

Dhãwu

YOTHU YINDI FOUNDATION NEWS DECEMBER 2008

Garma worked its magic again for the third successive year for a group organised by **Reconciliation Australia and its CEO, Barbara Livesey**. In partnership with the Yothu Yindi Foundation, RA hosted 20 influential women from government departments, corporate entities, media or community organisations. They gained valuable insights into Yolngu culture and into the Yothu Yindi Foundation's expanding set of cultural, social, economic, educational and health projects.

For several years Dare to Lead and its parent organisation Principals Australia have sent delegations to the Garma Festival, reflecting the belief that while Garma is a crucial event for Indigenous Australians and the wider community, it is also of specific importance to educators. In 2008 a Dare to Lead group of 58 attended Garma, including educators and 16 delegates from the corporate sector to gain first-hand experience - an invaluable learning tool - and to forge partnerships with Indigenous Australia.



©YYF/Photographer Jan Larcombe.



©YYF/Photographer Wayne Quilliam.



©YYF/Photographer Stephen Cherry.

"That experience was really powerful... the power of the land and the Aboriginal tradition and spirituality is immense. It's kind of life-changing; that was my first, direct experience of it, my sense of desire to contribute to not just the protection of Aboriginal Culture in Australia, but to help it thrive in any way possible."

Ben Lee, Musician and mentor at the Garma Miwatj Youth Forum



©YYF / Photographer Wayne Quilliam.

Garma Festival 2008

Australia's premier Indigenous cultural exchange event, the Garma Festival, celebrated its 10th anniversary in August. Garma was opened by Jenny Macklin, Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, who became the first Indigenous Affairs Minister to open the Festival.

More than 2800 people from all over the Northern Territory, around Australia and overseas camped on site at this year's Festival, which marked a number of firsts:

- The first time dancers from the Wadeye community attended Garma, opening proceedings in the famous nightly Bunggul
- Members of the Dhawilingu people, the traditional owners of the Waruwi, came for the first time along with many other groups from around the Northern Territory and beyond
- An expanded set of conferences and discussions, including a major Indigenous Economic Development Conference; an Indigenous Water Knowledge Exchange; a Marine Turtle and Dugong Project Meeting; and a remoteFOCUS: Revitalising Remote Australia workshop.

• An expanded music performance program to mark the 10th anniversary. At the opening Ms Macklin said, "Garma is a way for Australia and the world to learn about the Yolngu way of life" and passed on a message from Minister Peter Garrett commending

Dr Mandawuy Yunupingu for his vision in establishing the Foundation in 1990, the Garma Festival 9 years later, and for his work for the rights and recognition of Indigenous culture, especially in areas of employment and training and cultural maintenance.

2008 attracted record crowds

Bunggul and Key Forum participants and artists attended Garma 2008 from many parts of the Northern Territory – Alice Springs, Alyangula and Umbakumba (Groote Eylandt), Batchelor, Jabiru, Darwin, Kenbi, Tennant Creek, Palmerston, Milingimbi, Minjilang, Ngukurr, Gapuwiyak, Yirrkala, Maningrida, Numbulwar, Ramingining, Tiwi, Wadeye, Galiwin'ku, Yirrkala, Nhulunbuy, Gunyangara, Yilpara, Katherine, Marngarr, Laynhapuy, Ali Curung, Lajamanu, Waruwi, Gunbalanya, Murganella and other regions of Australia.

GARMA 2009 FEATURES

- The Garma Key Forum, 8 to 10 August with the theme of CREATIVE INDUSTRIES. One of the central issues and challenges to be discussed will be the extent and nature of the Creative Industries interface with Indigenous Australians, including cultural and commercial rights, and the place of traditional art. An Indigenous Economic Development Conference will again be held in conjunction with the Key Forum.
- The daily Bunggul and music performances, Garma art exhibitions and projects, and evening entertainment and discussions.
- The Cultural Tourism Program, again presenting Men's and Women's Programs for registered participants.
- The Garma Miwatj Youth Forum for 12-18 year olds from the East Arnhem region.
- The Indigenous Contemporary Music Program.
- The Indigenous Recording and Multimedia Training Program

Garma 2009 will be at Gulkula, Friday 7 to Tuesday 11 August
Register to attend at www.garma.telstra.com



Rio Tinto Alcan

For a full list of Partners and Supporters go to www.garma.telstra.com

YES, I would like to join the Garma Supporters Club and fund the Yothu Yindi Foundation's valuable projects and community services.

I would like to make a donation of: \$100 \$1000 \$250 \$500 My choice \$ _____

I'd like to make my gift by: Cheque/money order (made out to Yothu Yindi Foundation) OR Visa MasterCard

Expiry date: _____

Name on card: _____ Signature: _____

Email: _____ Ph: _____

Please return this coupon to: GPO BOX 2727, DARWIN NT 0801 OR Fax to: 08 8941 1088
or donate on-line at www.garma.telstra.com or email garmafest@bigpond.com

Donations over \$2 are tax deductible. The Yothu Yindi Foundation is a not-for-profit Aboriginal charitable corporation with charitable status.



Garma FESTIVAL

YOTHU YINDI

Wellbeing Program

The Wellbeing Program is a set of community and culturally based projects tackling poor health outcomes, drug and alcohol abuse, volatile substance misuse and the high rates of suicide in the Miwatj region.

The Program:

- Coordinates regular cultural activities to divert Yolngu men and women from drug and alcohol abuse, volatile substance misuse and suicide
- Facilitates workshops and information sessions on alcohol and drug abuse issues
- Increases awareness of, and access to, traditional healing in Yolngu communities
- Facilitates the intergenerational transfer of cultural knowledge
- Strengthens linkages between local service providers and Yolngu men and women in the north east Arnhem Region, including referrals and linkages with other programs
- Develops pathways to training and employment for Yolngu men and women

One element of the Wellbeing Program is the **Alcohol and Substance Abuse Education, Rehabilitation and Diversionary** project that is engaging with at-risk men and women through: Health Promotion and Drug and Alcohol Education Sessions; Suicide Prevention Strategies; Crime Prevention Strategies; and Men's Alcohol and Substance Abuse Diversionary Activities.

A key element of the Wellbeing Program is **Dilthan Yolngunha: The Healing Place** now in its second year of operation.

The Yothu Yindi Foundation has worked with Senior Yolngu women to establish a traditional practice healing initiative at Gulkula in north east Arnhem Land where marrantji (healers) treat their people with medicines from the bush pharmacy, ceremonies, songs and dances and teach this knowledge to their daughters.



Healing place trainees: ©YYF/Photographer Amy Jo Vickery.



Healing place posters: (©YYF).

Garma 2008 – A national hub



©YYF/Photographer Cameron Herweyan.

The **Garma Key Forum "Indigenous Knowledge: Caring for Culture and Country"**, coordinated by Charles Darwin University was opened by Mandawuy Yunupingu, who called for deeper understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians on economic and cultural issues. Each day of the three-day forum focused on a sub-theme: The Value of Culture and its Influence; Indigenous Ecological Knowledge and Managing Country; and Governance

At the **Garma Indigenous Economic Development Conference**, the predominantly Indigenous participants emphasised their stewardship of their country and focused on taking control of a broad range of Indigenous economic affairs. Sessions on economic growth and development; employment and housing and infrastructure; the role of traditional knowledge in economic development; capacity building and development; community development; employment; financial literacy and accountability stimulated substantive discussion.

The **Indigenous Water Interest Knowledge Exchange** shared international experience and perspectives to help identify and advocate around Indigenous interests in water and will submit its findings to the UNESCO water and culture database.

remoteFOCUS: Revitalising Remote Australia, a research workshop conducted by Desert Knowledge Australia at Garma 2008, aimed to research aspects and options in regard to the governance of – and good public policy development for – remote Australia.

HEALING TOURS

The Dilthan Yolngunha healers will again open the centre to female visitors in 2009 for three-day Healing Experience Tours. Attending a Healing Experience provides great insight into traditional medicine, bushcraft, landscape and spirituality and helps fund the vital community service operation of Dilthan Yolngunha. For more information www.healingplace.com.au

The **Dugong and Marine Turtle Project Meeting** brought together Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders and scientists from across northern Australia to talk about better management and protection of marine turtles and Dugong.

At special lunches and dinners **Celebrity Chef: Mark Olive** (aka the 'Black Olive') demonstrated bush tucker to Garma attendees, showcasing Indigenous ingredients as he prepared barbecued kangaroo filet with bush spices, barramundi cooked in coals in a pit oven and herbed damper and salads.

About 100 participants were involved in the unique **Indigenous Cultural Tourism Program** including a separate Men's Program Gon-Galpu involving workshops on spear-making and hunting; Women's Program Gong-Wapitja involving field trips with interpretive walks, women's workshops on healing, ethno-botany, and basket-weaving; and joint activities such as field trips and the Bunggul.

Indigenous students participated in the **Indigenous Recording and Multimedia Training Program**, developing and implementing a practical working model to record and document important Indigenous music, dance and ceremony – pillars of Indigenous culture – that are becoming increasingly endangered. We thank the Telstra Foundation and the Genographic Legacy Fund for their support for this program.

The third **Garma Miwatj Youth Forum** involved more than 250 young people in a cultural immersion and personal growth, youth-friendly program of workshops on drumming, lino printing, health and fitness, hip-hop writing and a leadership program. Ben Lee, Andrew Farris (INXS), Jimmy Little and the Chooky Dancers, performed for and mentored participants.



©YYF/Photographer Carol Grossman.



©YYF/Photographer Cameron Herweyan.



Alan Tietzel of Rio Tinto Alcan speaking at a Garma Forum. ©YYF/Photographer Stephen Cherry.



©YYF/Photographer Stephen Cherry.

Men and young boys continued to construct the Lipa Lipa (traditional dugout canoe) at Garma, extending the wellbeing program through Garma into the public domain. In 2008, YYF commenced a Wellbeing Program to divert men and young boys from alcohol and substance abuse and direct them to culture-based activities – spear making and hunting; fishing; and the very successful Lipa Lipa project.

Djapirri Mununggirritj

In 2009, after two years of successful development Dilthan Yolngunha will appoint Djapirri Mununggirritj as its full-time Yolngu Coordinator. As Djapirri says, "There are many serious issues facing my community – chronic disease, poverty, violence, alcohol and drugs, and I am committed to this healing role in my community."

A Yolngu woman from the Gumatj Clan and Yirritja moiety, Djapirri is married with one son. Education to year 12 and a traineeship gave Djapirri the skills to manage Nambara Arts and Crafts and Yirrkala Women's Centre. She was instrumental in establishing the Yirrkala Women's night patrol at the end of 2004 and is actively involved in the annual Garma Festival. Djapirri is a leader in her community and a role model for men, women and children, and the 2006 recipient of the Territory Woman of the Year Award for her leadership and commitment to Yolngu women.

HEALING PLACE POSTERS

If you donate \$100 or more before 31 March 2009, to support the work of the Healers in improving the health and wellbeing of Yolngu, we will acknowledge our appreciation of your support by sending you a small 'thank you' of a 'Dilthan Yolngunha' poster. Examples of the 'Dilthan Yolngunha' posters are pictured above.



©YYF/Photographer Amy Jo Vickery.