

From little things...

Thursday, 15 May 2008

Last Updated Tuesday, 20 May 2008

In incredibly exciting news Minister Garrett and Minister Macklin have written to the Prime Minister regarding the need for an Indigenous Languages Policy and are awaiting his reply. We of course are waiting too, eager to learn if this might be the beginning of a long-awaited policy development in this area. Alex met with Minister Garrett last week to discuss where this matter was sitting and was delighted to hear things were indeed on the move.

Alex traveled to Sydney for a range of meetings last week, trying to

pull together some more resources for this year's tour as well as

having discussions about making a documentary of the tour with the ABC. She also had meetings in relation to the making of a feature film from the story told by Trevor in Ngapartji Ngapartji as well as other material which has emerged in the project based on the history of anangu across the APY lands.

Meanwhile Belinda, Sadie and myself traveled out to Hamilton Downs for NPY Womens Council's Kungka Careers Conference, which brought together kungka tjuta (young women) from across the APY Lands as well as Titjikala and Santa Teresa communities to hear stories from Aboriginal women role models and leaders and take part in workshops around leadership, health, domestic violence, self-defence, art and theatre.

Our camp at the Kungka Careers Conference, Hamilton Downs

Ngapartji Ngapartji did a presentation on Tuesday night to tell young women about the project with photos and video support. A bit of a highlight was Belinda's digital story where she articulates her involvement with the project, using voiceover and photographs of bush trips, video training and the tours she has taken part in. Showing your artwork to your peers for the first time can be a little daunting and it was a great moment when the audience started clapping loudly as the credits rolled, which is not always the way anangu show appreciation. We hope Belinda's story inspired other young women to think about their own stories and how they might share these through the arts. It was also nice to look out and see Maureen Watson and Janet Inyeko and Sadie in the audience, each of whom have toured with us.

Belinda at the Kungka Careers Conference

It was awesome to see the front row of the audience fill up with the kungka tjuta we worked with in Pipalyatjara two weeks ago. It was hard to know how much was excitement, how much terror, as they prepared for the Ngapartji Ngapartji movie night which followed, where their films would be screened for the first time outside the community. It was also great to catch up with both the Docker River and Kiwirrkurra girls whose communities we visited last year and whose short films remain some of the strongest and most popular of our growing body of community films. It was a great movie night and clearly the audience wanted us to go all night but warnings of a 7am wake up call the next day limited put an early end to it.

The cold has hit us! Priscilla, Sadie and Josina rug up in their swags at the KCC.

We camped in the river with the Docker River girls and though I only stayed for two days Sadie and Belinda stayed on til Friday. Apparently I missed the best disco ever and look forward to seeing the photos!

We welcome to Alice Springs Beth Sometimes who has been choir coordinator for the stage production over the past year and a half, having been based first in Ernabella and this past year in Melbourne. Beth will be doing artwork for us a couple of days a week as well as working with the choir in the lead up to the Ernabella/Alice season later this year. Meanwhile Mariaa has gone to run dance workshops in various communities for the next 6 weeks after which she will be back on deck to manage the regional and remote tour.

Dani Powell

Community Producer