

ANTaR ACT



Justice, Rights and Respect for Australia's First Peoples

ANTaR ACT Newsletter

November 2012

2012 David Hunter Memorial Lecture

WHAT NEXT FOR CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION?



Guest Speaker

LES MALEZER

Co-chair of National Congress of Australia's First Peoples

A perspective from the local region will also be presented.

Tuesday 27 November 2012, 7:15-9:30 pm

Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture

15 Blackall St, Barton, ACT.

Free admission. All welcome. Refreshments will be provided.

Further information: Visit our website antaract.wordpress.com, our Facebook page or write to antaract@yahoo.com.au.

David Hunter was one of the founding members of ANTaR and the Journey of Healing in the ACT, and an enormously supportive and inspiring activist on Indigenous issues. In October 2000 he was diagnosed with multiple myeloma. He died in December 2003. ANTaR ACT hosts the annual memorial lecture in memory of David's contributions to reconciliation and Indigenous rights.



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ANTAR ACT ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013

Campaigning and Events

In 2012-2013 ANTaR ACT hosted and supported several events in the Canberra region, addressing a number of campaign issues and supporting local Indigenous groups and organisations.

The annual David Hunter Memorial Lecture focused on development in the Northern Territory, reflecting on what has and hasn't happened in Northern Territory Aboriginal communities since the intervention. Jon Altman, from Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, and John Paterson, CEO of Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance of the Northern Territory, both spoke about the impacts of policy decisions on communities and reflected on issues that must be addressed to improve community life.



Continuing its work on campaigning to reduce the high rates of Indigenous incarceration in the ACT, ANTaR ACT provided a joint submission on the ACT Government's Blueprint for Youth Justice with the ACT Council of Social Services (ACTCOSS). The Blueprint will be a strategic plan to reform the youth justice system in the ACT over the next 5-10 years.

ANTaR ACT actively participated in a number of events for Reconciliation Week. In partnership with ACTCOSS, ANTaR ACT hosted a lecture reflecting on forty years since native title (*Rights and Recognition: From Native Title to the Constitution*), including the impacts of native title on Aboriginal communities, the challenges and disappointments of native title and important next steps. Professor Mick Dodson, Director of the National Centre for Indigenous Studies at the Australian National University, provided a national perspective. Masepah Banu, Chair of the ACT Torres Strait Islanders Corporation, provided a local perspective, both in regards to his work in Canberra and his community in the Torres Strait.

In partnership with Reconciliation Australia and the ACT Parks and Conservation Service, ANTaR ACT also ran an Indigenous ranger guided walk in Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve to celebrate Reconciliation Week (see p.5). The walk provided community members with insight into local Indigenous history and culture. The event was well attended and received local media attention.

ANTaR ACT supported a number of community events and Indigenous organisations throughout the year, including providing support for the celebrations for the 40th anniversary of the tent embassy, providing sponsorship for the Yuin Monaro football team to support their participation in 42nd NSW Koori Knockout (see photos bottom p.3) and participating in NAIDOC Week on the Peninsula.

Committee and Administration

ANTaR ACT welcomed several new committee members this year. The committee continued to meet monthly at formal meetings. To strengthen its relationship with the wider ANTaR ACT membership base, committee members also attended and promoted several local events including Indigenous movies and theatre performances. Members worked hard to strengthen the committee's relationship with other local community organisations including ACTCOSS, the Journey of Healing and ReconciliACT.



Left: 2011 David Hunter Memorial Lecture, John Paterson and Jon Altman with David Hunter's sons. Above: Speakers for ANTaR ACT-ATCOSS *Rights and Recognition: From Native Title to the Constitution* talk, Professor Mick Dodson AO and Mr Masepah Banu. -Photos on this page by Joseph Lafferty.

JUSTICE REINVESTMENT FORUM

Australian National University, July 2012

By Jacqueline Phillips, National Director, ANTaR

Justice Reinvestment is a new framework for thinking about criminal justice. It has been applied with considerable success in a number of US states to reduce prison populations which were growing unsustainably. In general terms, it works by progressively diverting resources from prisons into community programs which prevent crime and build safer communities. Justice Reinvestment is based on the principle of 'localism' – for maximum impact it identifies and targets resources to high-risk communities with higher proportions of their population imprisoned.

Interest in the potential for a Justice Reinvestment approach to reduce the staggering over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in prison in Australia has grown in recent years.

In July, a one day forum on Justice Reinvestment organised by the National Centre for Indigenous Studies was held at the ANU in Canberra to bring international experts together with Australian academics, governments, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives and advocates to explore its potential application in an Australian context. We heard from USA expert Professor Todd Clear, UK prisons expert Professor Andrew Coyle CMG and UK House of Lords member Baroness Vivian Stern on the respective overseas experiences and politics of Justice Reinvestment.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander speakers included Professor Mick Dodson AM, who reflected on the failure of governments to heed the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody 20 years ago, and Dr Tom Calma who spoke about the need for a coordinated national campaign for Justice Reinvestment, drawing on his experience in the effective 'Close the Gap' campaign.

The forum was also an excellent opportunity to connect with stakeholders and advocates on justice issues from around the country. The forum raised many more questions than answers. There are many aspects of Australia's Federal governance arrangements that, being different from overseas models, raise questions about how a Justice Reinvestment framework might be applied here. Above all, the distinct challenges facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities which contribute to high imprisonment rates also raise very specific and unique issues which must be addressed if Justice Reinvestment is to prove appropriate, empowering and effective. For example, to what extent can Justice Reinvestment accommodate localised community development approaches? Overseas experience suggests that there has been limited scope for 'bottom-up', community-directed initiatives. It is fundamentally important that the adaption of Justice Reinvestment to the Australian context must include community development as a key principle in design, process and implementation.

ANTaR will continue to campaign nationally and at state and territory level for a new and more effective approach to justice, which reduces imprisonment rates and creates safer communities. We believe Justice Reinvestment should be part of the solution, but adaptations to the Australian context are necessary to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are in the driving seat.

More information about the NCIS Justice Reinvestment forum is available at:

ncis.anu.edu.au/events/past/jr_forum.php.

To join ANTaR National's Justice Campaign, go to: www.antar.org.au.

YUIN MONARO RUGBY LEAGUE TEAM AT THE 42ND NSW KOORI KNOCKOUT (SEPT. 2012)

Support Yuin Monaro in 2013! Please contact ANTaR ACT at antaract@yahoo.com.au for details on how to make a donation.



Yuin Monaro Senior team (left) and Junior, under 15 (right). –Photos: Courtesy of Yuin Monaro.

8 ways to take action to support CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION

The Government has deferred holding a referendum to recognise the First Peoples of this land until after the next Federal election, saying there is not yet sufficient public support for it to succeed. Many indigenous groups have agreed. We must build such a groundswell of opinion as will convince the next Federal Government that such a referendum will succeed! Please help.

Together, we have the power to end our Constitution's silence on the existence and prior occupation of the First Australians, the custodians of the oldest continuing culture on Earth.

The barriers to success are high: any changes must be approved by a majority of voters in a majority of States, as well as a majority of voters across the nation. We need a movement in every State and Territory, in communities across the country, calling for change. We need you to be part of it. Here's how:

1 Get informed. Go to:
www.antar.org.au/constitutional_recognition

2 Organise an event in your home, workplace, school, university, TAFE or community centre. See ANTaR's 'Event Hints and Tips'.

3 Circulate ANTaR's petition calling on Federal politicians to support changes to recognise Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander People in the Constitution and protect all Australians from racial discrimination. Go to:
www.antar.org.au.

4 Make a financial contribution to ANTaR's campaign for Constitutional Recognition.

5 Tweet the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. Tell them you stand for **#ConstitutionalRecognition**.

6 Get together with other supporters to lobby your MPs in State and Federal Parliament and encourage them to voice their support for Constitutional reform.

7 Ask if you can put up a poster in your workplace, neighbourhood centre, school, library, university, local cafe or public place. To order a free poster, go to:
www.antar.org.au or contact antar@antar.org.au.

8 Volunteer your time at ANTaR's HQ in your State. Fill out our campaign supporter registration.

For more information and to download campaign materials go to:
www.antar.org.au/constitutional_recognition.

For ACT specific questions and information contact us at:
antaract@yahoo.com.au.

Online store - Rights Stuff

ANTaR's Rights Stuff Economic Development Program works to generate economic, cultural and social benefits for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by offering a range of vibrant and thoughtful products to Australia and the world.

In doing so, ANTaR actively promotes a more just and equitable Australia. The sale of selected ANTaR products cross-subsidises community enterprises and fledgling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.

<https://antar.org.au/shop>





RECONCILIATION WALK

By Jeanette Mathews

On Saturday 2 June, at the end of Reconciliation Week, ANTaR ACT joined with the Parks and Conservation Service and Reconciliation Australia to host a ranger-guided walk in Tidbinbilla Reserve. About 30 people met on a cool drizzly day to walk together to Hanging Rock.

Ngunnawal Country Ranger Adrian Brown led the walk, pointing out plants that were used for food, healing and other uses, and explained the value of the rock shelter for the Ngunnawal people until the quite recent past. After the walk we headed to the Ribbon Gum Amphitheatre where a camp fire and hot drinks were waiting for us. Adrian and others from the Murumbung Yurung Murra group passed around artefacts and facilitated

some hands on activities that were enjoyed by children. The day reminded us of the rich culture of our local Ngunnawal people.

The photos (courtesy of Canberra Chronicle) show Bonnie Learmonth and Susie Russell of ANTaR ACT enjoying the day and Adrian helping a young participant with hands-on activities.

For the latest program of Indigenous Ranger led activities and details of interpreted self-guided walks organised by the ACT Parks and Conservation Service, go to:

www.tams.act.gov.au/play/pcl/get_out_there/ranger_guided_activity_program

What involvement with ANTaR ACT means for us: Susie Russell and Janet Hunt

SUSIE

I joined ANTaR at the start of 2012 knowing people at ANU who were involved and because I wanted to have a better sense of what was going on locally – different Aboriginal organizations that were working on different issues, and to just stay informed. It's been a good way of trying to stay on top of current events and publications. For me a really good thing has been to meet other people who have a long standing involvement with ANTaR and activism, to hear their perspectives on current events.

JANET

I helped in the formation of ANTaR in 1997 when the Native Title Act was under threat (the Howard amendments) and I was working at the Australian Council for Overseas Aid. People from Sydney and Melbourne in particular were contacting ACFOA wanting to know what to do about the changes. So we held meetings in Sydney and Melbourne to bring concerned people together. It was from those beginnings that ANTaR eventually formed as a national organisation.

I wasn't very involved locally for many years as my job was too demanding but when I returned from Melbourne to Canberra in early 2005, Charlie Pahlmann, a core ANTaR activist and friend, had died suddenly. ANTaR ACT was in shock and took some time to recover and get active again. That's when I got involved in ANTaR ACT.

I soon became a representative for ANTaR ACT on the National ANTaR Management Committee and in late 2008 I became National President of ANTaR. That was a difficult time as ANTaR had some financial challenges due to the GFC. It's very satisfying to see ANTaR now, with our dynamic National Director Jacqui Phillips providing strong advocacy and campaigning leadership and very strong relationships with Aboriginal organizations, especially the new National Congress of First Peoples.

SUSIE

I'm looking forward to more forums to discuss Constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. I enjoyed the robust and frank discussion of Native Title today in ANTaR's Mabo 20th anniversary forum and am interested in the changes to the Native Title Act that might be in the wind – for example to reverse the burden of proof for native title claimants. It's promising the links that ANTaR ACT has been making with other organizations like ACT COSS, Oxfam and Amnesty International.

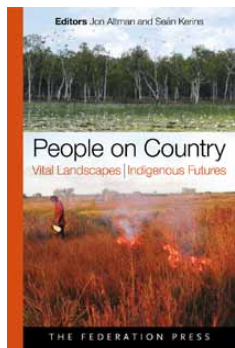
JANET

I'm keen to see the campaign to reduce Indigenous incarceration strengthen because it's a tragedy to me that so many young Aboriginal people are in our jails.

HIGHLIGHT

People on Country, Vital Landscapes, Indigenous Futures

Edited by Jon Altman and Sean Kerins, The Federation Press



Over the past four decades Aboriginal people living in remote and regional Australia have been empowered by land rights and native title laws to claim back large tracts of their ancestral lands. Today the Indigenous estate covers over 20 per cent of the continent and includes areas of globally significant biodiversity and cultural value, many now declared as Indigenous Protected Areas in the National Reserve System. But none of the Indigenous estate is in its pre-colonial condition and it faces a myriad of environmental threats.

People on Country, Vital Landscapes, Indigenous Futures draws on a diversity of perspectives to document a significant social and environmental movement that is quietly gathering momentum across this vast Indigenous estate. This series of essays, resulting from an unusual collaboration between Australian National University researchers (including current and former ANTAR ACT members Janet Hunt and Katherine May) and Indigenous land owners, tells a little-known story about Aboriginal people who are living on, working on and caring for the lands and seas that they own and manage. The ongoing struggles by Indigenous people to conserve and rehabilitate the outstanding natural and cultural values of their ancestral lands deserve wide recognition and acclaim. Focussing principally on Northern Territory's Top End and Gulf Country, the monograph also offers perspectives from New South Wales.

This book seeks to reposition Indigenous people and their caring for country activities from the margins to the very core of the growing national conversation on issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss and resource depletion. It challenges the Australian public, policy community and politicians to re-imagine the role that the Caring for Country movement, deploying a mix of western scientific and Indigenous ecological knowledge systems and techniques, must play in the proper environmental management of Australia in the 21st century.

“Have a good read of it because it means a lot to us as an Aboriginal people.”

—Jack Green, one of the book authors and Senior Cultural Advisor to the Garawa and Waanyi/Garawa Ranger programs in the Gulf region of the Northern Territory.

People on Country, Vital Landscapes, Indigenous Futures is available from good bookstores, or direct from Federation Press at www.federationpress.com.au at a publisher's discount price of \$35.00.

[288pp paperback, ISBN 9781862878938, Australian RRP \$39.95.]

Available now.

2012-13 Calendar

27 November 2012
David Hunter Memorial Lecture
antaract.wordpress.com

26 January 2013
Survival Day

13 February 2013
National Apology Day
www.nsd.org.au

21 March 2013
Harmony Day
www.harmony.gov.au/harmony-day

National Close the Gap Day
www.oxfam.org.au/explore/indigenous-australia/close-the-gap

26 May 2013
National Sorry Day
www.nsd.org.au or www.antar.org.au

26 May – 2 June 2013
National Reconciliation Week
www.reconciliation.org.au

3 June 2013
Mabo day
www.mabonativetitle.com/home.shtml

7-14 July 2013
National NAIDOC Week
website at www.naidoc.org.au

4 August 2013
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day
www.snaicc.asn.au/news-events/dsp-default.cfm?loadref=58

9 August 2013
International Day of the World's Indigenous People
www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/indigenous-peoples-of-the-world

Keep an eye on our website (antaract.wordpress.com) and Facebook page for more events, conferences, workshops and celebrations.

REVIEW

Ngapartji Ngapartji {one}

Canberra Theatre, Wednesday 25 July 2012

By Julie Evans

A group of ANTaR members went to the opening night of Ngapartji Ngapartji {one} at the Canberra Theatre in July. Using song, film, movement and word, Trevor Jamieson and the cast told the story of Jamieson's family's confrontation with a strange new world at the time of the Maralinga nuclear tests. The phrase Ngapartji Ngapartji has no exact translation, but roughly means 'I give you something, you give me something'.

I'd heard about the tests, of course, but hadn't before really understood the impact that these had on a people and their land. This was no barren wasteland, as often presented, but a fertile land precious to its custodians, most of whom authorities removed far away, while others stayed defiant and elusive, unprotected while nuclear bombs were exploded around them. The cultural imperative to not talk about the dead meant that their stories were untold.

The diverse sequences combined effectively to convey the stories. Trevor Jamieson is a powerful performer, restless, agile and intense as he talks about his family. He was accompanied by his daughter, Keischa, who is in Year 11 at Erindale College, Lex Marinos, an iconic Australian actor, Yumi Umiumare, who brought the Japanese experience of nuclear destruction and two elders from Ernabella Mission; Alison (Milyika) Carroll and Renita Stanley. At the back of the stage, a wide white wall was used for video projections. Gradually, members of the cast turned over pages, and an Albert Namajira landscape was revealed. To the right of the stage, a sweeping curl represented, variously, dunes or mountains or other aspects of country.

This was the second production that the company Big hART brought to Canberra, after Namatjira last



Ngapartji Ngapartji {one}:
Photos courtesy of the Canberra Theatre Centre



year. Big hART is a national arts and social justice company, working since 1992 with the simple approach 'it's hard to hurt someone if you know their story'.

Consistent with that, ANTaR ACT will promote and support productions that tell the stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. The Canberra Theatre has an expanded season next year with the Canberra Centenary, and will have six productions that explore different stories, including another from Big hART – see the details below. Also look out for shows at The Q in Queanbeyan and The Street Theatre. We will include information in emails and on Facebook, so ANTaR supporters can meet up at shows.

www.canberratheatrecentre.com.au

Don't miss these shows:

THE SECRET RIVER

Sydney Theatre Company

14–17 February 2013

Adaptation for stage of Kate Grenville's novel, about a convict seeking to

establish his family on the Hawkesbury River, home to a family of Dharug people, and the conflict that follows.

WULAMANAYUWI AND THE SEVEN PAMANUI

10–13 April 2013

Using songs and puppetry, this production mixes a traditional European fairytale with Dreamtime characters and stories of the Tiwi Islands.

HIPBONE STICKING OUT

Big hART

3–6 July 2013

On the edge of the Pilbara, Murujuga (Burrup Peninsula) juts into the Indian Ocean like a hipbone. Created with and for the community of the nearby town of Roebourne, this production uses music, story, movement, video and songs to tell the story of a young man who, one night, hits his head on the footpath and finds himself travelling through time from Ngurra Nyujunggamu, "when the world was soft" to the mining boom of the present.

BLAK

Bangarra Dance Theatre

11–13 July 2013

This performance is about the rites of passage for Indigenous young men and women transitioning into adulthood, ultimately reaffirming their powerful desire for belonging, to family and Country.

JACK CHARLES VERSUS THE CROWN

17–19 July 2013

Uncle Jack Charles is an Australian legend: veteran actor, Koori elder, activist and, until recently, heroin addict and cat-burglar. This is a show about his life – told by him – a map of the traps of dispossession and a guide to reaching the age of grey-haired wisdom.

HIT THE FLOOR TOGETHER

QL2 Dance

31 July–3 August 2013

A collaboration between 30 creative Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people from the Canberra region, with visiting dancers from around Australia.

ANTaR ACT

Justice, Rights and Respect for Australia's First Peoples

Become a volunteer, join a campaign, inform yourself, donate, subscribe to our newsletter, get involved!

Visit us at antaract.wordpress.com
or on Facebook.

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

One printed newsletter is sent once 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. To receive this newsletter electronically, please send your details to the email address below.

Email: antaract@yahoo.com.au

Phone: 0429 850 423

Post: ANTaR ACT, PO Box 7138,
Watson ACT, 2602

ANTaR

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

– Tom Calma,
Former Social Justice Commissioner

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