

Last news for 2008!

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Welcome to the last Ngapartji Ngapartji news for 2008. After the excitement of the Ernabella/ Alice Springs tour, as well as the recent Deadly award, you'd think there'd be nothing left to report. But the action continues with documentary footage gathering, new projects in the pipeline, the completion of a series of literacy and arts workshops at Abbott's Camp, participation in conferences both locally and nationally and more!!!

While this is the final Ngapartji Ngapartji news report for 2008, it is also the first put together by Jane Leonard, the project Literacy and Learning Coordinator who is taking over the task after the departure of Community Producer Dani Powell. Dani has made a huge contribution to the project since 2006 and her recent departure will be felt by many. Everyone at Ngapartji Ngapartji wishes her well in whatever she undertakes next.

After excitement of the Ernabella/ Alice Springs tour and the Deadly award died down, there was still lots happening at Ngapartji Ngapartji, but in many different areas of the project.

On the doco front, Beth, Trevor and Batesy recently headed to a wet and muddy Ernabella to complete further filming. The trip also was a great chance for Trevor to show off the Deadly award to all the Ngapartji Ngapartji cast members and for him to acknowledge their contribution to winning the award.

We also put on a couple of film nights to show everyone footage shot from the recent tour. This was received with much hilarity and enjoyment, especially moments depicting the dust storm ripping through our camp at Intjipiri, and all the men from the production crew performing the traditional kalaya inma (emu dance) for the first time. We also spent some time filming a video clip to Jennifer Well's hit song 'Ngura Pilingka' which is about dry country (filming took place in the rain!). Jennifer performed, and directed, with Trevor's guidance. We then headed through muddy puddles to Uluru for more big storms and shooting whilst dodging raindrops. Davo and Stuart flew in and it was back to Ernabella for more interviews before flying to Adelaide and Nowra to interview Nancy Sheppard and Winifred Hilliard about their time in Ernabella in the 1950s. We have now successfully finished the second shooting block and Batesy is back in Alice to start sifting through hours of footage, and delve into the archives to start the daunting post-production process.

This trip was also a chance for Beth to gather community feedback about the tour and for the team to touch base with participants and audiences and swap stories about experiences over the intense tour period. Beth has also been working on the early stages of developing a community workshop program for 2009, which will be a spin-off from Ngapartji Ngapartji, and build towards a new show called "Nyuntu Ngali". This development work involved some exciting initial conversations with community and potential participants while in Ernabella. The show will be a co-production with Windmill Performing Arts and will play at the Adelaide Festival Centre in September 2009, offering Ngapartji Ngapartji participants further opportunities to develop skills and participate and share language and culture through community arts.

Beth and Jane have also wrapped up the sessions held at Abbott's camp in Alice Springs by delivering a laminated family tree and several transcribed life stories to residents. These were put together collaboratively during weekly literacy and arts sessions held in the community centre. Stories detailing the experiences of Louise Abbott, Nora Abbott and Debra Anderson are now on display, along with the family trees, in the Abbott's Camp community centre.

Beth with one of The Abbotts' Camp family trees

Last month also saw Jane co-write (with Inge Kral) and present a conference paper titled 'Alternative Learning Pathways : Community based approaches' at the 2008 Desert Knowledge Symposium. The paper showcased alternative learning approaches in non-formal youth arts and multimedia programs, including those practiced at Ngapartji Ngapartji.

Meanwhile, Alex was lucky enough to be in Washington DC on the evening of Obama's historic victory in the US elections, while she took part in a YouthAction Net fellowship.

<http://www.youthactionnet.org/index.php?fuse=fellowmainpage>. The program involved 20 young leaders from around the world and it was exciting for Alex to discuss Ngapartji Ngapartji alongside a rural farmers' radio station from Nigeria and an art based recycling project from Brazil. From Washington Alex traveled to Boston to visit a friend who runs Smartmeme, an inspiring social change and communications project who have recently launched a book and film - which Alex participated in; https://org2.democracyinaction.org/o/5191/t/2573/shop/custom.jsp?donate_page_KEY=613 Back in town, Alex is keeping busy continuing to fundraise with hope of taking show to London in 2009, starting to vision the last 12 months of the project, and of course working on more grant applications.

And on a final note, congratulations to project performers Rhoda Tjitayi, Maureen Watson and Julie Miller on the births of their little babies.

After an action packed year, the Alice Springs office will go into sleep mode until early January/February while several staff take some well earned time off (except Batesy who continues on with the doco!). So have a great New Year and we'll be back in February to bring you more news of our plans for 2009.