

Future of Indigenous nursing degree uncertain

The Howard Government has authorised Sydney University to shed its Indigenous nursing degree. Undergraduate nursing may be closed down altogether at Sydney, with students transferred to other institutions. The Commonwealth Minister for Education, Brendan Nelson, claims that the Indigenous nursing program will continue at other institutions, but has not explained the details of how that will happen.

Indigenous health is a national crisis in Australia. It is widely agreed that better access to primary health care and a larger health workforce, particularly well-trained Indigenous health care workers, are essential to tackle this crisis. This was recently reinforced by the publication of the Australian Medical Association's (AMA) third *Report Card* on Indigenous health, based on research by Access Economics, which estimates that there is a **funding shortfall of \$452.5 million per year** in funding for Indigenous primary health care and health workforce. Only an additional \$40 million over the next four years was offered in the 2004 Federal budget.

A trained Indigenous health workforce is especially important and the AMA estimates that an additional 2,570 Indigenous nurses need to be trained. News that a specialist Indigenous nursing course faces an uncertain future is therefore very worrying.

The move has been criticised by many, including the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU), the NSW Nurses Association and the non-government parties in the Senate. ANTaR NSW urges its supporters to inform themselves about this issue and fight to protect specialist nursing training in Indigenous health.

The Bachelor of Nursing (Indigenous Australian Health) was introduced at Sydney University only

in 2003. It operates from campuses in Sydney and Orange. The Orange-based course offers short intensive blocks of study that enable students to continue to live in their communities and overcome some barriers they typically face in gaining tertiary qualifications. There is preferred entry for Indigenous applicants, Indigenous staff

continued back page



The National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) recently named Senator Aden Ridgeway as its Indigenous Person of the Year. An Australian Democrat Senator for NSW, Aden Ridgeway is currently the only Indigenous person in the Federal Parliament and is standing for re-election as leader of the Democrat NSW candidates team for the Senate. The National NAIDOC Committee grants this award yearly from nominations by the Indigenous community. Those previously honoured include Cathy Freeman, Jimmy Little, Deborah Mailman and Evonne Goolagong-Cawley.

ANTaR NSW President's Report

The period since the April newsletter has been so busy that we are surprised to be already planning the 2004 Annual General Meeting, scheduled for 20 November (see insert for details).

As we go to press the date of the federal election has just been announced. The National Office has produced the *ANTaR Federal Election Kit 2004*. This can be downloaded from the ANTaR website (www.antar.org.au) and printed copies are available from the ANTaR office (9555 6138). A federal election insert with this newsletter includes extracts from the election kit and details about Indigenous candidates for the Senate and the House of Representatives in NSW. We encourage our members to follow up candidates in their electorates and ask their views on issues of justice for Indigenous people, and to support the campaigns of Indigenous candidates wherever they can.

In August, ANTaR NSW convened a second meeting of individuals and organisations on the issue of Stolen Wages (see report page 4) and has prepared a submission for the Aboriginal Trust Funds Reparation Scheme Panel, available on the NSW ANTaR website.

Margaret Brennan, Sea of Hands Coordinator, reports there were so many requests for displays during Reconciliation and NAIDOC Weeks that a school that missed out has already booked for 2005. If you want a Sea of Hands in your area contact Margaret through the ANTaR Office (9555 6138).

Please put our AGM meeting date, 20 November, in your diary. We look forward to seeing you there!

**Claire Colyer,
President, ANTaR NSW**



New Staff Member for ANTaR

Janene Collins is a welcome new face in the ANTaR Office, working from Monday to Wednesday – part-time for ANTaR NSW and part-time for ANTaR National.

Janene comes with extensive experience in both paid and voluntary positions for community organisations. Working with Radio Skid Row, with its commitment to Aboriginal content, put her in touch with Aboriginal people, their issues and music. The experience of working with Aboriginal people helped her appreciate the urgent need for justice for Indigenous peoples and the importance of organisations such as ANTaR.

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We welcome volunteer assistance with
this newsletter and all other aspects of
ANTaR's work – please contact us as
above.

The Eurobodalla Walking Together Group

'Eurobodalla', Land of Many Waters, is a beautiful coastal strip of forest and lakes on the NSW South Coast, from the middens of Murramarang, north of Batemans Bay, to the sacred mountain Gulaga, and Wallaga Lake near Narooma. 'Walking Together' signifies Koori and non-Indigenous people working for social justice and Reconciliation.



Eurobodalla Walking Together Group started in 1993, inspired by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation's *Learning Circle* kit of materials for studying Aboriginal history, culture, and the need for social justice.

From the beginning, relations with the Koori community were good. For several years, earlier members had joined in Yuin Elder Anne Thomas's women's dreaming camps. This connection led to a special focus at the Women's Spirit Event at Murramarang in 1999. As well, members have been invited to attend several of the Yuin Elder Council Conferences.

The Walking Together Group has organized or participated in National Reconciliation Week events and NAIDOC Week celebrations, in co-operation with the Cobowra Land Council at Moruya and other local land councils.

Events such as elder story telling under the trees in Moruya during school holidays became a very popular way to teach children (and their parents) about Koori history, culture and customs. With support from Eurobodalla Shire Council and the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs, the project continued for a number of years.

Sea of Hands installations with their strong message of Reconciliation and social justice have been the focus of Reconciliation Week events in Batemans Bay, Moruya, Narooma, and Bermagui. Four of our members took part in ANTaR's 'Round Australia Tour' taking the *Sea of Hands*

to Uluru and elsewhere in the Northern Territory and Western Australia.

Cooperation with Eurobodalla Shire Council was greatly assisted by their decisions to set up an Aboriginal Consultative Committee, and to fly the Koori flag each day at the Council chambers with the Australian and New South Wales flags. Council also supported an Aboriginal Art exhibition over a number of years, to which the Walking Together Group contributed one of the prizes. Council has also helped the Walking Together Group with distribution, postage, and meeting places.

A week after the historic Sydney Harbour Bridge Walk on 28 May 2000, Eurobodalla had its own Walk across the Moruya River Bridge, with an estimated 3000 people, a remarkable result for a small regional area.

We also work with the *Tribal Warrior* boat group, and on health issues and camping site campaigns.

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NSW Aboriginal trust funds: panel looks at repayment scheme



Participants at the Redfern meeting, August 2004, including representatives from: ANTaR, Trade Union Committee on Aboriginal Rights, NSW Aboriginal Land Council, Link-Up, Public Interest Advocacy Centre, NSW Reconciliation Council, Indigenous Law Centre, Crossroads Aboriginal Ministries, Kinchela Boys' Home Inc and NSW Sorry Day Committee

In February 2004, the NSW Government's liability on Aboriginal trust funds was dramatically exposed via a leaked draft cabinet minute in the *National Indigenous Times*. In response, Premier Bob Carr apologised to the Aboriginal people of NSW, publicly admitting that from 1900 to 1969 many people had their wages, pensions, family endowments, inheritances and lump sum payments paid into trust accounts. "Those funds were held in trust, and our predecessors failed that trust," Mr Carr said.

Since then, Premier Carr has committed the present NSW government to make amends and announced the creation of the Aboriginal Trust Funds Reparation Scheme (ATFRS).

Announcing the scheme, Carr emphasised that payments will not be capped, that claimants will be paid what they are owed with interest, and that they will not have to surrender their right to take legal action against the Government. It is not yet clear how interest on monies owed or lost-opportunity compensation will be calculated.

As a first step, a three-member panel was established. Its members are: Indigenous lawyer, Ms Terri Janke, the Chairperson of the Murdi Paaki ATSIC Regional Council, Mr Sam Jeffries, and Mr Brian Gilligan, former Director-General of National Parks and Wildlife Service. In recent months, the panel has sought comment from the Aboriginal community, taken submissions, and

met with potential claimants. It is due to report to the Government in October 2004.

Meanwhile, since January 2004 ANTaR NSW has hosted meetings and conferred with potential claimants and other individuals and organisations to canvass views and offer support. These included Senator Aden Ridgeway, the NSW Aboriginal Land Council, the NSW Reconciliation Council, the Federation of Traditional Owners Council of NSW, the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC), Link-Up (NSW), the NSW Sorry Day Committee, the Indigenous Law Centre (ILC) at UNSW, the Trade Union Committee on Aboriginal Rights (TUCAR) and the Labor Council of NSW. These consultations have assisted with the research and drafting of a fact sheet on Aboriginal trust funds by the ILC, which is available at www.ilc.unsw.edu.au.

ANTaR NSW's submission to the ATFRS panel can be found at www.antar.org.au. We would like to hear from ANTaR members and supporters who could work on this issue, including (but not only!) people with past experience in government records research, relevant legal areas, and knowledge of government benefits and wage awards for the period 1900 to 1969. We also need help with general areas of the support effort. If you can help, please get in touch: janene@antar.org.au or phone 02 9555 6138.

Background on the 'Stolen Wages' in NSW

From the early 1900s, the wages, benefits and entitlements due to many Aboriginal people were paid into NSW Government-controlled trust accounts. For example, Aboriginal apprentices were paid a small amount of pocket money and the balance of their wages was sent to trust accounts kept by the Aborigines Welfare Board. Child endowment payments were also diverted to the Board. Administrators controlled release of the funds and many Aboriginal people never received money which was legally theirs.

Over the ensuing decades, much of the money has never been accounted for, and for many individuals, records are missing from Government files. No payments have been made to Aboriginal claimants since 1969 and in recent decades, the NSW Government has resisted the efforts of claimants to retrieve their money.

This issue is not limited to NSW. Over the past three years, surviving claimants in Queensland have been campaigning intensively for restitution of wages, savings and other entitlements.

At a meeting held in Redfern in August 2004, particular concerns were expressed about the process that the government has initiated, especially the limited time for consultations and the location of the scheme within the Department of Community Services (DoCS). ANTaR NSW and others are now seeking an extension of the consultation period to include a second stage of negotiations, in which the panel would present a draft proposal and work more closely with the Aboriginal community on the details. It is critical to ensure that the right sort of scheme is created, that processes are culturally safe, and there is adequate support for claimants and their families.

Although reparation is mentioned in the naming of the ATFRS, the monies held in trust by the NSW Government are monies owed to Aboriginal people and which must be repaid. The issue of past human rights abuses and their restitution by way of reparations remains 'unfinished business' in the process of reconciliation.

Bill to abolish ATSIC goes to Senate inquiry

The Howard Government has been at odds with ATSIIC almost continuously since 1996 and in June 2004 introduced legislation to abolish it.

Under the plan, representatives elected by Aboriginal people will be replaced by a purely advisory committee, hand-picked by the government. Indigenous-specific programs will be returned to mainstream departments. All this carries strong echoes of the 1960s and the failed paternalism of the past.

The government was able to do a lot financially and administratively to dismember ATSIIC without this legislation, but a Senate inquiry puts on hold the complete abolition of elected national representation. It is an opportunity to scrutinise what the government proposes in place of ATSIIC and allows the voices of Indigenous people and organisations to be heard in a debate about their future. Many, including ANTaR, lobbied hard for the Bill to be sent to a Senate committee. They succeeded, and the committee has received around 150 submissions and will hear evidence from witnesses before reporting to the Senate by 31 October 2004.

Submissions and transcripts can be found at www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/indigenousaffairs_ctte. ANTaR encouraged its supporters to make submissions and provided information on its website, including the key issues at stake and useful links (see www.antar.org.au). The proposed abolition of ATSIIC is a critical moment in Indigenous affairs and everyone has an obligation to learn about this issue. Indigenous people should be supported to develop their own governing institutions and to maintain an independent Indigenous voice.

NSW Ambassadors for Reconciliation Program launched

Reconciliation Week 2004 saw the launch of the NSW Reconciliation Council's (NSWRC) Ambassadors for Reconciliation program at the Sydney Opera House. Community leaders and members of Local Reconciliation Groups were an appreciative audience to inspirational addresses by Sir William Deane, Senator Aden Ridgeway, Ms Linda Burney MP and NSW Aboriginal Affairs Minister, Dr Andrew Refshauge.

The Ambassadors program aims to encourage eminent Australians and community leaders to speak out and show their support for Reconciliation and Aboriginal rights. Most importantly, the NSW Ambassadors will raise awareness of the 'unfinished business' which must be dealt with before reconciliation can be achieved, including the continuing disadvantage, discrimination and opposition to self-determination faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In the words of NSWRC Chairperson, Mr Paul Newman, the Ambassadors program seeks to "recognise some of the important work which is being done at the grass roots level, and to commend the leadership of those members of the community who have the vision and courage to speak out in support of a rights-based Reconciliation agenda".

Ms Linda Burney MP and Senator Aden Ridgeway were welcomed as the inaugural NSW Ambassadors for Reconciliation. Each echoed the opening remarks of Sir William Deane, who reflected on the nature of leadership and the important role of the grass roots in the national consciousness.



Former Parliamentary Secretary for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Col Markham, from the Illawarra, is the NSWRC's first Regional Ambassador for Reconciliation. Throughout his career, which includes a significant term on the NSWRC Executive, Mr Markham has been an inspiration to individuals and community groups that 'live Reconciliation' every day.

Future Ambassadors will be selected from a range of sectors, including business, the arts, sport and youth. Community nominations and suggestions for future Ambassadors are welcome. For more information about the program or how to register with the Council contact 02 9219 0719 or email nswrc@daa.nsw.gov.au.

Legal Aid Services under threat

For over thirty years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (ATSILS) have been essential organisations for Indigenous Australia. They respond to community needs, providing first line legal defence, and have been powerful advocates for Indigenous political and cultural rights since the early 1970s.

For some time, the Howard government has intended to open Indigenous legal aid services to competitive tendering, despite warnings from three Parliamentary inquiries and two government audits. In July, Attorney-General Ruddock announced that it would go ahead.

ATSILS currently receive government funding of about \$40 million per year, much less than needed. Even so, they provide about 90% of legal aid for Indigenous people, nearly all of it in criminal law. Funding levels prevent many from providing full services across criminal, family and civil law, and some have been criticised for a relative under-servicing of women.

An ATSIC trial of competitive tendering, excluding 'for-profit' providers, recommended limited tendering, with more help to established ATSILS. Its recommendations were not taken up. Even people who believe that competition in legal aid is possible or desirable, feel deep concern about Mr Ruddock's proposals. Further cost-shifting to the states and territories could do great damage.

Tendering and management of contractors would be run by Mr Ruddock's own department. This is likely to ensure that his requirement for tenderers to "provide Indigenous leadership" will be hopelessly compromised from the start.

Cultural appropriateness and community confidence will be hard to secure if tenderers have no ties to the people they serve. Anyone needing legal aid or advice knows how vital it is to have confidence in the lawyer, and know that they are working for the client's agenda.

The government fashion for privatisation and competition is itself under question, given inappropriate and ineffective service delivery by organisations ranging from multinational

corporations to churches. Mr Ruddock offers support to develop 'commercial contracting' expertise, but in a time of very high incarceration rates, we might be better off investing in *better services* instead of better tenders.

The National Aboriginal and Islander Legal Services Secretariat (NAILSS) is monitoring developments. The Indigenous Law Centre at the University of New South Wales is assisting. To join an e-mail list or to share information, contact ilc@unsw.edu.au.

More information:

- ATSIC Office of Evaluation and Audit, *Evaluation of the Legal and Preventative Services Program*, January 2003
www.atsic.gov.au/about_atsic/Office_Evaluation_Audit/Docs/LPSPrept.pdf
- Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee, *Inquiry into Legal Aid and Access to Justice*, final report June 2004
www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/legcon_ctte/legalaidjustice/report/report.pdf
- Australian National Audit Office, *ATSIS Law and Justice Program*, November 2003
www.anao.gov.au/WebSite.nsf/Publications/EA1872D915D751B6CA256DD70004E737
- Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, *Indigenous Law and Justice Inquiry*, audit continuing – unlikely to report before election
- Senate Select Committee on Administration of Indigenous Affairs, inquiry continuing, due to report by 31 Oct. 2004

ANTaR

National Congress

This year's National Congress in Brisbane, attended by delegates from state and territory ANTaRs, the National Office and guests from the Queensland Indigenous community, was an inspiring occasion for everyone present.

Indigenous speakers stressed the continuing importance of ANTaR's work, giving heart to Indigenous people, educating non-Indigenous Australia and keeping pressure on governments. The support base for Indigenous rights and reconciliation remains strong despite the unfavourable political climate.

ANTaR Indigenous Reference Group member Olga Havnen, from The Fred Hollows Foundation, reminded the Congress that without sustained non-Indigenous support, long-term change won't happen. Political impact has been generated by three campaigns: Health Rights, the Queensland Stolen Wages postcard campaign and ANTaR Victoria's *Restore Indigenous Voice* Campaign. ANTaR's Indigenous Health Rights Statement has been widely distributed, and the Indigenous Health Rights Action Kit is available for individuals and local groups.

Guest speaker, Gwen Schrieber, of Queensland's Aboriginal Coordinating Council, spoke of her work in remote communities and the Cape York Substance Abuse Strategy. She called for training within communities to address serious problems of alcohol misuse, violence and welfare dependency.

On reconciliation, Jackie Huggins, co-chair of Reconciliation Australia (RA), spoke of the different, but complementary roles of Reconciliation Australia and ANTaR. RA remains committed to the final recommendations of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation made in 2000.

Guests Aunty Ruth Hegarty and Tiga Bayles gave an update on Stolen Wages, and expressed their appreciation for the support of ANTaR and the Queensland Stolen Wages Coalition. With trade union support, the Queensland ALP Conference has supported the reopening of negotiations with Indigenous people (see page 4 for a NSW update on this issue).

Robbie Williams, ATSIC Zone Commissioner for South-East Queensland and community elder, Aunty Ettie Gleeson, spoke about the abolition of ATSIC. Aunty Ettie Gleeson made a heartfelt statement: "I want to know if we are going to have a voice, if we are going to have someone speak up for us". ANTaR campaigned for a referral of the legislation proposing ATSIC's abolition to a Senate Committee and encouraged supporters' submissions to the subsequent Senate Inquiry (see ANTaR's submission at www.antar.org.au).

Mary Graham, from the Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action (FAIRA), spoke of the need for a 'peace accord' between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australia. Sean Brennan, Director of the *Treaty Project* at UNSW, explained how Native Title has created opportunities for some, while delivering severe disappointment to others. Kevin Smith, of the National Native Title Tribunal described the burden that negotiations place on traditional owners but noted that initial agreements on land can lead to more comprehensive ones on health, infrastructure, employment and housing.

Nicole Watson, a young Indigenous academic, argued that violence against Aboriginal women is not new, but a continuing product of colonisation and the denial of Indigenous rights. Matt Fuchs, from ANTaR at University of Queensland, spoke about the ReconciliACTION Network of youth organisations, which focuses on what young people can do in their own communities to advance Reconciliation.

Want to find your local group?

Joining ANTaR NSW is a good way to help the Reconciliation process. Many people want to do this work within their local community. ANTaR activities are part of this, but there are also many Local Reconciliation Groups and Aboriginal Support Groups around the State. Some of these local groups are 'organisational members' of ANTaR; some are not but are welcome to join, or to use ANTaR resources like the Sea of Hands.

To find the local group nearest you, the NSW Reconciliation Council website has a pretty complete directory – visit www.nswrecon.com and select 'Local groups' (or phone the Council on 02 9219 0719).

For snapshot news and updates about Reconciliation events, including many local group contacts, you can subscribe to Reconnet by sending an email to reconnet-subscribe@green.net.au. Reconnet is a free service.

ANTaR NSW is working hard on establishing a more regular email subscription news and contact list of its own – volunteer assistance welcome!

Myall Creek Commemoration



Following the 1838 Myall Creek massacre of 28 Wirrayaraay women, children and old men, for the first time in Australian history a group of white people were found guilty of murdering Aboriginal people. The memorial service, held yearly since 2000, is well attended by a broad cross-section of the local community including descendants of both the perpetrators and the murdered. They acknowledge the callousness and brutality of the massacre, yet are able to remember the events together in a spirit of healing and moving on together. Here, Lyall Munro Snr, Chair of the ATSIC Kamilaroi Regional Council, speaks at this year's memorial service in June, which was attended by about 200 people. Myall Creek is 25 km north of Bingara in Northern NSW.

NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act under review

A major review of the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Rights Act is well underway and Aboriginal people in NSW are encouraged to find out about it and have their say.

Announcing the review in May 2004, the NSW Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Dr Andrew Refshauge said "The Land Council system has delivered enormous benefits to Aboriginal people in its 20 years of operation - but I want it to do better."

Dr Refshauge said that a major concern was financial management and governance problems within the NSW land council system.

The NSW Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) has welcomed the review and reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring improved economic, social, political and cultural outcomes for Aboriginal people in NSW. NSWALC has itself begun a major regional restructure to streamline

services and has taken steps to ensure efficient management of rural properties.

A three person task force has been appointed to conduct the review. Its members are the NSWALC Administrator, Mr Murray Chapman, the Registrar of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act, Mr Steven Wright, and the Director General of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Ms Jody Broun.

NSWALC is conducting a public information campaign. The review is likely to lead to a major overhaul of the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act, and it is important that Aboriginal people in NSW are aware of the possible implications of any major changes.

Information about the review, including a background paper about the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act, is available on the NSWALC website www.alc.org.au/news/alra/index.htm.

Coming Events

• **September 17(Fri): Tranby Art**

Festival Launch. 6.00 pm, Tranby Aboriginal College, 13 Mansfield St, Glebe. Finger food, drinks, guest speaker. Preview of art works for sale from Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists and a series of short films from the Metro Screen Lester Bostock Scheme. Tickets \$30 (launch only). Details and bookings: 9660 3444. The Festival continues on September 18 and 19, with food and entertainment throughout weekend.

• **October 16 (Sat): Talking and Working Together.** A

Reconciliation dinner with guest speakers Linda Burney and Rick Farley. Organised by Armidale ANTaR. Contact: Christine Ross (02) 6772 0035

• **October 22-24: Wollumbin Festival - Reconciliation and Environment.**

Community-based festival in Tyalgum village, Tweed Valley hinterland. A focus on Indigenous recognition and reconciliation with Bundjalung elders speaking on traditional culture and values. Info: (02) 6679 7034 or website www.wollumbindreaming.org

• **October 29-30: NSW Reconciliation Council's Annual Conference.**

Following on the Council's AGM, the two days of the Conference are open to people involved with the Reconciliation movement in NSW. Details: (02) 9219 0719

• **November 20 (Sat): ANTaR NSW Annual General Meeting.**

ANTaR office, first floor, 19A Quirk St, Rozelle, speakers and lunch starting at 1.00 pm, AGM commences at 2.00 pm. All welcome.

• **November 25 (Thurs): Address by Professor Larissa Behrendt.** 7.30-9.30pm.

Sutherland District Trade Union Club, 57 Manchester Rd. Gympie. Larissa, Director of Jumbunna at University of Technology, Sydney, will talk about her books, *Achieving Social Justice and Home*. Organised by the Sutherland Shire Citizens for Native Title and Reconciliation. Enquiries: (02) 9523 9514

Metropolitan Land Council and Lane Cove Council MoU



The Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council and Lane Cove Council in Sydney recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding that covers issues of recognition and consultation. Here Robert Welsh (Chairman, Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council) presents Lane Cove Mayor, Ian Longbottom, with the painting 'Journey of the Spirit', by Keith F. Stewart. Flanking them are Paul Coe (Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council CEO, on right) and Peter Brown (Lane Cove Council General Manager).

Other NSW councils with similar agreements with Aboriginal organisations include Leichhardt and Warringah. The City of Sydney Council has also agreed to move towards an agreement following an Aboriginal Tent Embassy protest in Victoria Park.

NOTICE

ANTaR NSW 2004

Annual General Meeting

Saturday November 20th (election permitting) at the ANTaR office, first floor, 19A Quirk St, Rozelle. Lunch 1.00 pm (donations welcome) AGM starts 2.00 pm. All welcome.

Come and hear guest speakers, and help us review ANTaR's activity over the year and the prospects for 2005. For information about nomination procedures for the 2005 management committee, and AGM resolutions, see separate flyer sent to all ANTaR NSW individual and organisational members. You can also check with the office on (02) 9555 6138, the website at www.antar.org.au, or by email to antar@antar.org.au. Members must be financial to vote at the AGM.

Membership and Renewals

If you are not already a member of ANTaR NSW, please consider joining. Membership runs from AGM to AGM. Memberships must be renewed before the opening of the AGM to exercise a vote - by mailed cheque made out to "ANTaR NSW", or by payment on the day of the AGM. Recent memberships and renewals (since 1 June 2004) are valid for this year's AGM through to the opening of the 2005 AGM. If you are unsure of your membership status, please contact the office or come early to the AGM and check with us there. Annual membership fees help us produce this newsletter, run the Sea of Hands, and fund our other activities around the State. Please note that if you are a donor to the National ANTaR donor scheme, and receive the Sea Change newsletter, this does not automatically make you a member of ANTaR NSW, which is administratively separate - but we'd love to hear from you! Annual membership fees are:

- Individual rate: \$20, or \$10 unwaged and concession
- Organisational rates: \$40 for small organisations (e.g. local reconciliation groups), \$100 for large (e.g. state-wide) organisations. For a new membership or renewal form, please see our website www.antar.org.au (select 'About ANTaR' and 'State ANTaRs') or ring the office on (02) 9555 6138.

NEW BOOKS

Home by Larrisa Behrendt

Professor Larissa Behrendt is a leading legal scholar and commentator, and author of the excellent book on Indigenous rights, *Achieving Social Justice* (Federation Press,



2003). Now she has published her first novel, *Home*, which won the 2002 David Unaipon Award for Indigenous writers. The novel follows the stories of Garibooli, the narrator's grandmother, and her family across the

generations. It was when Larissa stood at the place where her own grandmother was stolen as a young girl that she felt compelled to write the novel. "In the current political climate, what gets lost in the ongoing 'history war' debates is Aboriginal history and experience, yet these remain unchanged despite the debates. I've decided to write this book to give life to these stories," explains Larissa. *Home* is published by UQP and sells for \$22.95.

Honour among nations?

Edited by Marcia Langton, Maureen Tehan, Lisa Palmer and Kathryn Shain.



ANTaR supporters will remember that in 2000, the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation recommended that Australia pursue a treaty process with its Indigenous peoples, to resolve the unfinished business of Reconciliation.

A well-informed debate about that important issue is difficult in today's political climate. For that reason alone, the publication of a new book on treaties and agreements with

Indigenous peoples is very welcome. *Honour among nations?* contains contributions from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous authors from Australia, New Zealand, and North America, including Marcia Langton, Gillian Triggs, Joe Williams and Noel Pearson. It features a preface by Sir Anthony Mason, former Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia. The book covers diverse topics: treaty-making in New Zealand and British Columbia; land and maritime issues; political rights; Torres Strait Islander self-government; race discrimination in Australia; the Timor Sea Treaty; and copyright issues for Indigenous authors. *Honour among nations?* can be ordered from Melbourne University Publishing in hardcopy for \$39.95, or electronically at \$5 per chapter or \$30 for the whole book. Details at www.mup.unimelb.edu.au

Future of Indigenous nursing degree uncertain

continued from page 1

New Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner appointed

Mr Tom Calma has been appointed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner for five years, the position formerly held by Dr Bill Jonas. Mr Calma has also been appointed as acting Race Discrimination Commissioner for a one-year term.

Mr Calma is an Aboriginal elder from the Kungarakana and Iwadja tribal groups whose traditional lands are south west of Darwin and on the Coburg Peninsula in Northern Territory, respectively. He has been involved in Indigenous affairs at a local, community, state, national and international level and worked in the public sector for over 30 years.

Mr Calma has broad experience in public administration, particularly in Indigenous education programs and in developing employment and training programs for Indigenous people from both a national policy and program perspective.

Until his appointment on 12 July 2004, Mr Calma managed the Community Development and Education Branch at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services (ATSIS).

Join ANTaR's Regular Donor Scheme

ANTaR is an independent national non-profit organisation that has supported Indigenous rights in Australia since 1997. You can support this important work by joining the ANTaR Regular Donor Scheme, and/or you can become more involved in our work in New South Wales by joining or donating to ANTaR NSW. Contact the ANTaR Office (02) 9555 6138 or visit the website: www.antar.org.au

are employed in the Faculty and there is a space for Indigenous students – all associated with promoting success in Indigenous education.

The degree is closely integrated with the general nursing degree, which may be axed if Sydney University proceeds with its plans. This complicates the issue, because keeping the specialist Indigenous course may involve saving an undergraduate nursing program at Sydney, a matter for the University Senate and Minister Nelson. In general, of course, ANTaR supports other institutions also involved in specialist Indigenous nursing education.

Many critics say we need to create new programs, not put existing ones at risk. It is not known what other institutions might do if they are left to pick up the Indigenous nursing program from Sydney. What will happen to a tailor-made course as it passes from one institution to another?

Minister Nelson must protect and expand specialist Indigenous nursing training. We encourage you to write to him, stressing the importance of primary health care, a bigger workforce and more Indigenous health workers in tackling the crisis in Indigenous health. Register your serious concern about Sydney University's plans. Ask him to explain how he can approve a transfer of places to other institutions, even conditionally, without first seeing details of how the specialist Indigenous nursing program will be protected. Request a reply explaining precisely how the positive features of the course will be maintained whatever happens and what broader action the government will take to boost specialist nursing courses in Indigenous health.

More information:

- www.nteu.org.au/bd/sydney/savenursingandorange/campaign (NTEU).
- www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-63S2AD (AMA)
- Minister: B.Nelson.MP@aph.gov.au or The Hon Brendan Nelson MP, House of Representatives, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600 or 02 6277 7460.