

Way out West

Tuesday, 07 August 2007

Last Updated Thursday, 09 August 2007

It's all quiet at Ngapartji Ngapartji HQ with everyone away apart from myself and even I left work half way through last week with the flu. Thankfully Lorna is in Alice for a couple of months and will be coming in to do some casual work with us while she's here.

Prior to last week Batesy and myself had been invited out west to Kiwirrikurra by NPY Women's Council to do some video-making workshops during the WA school holidays. Kiwirrikurra is a Pintubi/Luritja-speaking community 750kms from Alice, in Western Australia. Not being a Pitjantjatjara-speaking community (though there are families with connections down through Docker River, Warakurna and Tjukurla) the trip was a bit of an exception which coincided with a lot of the young people we work with in town heading to Docker for the football. A group of young women from Kiwirrikurra had expressed an interest in video-making to NPY during the annual Kungka Careers conference at Yulara recently and apparently had a storyline waiting to go.

From the outset we attracted a lot of interest with the large numbers of young people and kids in Kiwirrikurra who recognised us from videos they had seen on ICTV which we'd made with the Docker River community earlier this year. It seemed everyone wanted to be involved in making movies. Every 'film shoot' had large numbers of actors as well as onlookers and helpers who all remained amazingly quiet while filming, continuously pulling babies out of the frame as they crawled magnetically towards the action.

In the two weeks we spent out there we integrated film-making and photography with trips to favourite locations close to the community and activities people were wanting to do, like hunting for maku. On these trips we availed the cameras to young people for experimentation and have amassed some great photos and footage which we've just had printed and sent back to the community.

Kylie having a go on camera and Michael shows the youngfellas how it's done

The process of facilitating the journey from young people's ideas to story to storyboard to movie realisation created 3 short movies which were shown at a movie night at the Women's Centre the night before we left to a riotous response. We thank the Kiwirrikurra community for having us and NPY Women's Council for making it happen and especially the young people who put so much into making such great videos.

Unfortunately Indigenous Community Television (ICTV) folded recently with the launch of the new National Indigenous Television (NITV). ICTV had been an highly valued outlet for community-produced material and, as we have experienced, a great way for people in more than 150 remote Aboriginal communities to see films, video-clips and music being produced in other communities.