, a measure of restitution.

Sadly, to date, the Federal Government has ruled

out any monetary compensation for members of the Stolen Generation. But ANTaR will continue to advocate for compensation.

In contrast, the Canadian Government has shown leadership by providing substantial compensation to Indigenous Canadians. For over a hundred years from 1874, Indigenous Canadians were removed from their families to 130 residential schools across the nation. Their suffering closely reflects that of the Stolen Generation.

Our Government has made a great start in righting the wrongs of the past, but it has to take more steps before the task is completed.

Crowds at the apology in Canberra



More details about ANTaR's Stolen Generation Campaigning can be found on the ANTaR website – www.antar.org.au

ANTaR ACT - 2007-2008 report

2007-2008 has been a busy 12 months for ANTaR ACT. With your support, we've contributed to:

- The National ANTaR Congress in Canberra
- David Hunter Memorial Lecture
- Convergence on Canberra (in protest to the Northern Territory Emergency Response)
- National Apology
- National Sorry Day stall
- NAIDOC week stall at the Peninsula
- National 'Close the Gap' campaign

- National 'Racism makes me sick' campaign
- Launch of 'Success Stories'
- Indigenous Health Kit

Thank you!

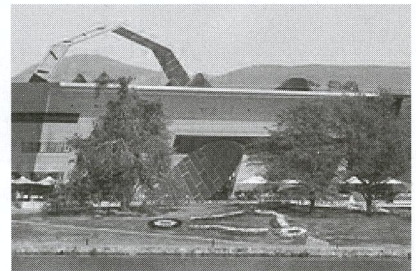
A big thank you to everyone who supported the events in Canberra - especially the Convergence and the National Apology. It was great to see people opening their homes to Elders who traveled from all over Australia to be there at the Apology.

Thank you to all our supporters for encouraging us to keep pressuring our Government to close the gap, and to keep demanding Indigenous equality.

Lastly, thank you to the local and national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations who work with us. Thank you for inviting us to co-host events, coming to our events and giving us your insight into local issues.

See you all at the Oxfam Christmas stall!

- ANTaR ACT

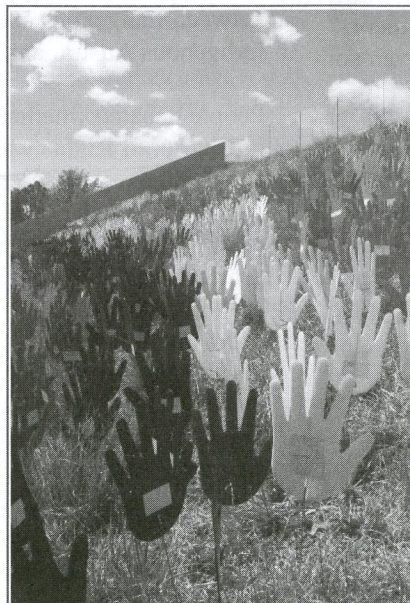


Highlights



ANTaR friends at the ANTaR National Congress, October 2007.

ANaR's Sea of Hands at the David Hunter Memorial Lecture, Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, July 2007.



Ms Christine King, Stolen Generations Alliance, at the ANTaR Congress, October 2007.

Photos by Priscilla Brice-Weller and Julia Pitman.

2020 Summit - Indigenous Issues

ANTaR ACT member, Janet Hunt, was a delegate at the 2020 Summit in April 2008.

ance Stream, which looked at models for Australia's political system, and citizen's rights and responsibilities.

national, bipartisan dialogue and formal legal recognition. They called for a new philosophy to redefine the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the nation. This new philosophy and relationship should be reflected in the instrument of formal recognition. Formal recognition could involve an agreement, pact, treaty, Bill of Rights or constitutional amendment.

Some groups debated whether formal agreement was necessary or whether it was a priority. Others were anxious that the notion of a treaty would raise concerns in some sectors of the wider community. Ultimately, the group recommended that an educational program to support formal legal recognition would be required.

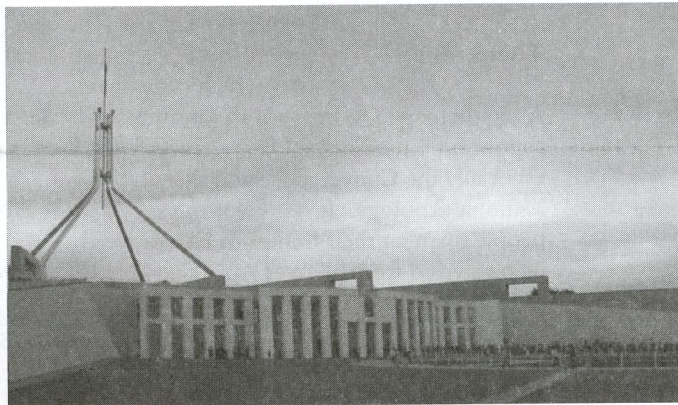
The group also recommended that the Government support the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Health

Specific ideas for reinvigorating Indigenous service delivery included:

Programs to eradicate trachoma in Indigenous children (possibly costing less than \$25 million).

Placing a child health nurse in every school, and giving



The summit was a remarkable mixture of people – people who'd never usually come together and discuss these things.

Just the fact that these hundreds of people were invited is a plus. The previous government wouldn't have even considered this kind of event.

Around 100 Indigenous people were among the 1000 participants. There was a strong Indigenous presence in a range of themes, not just in the Indigenous-specific stream.

Governance Stream

I attended the Govern-

People in the group voiced strong support for a Constitutional preamble that recognised Indigenous people. They also supported removing all racially discriminatory provisions in the Constitution and for a national process to reach a compact of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

People debated whether a Bill or Charter of Rights was best, but they generally agreed that something needed to be done to strengthen human-rights protections.

From talking to people, and reading the summit papers, I also got a sense of discussions from the Indigenous stream.

Legal Recognition

The group supported a new

'We'll know the summit will have been a success when the Prime Minister speaks an Aboriginal language in 2020.'

- a group of Indigenous people at the 2020 Summit in April.

young mothers and their babies in the community access to this service.

Families

The Indigenous stream suggested the goal that every Indigenous family to have one parent in full-time ongoing employment by 2020.

Participants agreed that governments at all levels should proactively work with families and to develop family-centred services and family-tailored solutions.

Services need to deal with urgent and deep-seated intergenerational problems, especially in remote

areas and where children are involved, to break cycles of poverty.

Culture, art and symbols

Ideas included:

Creating a cultural framework for a strategic plan to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and other cultural opportunities globally.

Establish a National Knowledge and Cultural Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, showcasing their cultural contributions.

Provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teaching in the early school years.

Reflections

The summit was very much about us putting forward our views.

The Government has committed to respond to all these ideas by the end of 2008. That's when we'll know if we were heard.

The Indigenous section of the 2020 Summit report is available at:

http://www.australia2020.gov.au/docs/final_report/2020_summit_report_7_indigenous.doc

Billabong Needs Your Help

Know anyone who could help Billabong Aboriginal Corporation?

Billabong Aboriginal Corporation has many ideas, but needs more people power!

Billabong, a not-for-profit organisation, has established an Indigenous-focused service facility for the Belconnen /Gunghalin Region. The facility is at the Stockdill Drive Community Farm, a semi-rural property on the outskirts of Holt.

Billabong needs skilled volunteers to help it grow and become self-reliant:

Billabong's Programs

- Billabong rental housing program for low-income families
- *Jumby Mulla* family support pro-

gram, including a small engine and car maintenance program for young people

- Native Seed Bank and propagation nursery & community gardens
 - IT resource centre – with training to overcome the digital divide
- Community linkages and participation activities.

Skills needed

Billabong is looking for people with skills in the following areas:

- Writing grant applications
- Project management
- Enterprise development - helping develop Billabong's ideas.
- Tradespeople with skills to help re-furbish a building as a Playgroup Centre – eg, painting, carpentry, electrical skills.

Willingness to share these some of these skills with young Aboriginal people would be desirable.

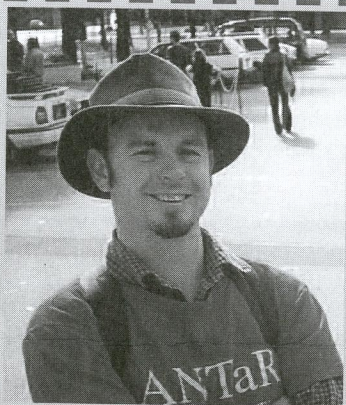
Please contact

If you know anyone who might be able to help, please ask them to contact Jim Best at Billabong : ph: 6278 4799 or 0407 429 394. Jim is a very busy man, so only serious offers of help please!



Billabong's Stockdill Property

David Hunter Memorial Lecture: A Retrospective



David Hunter was one of the founding members of ANTaR, and an enormously supportive and inspiring activist on Indigenous issues.

David was inspired by his Christian faith and membership of the Baptist community in Canberra. He tirelessly worked for reconciliation between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians, especially amongst the Baptist and broader church communities, but also in community groups such as ANTaR.

In October 2000 he was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, and he died in December 2003.

"Reconciliation is not only an issue between black and white in our community, it must extend to every unjust situation in our nation. And leadership must be shown at every level, by ordinary people as well as the political, economical and religious leaders" - Mark Yettica Paulson, David Hunter Memorial Lecture—2004

Since 2004, ANTaR ACT and Journey of Healing ACT have hosted an annual memorial lecture in memory of David's contributions to reconciliation and Indigenous rights. David was an enthusiastic supporter of both groups.

In these annual lectures we have been privileged to hear some inspirational lectures from prominent Indigenous leaders around Australia.

The memorial lecture has been a wonderful tribute to David Hunter by both keeping his memory alive and keeping the Canberra community focused on things for which he felt passionate and worked so hard.

2004 - "Healing the nation: a question of leadership" - Mark Yettica Paulson.

2005 - "Reconciliation – a unique moment in time" - Vicki Walker, coordinator of Aboriginal Catholic Ministries in Melbourne.

2006 - "Personal journeys in justice and hope" - Rev Ray Minniecon, Director of Crossroads Aboriginal Ministries in Redfern, Sydney.

Vicki and Ray spoke of practical engagement of faith and scripture with lived experience of Indigenous Australians, and the need to shape

of Indigenous Australians, and the need to shape identity that draws on cultural heritage as well as spiritual formation.

2007 - Julie Tongs, CEO of Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service. Julie related the story of the growth of Winnunga, and shared her own personal journey and energy that has made her such a well known advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT region.

- Jeanette Matthews

2008 Memorial Lecture

"The Changing Landscape for Indigenous Young People" - Grant Paulson, assisted by Sondra Paulson

Grant currently works for Reconciliation Australia and has been involved in leadership training for Indigenous youth for many years.

6:30 – 8.30 pm

Thursday 16th of October 2008

Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture
15 Blackall St, Barton, ACT

Further information: 6288 0679

Reviews



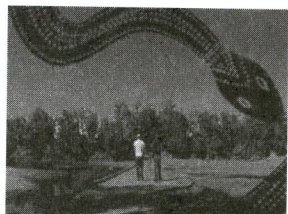
Conversations with the Mob

The first thing that hits you about Megan Lewis' *Conversations with the Mob* is its weight; this book is an extensive, in-depth view of the Martu people living at Parngurr in northern Western Australia. It's a no-holes-barred photographic journey through the many facets of this community, touching on issues as various as football to sexual abuse. The images, all stunning and in full colour, show parts of Indigenous community life that rarely make it into the press. Some of these images won Lewis a Walkley

Award in 2002.

Quotes and oral stories from Martu elders are interspersed throughout the book, along with Lewis' personal experiences. Lewis' was forced to leave standard photographic journalism behind as she lived within the community for 2 and a half years. The images particularly are evidence of a very special relationship between the author and community. *Conversations with the Mob* is published by UWA Press.

- Allison Burness



Liyarn Ngarn and The Apology

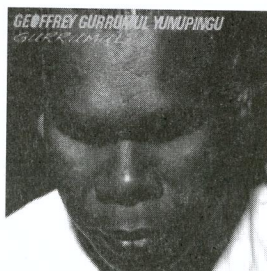
The past year has seen two Indigenous-themed documentaries screening in Canberra: *Liyarn Ngarn* and *The Apology*. Both films are informative, deeply moving, and well-worth watching.

Liyarn Ngarn explores Australian race relations through key events in the reconciliation movement, and is introduced

by Peter Postlethwaite and Archie Roach.

The Apology documents the process leading up to the Prime Minister's apology of 13 February 2008, and shares the experiences of those involved. In some ways, it fulfilled the hopes expressed so poignantly in *Liyarn Ngarn*. But it also encourages us to continue in the journey towards true reconciliation in which the Apology is only one step, albeit a significant one.

- Jeanette Matthews



Gurrumul - Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu

Gurrumul's highly emotive music and the accompanying lyrics, in Yolŋu Matha, take you on a journey through his country. Blind from birth, and playing the guitar upside down, Gurrumul's songs translate

even more powerfully on stage.

Yunupingu's first solo album literally stops you in your tracks. As the first song begins you gravitate towards a chair absorbing the beautiful music and even after the last song has finished it takes a while to return to reality.

At a recent Indigenous festival in Queensland, *The Dreaming*, the intensely shy Gurrumul silenced the normal rowdy crowd

as his angel like voice permeated the winter air.

Gurrumul is from the Gumatj nation in North East Arnhem Land. He is the front runner of the Saltwater Band and a former member of Yothu Yindi. Gurrumul's album is distributed by Skinnyfish records.

- Angela Jane

Oxfam Australia Christmas Fair

Saturday 29th November

10.00am — 4.00pm

Albert Hall, Commonwealth Avenue,

Yarralumla, Canberra

ANTaR:

"...perhaps the most significant national community-based organisation for reconciliation and Indigenous rights in Australia."

Social Justice Commissioner, Tom Calma

Join a campaign, inform yourself, donate, subscribe to the newslist, get involved!

www.antar.org.au/ACT

ANTaR is working locally and nationally on a range of indigenous issues.

One printed newsletter is sent a year, with regular updates sent via email. To subscribe, please email us with your name and email address.

If you're moving, please email us so we can update your details.

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