

KARAJARRI WANKAYI MUWARR

Community Report

Canberra March 2017



ABOUT THIS COMMUNITY REPORT

This community report is about the *Karajarri Wangkayi 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.

This report provides an update of the project following the Karajarri visit to Canberra to look at archived Karajarri material and present at and attend the AIATSIS National Indigenous Research Conference in March 2017.

Karajarri Wangkayi Muwarr is part of an AIATSIS research project, Preserve, Strengthen, Renew in Communities, which aims to involve communities in developing culturally informed ways of returning materials, and creating and archiving new materials.



Above: Sylvia, Wynston, Sam and Tran discussing the project in Canberra, March 2017.



Below: Wynston, Anna, Sylvia and Mervyn at the AIATSIS National Indigenous Research Conference.



PROJECT AIMS

The aims of this project stage are to:

- Discuss the project and get KTLA approval for the project.
- Return Karajarri material held in the AIATSIS archive and start thinking about good processes for returning such materials.
- Begin talking about protocols for keeping cultural material safe.

We would also like to write up a report about the process to share what worked and what didn't work with other communities.

WHO IS AIATSIS?

AIATSIS is an archive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander material. This material is preserved and stored safely for use in the future.

Part of the job of AIATSIS is to gather materials to keep safe in archives and to make material available for other people to see and learn from in the future.

AIATSIS also has to follow rules about who they share material with so that important cultural material is only shared with the right people.

AIATSIS looks after stories by:

- Keeping them safe (storing photos and films)
- Making sure only the right people can see or hear the stories
- Helping communities to make new stories and look after them
- Helping communities to tell their stories through research



Above: The AIATSIS building in Canberra.



Below: The closed stacks where rare and fragile books and manuscripts are safely stored.



Mervyn showing AIATSIS staff members the Karajarri Cultural Database in Canberra, March 2017.



Project meeting

On Monday 20 March 2017, Anna Dwyer, Sylvia Shoveller, Mervyn Mulardy, Wynston Shoveller and Sam Bayley met with AIATSIS staff in Canberra to discuss the project.

AIATSIS staff members were then introduced to the KTLA cultural database.

This helped the project group to develop an understanding of the types of material that Karajarri would like to access from the AIATSIS archive, as well as the type of material to record when Tran and Nell from AIATSIS go to Karajarri country at the beginning of June.

Access visit

While at AIATSIS, Mervyn, Anna, Sylvia and Wynston looked at Karajarri images and films held at the AIATSIS archive.

Mervyn and Wynston listened to some restricted audio files recorded by Father McKelson and others while Anna and Sylvia listened to a number of open audio recordings. Anna found many of these to be very useful for Karajarri language teaching and learning.

Mervyn also found some images of rock art in caves on Karajarri country that they had only recently been located and visited. He suggested that this might be a good place for recording.

A number of photos were returned to be added to the KTLA Cultural Database including older images of Kurrjungu, the fish traps.

The name for the project, 'Karajarri Wangkayi Muwarr' was also decided on.





AIATSIS National Indigenous Research Conference 21–23 March 2017

Mervyn, Anna, Wynston and Sylvia also attended the AIATSIS National Indigenous Research Conference.

Anna presented a paper with Kathryn Thornburn titled, 'Alternative narratives in health research and service delivery' and Mervyn, Wynston and Sam gave a presentation on the Karajarri Cultural Database.



Fieldwork on Karajarri country 29 May–2 June 2017

During the week we would like to:

- Meet with KTLA directors in Broome and Bidyadanga to talk about the project.
- Discuss what we should record during the trip.
- Explain the recording process and teach people who are interested how to use the voice recorder and cameras.
- Discuss the protocols and processes for viewing or using Karajarri recorded materials.
- Discuss how materials held in other places (eg. Sisters of God, KLC etc.) can be returned.





KARAJARRI HEALTHY COUNTRY PLAN 2013 – 2023

Palanapayana Tukjana Ngurra

'Everybody looking after country properly'



Karajarri Wangkayi Muwarr and the KTLA Healthy Country Plan

This project has been endorsed by the KTLA and helps to achieve a number of goals from the KTLA Healthy Country Plan, including:

- Establish a safe keeping place and develop protocols for storing information collected during Native Title negotiations and other research.
- Conduct at least two on-country trips per year with young and old people transmitting traditional knowledge and maintaining jila sites.
- Record traditional songs, dances and stories about plants, animals, culture and country and teach them to younger generations.
- Seek the repatriation of Karajarri artefacts and remains to keep Karajarri culture strong.
- Expand and manage Karajarri database with natural and cultural traditional knowledge about plants, animals, country and culture.

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