

LARRAKIA NATION

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

PO Box 42043
Casuarina NT 0810

76 Dickward Dve
Coconut Grove, NT

Website: <http://www.larrakia.com>
Email: reception@larrakia.com

PH: 08 89483733

Mr Ronnie Agnew
Community Leader
Knuckey's Lagoon
Aboriginal Community

Subject: KNUCKEY's LAGOON: UNAUTHORISED NAME CHANGE, etc.

To Mr Agnew,

We write to express our concern regarding the attempt to create a new name for Knuckey's Lagoon, which is on Larrakia country.


As the representative organisation for the majority of Larrakia people, the Traditional Owners of Darwin, Cox Peninsula, etc, we formerly request that you and your organisation immediately cease to use the unauthorised name "Milgari" for Knuckey's Lagoon. The original Larrakia name has significant meaning to all Larrakia people and visiting Aboriginal groups, Larrakia people are the only people authorised to change or alter Larrakia site names.

It has also come to our attention that there have been unauthorised burials at the Knuckeys Lagoon site. The burial of non-Larrakia people on our lands, aside from authorised burials in registered public cemeteries, is also taken seriously by all Larrakia people. It is known that this kind of sensitive issue, has in the past, allowed non bloodline descendants to attempt to claim and a form of tenure or ownership, on the land where their relative has been entombed. Knuckey's Lagoon is now, always has been, and always will be Larrakia (Gulumirgin) land.

Changing the name of local areas, or allowing burials of non-bloodline descendants, without the consent of the Traditional Owners is against cultural protocol and is not acceptable. We will write again soon to ensure the name has been reverted back to Knuckey's Lagoon on all official paperwork. We also wish to make it very clear that no further burials are to take place at Knuckey's Lagoon, or on any other Larrakia land, outside of public cemeteries, without demonstrated consent of the Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation, &/or, other senior Larrakia people.

We have cc'd this letter to the various relevant service providers, government and Bernie Valadian, at the Aboriginal Development Foundation (ADF). Please ensure this does not happen again, and don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions regarding this directive.

Sincerely



(3rd June 2010)

Kathleen Williams Browne
Chair of the LNAC Board of Directors

Knuckeys Lagoon Community
c/- PO
Berrimah
NT 0820

Kathleen Williams Browne
Chair of the LNAC Directors
Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation
PO Box 1098
Nightcliff
NT 0814

Dear Ms Williams Browne

Thank you for your letter of 3rd June 2010 expressing concern concerning the choice of name for the Knuckeys Lagoon community as used in advertising our recent successful Milgari Festival and Open Day. You also objected to the 'unauthorised' burials of 'non-Larrakia people' in the small burial ground on the Knuckeys Lagoon lease.

Firstly, archival records show that Knuckeys Lagoon was named after a non-Aboriginal surveyor in the very early days of white settlement. Although the word 'Knuckey' resembles a Larrakia word, I can assure you that in the case of Knuckeys Lagoon the word has no connection to anything Larrakia, no more than the name chosen for Darwin's Bagot Aboriginal Reserve, as the community used to be called. Like Mr Knuckey, Mr Bagot was a surveyor who had a role in the dividing up of Aboriginal lands in the 19th century. It is our belief that an Aboriginal word would be more appropriate for our community, and if the Larrakia Nation has a better suggestion, we would be happy to consider it. However, because the word 'Milgari' means waterlily and Knuckeys Lagoon is noted for its display of waterlilies, we think the word is most suitable for the community of Knuckeys Lagoon.

Living on the lease are families and descendants of families who fought hard to have this land set aside so they could establish a community in a secure environment instead of living in tin humpies on vacant Crown land as they did in the sixties and seventies at the '9 Mile' and Berrimah cross roads. When the original families chose this block, they did so with the support of Larrakia elders like Bobby Secretary, Captain Bishop, Norman Harris and others. In those days when the Larrakia started fighting for their rights they were small in numbers and living in similar conditions to the camps at Knuckeys Lagoon and One Mile Dam. In fact, the Larrakia people and their supporters

used to move freely between these three camps which were outside the restrictions placed on people living on the Welfare Reserve at Bagot. History shows that the leases at Knuckeys Lagoon and One Mile Dam were granted a result of this combined struggle and the close family connections that then existed between these places. You can read more about this in Bill Day's book, *Bunji: a story of the Gwalwa Daraniki Movement*.

Concerning the present day Larrakia, we should point out that we have three descendants of Captain Bishop living at Knuckeys Lagoon, namely Titus and Dominic Bishop and Tania Stevens. The Bishops identify as Larrakia and have the genealogy to prove it. If these three are not accepted as members of Larrakia Nation, the question must be asked, 'How representative is the Larrakia Nation?' The example could also be given of the Thompson family at Bagot and the Campbells and Mortons at Kulaluk. Apparently even the Secretary family are not members of Larrakia Nation. Not to mention the divisions within your organisation and the various bodies bearing the Larrakia name.

In the letter from LNAC to Knuckeys Lagoon Aboriginal Community you also complained about 'unauthorised burials' that you say are against 'cultural protocols'. The letter states:

"It has come to our attention that there have been unauthorised burials at the Knuckeys Lagoon site. The burial of non-Larrakia people on our lands, aside from authorised burials in registered public cemeteries, is also taken seriously by all Larrakia people. It is known that that this kind of sensitive issue has in the past, allowed non bloodline descendants to attempt to claim and a form of tenure of ownership, on land where their relative is entombed."

We attach an article written by Dr Bill Day written on the anniversary of the granting of the Knuckeys Lagoon lease. As the article points out the original graves are those of Darwin leaders who fought side-by-side with the Larrakia people for land rights in the 1970s. In fact the earliest burial on the lease, of Louise Bangun's brother, occurred during the lifetime of the old Larrakia people, and with their full knowledge. Considering the above, we are surprised that these burials have only recently 'come to your attention'.

We also point out the Kulaluk, Knuckeys Lagoon and One Mile Dam leases were granted after extensive hearings by the Interim Aboriginal land Commissioner, Judge Dick Ward in 1975 and the latter two leases were granted to the Aboriginal Development Foundation (ADF) on behalf of the Aboriginal residents by Mr Marshall Perron, Minister for Lands and Planning in 1979. Although the residents and their ancestors have always recognised the Larrakia people as traditional owners of

Darwin, the leases were granted under Northern Territory law giving the residents of the three town camps full rights as leaseholders. As such the burials were done in accordance with the relevant laws and were in no way 'unauthorised'.

Hopefully, this belated reply to your complaint will clarify the origin of the name Knuckeyes Lagoon and our reasons for the name change, but if you have a better suggestion of a Larrakia word, we are willing to consider it. Concerning the burials, we have fourth and fifth generation residents living at Knuckeyes Lagoon now, who may wish to be buried with their families. We make no claims to Larrakia lands except for the lease we were granted at the same time as the Kulaluk and One Mile Dam leases that were intended as security of tenure so that we could plan our future. The Knuckeyes Lagoon families have always had good relations with the Larrakia people and wish to maintain that relationship.

Finally it is regretful that the tone of your letter is unnecessarily officious. Despite these differences hopefully the alliances between people that existed in the past and hopefully will continue to exist between Larrakia people and their neighbours in this and future generations.

Yours sincerely

For Knuckeyes Lagoon Community

Need must be met

MIKE Reed, the Minister for Lands, Planning and Environment, is not giving homeless Aboriginal people in Darwin any incentive to improve their lives.

He claims Aborigines already own too much land in the Northern Territory.

Even those people who already live in town camps with very basic amenities are put down.

Railway Dam people are told they will be "relocated" from their special purpose lease.

At the Knuckeyes Lagoon town camps the people are demanding title so they can plan for their future.

Some are third-generation residents and their parents are buried on the lease.

Aborigines who choose to live in Darwin should not be discriminated against because their people own land elsewhere.

They are citizens of Darwin who have a need which is not being met.

Bill Day
Ludmilla

News, Saturday, March 29, 1997

Camp has long history

CV Hee (Northern Territory News April 2) perpetuates the myth of the "nomadic" Aborigine always on "walkabout".

It is well documented that four generations of Aboriginal people have lived in the Knuckeyes Lagoon town camp.

Major Bangun is buried on the lease and his daughter and son still live there with their families.

Tragically, Major's father was killed by a falling tree while sheltering in the camp during Cyclone Tracy and the next three generations of the same family are represented in the community burial ground.

The continuous existence of the Knuckeyes Lagoon camp was also well documented by anthropologist Basil Sansom who lived in the camp from 1975 to 1976, before a lease was granted by the Everingham Government.

Sansom's book *The Camp at Wallaby Cross* is still used as a text in many universities.

Aboriginal ringers and their families used to camp around the Berrimah crossroads in appalling conditions until Major Bangun and Gypsy Bangun, Roy Kelly, Fred Waters, Leo and Maggie

Puzzled at claim

2 APRIL
1997
NTNE

I AM a little puzzled about Bill Day's claim that three generations of Aborigines had lived at the Knuckey Lagoon Town Camp (Saturday, March 29).

Perhaps he meant families of three generations lived at Knuckey's Lagoon. If so, his words are misleading.

In the '50s and '60s, up to Cyclone Tracy, there was a vegetable garden owned by Peter Syrimi and later by the Moo brothers.

Next to them was the Litchfields. They were the only farms on the now-camp side of Knuckeyes Lagoon. On the far side was the Pang Quee farm.

In the early years Knuckeyes Lagoon was my favourite shooting and fishing spot accessed by a rear gate in the Moo's farm.

I have never seen an Aboriginal camp there.

We use to take truckloads of Aborigines to Shoal Bay fishing and camping, but they were transient and soon went "walkabout".

For three generations to have evolved since the setting up of the town camp there I can only say that they must have started young.

C.V. Hee
Fannie Bay

Jackaboy and others applied for an area of vacant Crown land to establish a town camp.

The claimed area was uncleared forest before Cyclone Tracy, not farms as claimed by CV Hee and the humpies were well hidden from the highway.

Many important ceremonies have been conducted at Knuckeyes Lagoon since sacred tribal boards were stored in the area in the early 70s.

In 1971 the people joined a coalition of homeless Darwin Aboriginal people to fight for living areas at Knuckeyes Lagoon, Railway Dam and Kulaluk.

Today the descendants of the original Knuckeyes Lagoon families live as tenants of the Aboriginal Development Foundation which holds the lease.

Their courageous struggle for recognition continues.

7 April/97 Bill Day
Casuarina

Facts on lagoon area

A FEW facts about Knuckeyes Lagoon for CV Hee and Bill Day:

Three farms were taken up around Knuckeyes Lagoon in 1947 by my late husband Joe Yates, Ken Litchfield and Rex McLaren.

Rex later sold to Peter Syrimi and then the Moos took over.

The farm blocks were resumed by the Government in 1974.

A quick check at the land titles office would confirm this.

Mr Hee was wrong in that the Knuckeyes Lagoon camp was not on the farm sites, but on the old army camp.

The Aborigines did not move to their present site until about 1971, and then there were only a few.

Before that, they occupied the Darwin Butchery block on Agostini Rd.

Most Aborigines were either from Maningrida or Humpty Doo.

I was born in Parap in 1922, a fourth generation Territorian, three more generations of my family live in Darwin.

When I was a girl, the annual 10 mile picnic was held at the first lagoon by the highway.

We were transported from town to Knuckeyes Lagoon by the train.

Lagoon Rd was just a bush track then.

Like Mr Hee, I doubt Bill Day's claim that four generations of Aborigines have lived on Knuckeyes Lagoon.

K Yates
Howard Springs

Territory News, Friday, April 11, 1997

Land grab concern

ALLAN Donald has reminded us of great author Xavier Herbert's description of Australia as: "not a nation but a community of thieves".

Xavier Herbert knew local Aborigines as his terrific book *Capricornia* shows, plus he visited Railway Dam I think and certainly Kulaluk 20 odd years ago.

How appropriate then it is to recall his description when one looks at the land grab by the CLP and Minister Mike Reed especially in relation to the Railway Dam area.

By the way the dam was built to contain a spring which was a water supply for Aborigines and a dreaming site since the year dot.

14/4/97 Rob Wesley-Smith
Howard Springs

27 September 1999

Senator John Herron
PO Box 658
SPRINGHILL QLD 4004

Attention: Leonie Stewart

CC Robert Chamberland, Office Of Business Affairs N.T.

Dear Sir,

I would like to voice serious concern towards the operation of the Aboriginal Development Foundation (ADF) based at Lot 2269, Stuart Highway, Berrimah in the Northern Territory of Australia.

The Foundation is a government funded organisation with these funds being mainly for use in four Aboriginal Communities. These communities are:

- Railway Dam, (Darwin City Centre);
- Knuckeyes Lagoon, (Berrimah);
- Palmerston Town Camp, (Palmerston); and
- Adelaide River Camp, (Adelaide River).

The Foundation holds a large asset base including a large acreage of industrial land, approximately 1,000 sq/m of industrial workshop fully fitted out for engineering, numerous pieces of plant and equipment worth hundreds of thousands of dollars and approximately 15 vehicles.

In April 1999, the foundation was funded by ATSIC to set up and manage a corporate community development and employment program (CDEP). The clients of this CDEP were to be the four ADF communities with addition of Belyuen, White Eagle, Wariuk and Warai communities, and also the Larrakia Nation, with a long-term goal to implement additional programs for the inclusion of urban Aboriginal groups. The grants per annum for the CDEP program were expected to exceed 2 million dollars.

In the second half of April 1999, Mr John Cook (John) and myself were employed by ADF to manage the CDEP. John held the position of CDEP Coordinator and my position was to assist the coordinator and manage the finances. John has worked in similar positions for over 10 years and holds a masters degree in business. My background is in the private sector, with my involvement mainly in corporate management. I accepted the position on an interim basis whilst I awaited the outcome of personal business matter.

The administration centre for the CDEP is located in a demountable adjacent to the ADF workshop. After working in this demountable I became intrigued by the fact that the majority of ADF assets was idle for months and the workshop staff (approx 6 employees) were tasked directly by the executive director. The greater percentage of this tasking was meaningless and seemed only to achieve minimum expenditure with maximum time consumption.

John and myself began asking Bernard Valadian, the Executive Director ("ExecDir") for use of the idle ADF assets to train the Aboriginal people and if he would allow some of the CDEP workers to work at ADF on a training basis. These requests were denied.

It was becoming apparent at this stage that the CDEP was a threat to the current operation of the ADF. If the CDEP was to operate and expand as per its direction, it would take over most of ADF's responsibility to the four communities and in turn, the associated grants, leaving the ADF with minimum funds and no reason for existence.

It could be said that ATSIC in its great wisdom had given a baby monster to ADF and asked them to feed it so it could grow to eat its master. We discussed these matters with ATSIC on several occasions in great depth, and on all occasions we were told flatly that "ATSIC would not get involved in the foundation's politics".

I endeavored to discuss this matter with David Timber, the ADF President and to my amazement, he and all other members of the committee were under the impression that the ExecDir was their boss. He also informed me that the committee had been asking the ExecDir for change for many years.

When I informed the President of the amount ADF received in grant funding for the four communities, his look was somewhere between disbelief and irate. He also told me that the ExecDir had never informed the committee of any financials at the meetings and that it was common practice for the committee to be given documents to sign with no explanation to the content therein. It was also expected of the President to sign blank cheques on a regular basis.

After becoming aware of this situation I strongly advised the President to seek legal advice and arranged a meeting for him with the North Australian Legal Aid Service (NAALAS). He was advised of his rights but no more as the service could not get involved in political issues.

It must be noted that all members of the ADF committee are Aboriginal people who live in the four ADF communities and have no experience in business nor have they ever been informed of their rights and duties as committee members. It has also become apparent that the ExecDir is also the Secretary and the Public Officer. He also drafts all minutes relating to all meetings.

The ExecDir is believed to be on a salary package of \$65,000 plus a house and several vehicles. His wife is the Bookkeeper/Accountant and is paid \$45,000 and at the same

time cares for a baby. She worked full-time prior to the birth of their baby, and now only works a few hours each day.

The ExecDir has been in charge of the ADF for over 25 years and seems to have entrenched himself as a dictator - taking no direction from the committee or the people of the communities.

Any intrusion by an outsider trying to support the community people are swiftly dealt with by his legal entourage or are simply sacked. It seems that the termination of John and myself is far from unusual. It also seems a coincidence that I was sacked the day before an emergency meeting of the ADF committee called by the President, whom I has been asked to represent. I was also informed by the ExecDir that if I attempted to attend the meeting I would be removed by the police.

I did attend the meeting under an invitation from the President, along with representatives from ATSIC. Before the meeting could be convened the ExecDir's barrister (Mr John Dearn) declared the meeting void due to legal implications and asked ATSIC, John and myself to leave or suffer the legal consequences.

The fact that the ExecDir and his wife are in total control of all finances, including government grants, and his refusal to be accountable to the committee, leaves only the audit reports for any means of accountability. The ADF has been using the same interstate auditor for 15 years (approx). This auditor openly admits to being a very good personal friend of the ExecDir and his wife. This situation alone raises questions - not only of financial, but also of the democratic right of the people involved in and clients of the Foundation.

Not even the President can give figures to the total amount of funding received by ADF as there are numerous grants both federal and state and other rental income etc.

It seems to me that ATSIC have one simple principle, and that is to account for the grants allocated on a financial basis, with no intention of being involved in any productivity analysis of the expenditure. For if any consultant was to study ADF on an operational basis, the words dysfunctional, archaic, unconstitutional, unsafe and open to corruption would be widely used.

The bottom line is that this Foundation has large amounts of taxpayers' money coming in with no product in return; no training for the people; no employment for the people; minimal upgrading of community infrastructure and housing. This Foundation operates against democratic principles and nullifies the ability of the Aboriginal people to be self determining.

It is also endeavoring to ~~improve~~ ^{impe} one of the best programs these people have seen, namely the CDEP. The people are screaming out for help and no-one seems to care, least of all ATSIC.

HL

I have attached a copy of the ADF Constitution in which should be noted that the committee is to be elected at the annual general meeting on a biannual basis. The president of the ADF and other committee members have informed me that to there knowledge this has not occurred for many years as they were elected at committee meetings by other members of the committee and at no time can they remember Bernard Valadian being subject to any election. The President has asked Bernard Valadian on several occasions both verbally and in writing for copies of the minutes relating to these meeting, Bernard Valadian has refused to response to these requests.

I ask as a concerned citizen that your office investigate this matter urgently as several of the communities have serious health problems due to the living conditions. I believe that the ADF committee wish to make major changes to the Foundation but they do not have the ability to fight Bernard Valadian's legal representatives, which of course is paid for by the government funds.


Stuart Higgins

Ph 08 89832995
Po Box 1142 Howard Springs N.T. 0835

I David Timber have read and agree with all statements contained in this letter, as president of the Aboriginal Development Foundation and on behalf of other members of the Executive Committee and other members of our Aboriginal Communities, I ask that your office investigate the operations of the ADF urgently.

David Timber
President, ADF

Railway Dam Community Darwin N.T.
Ph 08 89810587

Indigenous people crushed by faraway administrators

By Dr William Bartlett Day

Darwin, June 22: For the past two years the Aboriginal people at Knuckeys Lagoon on the outskirts of Darwin have been living in a "prescribed area", regulated by the Northern Territory Emergency Response Act, 2007.

Like all residents of Aboriginal town camps in the Northern Territory they have no idea what the future holds under the Act, except for the little they read in the newspaper and hear on the radio.

In 1971 when the group was living on vacant crown land, I helped them get a water tap, until after eight years of protesting the campers were granted a lease at the end of the flight path of the International Airport, where their rudimentary houses now stand.

This week when I returned to Darwin I was reunited with Louise Bangun at Knuckeys Lagoon who was a child living under sheets of tin with her parents and siblings in 1971.

Louise's father, mother, brother and son are all buried in the little cemetery at the community, as are the son and sisters of her aunt, May Stevens. Louise reminded me that her grandfather was killed at the camp by a falling tree when Cyclone Tracy destroyed Darwin on Christmas Day, 1974.

Louise herself was crippled by a stroke in 1996 and is confined to a wheelchair. She told me she has five surviving children and ten grandchildren who would like to live at Knuckeys Lagoon to assist her, if they had the accommodation.

Although the residents were unaware that the federal government is preparing to compulsorily acquire all Aboriginal town camps, an impromptu wreath laying ceremony was held at the graves of the founders on the second anniversary of the latest political intervention into Aboriginal lives.

By the graveside of my old mates, I shed a tear as I reflected how the hopes and aspirations of Aboriginal empowerment were once again being crushed by a distant administration.

PO Box 41104
Casuarina NT 0811

4 November 1997

the Minister for Aboriginal Development
Parliament House
Darwin

Dear Sir

Re: Knuckeys Lagoon Town Camp

Please consider the plight of the people who live at Knuckeys Lagoon town camp. Many of them are the sons and daughters of the people who fought for a place to stay in Darwin. Their parents used to camp beside the railway line in the open without sewerage or water. They now have shelter and facilities but they still live as tenants of the Aboriginal Development Foundation with little chance to influence their future.

In April I proposed a plan to the Minister which would empower the people to direct their future free of dependence on the government (see enclosed letter). As the new minister you may be more sympathetic to my plan which is in keeping with your Partys ideology.

At present a contradiction exists whereby the Kulaluk people are developing their SPL to provide an income (eg the McDonalds Restaurant) while the Knuckeys Lagoon people, who also have areas not being used on their SPL cannot go ahead with business proposals. This seems unfair.

The previous minister also said that no new town camps would be considered until land was fully utilised on existing leases (eg Knuckeys Lagoon, Kulaluk). This is a highly discriminatory policy and a repetition of the old and failed compound mentality. People applying for camping areas ie alternative housing do not want to live on existing SPLs but are asking for their own areas.

Yours sincerely



**MINISTER FOR PARKS AND WILDLIFE
MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL DEVELOPMENT
MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT
MINISTER FOR HOUSING**

PARLIAMENT HOUSE
STATE SQUARE
DARWIN NT 0800

GPO BOX 3146
DARWIN NT 0801
TELEPHONE: (08) 8999 7514
FACSIMILE: (08) 8999 7511

Mr Bill Day
PO Box 41104
CASUARINA NT 0811

Dear Mr Day

I acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 4 November, to the Hon. Tim Baldwin, MLA regarding Knuckeyes Lagoon Town Camp.

Your letter has been placed before the Minister.

Yours sincerely

MICHELLE CHANDLER
Personal Secretary
5/11/97



25 Mosec St

Ludmilla NT 0820

08 89482010

12 February 1997

The Editor NT News
PO Box 1300
Darwin

Dear Sir

(I posted this letter yesterday and overnight I thought of a few important changes. I hope you can use this version but if it is too late that's OK).

C V Hee (NT News April 2) perpetuates the myth of the "nomadic" Aborigine always on "walkabout". It is well documented that four generations of Aboriginal people have lived in the Knuckeyes Lagoon town camp. Major Bangun is buried on the lease and his daughter and son still live there with their families. Tragically, Major's father was killed by a falling tree while sheltering in the camp during Cyclone Tracy and the next three generations of the same family are represented in the community burial ground.

The continuous existence of the Knuckeyes Lagoon camp was also well documented by the anthropologist Basil Sansom

who lived in the camp from 1975 to 1976, before a lease was granted by the Everingham government. Sansom's book, "The Camp at Wallaby Cross" is still used as a text in many universities.

Aboriginal ringers and their families used to camp around the Berrimah crossroads in appalling conditions until Major and Gypsy Bangun, Roy Kelly, Fred Waters, Leo and Maggie Jackaboy and others applied for an area of vacant Crown land to establish a town camp. The claimed area was uncleared forest before Cyclone Tracy, not farms as claimed by H V Hee, and the humpies were well hidden from the highway. Many important ceremonies have been conducted there since sacred tribal boards were stored in the area in the early seventies.

In 1971 the people joined a coalition of homeless Darwin Aboriginal people to fight for living areas at Knuckeys Lagoon, Railway Dam and Kulaluk. Today the descendants of the original Knuckeys Lagoon families live as tenants of the Aboriginal Development Foundation which holds the lease. Their courageous struggle for recognition continues.

Yours sincerely,

PATRICK AMITAL

A Graveside Funeral Service for the late Mr Patrick Amital will be held at the Thorak Regional Cemetery, at 2pm Friday 2/5/97.

Darwin Funeral Services Pty Ltd
Cnr Amy Johnson Ave & McMillans Rd, Sanderson
Phone 8945 2222

We are people who live at Knuckeys Lagoon. Many of us with our mothers, fathers, uncles, aunts, grandmothers and grandfathers fought for this land from 1971. Some of them are buried here.at Knuckeys Lagoon.

We do not have the title to this land so we cannot make plans to improve our living conditions or to develop the land. We recognise that Darwin is built on Larrakia land but our families helped the Larrakia people win back Kulaluk and Railway Dam, so we hope the Larrakia will respect our rights to this land at Knuckeys Lagoon.

We are asking the NT Government to give us the title for the land where we live so we can make plans for our children. We are asking the Larrakia to support our claim.

PO Box 41104
Casuarina NT 0811

4 November 1997

The Minister for Aboriginal Development
Parliament House
Darwin

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Yours sincerely

Bill Day

P.O. Box 4751,

Darwin N.T.

5794.

Dear Sir,

29.12.71.

I have been speaking to the people camped at Berrimah, today.

Altho' it is my opinion that the Social Welfare Department is quite aware of the situation there, and has been for many years. I wish to put forward some observations.

Regular police patrols to the area have suggested to Mr. Leo Jackaboy - an accepted leader, that he send a delegation to your offices in preference to direct action over their grievances.

This, I understand, is the wish of the people and I am passing this request to you.

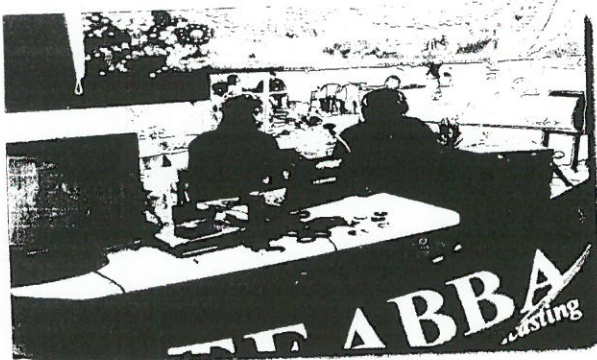
1. That the Social Welfare Department give these people a hearing
2. That water from the pipeline be tapped as soon as possible

I write this for the people in question.

Yours faithfully,

W.D. Day.

NAIDOC DAY AT KNUCKEY'S



Milgarri Festival was on the 8th of July 2010. I was approached by the NAIDOC Council and Kelvin Costello (Ironbark) early in June. So a lot of work had to be done to organise this event in a very short time (3 weeks). I had help from Lee Kenny, (agent for music & art events). We approached organisations to sponsor the community festival and we got our responses back in a couple of days, the Fred Hollows Foundation was one of the main sponsors and the Army.

I also got all the service providers to set up their stalls, do posters, advertise on Larrakia Radio and the Army had 2 massive tents where they did assembling and disassembling weapons blindfolded, and a recruiting office and other demonstrations. Major John Delaney was the officer in charge where they officially raised the flags, before hand the dancers from the Berrimah Prison (One Mob, One Country) were the highlight for the morning session. We had media coverage, TEABBA (Top End Aboriginal Broadcasting Association) Larrakia Radio, people did requests to their families in the remote areas and it was heard around the p.a. system at the media centre.

The day was like a mini Darwin Show where kids and adults were getting show bags from all the stalls. To finish off the day the concert started (5 bands) at 4.30pm and went until midnight. Many people attended, Indigenous & non Indigenous, it was a big family day. Everybody enjoyed themselves and there was no trouble, police and the night patrol were on hand and they said people were well behaved and no alcohol problems.

Well I like to thank all the service providers, Army, Phillip Goodman promoting the Milgarri Festival when he did a interview on Larrakia Radio, also his band and all the bands that played and all the people (visitors) and Gerry Wood (M.L.A) and Michelle for the mobile road sign, and Lee Kenny for helping me do a lot of work.

Ronnie Agnew

TREV TALKIN'

"The community is quiet today, isn't anybody around?"

"Not until after 5pm, everybody's working."

That's the sound of independence. The BLAC Program has a fundamental principle of working from an asset based approach and one of the objectives of the Program is dealing with the shackles of welfarism.

In a recent leadership workshop, the BLAC leaders looked at paradigms and paradigm shifts, it examined the paradigm of welfare and how to make a transition to a paradigm of independence.

It was agreed that a paradigm shift away from welfare was the future for Aboriginal people.

Leaders agreed that some fundamental issues have to be addressed including everybody who is capable of getting a job needs to get a real job, children need to go to school every day, parents need to take responsibility for their children and communities develop a culture that does not tolerate domestic violence, has a pride of achieving and supports each other in a meaningful way.

This needs to be achieved without compromising cultural responsibilities such as sorry business. Where a conflict exists between obligations and work or school, strategies need to be negotiated by Aboriginal people to make sure both objectives can be met. It is appreciated that this is easier said than done, however it is not impossible and is attempted less often than one would think.

Once barriers are challenged and overcome, communities will start seeing the rewards of independence, improved health, children being functional in school and achieving, parents getting up in the morning and going to work each day to earn their own money to pay bills, and alcohol fueled violence stopping. Some benefits will be less visible, less mental health issues, pride in achievements, men being good fathers and leaders of their families, mothers getting together and enjoying a good yarn and a cuppa without worry, children being confident about the future, and most importantly, culture getting stronger again because people are proud of who they are.

