

# KARAJARRI WANKAYI MUWARR

## Community Report

Bidyadanga May/June 2017



**AIATSIS**  
AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ABORIGINAL  
AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDIES



**Nulungu**  
Research Institute  
The University of Notre Dame Australia





## ABOUT THIS COMMUNITY REPORT

This community report is about the *Karajarri Wankayi Muwarr* project carried out by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and Karajarri Traditional Lands Association (KTLA).

This is a pilot project about finding ways to return Karajarri material to the community, record new stories and develop strong rules about keeping community stories safe. *Karajarri Wankayi Muwarr* is part of an AIATSIS research project, Preserve, Strengthen, Renew in Communities.

This report provides an update of the project following the AIATSIS visit to Bidyadanga to record Karajarri cultural information on country and discuss future access to this material.



*Above: Anna Dwyer at Injudine Creek*

*Below: Joe Edgar talking about the coral heads at Mirntanymartaji.*







*Above: Project group recording at Warwan.*

*Below: 4500 year old footprints at Palitangka.*



## PROJECT AIMS

The aims of this project are to:

- Record Karajarri stories and knowledge
- Discuss the best ways to securely store this material
- Record the rules about future access to this material
- Develop a process for seeking permission to access Karajarri material.

The project also meets Karajarri priorities including:

- Building knowledge about Karajarri cultural sites
- Enhancing the Karajarri Cultural Database
- Maintaining Karajarri cultural rituals and cultural practice
- Developing community capacity to record Karajarri stories
- Developing decision making protocols for storing and accessing recorded materials.



## Day 1 – Bidyadanga IPA office

Tran Tran and Nell Reidy from AIATSIS, with Karajarri IPA Coordinator Sam Bayley, met with KTLA chairperson, Thomas 'Dooli' King in Broome to talk about the project.

Dooli outlined several Karajarri priorities including building a local cultural centre where information can be stored and accessed by the community.

Sam, Tran and Nell with Anna Dwyer arrived at the Karajarri ranger's office in Bidyadanga and ranger coordinator Ewan Oakes introduced the work that the rangers do, and Sam introduced the project to the rangers.

Anna explained how the project title was developed:

When we sat there hearing the recordings we thought it can't sit here in AIATSIS, it can't be lost it can't be dead so we thought we need to somehow bring it back to life and that's why we came up with Karajarri Wankayi Muwarr, to keep it alive.



*Below: Meeting with the rangers and AIATSIS staff at the Karajarri ranger's office.*





## Day 2 – Ranger office and site visit

The Karajarri cultural advisors met at the ranger office where Anna and Mervyn Mulardy talked about the March visit to Canberra including the impact of hearing the voices of those who had passed and the importance of the project in supporting cultural practice.

After lunch we drove to **Panganunganyjal** (Whistle Creek) and recorded the Salmon Dreaming about respectful ways to fish for salmon with Mervyn Mulardy.

We drove on to **Palitangka**, a site with 4500 year old footprints and Auntie Reeny showed us some bush onions.

Nearby Auntie Rosie Munro talked about the soak, also known as Palitangka that she visited with her husband and family.

At **Yukurrangka, the Dingo Dreaming site**, we recorded Mervyn talking about the necessary practices to maintain this important Karajarri place.

In the late afternoon we drove to Injudine Creek and set up camp for the evening.

*Images from top to bottom: Mervyn Mulardy talking about the Salmon Dreaming at Panganunganyjal; Karajarri rangers looking at fossilised footprints at Palitangka and Auntie Rosie, Anna, Jacqui and others at Yukurrangka.*







## Day 3 - Injudine Creek and site visit

In the morning we talked about the best ways for Karajarri people to manage their cultural information. During this meeting the group discussed the potential for a subcommittee of cultural advisors, board members, and rangers, to make decisions around Karajarri cultural material.

It was suggested that this group would assess material returned to Karajarri people from archives, researchers and other organisations as well as how to best manage newly recorded Karajarri material.

Following this meeting, cultural advisor Joe Edgar joined the group and we recorded Joe on his country at **Mirntanymartaji** and **Warwan**.

The day finished at **Purnturr Purnturr** (Port Smith Caravan Park), where the project group looked at old photos of Karajarri country returned from the archive at AIATSIS.

ABC also joined the group to record a media story about the project.





## Next steps

We would like to talk about:

- Coming back for more recording in November
- Develop the Karajarri protocol for managing cultural information
- Invite a community researcher to AIATSIS at the end of 2017
- Write up a report about what has happened so far to share with other groups who are thinking of ways to manage their cultural information.



## CONTACT ABOUT THE RESEARCH PROJECT



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