

Circle Sentencing: Returning Jurisdiction to the Community

In our last issue we reported that the detention rate for Aboriginal juveniles is 15 times the non-Indigenous rate. NSW needs better policies in the area of sentencing. As part of ANTaR's focus on justice issues in NSW, we now take a look at circle sentencing.

Severe over-representation in detention for Indigenous men, women and kids is a sign that the Western criminal justice system is not working well in many Aboriginal communities. Circle sentencing is one attempt at reform which aims to create more appropriate sentencing options for Aboriginal offenders. But beyond the end result of what punishment a wrongdoer receives, circle sentencing has much more ambitious objectives.

It is a rights-based approach to government policy and reform in Indigenous affairs, based on re-empowering Aboriginal communities and returning to them some of the internal jurisdiction and governance they enjoyed before colonialism, assimilation and welfarism took them away. Circle sentencing proponents aim for a sentencing system with Aboriginal community involvement and control, that closes the cultural gap between Aboriginal communities and the mainstream courts, provides appropriate and effective support to Aboriginal defendants and to their victims and which ultimately reduces offending in Aboriginal communities.

The idea emerged from Canada and is based on the belief that, as a recent discussion paper put it,

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Jodie Patterson and Susan Moylan Coombes at the launch of Manly-Warringah Pittwater Aboriginal Support Group's great new website: see page 13

Practical Reconciliation: Way Too Slow and Only Half the Story

Focusing on disadvantage while ignoring the rights agenda is misguided and doesn't work.

The people's movement needs support, resources and national leadership but the Commonwealth is letting it down on all three fronts. Governments should speed up changes which return genuine decision-making power to Indigenous communities. Agreed targets and clearer information about government performance are needed to ensure genuine improvements occur in the lives of Australia's Indigenous peoples.

These are some of the findings of the Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee report on the progress of Reconciliation and a review of "Practical Reconciliation" by the ANU's Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research.

See full story, page 6

NSW PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings to all our members and supporters, and a warm welcome to the many new members who have joined us this year.

2003 has been an encouraging year for us at ANTaR NSW. Over the past couple of years we have been aiming to strengthen and consolidate our movement and build stronger relationships with local groups and Aboriginal community organisations. As a result of changes in our constitution, we are now able to offer a new category of group membership and I am pleased to report that a number of ANTaR groups and local Reconciliation groups have formally joined ANTaR NSW.

The development of our new look newsletter during the year is an important part of our growth and development. We are deeply indebted to Frennie Beytagh for coordinating our newsletter (single-handed!) over several years. Now a writing and editorial team of four or five people (including Frennie) is producing the newsletter as we believe it is an important way of communicating, informing and encouraging the Reconciliation movement.

A highlight of the year was the meeting of Local Groups and members in July. HREOC Commissioner Bill Jonas was a strong and informative guest speaker and just as valuable was the strength and encouragement everyone gained from hearing about the achievements of local groups in so many regions. It confirms that, despite discouraging times, the real work of Reconciliation and our support for Indigenous rights continues.

We plan to hold more local group meetings in 2004 and to build on the work that has been done by developing information and resource kits to share our ideas and successes. With a Federal election due in the coming year, watch out for ANTaR's election kit as well. This will be produced to help local groups campaign to get rights issues on the election agenda, and to let our politicians know that we care, and we vote!

The year isn't over yet and there are still some great events to come. Patrick Dodson in

conversation with his biographer Kevin Keffe on 4th December will be a memorable event (see notice in this issue). Our AGM is also coming up on December 6th and I look forward to seeing you there. Don't forget to forward your nominations in good time! Our end of year party immediately after the AGM will be a great opportunity to relax and share more stories, and to round off 2003, there will be a roof top party to see in the New Year.

Finally, a sincere thank you to our hard working committee and to all our volunteers for your time, commitment and support. Best wishes to all for the holiday season and an even better 2004!

Claire Colyer
President, ANTaR NSW



Part-time Coordinator for NSW ANTaR

We are delighted to welcome Ros Lajoie as our part-time Coordinator. Ros was born in Mauritius, moved to Australia when she was nine, and

grew up in Sydney. Ros has a long term commitment to ANTaR, having worked as a volunteer from 1997 to 2002, assisting in fund-raising, co-coordinating the telephone tree and volunteer management.

Ros has worked in the community sector in various roles since 1985 and has an Economics Degree and a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Leisure Studies. Last year she completed a Masters in Community Management.

In her role as ANTaR NSW Coordinator, Ros will help us to continue to build an active support base, coordinate volunteers and provide information and support to members.

Ros will be available in the office one day per week, but you can leave a message at the ANTaR office any time on (02) 9555 6138 or by email antarnsw@antar.org.au.

LOCAL GROUP PROFILE

Armidale ANTaR

Armidale, in northern NSW, is a small city of 21,000 where Indigenous people make up more than 5% of the population. There is a rich spread of Aboriginal organisations, with an independent Aboriginal-run primary school, an Aboriginal Medical Service, a Community Development Employment Project, an Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Keeping Place, a branch of the Kamilaroi Legal Service, a Regional Land Council and several housing organisations, as well as Indigenous staff and specialised units at many government offices. There is also the Oorala Centre at the University of New England, where around 200 Indigenous students are enrolled.

Armidale ANTaR has been going for over six years. We are an informal group, but to give an idea of the 'reach' of the organisation, our newsletter, published three or four times a year, has a mailing list of 250, with another 250 copies circulated in public places and at local Aboriginal organisations.

The newsletter is our main activity. Each issue profiles a member of the local Aboriginal community, reports recent local ANTaR and Aboriginal activities (especially youth activities) and includes book reviews and articles on relevant national/political issues and sometimes sport. Our positive reporting of local events makes the newsletter welcome throughout the community.

A couple of years ago we ran a month long season called *Our Mob in Film*, in conjunction with our local independent cinema. Films included *Yolgnu Boy*, *Radiance* and *Serenades*. The premiere of *Yolgnu Boy* was both a fundraiser and social occasion, and its success led to further film nights for *Rabbit Proof Fence* and more recently, *Black & White*. It's a special feeling watching such movies in an Indigenous and non-Indigenous audience. Our next film project is a screening and discussion of *The Tracker*.

The *Sea of Hands* has been held twice in Armidale: a huge event in 1998 including an all-day concert (where over 1000 people signed the Sorry Book), and during Reconciliation Week 2002 we had a big display at the screening of *Rabbit Proof Fence* followed up by displays of brightly coloured buckets of Hands in the foyers of major public buildings, including the Council, library, art museum and hospital.



Co-convenors of Armidale ANTaR:
Jaluka Rose Quinlin (left) and Barbara Finch

The *Sea of Hands* concert led to the production of an industry-standard CD, *Together Together*, on the theme of reconciliation with original tracks from 17 local performers.

We join in NAIDOC Week activities, and in our community's major Autumn Festival Parade. We also organise occasional social events, the most recent being a lunch at the Keeping Place, open to all, that turned into an afternoon singalong.

Perhaps our most powerful event in the last couple of years was an all-day event called 'Unfinished Business'. It was held in conjunction with the Keeping Place and was attended by over 60 people. It was loosely structured, which led to some outspoken contributions, largely from the Aboriginal people attending, including life stories; contemporary facts of life for the Aboriginal community; the effects of institutionalisation, both in the past and currently in the juvenile justice system; and the need for 'reconciliation between black and black'. Many of the issues raised are beyond local solutions, but everyone recognised that we have to start from where we are. The success of this event was largely due to the organising committee being led by the previous ANTaR co-convenor Christine Ross, of the New England Aboriginal Corporation.

This year we reviewed our activities and engaged Charles Trindall to facilitate a Future Directions Workshop. Over two evenings we clarified some issues and plan to continue our lobbying, social interaction, and community education, all with particular emphasis on youth.

We can be contacted at Armidale ANTaR, P.O. Box 1603, Armidale NSW 2350, or phone 02 6772 4667.

Notice of Annual General Meeting of ANTaR NSW Inc

The Annual General Meeting of Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation NSW (NSW ANTaR) Inc. will be held on

**Saturday 6th December 2003,
1.00 pm
at the ANTaR Office: 1st floor, 19A Quirk St,
Rozelle, Sydney.**

All members are welcome to attend in a voting capacity (individual members and representatives of organisational members); ANTaR supporters are welcome to attend as observers.

A **Special Resolution** will be put to the AGM to increase the size of the ANTaR NSW management committee by two positions. The Committee currently has four office bearers (see below) and three ordinary members.

The Special Resolution reads:
“That Rule 14(1)(b) of the Association be amended to read ‘5 ordinary members’.”

Election of Office-bearers and Ordinary committee members

Nominations are now open for the following positions on the NSW ANTaR Inc. Committee of Management:

- President
- Vice-President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- 3 Ordinary Committee Members [or five if the Special Resolution is passed].

Candidates nominating for office-bearer or ordinary committee member positions must be individual members of the association under Rule 2(1).

Nominations must be made **in writing, signed by two members of the Association** and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate (which may be endorsed on the

nomination form), and must be delivered to the Secretary **at least seven days** before the AGM (post to: The Secretary, NSW ANTaR Inc., PO Box 1176 Rozelle NSW 2039).

Nominations may be made on the form sent to members with this newsletter. Alternatively, copies of nomination forms may be obtained from the ANTaR office (phone 02 9555 6138, email leigh@antar.org.au), or may be made in other written form (not email) that conforms with the above requirements. Nominations must specify the position being sought. Separate forms should be submitted for each position. For clarification of the duties of the positions, or of the membership status of nominees or nominators, please contact the Secretary, Bob Makinson, well before the deadline (02 9144 2406 a.h., 0408 116 488 mob., bob.makinson@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au).

End of Year Party!!

The AGM will be followed by our end-of-year function, starting at 1.30 pm at the same venue. Food provided but BYO welcome. All members, supporters, and especially all ANTaR Volunteers, most welcome.

ANTaR New Year's Eve Function

Come and watch the fireworks with us from an inner-Sydney rooftop venue!

This is a fundraiser so we are suggesting a \$20/person donation (\$10 concessions).

Bookings are essential so please call ANTaR office on 02 9555 6139 or email leigh@antar.org.au.

Further details at time of booking.

Putting Communities Back in Charge of Health

As part of ANTaR's continued focus on health, in this issue we ask what are Co-ordinated Care Trials (CCTs) and why so many people say they must be part of the picture in turning around the dreadful health statistics for Indigenous people in Australia.

A lot of good intentions and a fair bit of money have gone into trying to improve Indigenous health – but as our article in the last edition of this newsletter showed, not only have there been few improvements, Indigenous health is actually declining.

After 30 years of official rhetoric about self-determination and self-management, it is almost incredible how little has changed to support genuine empowerment and community control. Non-Indigenous Australia has a long way to go to lift its game on Indigenous health but CCTs are a step in the right direction. These trials in some Indigenous communities have four main features:

1. Genuine community control

Instead of fragmenting responsibility for Indigenous health across a dizzying array of Commonwealth, State and Territory departments and agencies, CCTs call for the careful establishment of a representative regional Aboriginal health board which has legitimacy in the eyes of the community and the power to make the decisions about funding and services – decisions that are currently made by bureaucrats.

2. Pool the available funds

Under a CCT, Commonwealth and State or Territory governments pool the money they would have spent on health in that region and pass the decision-making power as to how the funds and resources should be used to the regional Aboriginal health board.

3. Cash out funds from mainstream programs

Indigenous people generally access mainstream services like Medicare (Medical Benefits Scheme) and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) at much lower rates than non-Indigenous people. In

practice, this means that less is spent on primary health care for Indigenous people, even though their health needs are so much greater. Under a CCT, Health Commission funds equivalent to what is normally spent on average per person on the mainstream population through Medicare and PBS are “cashed out” and added to the pool of funds, so the overall level of funding for each person in the region is much more equitable.

That means a major net increase in health spending in CCT regions – for example, a recalculation on this basis meant an extra \$1.5 million went to the Katherine West region, site of a CCT for the last few years.

4. A holistic approach

Because resources and decision-making power are vested in a representative regional health board, Indigenous people can re-shape service delivery in the ways they have been calling for, for many years. With predictable income, a CCT allows Indigenous communities to take a strategic and holistic approach, emphasising preventative health and community-driven solutions. The results so far are very encouraging. The Northern Territory Government recently reported the following improvements in the Katherine West region since commencement of the CCT:

- double the number of Aboriginal health workers
- double the primary care doctor visits to communities
- more mobile primary care services
- locating GPs in the region for the first time
- new women's and aged care programs
- better dental and specialist services
- increased capacity for effective Aboriginal governance in health amongst Board members.

ANTaR is tracking the progress of CCTs as part of its campaign focus on Indigenous health and we will keep members informed. In the meantime, the following sources are valuable further reading:

National Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO):
<http://www.naccho.org.au/>

Fred Hollows Foundation submission on Capacity Building in Indigenous Communities:
www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/atsia/indigenouscommunities/subs/sub036.pdf

Edmund Rice Centre's Just Comment: *Indigenous infant mortality: an Australian health crisis*:
www.erc.org.au/issues/text/im03.htm

Practical Reconciliation: Way Too Slow and Only Half the Story

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The Senate Committee inquiry into progress on national Reconciliation was instigated by leading Indigenous figures Dr Bill Jonas and Senator Aden Ridgeway out of frustration at the Commonwealth's failure to respond to the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation's (CAR) blueprint from the year 2000. The Committee's report *Reconciliation: Off Track* reaffirms the wisdom of CAR's national strategies and final recommendations, which were based on exhaustive community engagement over ten years from 1991.

Monitoring Practical Reconciliation was produced by the ANU's Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research. Using census data from 1991 as a baseline for the decade of Reconciliation, it compared statistics on Indigenous disadvantage across two five year periods. The 1996 and 2001 census figures give a report card on five years of Hawke/Keating policies as against five years of what the Howard Government calls 'practical reconciliation'.

The CAEPR study shows that the Howard Government has performed no better than its predecessor in tackling disadvantage, despite an Indigenous affairs policy focusing almost exclusively on practical measures in the areas of employment, education, housing and health. In relative terms things

have got even worse on some fronts in the past five years, as Indigenous people have not shared in the benefits of sustained economic growth and wealth creation. In education, 'the most important indicator of future prospects' the study says the Howard Government has failed 'even on its own terms'.

CAEPR highlights the limitations of practical reconciliation: a disregard for social, cultural and spiritual needs, for the impact of historical disadvantage, for the restitution of commercially valuable property rights in resources.

That analysis echoes the stance taken by the Senate Committee. It found that the Commonwealth had fully agreed to only one of the CAR's six final recommendations: that the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) implement a national framework to overcome Indigenous disadvantage. Even on that score the Committee said progress was far too slow and after two years there was no information on targets and benchmarks in key areas like community services, employment and health, let alone concrete signs of improvement.

The Committee saw no justification in the Government closing its eyes to the wider Reconciliation agenda. The Commonwealth must attend to the social, cultural and human rights issues which Indigenous people say are important to them, the Committee said. Constitutional change, a legal framework for resolving unfinished business by negotiation, more resources and support for the people's movement and Reconciliation Australia – none of these should be put on hold while disadvantage is addressed.

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What about you Mr Carr?

The Senate Committee report found that the Howard Government was dragging the chain on national Reconciliation and had allowed the momentum of the year 2000 to be lost. One of the really surprising things in the report was to find that the NSW Government did not even bother to make a submission to the inquiry.

Every other government understood that by calling the inquiry the Senate was trying to put Reconciliation back on the political agenda. It was asking governments at all levels to show they take seriously the challenge issued to them by CAR's final report and the ten-year Reconciliation process.

Reconciliation isn't just about the Commonwealth Government and the people's movement. State and Territory governments have a lot of responsibility for past failures and injustices and the CAR recommendations singled them out for special attention.

The Committee's report shows that some very positive things have happened in other States since CAR wound up in December 2000. Perhaps the Carr Government has done some good things too. But who would know, if they can't even be bothered lodging a submission, 'despite repeated contact' from the Committee?

You can help put more pressure on all governments to revive the Reconciliation agenda. Go to www.antar.org.au and follow the links to 'Reconciliation Inquiry Report' for more information on ANTaR's letter writing campaign. The Senate has created a platform, let's use it!

Reconciliation cannot be achieved without addressing broader structural causes, said the Committee, and the Commonwealth Government must take a lead. It cannot be **either** practical reconciliation **or** the rights agenda. They are two halves of the same story and progress must be made on **both** fronts at the same time.

The Committee's report is well put together and easy to read. It gives a snapshot of where Reconciliation is going well and where it has gone off the track. In its recommendations it returns to the

wisdom of the community which participated in the decade of Reconciliation. The blueprint is there, the country needs to act on it.

Altman and Hunter, *Monitoring Practical Reconciliation* (CAEPR, 2003) www.anu.edu.au/caepr/Publications/DP/2003_DP254.pdf

Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee, *Reconciliation: Off Track* (October 2003) www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/legcon_ctte/reconciliation/report/report.pdf

Letter From London

Hi folks at ANTaR.

Here I am back in Sydney again. As always, I am amazed that few people are aware there is a London based Aboriginal Rights group, so I am delighted to have this opportunity to tell you about ENIAR.

We formed in 1998 from the European-based work of individuals and organisations (including ANTaR UK), committed to human rights and social justice for Indigenous Australians.

Our aim is to promote awareness on Indigenous issues and to provide information for Indigenous Australians about Europe and international organisations. ENIAR is not affiliated to any government or commercial bodies, is not-for-profit and is run entirely by volunteers.

Our activities over the years have included the signing of the 'Sorry Book' outside the Australian High Commission in London, assisting with the UK promotion of 'Rabbit Proof Fence', and protests to coincide with the visit of Prime Minister John Howard and his 53-strong non-Aboriginal delegation, to mark the centenary of the UK Act leading to Australian Federation.

In 2000 we launched www.eniar.org, which has now grown beyond all our expectations and



Richie Ah Mat, Chairman Cape York Land Council, Sea of Hands, London 2000

includes fact sheets, European and Australian media coverage, a guide to Indigenous support organisations, ENIAR and other organisations' press releases, events gallery, European events and much, much more. We would greatly appreciate your feedback on the site. You can contact ENIAR at info@eniar.org

ENIAR campaigns on issues that attract international attention, for example Jabiluka, Land Rights and 'The Stolen Generations'. We are currently supporting ANTaR Queensland's 'Stolen Wages Campaign'.

If you know of or have campaigns running that may be relevant to Europeans please get in touch. Anyone visiting Europe who would like to get involved with ENIAR, please contact us.

Also, while I am in Sydney I would be happy to speak to any groups about ENIAR.

Sue Storry,
ENIAR (European Network for Indigenous Australian Rights)



Doris Pilkington Garimara addressing an audience at University College London, 2002

Coming Events

The NSW ANTaR Newsletter appears three times a year. ANTaR members are also updated by email and special bulletins from time to time.

Please advise us by 1 March 2004 of coming events in your locality and help us spread the word. The next edition of our newsletter appears in April 2004.

Contact us at: NSW ANTaR Inc.,
PO Box 1176, ROZELLE NSW 2039
phone 02 9555 6138, email leigh@antar.org.au,
or email antarnsw@antar.org.au.

November

15 November (Sat): Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative pre-auction preview and last days of travelling exhibition Native Title Business – Contemporary Indigenous Art. 3pm to 6pm at Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Cooperative new exhibition space, 55-59 Flood Street, Leichhardt. All ANTaR members and supporters are invited to view two fabulous exhibitions and meet artists. Further information from Boomalli, (02) 9560 2541 or ANTaR (02) 9555 6138.

16 November (Sun): Ryde Hornsby Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and members of the local Aboriginal Community: Family Fun Day for Aboriginal families at Lane Cove National Park, Casuarina Point – site 30, 10.00 am to 3.00 pm. Fun sport, craft and cultural activities for kids of all ages and discussion on helping our kids to get a good start in life and helping our communities to develop networks in Ryde,

Hornsby and Lower North Shore area. RSVP Louise del Popolo, 9228 3354.

19 November (Wed): Lightning Strikes! Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative Fundraising Auction of contemporary Indigenous and non-Indigenous art at 55-59 Flood St, Leichhardt. An opportunity to give your practical support to Indigenous artists. Boomalli is an independent cooperative by and for Aboriginal artists which promotes Aboriginal culture and independence through the visual arts. Contact: (02) 9560 2541.

19 November (Wed): Reconciliation for Western Sydney Workshop: Making a Difference in Reconciliation and Justice for Indigenous People at 7.30pm, Karabi Community Centre, Wentworthville, Reg Burne Meeting Room. Mareese Terare from the Education Centre Against Violence, Parramatta will talk about how we can move forward and find ways to increase our courage and influence. Contact Maria Maguire on 9896 3839.

20 November (Thurs): Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) and The International Law Association (Australian Branch) Seminar: Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customary law: International and domestic implications at 3.00pm, The Wesley Centre, Smith Room, 220 Pitt St Sydney (note change to venue previously advertised). Speakers: Dr William Jonas AM, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner at HREOC and Ms Megan Davis, Faculty of Law, University of NSW. For further details: website at www.humanrights.gov.au/social_justice/. To join the Indigenous mailing list send a blank email (no text in the body of the message) to: join-indigenous@list.humanrights.gov.au.

20-21 November (Thurs/Fri): Kempsey-Macleay Women for Reconciliation Workshop Presentation: Dispossession, Inequality & Poverty – Indigenous Issues of Poverty at CHEC Campus, Coffs Harbour. For further details: Christine.Latta@community.nsw.gov.au.

21 November (Fri): Older Women's Network Book Launch – Steppin' Out and Speakin' Up – oral histories of Aboriginal Women to be launched by Linda Burney, MLA, 9.30am - 11.30am at The Strangers' Lounge, NSW Parliament House, Macquarie

Street, Sydney. Admission free.
RSVP essential (02) 9247 7046 or
email ownnsw@zip.com.au.

26 November (Wed): Women's Reconciliation Network Workshop: Challenging Racism – a partnership project with South Sydney City Council and in collaboration with Redfern Residents for Reconciliation. Registration 9.30am at Alexandria Town Hall, 73 Garden Street (nr Henderson Road) Alexandria. Cost per person: Corporate: \$30, Community: \$15, Concession: \$10. Bookings essential by 14 November. Further details contact: Sally Fitzpatrick (02) 9564 2935 or email sfjw@iprimus.com.au.

29 November (Sat): Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council Cultural Awareness and Reconciliation Family Films: *The Stolen Generations* and *Babakiueria* 2-5pm at Anglican Church, Mann Street, Gosford. Free Entry. For further details contact Phil Bligh, 435 1 2930.

December

4 December (Thurs): ANTaR and Gleebooks present Patrick Dodson and Kevin Keefe author of *Paddy's Road: Life Stories of Patrick Dodson* in conversation. 7.00pm sharp at The Valhalla Cinema, 166 Glebe Point Road, Glebe.
Book through ANTaR 9555 6138 or Gleebooks 9660 2333 or email books@gleebooks.com.au. \$8/\$5 conc & gleeclub. Discount for ANTaR members.

6 December (Sat): ANTaR NSW

Annual General Meeting and End-of-Year Party at 1.00pm, 19A Quirk Street, Rozelle – see page 4 this issue for further details.

10 December (Wed): Women's Reconciliation Network Spirit Event guided by our special guests and mentors. 10.00am – 3.00pm at 36 Collins Street (just off Johnston Street), Annandale. For further details contact Sally Fitzpatrick on 9564 2935 or email sfjw@iprimus.com.au

February

12-14 February 2004: Conference: "Indigenous Knowledge and Bioprospecting" at Macquarie University. Sponsored by Association for Baha'i Studies (Australia & New Zealand); Co-hosted by Macquarie University's Warawara Dept of Indigenous Studies, Centre for Environmental Law and Biology Department. Appropriation of Indigenous knowledge by pharmaceutical companies is a serious problem. Conference themes include better ways of protecting and valuing traditional knowledge. Further information: Chris.Jones@law.mq.edu.au or laurel.ocs.mq.edu.au/~cjone005/index_conference.htm.

Paddy's Road:

Patrick Dodson and Kevin Keefe

Paddy's Road: Life Stories of Patrick Dodson is the story of one of the most influential Aboriginal voices in Australia of the past three decades. Biographer Kevin Keefe reveals the influences that shaped Patrick Dodson – an early life marked by tragedy and dislocation, a stint as a priest in young adulthood and finally his role as the 'father' of Reconciliation.

This extraordinary family history tells how he and his family have built relationships with non-Aboriginal Australians of good will and compassion, affirming what they have in common rather than what sets them apart.

Join Patrick Dodson and Kevin Keefe in Conversation on Thursday 4th December, 7.00 pm sharp at Valhalla Cinema, 166 Glebe Point Road, Glebe.

Cost \$8 / \$5 concession. Discounts for ANTaR members and volunteers phone: Leigh at ANTaR 9555 6138 or Gleebooks on 9660 2333 or email books@gleebooks.com.au. Bookings are essential.

NSW Reconciliation Council Update

The NSW Reconciliation Council (NSWRC) is an independent non-government organisation funded by the NSW government. It is the representative body for Reconciliation in NSW. Its Board includes Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal regional representatives and persons with special qualifications selected each year by NSW's 52 Local Reconciliation Groups (LRGs). The NSWRC held its annual State Conference and AGM in Sydney on the 24th & 25th October 2003.

Conference delegates heard from inaugural chair, Ms Linda Burney MP, who gave the keynote address. Ms Burney urged those working at the grass roots to "keep our stories strong" in the face of the current political climate. She stressed the importance of local action, highlighting the face-to-face negotiations that take place between LRGs and Local Government. "Flag flying is important," she said. She also stressed the importance of individual action, maintaining strong community networks and the role of the NSWRC in supporting those networks.

Also focussing on Local Government action, Dubbo's Deputy Mayor, Cr Warren Mundine spoke at the Conference dinner and said that currently 32, or 2%, of NSW's elected Local Government representatives are Aboriginal. In the 1980s, there were only four. In light of forthcoming Local Government elections, Cr Mundine laid down a challenge to delegates that 4-5% Aboriginal representation could be achieved.

Several initiatives to support LRGs were announced, including a Local History Grant Project. A new regional structure was proposed which will provide greater participation and better communication through the establishment of Regional Reconciliation Committees. The Council also announced the seven recipients of the first round of its Small Grants Program.

The 50 or so delegates at the Conference made a series of recommendations to the Board including working with ANTaR on the development of a Local Government Tool Kit and continuing to work toward the co-ordination of a national theme for Reconciliation week.



The NSW Reconciliation Council AGM in October closed with a song about Reconciliation written by Aboriginal woman Mereki. Performed by Priscilla Orcher-Wightman and Judith Light of Lismore.

Office Bearers for the Council Board were elected at the AGM. However, several irregularities were identified in the process, including insufficient notice for nominations and confusion surrounding the LRG status of certain groups and the voting eligibility of their members. The newly elected Board has called for a re-election in early December at a Special General Meeting and will operate as a caretaker Board until then.

If you would like to know more about the NSWRC, or how your local group can get involved, please contact Acting-Executive Officer Sylvie Ellsmore on 9219 0719 or sylvie.ellsmore@daa.nsw.gov.au or check the website www.nswrecon.com.



Protocols for Working with Indigenous Communities

The people's movement has been marked by many non-Indigenous Australians making an effort for the first time to meet and find out more about the Indigenous people within their community, to acknowledge their status as first peoples for the area and to work with them on areas of common interest. Cross-cultural communication, however, is not always easy and we all have a lot to learn about breaking down barriers of discrimination and ignorance.

A useful booklet was published recently by Community Cultural Development NSW (CCDNSW), a peak group interested in community-based arts activity which has tangible social and community, as well as artistic, outcomes.

Right now CCDNSW are working in Western Sydney and in collaboration with the Indigenous communities of the area, they have published *Respect, Acknowledge, Listen: Practical Protocols for Working with the Indigenous Communities of Western Sydney*. Although specifically tailored to that area of Sydney, it is full of good practical advice of a general nature for getting to know your local Indigenous community and working with them on the basis of mutual respect and understanding. The booklet is now on the web at www.ccdnsw.org/ccdnsw/default.php or, for hard copies, a second print run will be available soon (call CCDNSW on 02 9821 2210 or email: info@ccdnsw.org).

Stolen Wages campaign

A national postcard campaign was launched in Brisbane in August. A set of three cards tells the story of the missing, unpaid and underpaid wages belonging to Aboriginal people who were forced to work over the past century, yet had no control of the wages they were paid.

Union and community groups, including the Australian Council of Trade Unions, Queensland Council of Unions, Victorian Trades Hall Council and Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation (ANTaR) have generated and endorsed the campaign, which will distribute 50,000 of the postcards.

The set of three cards includes one to support the unions' backing of the campaign, one to Queensland Premier Peter Beattie and one to keep which has details of the fighting fund which is being established.

You can obtain postcards by emailing a request to antar@antar.org.au or by phoning (02) 9555 6138.

Music – Whichway 2003

The music industry is getting behind Indigenous music with the third edition of *Whichway*, an intensive artist development program for Indigenous musicians and bands. *Whichway* gives talented Koori musicians the opportunity to spend a week in Sydney recording their music, learning about the industry and developing the tools, knowledge and networks needed in the competitive music industry. The initiative was developed by MusicNSW, a non-profit music industry association. For more information and application forms, contact MusicNSW (02) 9247 7540 or email tracyred@musicnsw.com.

ANTAR NATIONAL OFFICE REPORT

The National Office has been very busy over the past couple of months. Our current priority is the annual end of year appeal, which goes out in mid-November. The appeal letter is written by members of ANTaR's Indigenous Reference Group. Please look out for it in your mail boxes.

Activity at the office has been building over recent months with the hosting of the ReconciliAction Network and increased volunteer activity. We are also fortunate to be welcoming a new full-time employee, Hilary Blackman, who joins us as Communications and Fundraising Manager. Hilary has extensive experience and will greatly enhance our capacity to respond to issues and to raise the profile of ANTaR's work. We are looking forward to having her on board.

To cater for the increased activity in the office we are currently expanding our work stations, thanks to a grant from Uniting Care. We are also lucky to

have the services of award-winning Indigenous web-design company, Cyberdreaming, in re-designing ANTaR's national website. The new site will provide an up to date, state-of-the-art resource for ANTaR supporters as well as the broader community.

On the campaign front, the National Office has begun to implement our new strategy, developed at a special planning meeting at Terrigal at the end of July. Later this month the National Management Committee will be meeting in Canberra to further develop the strategy and to meet with politicians and key Canberra-based organisations.

We are also currently in discussions with Reconciliation Australia and other stakeholders on a major new national reconciliation initiative which will be launched early next year. Planning is also under way on a joint national conference next year with A Just Australia on race and discrimination issues.

For updates on what's happening visit the "What's New" link on our website at www.antar.org.au.

David Cooper
National Coordinator



Granny Smith Festival, October 18, 2003, Eastwood

For the 4th year in a row the brilliant colours of the Sea of Hands installation flashed in the sunlight on the hill above Eastwood's oval, at the annual Granny Smith Festival, sponsored by the City of Ryde. More than 80,000 people attended the festival on October 18. This Sea of Hands installation was set up by Epping/Beecroft and Bennelong and Surrounds Residents for Reconciliation.

ANTaR members and local groups meet

The Local Groups Meeting on July 27 attracted local groups and ANTaR members from across Sydney and as far afield as Newcastle, Maitland and Eurobodalla.

A highlight was a talk by Bill Jonas (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commissioner), outlining the Indigenous human rights situation in Australia, and the impact of government policy.

Each group also reported back about its activities, highlighting the huge range of events and work being undertaken in communities across the State. This session was enormously encouraging and highlighted how much can be achieved by the dedicated efforts of even just a few people.

Points that came out strongly included:

- The need for local and State groups to consult more closely with Koori communities to ask what they need in support and action;
- The need to work with local government to create more Aboriginal long-term employment with Councils, and better access to training and professional development;
- Encourage establishment of Local Council Indigenous advisory committees;
- Better networking to pass on information about what has worked and what has not;
- Recognise the increasing receptivity in local government to reconciliation policies;
- Recognise and use NSW State legislation, giving local government the ability to develop social plans for significant groups in the community;
- Use the (2000) Council for Reconciliation “Road Map” document in developing local government activity;
- The need to link with local government organisations (including the Indigenous Local Government Network), and develop our own people’s movement regional bodies (the Northern Sydney Region Reconciliation Network model).

The meeting resolved to start collating materials, through ANTaR’s State office, towards a Local Government and Local Group resource kit. If your group hasn’t already been contacted about this, you will be soon – or you can email Ted.nettle@optusnet.com.au. The kit will include information on relevant State and Local Government structure and policies, funding sources, projects that have worked, ways of developing public involvement, models of group activity and media resources. The process will include input from Indigenous sources. A comprehensive kit, in hardcopy and on the Web, will take time and effort – ANTaR is seeking funding to support a top-line resource.



Website designers Mark and Vanessa Walsh at the launch of the Manly Warringah Pittwater website.

Local Group Launches Website

One of the longest running reconciliation groups in the country, Aboriginal Support Group: Manly Warringah Pittwater recently celebrated the launch of its great new website at www.asgmwp.net. Partly funded with a grant from Warringah Council, the website includes information about the group’s activities, local and national Indigenous issues, a calendar of local happenings and a high-quality resources page directing users to relevant organisations, events and information. The ASG acknowledges the assistance of Susan Moylan Coombes and the Guringai Local Aboriginal Educational Consultative Group in reviewing the website content for cultural appropriateness.

The meeting also discussed plans for a national ANTaR campaign on Indigenous health. An important point made from the floor was the need to tackle both State and Federal governments (to break the buck-passing cycle) and aim for achievable initiatives at State level. We need to make clear that health issues like reduced life expectancy, are not just remote-area issues – they apply to urban communities as well. Thirdly we need to link with and take leads from local Koori communities and the professional health bodies, aiming for a common approach.

A campaign on health needs to be closely linked with other areas of Indigenous concern, to maintain the broad “rights agenda” of land rights, native title, justice issues, employment and education.

The July 27 meeting also heard reports on the recent Native Title Conference in Alice Springs, and on *Sea of Hands* activity.

The meeting finished with a round-the-table of comments. Nearly all felt the conflict between the urgent need to stop the backward slide in Federal government policy, and the sheer joy of hearing of so much effective Reconciliation work in local communities. More such meetings are planned.

IN BRIEF

New Books

***When I was little, like you,* Mary Malbunka**

A vibrant celebration of a uniquely Australian childhood in which Mary Malbunka uses pictures and English and Luritja words to share her experience of growing up in the early days of Papunya, an Aboriginal community north west of Alice Springs. Suitable for children aged 5-12 and older; published by Allen and Unwin; copies available from ANTaR (\$29.95+postage).

Papunya School Book of History and Country

The book begins “At Papunya school, *ngurra* – country – is at the centre of our learning. It is part of everything we need to know.” The book was the result of an extraordinary collaborative process and was written and illustrated by school students and staff with members of the Papunya community. It won the Children’s Book Council Eve Pownall Award for information books. Published by Allen and Unwin; available from ANTaR (\$16.95+postage).

Aunty Joan Cooper: Through the Front Door



This 132 page book details the story of Darug elder, Aunty Joan Cooper and her family.

Her great-great grandfather, Yarramundi, was one of the first inland Darug people to meet Captain Arthur Phillip; her great grandmother, Maria Lock was the first Aboriginal person enrolled in a school in Australia and one of the first literate Aboriginal women in the country.

The book, written by anthropologist Dr Dianne Johnson, traces Aunty Joan’s life and the family tree through to Aunty Joan’s own great grandchildren. Aunty Joan was married to a Gundungurra man, Digger Cooper, and lived in an area of Katoomba known as ‘The Gully’ which is now recognised under NSW legislation as an Aboriginal Place. She is the first Aboriginal elder to be formally recognised by the Blue Mountains City Council.

The book was launched in March 2003 in the Grand Dining Room of The Carrington Hotel in Katoomba by Freda Whitlam and Blue

Mountains City Council Mayor, Jim Angel. It was very fitting for Aunty Joan to be honoured in this way – her mother, Eva Webb, had worked at The Carrington as a washerwoman in the early 1900s and had always had to enter through the back entrance.

Blue Mountains ANTaR were actively involved in finding funding for this project as well as organising and staging the launch. Copies \$25 (plus \$3 postage), available from Mountains Outreach Community Service, Lawson, 02 4759 2354 or mocs@pnc.com.au.

IN BRIEF

Whitewash at Gleebooks

Editor Robert Manne and four contributing essayists – Lyndall Ryan, Martin Krygier, Dirk Moses and Robert van Krieken – addressed a packed house at the Sydney launch of *Whitewash: On Keith Windschuttle's Fabrication of Aboriginal History* at Gleebooks. Manne, who is Professor of Politics at La Trobe University, has described Windschuttle's book as 'one of the most astonishingly reactionary books that has been published in Australia for a very long time and taken seriously'. The collection of essays in *Whitewash* responds to Windschuttle's book and includes two by Aboriginal authors Peggy Patrick and Greg Lehman. *Whitewash* is published by Black Inc. \$25.95

Moving on ...

After an enormous contribution over 18 years to Tranby Aboriginal Cooperative College, Jack Beetson has resigned as Executive Director. Among his many achievements, Jack was responsible for developing Tranby College as a supportive learning environment delivering quality educational programs to Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. All friends and supporters of Tranby wish Jack well. Oomera Edwards, Tranby's Senior Course Coordinator, will act as Executive Director for an initial period of six months.

Remember '67

A commemorative plaque is to be placed on the footpath at 109 Pacific Highway in North Sydney, to recognise for posterity the historical significance of the 1967 referendum. Faith Bandler lived in a flat at North Sydney in the years leading up to the referendum, working with people like Oodgeroo (Kath Walker), Shirley Andrews, Pearl Gibbs and human rights campaigner Jessie Street. Faith later wrote *Turning the Tide*, her account of the Aboriginal rights movement.

Native Title Business & Lightning Strikes! - a special art event

ANTaR members and supporters are invited to two unique art exhibitions at the **Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Cooperative**, 55-59 Flood Street Leichhardt, NSW on **Saturday 15 November, 3.00 – 6.00 pm.**

In **Native Title Business**, Boomalli celebrates the heroes of Native Title with a travelling exhibition of works drawn together to celebrate the 10th anniversary year of the High Court Mabo decision. These beautiful contemporary works promote understanding and reconciliation on land and water rights in Australia. Some were painted as part of traditional evidence put forward in native title claims, and map traditional ownership of land and relationships between people and country. Others explore themes of dispossession, history, family life and spirituality. Artists include Bronwyn Bancroft, Fiona Foley, Michael Nelson Jagamarra and Thancoupie. A must-see for supporters of native title rights!

Lightning Strikes! is a collection by Indigenous artists, including Michael Riley, David Aspden, Harry Wedge, Tim Allen, Bronwyn Bancroft, Angus Nivison, Fiona Foley, Mervyn Bishop, Sally Morgan and many more. These works will be auctioned on Wednesday 19 November.

Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Cooperative is an Aboriginal owned and run contemporary art space in Sydney. It promotes Aboriginal culture and independence through the visual arts.

Enjoy a glass of champagne while catching up with ANTaR's activities, meeting artists, Boomalli members and special guest speakers. Donation at door.

Circle Sentencing: Returning Jurisdiction to the Community

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‘the underlying causes of crime are often more broad than a single incident and need the active participation of the whole community to fix. It further believes that criminal offences cause ruptures within communities that need to be healed.’

Instead of handing down a sentence from the bench, the magistrate joins local elders and community members, the prosecutor, Aboriginal Legal Service, defendant and victim to work out what should be done after an offender has pleaded guilty or been convicted by a court.

The Aboriginal Justice Advisory Council (AJAC) recently reported on the first circle sentencing court to sit on Wiradjuri land in Dubbo, where a young man had been convicted of a number of offences including assault. The circle of participants talked for several hours before deciding to impose a 12 month suspended sentence on condition that he attend counselling for anger management and substance abuse. He was also directed to receive Aboriginal cultural guidance and do 200 hours of community service. AJAC reports that the circle offered guidance and support for both the offender and the victim.

AJAC first developed a pilot circle sentencing scheme with the Nowra Aboriginal community and it has been running for almost two years. The new trial in Dubbo started in August 2003 and the State Government has said it will

expand the program to Brewarrina and Walgett. An evaluation of the Nowra trial by AJAC with the NSW Judicial Commission has just been released. The evaluation shows very encouraging results: positive changes in behaviour by offenders who go through circle sentencing and an extremely low rate of recidivism (repeat offending).

Circle sentencing is an experimental initiative which needs carefully developed community support. It makes sense to begin running it on a trial basis, evaluating its success as things go along. But that does not mean such trials cannot be held in more communities across NSW. If an Aboriginal community is prepared to put in the time and effort to make circle sentencing work in their area then the State Government should be there with the resources and the political will to support them.

ANTaR NSW is reviewing the Nowra evaluation and will keep its members informed on how they can help campaign for this and other reforms in the crucial area of criminal justice. Local Sydney group ANTaR Lowe has already petitioned the NSW Parliament to extend the circle sentencing program to more communities.

For more information on circle sentencing, including sources for this article:

AJAC and NSW Judicial Commission Evaluation of Nowra Circle Sentencing Pilot:
www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/ajac.nsf/pages/reports

AJAC Discussion Paper on Circle Sentencing:
www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/ajac.nsf/pages/discussionpapers

and to stay up to date with the latest developments, AJAC newsletters:
www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/ajac.nsf/pages/enews.

And the winner is...

Fiona Doyle won the 2003 David Unaipon Award for her manuscript *Whispers of This Wik Woman*. *Whispers* tells a proud family story of Fiona's grandmother, Jean George, an Alngith woman whose struggle for native title culminated in the 1996 Wik decision of the High Court of Australia. The judges described the work as 'a powerful, sometimes humorous and always commanding narrative'. Fiona, a graduate of James Cook University and NAISDA Dance College, Sydney, is a freelance performer and choreographer. (Source: Weipa Bulletin)