Reconciliation News

Stories about Australia's journey to equality and unity

Blak, Black, Blackfulla
Jack Latimore on being respectful in language

Reconciliation in Action
15 years of RAPs at work

True Tracks
Terri Janke on meaningful collaboration

POWER IN CULTURE
PROTECTION, BENEFITS AND SOVEREIGNTY

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RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA

Reconciliation News is published by Reconciliation Australia in May and October each year. Its aim is to inform and inspire readers with stories relevant to the ongoing reconciliation process between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.

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Reconciliation Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders past and present.

Reconciliation Australia is an independent, not-for-profit organisation promoting reconciliation by building relationships, respect and trust between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Visit **reconciliation.org.au** to find out more.

NOTABLE DATES

10 December 2021	26 January 2022	13 February 2022	17 March 2022	21 March 2022
Human Rights Day	Invasion Day	14th Anniversary of the National Apology	National Close the Gap Day	Harmony Day

Cover image:
Rayleen Brown, Ngangiwumirr and Eastern Arrernte woman and pioneer of Central Desert bushfoods, holds a Coolomon filled with dried quandong and bush tomato, at the 2020 Alice Spring's Parrtjima festival. Read more about bushfoods in *Look before you eat* on page 14. Photo: Parrtjima 2020

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FROM THE CEO

CEO Karen Mundine. Photo: Joseph Mayers

I recently spoke with Larissa Behrendt, on the ABC Radio Focus program, about healing community divisions.

We discussed approaches to growing mistrust, conflict and lack of unity, as the COVID-19 crisis increasingly pits state against state, suburb versus suburb, and the perceived right against the perceived wrong.

Larissa wanted to know how we can find a way forward together out of this crisis, when some communities have been made to feel especially targeted, demonised or left behind.

From my own experience in the reconciliation movement, I know good relationships are built on mutual trust, respect and understanding.

They require humility and a willingness to step back and listen: humility to acknowledge when you've got it wrong, and listening because there's no point in bringing people to the table if they're not going to be heard.

Into this space steps *True Tracks*, Terri Janke's recently published guide to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures and knowledge. Practical and personal in equal measure, at its heart this book is about creating collaborative, meaningful and respectful relationships centred on First Nations peoples' self-determination and voices.

Taking a leaf out of Terri's book, this edition of Reconciliation News is all about the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultural empowerment, protection and rights – and better, more beneficial relationships as a result.

We take a look at ownership and exploitation in Australia's booming bushfood industry (*Look before you eat*, page 14) and hear from Angelina Hurley on why the First Nations arts sector needs to be just as supported as sports during the pandemic (*Art is our voice*, 16).

In *Blak, Black, Blackfulla: Language is important, but it can be tricky*, Jack Latimore looks at the culture around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander expressions to show us that the words we choose matter (18). And we talk to chef Nornie Bero about her new restaurant and her favourite recipe for a delicious damper (20).

In *15 Years of RAPs at work*, we look back on what the Reconciliation Action Plan program has achieved since it was established with only eight organisations, how it's changed and where it's going next (12).

We also provide our *20 Actions for Reconciliatio*n (8), developed for National Reconciliation Week (NRW) and Reconciliation Australia's 20th anniversary this year, with the theme *More than a word: Reconciliation takes action*.

As shown in our NRW wrap up (6), our supporters truly embodied the theme this year, and brave action for reconciliation remains an evident priority for many, despite obstacles, setbacks and postponements.

If the success of NRW is any indication, I feel great optimism and encouragement that in these divisive times, the reconciliation movement continues to grow, evolve and move from safe to brave on issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Thank you for coming with us on this journey and looking ahead, I hope to see many of you at the 2021 Australian Reconciliation Convention this coming November.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer

UPCOMING EVENTS

Narragunnawali Awards 2021

17 November 2021

The Narragunnawali Awards recognise and celebrate schools and early learning services that are implementing outstanding reconciliation initiatives – across the Government, Catholic and Independent sectors. The finalists of this year's awards have shown outstanding commitment, passion, and resilience despite the profound obstacles that COVID-19 and school shutdowns have posed to learning and education. The stories of these exemplary schools and early learning services are testament to the hard work and dedication of educators, despite trying circumstances.

The finalists were announced in August 2021, with two representatives from each of the finalists getting together in November for a one-day workshop and forum.

Tune in to watch the Narragunnawali Awards: narragunnawali.org.au

Narragunnawali Award judges Professor Peter Buckskin, Geraldine Atkinson and Sharon Davis, with Karen Mundine and Tessa Keenan, at the 2019 Narragunnawali Awards. Photo: Nathan Dukes

2021 Australian Reconciliation Convention

15 – 17 November 2021

The 2021 Australian Reconciliation Convention is a once in a generation event, the first national reconciliation gathering in more than 20 years. Live-streamed over three half-days exclusively via the EventCast platform, the Convention will be a vibrant and historic landmark event in Australia's reconciliation journey.

The Convention program includes an excellent line-up of speakers in discussions and panel presentations. Through local, national and international perspectives we will reflect on the past, and explore the future of a just, equitable, and reconciled Australia. It will also include interactive sessions, storytelling, and performances, covering the breadth and depth of how we are moving from safe to brave.

Learn more about the 2021 Australian Reconciliation Convention: 2021arc.com.au

9th SNAICC National Conference

6 – 9 December 2021

Themed *Our Children Matter: Innovative approaches to new world challenges*, the 9th biennial SNAICC National Conference is a must attend event for anyone working in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and family services.

The largest conference of its type in the southern hemisphere, the SNAICC Conference provides the opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, policy makers, researchers, practitioners, government representatives, other non-government organisations and industry representatives to gather to share their work, learn from one another and make renewed commitments to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Take part in the SNAICC National Conference: snaicc.org.au/conference

Children performing at the 8th Annual SNAICC conference. Photo: SNAICC – National Voice for our Children

2022 Indigenous Governance Awards

May 2022

Since 2005, the Indigenous Governance Awards have shared and celebrated the success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led communities and organisations from around the country.

In July 2021, the judging panel were ready to visit and assess the nine finalist organisations leading the way in excellence in First Nations governance.

However, with COVID-19 travel restrictions and state-wide lockdowns the decision was made to delay the judging process and Awards for the safety of the judges, finalists and their communities.

Finalists for each of the three award categories will now be announced in November 2021, with judging and visits to finalist organisations to begin in February 2022, and the Awards ceremony to take place in May 2022.

Winners of the 2022 Indigenous Governance Awards have the chance to share in $90,000 of prize money, as well as receiving corporate mentoring, feedback from an esteemed judging panel, and media and networking opportunities.

Get updates on the 2022 Indigenous Governance Awards: indigenousgovernance.org.au

Marchers at The Long Walk in Perth, with Premier Mark McGowan (centre), Michael Long (second from right), and Reconcilation Australia CEO Karen Mundine. Photo: Brynn O'Connor, Essendon Football Club

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK 2021: **ACTION-PACKED**

Despite snap lockdowns, multiple postponements, and last-minute relocations to different states, National Reconciliation Week (NRW) this year was filled with activity, as supporters exemplified the theme *More than a word: Reconciliation takes action*.

From **27 May to 3 June**, in our big cities and small towns, and in workplaces, schools and communities, supporters of the reconciliation movement were urged to speak up on the tougher issues.

With the theme *More than a word: Reconciliation takes action*, National Reconciliation Week 2021, asked Australians to move from ally to accomplice, and participate in braver, more impactful action for reconciliation.

To assist them on their journey, Reconciliation Australia compiled **20 Actions for Reconciliatio**n (page 8), as well as a quiz on how far we've come, posters, an event calendar and a national Acknowledgement of Country.

Place-based reconciliation

The Australian Reconciliation Network (ARN) led the way with local, community-focused NRW events and activities this year.

The ARN are state-based reconciliation organisations that share the vision to create a reconciled, just and equitable community for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians.

While Australia remained in the throes of the pandemic, many events were planned for online attendance, and some major activities were still able to be held in person.

A snap lockdown for Victoria on the first day of NRW meant a number of both Victorian and Tasmanian events moved online or were postponed for a later date. Both state reconciliation bodies continued to spread the message of *More than a word. Reconciliation takes action* with online resources and by commemorating the key dates of Sorry Day (26 May), the 1967 Referendum (27 May) and Mabo Day (3 June).

Reconciliation WA held their National Reconciliation Week breakfast at Optus Stadium with MC Narelda Jacobs and a keynote address from June Oscar AO.

The Walk for Reconciliation had a great turn out, starting at the WA Museum Boola Bardip, through the cultural centre, over the Horseshoe Bridge and ending at Yagan Square as a public demonstration of leadership, support and solidarity with the reconciliation movement.

Over in Brisbane, the Reconciliation Queensland National Reconciliation Week breakfast also kicked off the week from the Queensland Parliamentary Annexe. With assistance from their major sponsor BHP, the event was live streamed to regional venues across the state including Cairns, Rockhampton, Townsville, Moranbah and the Cook Shire.

Reconciliation NSW's partnership with the Fred Hollows Foundation helped push the meaning of the 2021 theme even further with a digital campaign highlighting how to move from safe to brave on reconciliation and challenging Australians to take action in their everyday lives.

The Adelaide Convention Centre saw a large crowd for Reconciliation SA's breakfast featuring speeches from the current SA Premier and former Reconciliation SA board member Stephen Marshall MP and a live Q&A facilitated by Professor Peter Buckskin.

Reconciliation Australia has supported The Long Walk since 2013, and this year's made an historic appearance in Perth, moving through the streets before arriving at Optus Stadium ahead of the blockbuster Dreamtime AFL match.

The overwhelming response and activity during NRW this year is testament to the many who are living and exemplifying the theme, *Reconciliation takes action*, and moving from safe to brave on issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

With events cancelled this year, Reconciliation NSW encouraged their followers to act with a digital campaign focussed on action. Photo: Reconciliation NSW

Karen Mundine gave a live virtual book reading of Finding Our Heart by Thomas Mayor and Blak Douglas, on Fun with Captain Starlight. Photo: The Starlight Foundation

The crowd at The Long Walk in Perth WA, cross over the Matagarup Bridge before making their way to the game. Photo: Brynn O'Connor, Essendon Football Club

A. Professor Simone Tur, Professor Peter Buckskin and Karen Mundine, at the Reconciliation South Australia NRW breakfast, where they delivered a panel on turning words into action. Photo: Reconciliation South Australia

Q: What petition was presented to the Australian Parliament in 1963 by Yolngu leaders, protesting against the seizure of more than 300 square kilometres of Aboriginal land in Arnhem Land for mining?

A) The Barunga Statement
B) The Aboriginal Advancement League Petition
C) The Yirrkala Bark Petitions

Think you know the answer? Knowing Australia's true history is important: take the NRW2021 reconciliation quiz to test your knowledge: http://bit.ly/NRW2021Quiz

20 ACTIONS FOR RECONCILIATION

Move from ally to accomplice

Being only three per cent of the Australian population, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can't raise the profile of important issues without allies.

SAFER: Know how to be a better ally to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
BRAVER: Step up, show up, be an accomplice. Disruption of the status quo is often necessary to achieve real change.

Make reconciliation everyone's business

Make reconciliation part of the business of your workplace, school, or early learning place's culture and decision-making.

SAFER: Start a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for your workplace.
BRAVER: Already have a RAP? Join your RAP Working Group.

Call Out Racism

Racism damages lives and livelihoods. Getting abused, ignored, refused service or getting followed by security, has long-lasting damaging effects.

SAFER: Check you understand how your unconscious bias and attitudes affect your thinking and actions.
BRAVER: Be ready to call out racism when you hear or see it. Have those conversations with family and friends.

Drive reconciliation in education

If you didn't learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander cultures at school, make sure our kids do now.

SAFER: Check out the teaching and learning resources about reconciliation on the Narragunnawali.org.au website and at LearnOurTruth.com
BRAVER: Challenge colonial perspectives on history, support school curriculum changes, commit to a RAP in your school or early learning service.

It's all our history

A key reconciliation challenge is to overturn the cult of disremembering and the great Australian silence when it comes to our true history.

SAFER: When talking about the history or story of Australia, always include the participation and presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
BRAVER: Find out facts and ways to learn and talk about Australia's true history.

Aim higher in higher education

Voices, knowledges, and the specific expertise of First Nations professionals and students are still fighting to be heard in universities and colleges.

SAFER: Connect and work with First Peoples to improve the teaching of First Nations history, current affairs, and cultures in your college or university.
BRAVER: Encourage your educational institution to fund research into frontier wars, massacres, and other areas of underexplored Australian history.

Know your local history

Memorialising and commemorating those who committed massacres, forced removals and cultural genocide continues the suffering inflicted by the original crime.

SAFER: Investigate your local history and the record of colonial leaders who are memorialised by place names in your local area.
BRAVER: If they are guilty of historical crimes against First Nations peoples, then start a community conversation about renaming these places.

Support self-determination

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples need to be in charge of decision-making and leadership for themselves and their communities.

SAFER: Understand the strengths in First Nations community control in governing, health, education curricula, and media representation.
BRAVER: Support and promote community-controlled and Indigenous governed organisations.

Create culturally safe places

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples don't always feel safe or welcomed in some places, and have been historically excluded from many.

SAFER:Understand what could make your school or workplace a more welcoming and safe place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
BRAVER: Seek cultural awareness training locally or find a facilitator via Supply Nation.

Get your facts first-hand

Inaccurate portrayals, stereotypes, and lazy investigation and reporting, characterise mainstream media coverage.

SAFER: Inform yourself with First Nations produced and created content and news.
BRAVER: Speak out against and prosecute blatant racism and misinformation in mainstream media reporting.

Act to protect First Nations cultures

Knowing, understanding and being strong in culture influences the health and well-being of First Nations peoples; providing mental, economic and physical strength.

SAFER: Host a Reconciliation Film Club screening. Support and share music and content from Indigenous artists on IndigiTUBE and Spotify playlists like NIMA , and Original Storytellers.
BRAVER: Support and protect Indigenous protocols in the Arts. Report cultural theft or infringements.

Defend Land Rights and Native Title

Australia's First Peoples have defended their lands and waters, and asserted their rights to their homelands since the beginning of colonisation.

SAFER: Educate yourself about the details and history of First Nations Land Rights and Native Title in Australia.
BRAVER: Find out about Land Justice efforts and advocacy in your local area. Appropriately leverage your skills and sphere of influence in support.

Support economic development

Discrimination in employment, education and housing contribute to poverty today, but its roots go deep into generations of stolen wages, stolen land, historic exclusion, and discrimination.

SAFER: Learn and understand about the historical causes of contemporary poverty and economic disempowerment.
BRAVER: Find out ways you can support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic development and businesses via Supply Nation when searching for contractors, suppliers and products.

Acknowledging Country

Acknowledging Country shows you accept and understand that no matter where you are across this nation, you are on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands.

SAFER: Know whose Country you are on – resources like the AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia are a useful starting point but go further.
BRAVER: Including the name of Country when posting letters and parcels. Encourage businesses you buy from to add an address section for this on ordering forms.

Understand political representation

Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander peoples have been fighting for a political voice, and structural changes like treaty, for more than 100 years.

SAFER: Learn the long history of representative bodies and calls for Treaty.
BRAVER: Support current calls by First Peoples such as treaties, constitutional reform, and the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Care for Country

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have stewarded, nurtured and cared for Australia's diverse environment and waterways for over 80,000 years.

SAFER: Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives systems of knowledge on our natural environment.
BRAVER: Learn about how climate change is going to directly affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Stand up in support for those it's already affecting.

Challenge our leaders to take action on justice

Proportionally, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the most incarcerated people on the planet.

SAFER: Learn and understand the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the justice systems.
BRAVER: Stand with First Peoples to lower incarceration rates, rates of family violence and children in out of home care through campaigns like Change the Record and Raise the Age.

Speak up for languages

Language is inseparable from culture, and culture is empowerment. There are more than 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, including about 800 dialects.

SAFER: Know your local area language(s) of the Traditional Custodians of the land on which you live.
BRAVER: Actively support First Nations language revival programs. Know and use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander placenames and petition councils and governments to do the same.

Buy from First Nations businesses

Purchase Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander art or products only from Indigenous-owned businesses.

SAFER: Learn about the damage caused by casual or deliberate cultural appropriation. Follow and support businesses like @ TradingBlak on Instagram.
BRAVER: Call out exploitation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art, culture, people and businesses.

Take action every week, every day

SAFER: National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week are excellent times to focus on actions for reconciliation.
BRAVER: Consider your action for reconciliation *every week, every day*. How you are going to move from safe to brave on issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples? Share with your community, family, and friends. Ask others to turn their awareness into action on reconciliation.

Terri Janke, author of True Tracks. Photo: Terri Janke and Company

IN CONVERSATION: **DR TERRI JANKE**

Dr Terri Janke has been a decades-long warrior for the protection and strengthening of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures. The Meriam/Wuthathi lawyer, advocate, and international authority on Indigenous cultural and Intellectual Property spoke to Reconciliation News about her work and her recently published guide to respectful working relationships, *True Tracks*.

Tell us about the principles of True Tracks *and why they're so timely.*

The principles in *True Tracks* are in response to the growing interest in Indigenous cultures and the applications in various areas – from art, fashion and education to business.

They are in response to the misappropriation and copying, and the taking of culture without prior informed consent. That said, I think the principles empower better collaborations in these fields, from opportunities for Indigenous artists to work with public art projects to tech applications, the principles are a pathway to empower respect.

Respectful relationships start with people seeing each other as equal and wanting to come together in a fair way that has mutual benefits. The misappropriations of culture have led to a lot of trust being lost.

It's respect, self-determination, consultation and consent, interpretation, integrity, and it's about benefit sharing. It covers continuing cultures and thinking about the future of our cultures.

Bringing non-Indigenous and Indigenous people together can be challenging. The collaborative arrangements that we need for the future, and for reconciliation can be underpinned by this framework. It covers continuing cultures and thinking about the future of our cultures.

The book and the principles guide people to act respectfully, follow guidelines, work ahead of the legal requirements. Is the law still playing catch up when it comes to this area?

The law is behind in recognising Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP). Intellectual property laws are designed for western knowledge systems. They are based on incentive, individual rights.

The misappropriations of culture have led to a lot of trust being lost.

The copyright law protect works that are in material form so this excludes oral and performance-based cultures. Indigenous plant knowledge can be stolen for patents of new medicines. There is a need for free, prior-informed consent, and recognition of rights under the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

This area is your PhD – the culmination and aggregation of your decades of work in this area. How much did it change when you adapted it to the book and who was your intended audience?

The PhD has a lot more legal analysis and theory. I changed it and added stories of clients, work that I admired, and relevant case studies. I added pieces of my life and career. All of this was not welcomed in an academic research project but I had the creative freedom to include this here. I am grateful that I had so many people who allowed me to share their stories. My team at Terri Janke and Company helped enormously.

I wrote the book so that people could move towards positive engagement. I wanted people to take on the True Tracks as practical advice. I wanted to empower First Nations people – artists, creators, educators, inventors. I also wanted it to be for non-First Nations people who were interested in collaboration and engagement but do not know how to do it. I hope that this helps good collaborations.

People often say that this engagement adds time and complexity. How would you respond to these concerns?

I think people focus too much on the outcome. They need to consider that true engagement and understanding is a long-term opportunity. It is a cultural practice – taking time to understand, to try, and there is the reciprocity of relationships.

It's not helpful to see things as just transactions. The process is the focus. And I think that when we take the time, we can uncover creative excellence. It's not about just taking knowledge, design, or stories. It is about ensuring the First Nations people, who are the owners of the culture, have a voice. If we work in closer collaboration, we will gather a deeper insight that can create amazing new things that can make a difference.

What role do you think reconciliation and Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) could play in disseminating these principles and knowledges more broadly?

At a personal level, people can start thinking about how to bring the principles into their lives, and leadership. Change begins with the individual. At an organisational level, I think True Tracks principles can be implemented as part of RAP activities and goals. For example, an ICIP protocols document that has the principles as a foundation, but also then can be used to develop practice guidelines, can go a long way to assister deeper engagement, and be a tool for cultural safety.

Who or what has inspired you to keep going on this groundbreaking path of yours?

I would have to acknowledge Dr. B Marika AO, who recently passed. I want to respectfully acknowledge how she taught me about Aboriginal art, culture and copyright. She always spoke up and gave so much over the years, she was very inspiring.

We met when I was a young graduate and trying to find my focus in the law. She was one of a group of Indigenous artists fighting a case about Aboriginal arts and copyright. She would talk to me and share her ideas. It was her words, her fight in the case, her fire that encouraged me. I am grateful to her for sharing her art, culture and knowledge.

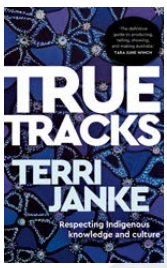
How do you see the future of ICIP progress in Australia?

ICIP rights in the arts has been a focus, but I think we will see more discussions around biopiracy, plant knowledge, and in science generally. We will hear more about ICIP in education as languages, cultures become more embedded in schools.

I would like to see great collaborations that are respectful and meaningful with mutual benefits and based on free prior informed consent.

I still hold out for new laws, and I believe that ICIP rights are fundament to the health and wellbeing of Indigenous people. If these rights are realised it can enable and empower Indigenous people to create, do things in business, be in control of their culture.

I hope the next generation of Australians can be fluent in True Tracks principles. It might not be the answer to all the problems, but if we all put our heads together from that grounding, and keep our tracks true, we are destined for better relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.



True Tracks is available to order at:
newsouthbooks.com.au/books/true-tracks

15 YEARS OF **RAPS AT WORK**

July 2021 marked 15 years of Reconciliation Australia's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program. It started with eight organisations – government, corporate, community and not-for-profit – in 2006.

Staff at Barunga Laundry, part of the Remote Laundries project, supported by Stretch RAP partner, NT Primary Health Network. Photo: NTPHN

We are now approaching **2,000** organisations with endorsed RAPs. Each has worked with us to develop and formalise a plan which meets their needs and our standards.

The on-the-ground effects of this are staggering. In the year up to 2020, RAP partner organisations:

- Employed **63,973** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Procured more than **$2 billion** worth of goods and services from Indigenous-owned businesses
- Invested more than **$24 million** into scholarships for First Nations students
- Provided more than **$50 million** in pro bono services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, organisations and communities.

More than 3,000 other organisations are in the preliminary stages of creating RAPs, and over 2,000 of those have commenced in the **last 12 months alone**.

"This 15-year process has involved a lot of hard work," says Reconciliation Australia Chief Executive Karen Mundine.

In the 12 months to August, Reflect RAPs increased from 406 to 983 and Innovate RAPs from 516 to 786. The inflow of organisations is accelerating rapidly.

It bodes well for the next phase of the RAP program's growth. After 15 years of hard work and good will, this phenomenal growth is exciting. The next 15 hold enormous potential. That's not to say that it has always been plain sailing.

RAPs – a business plan for embedding reconciliation

Once upon a time, there was a 'triple bottom line'. This phrase spread like wildfire among corporations in the 1990s. It signified that apart from profit, companies should also measure themselves against their social and environmental impact.

Sadly, it was frequently more talked about than genuinely practised. The original bottom line had a way of re-asserting itself at the expense of its 'feel good' counterparts. Eventually it was replaced by new mantras such as 'Corporate Social Responsibility' and 'Social Licence to Operate'.

More recently we find ESG everywhere on the corporate landscape: Environmental, Social, Governance. However, these ideas are no longer just good PR. They are increasingly enforced by investors who will withhold capital unless minimum ESG standards are met.

In the Australian context, recognition of the urgent need for national reconciliation and basic social justice is a fundamental element of any serious ESG policy program. RAPs offer organisations a tried and tested mechanism to address that need.

This does not mean signing up for RAPs merely to tick a box in annual reports. This may have been the attitude among some in the past, but Reconciliation Australia now has long experience in weeding out such tendencies.

"It takes leadership for an organisation to whole-heartedly embrace its RAP and embed it into every aspect of its business," says Karen Mundine.

"Reconciliation is a long journey, and sustained leadership is critical to long-term transformation."

The danger of disconnect

Telstra has been a long-standing RAP partner. Its senior management has long embraced the principles and actions embodied in their RAP. Yet they became sufficiently disengaged with the seriousness of that commitment that they allowed Telstra branded stores to sell vulnerable First Nations customers in remote communities phone plans they could neither understand nor afford.

Imposing a fine of $50 million, the Federal Court described the conduct as "unconscionable".

In response, Reconciliation Australia revoked Telstra's Elevate RAP, and today Telstra is grappling with how to rebuild trust and credibility among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities – and others appalled at the behaviour. This is the power of RAPs to bring meaningful accountability.

Woolworths is Australia's largest employer (including 5,000 First Nations people), an Innovate RAP partner and according to a report it recently commissioned from an Independent Review panel, "one of Australia's best-known brands …".

Its subsidiary Endeavour Drinks, went about its business as usual in the past couple of years, seeking a site in Darwin to build a Dan Murphy's liquor outlet that would be visible from space. Following their processes and protocols they settled on a site very close to three First Nations communities, which, at their own instigation, are 'dry' communities where alcohol is both unwelcome and illegal.

Aboriginal health, community and advocacy groups responded robustly to this plan, which was completely at odds with the RAP Woolworths said it valued so highly.

In the face of the resulting campaign and controversy, including coversations with Reconciliation Australia, Woolworths commissioned an Independent Review the findings of which included not going ahead with the store and returning the liquor license, amongst other commitments which Woolworths has said it will honour.

The report underscored Woolworths' failure to prioritise meaningful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. It remains in the program and is drafting its next RAP.

Reconciliation Australia continues to work with both Woolworths and Telstra, as we do with all RAP partners, to equip and challenge them to continue to grow in their reconciliation journeys.

The future of RAPs

As we enter the next phase of the RAP program, a couple of features stand out. The first is that for our longest-standing partners, this project of national reconciliation has developed an animating, self-perpetuating life of its own.

"The leading 200 organisations are now fully networked among themselves," says Karen Mundine.

"They meet quarterly to compare notes and offer advice to one another. They take this project very seriously."

The second is a phrase we've lately adopted to describe how we see the program evolving further is '**safe to brave**'. It signifies organisations and employees being motivated by the true meaning of their RAP, to make risky and costly choices to advance reconciliation. It takes courage.

"Real, enduring transformation within organisations, embedding reconciliation in all their activities, requires many individuals to make that shift from safe to brave," Karen says.

"It means taking on issues, entrenched practices and sometimes superiors to reinforce the commitment to reconciliation."

Rio Tinto was another longstanding RAP partner; working closely with us through a series of RAPs, including an Elevate RAP. It had displayed corporate leadership, was the biggest non-government employer of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and had procured billions of dollars in contracts from Indigenous-owned businesses.

Yet they lost focus and failed to do the ongoing work to embed their commitment to reconciliation. From a corporate leader in reconciliation, it became a company that by 2020 would carry out the catastrophic destruction of Juukan Gorge in the Pilbara.

Rio Tinto lost their Elevate RAP and is suspended from the RAP program but the episode highlights the question: *what if?* Instead of doing what was safe, going after the ore at all costs, ignoring the priceless 46,000 year history of that site, what if someone senior had instead been brave?

Such bravery might have saved intense anguish among Traditional Owners and the communities around the site, for people across Australia, and around the world. It might have saved one of the most precious cultural and historical sites on Earth from obliteration.

If Rio's RAP had been truly integrated and central to its operations and decisions, it would have been easier to find this bravery to speak up. In fact, it should not have been needed. The company should have intrinsically known what to do with a site like Juukan.

It's important to remember that RAPs are not the sole solution to 250 years of colonisation. Rather, they are an accessible and robust framework for organisations to commit to respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and a useful starting point for the individuals in that organisation to contribute to a more just and equitable society.

But achieving this mission requires sustained and brave commitment.

There are four types of RAP: **Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate**. Each signifies a stage of development for the organisation in its knowledge and sophistication on their 'reconciliation journey'. The current 1,953 endorsed RAPs comprise:

- Reflect 983
- Innovate 786
- Stretch 164
- Elevate 20

Peter Cooley, founder of IndigiGrow, checks over native bushfood, Lemon Myrtle, at IndigiGrow's premises at LaPerouse, Sydney. Photo: Renee Nowytarger

LOOK BEFORE YOU EAT
CULTURE AND COMMERCE IN AUSTRALIA'S BUSHFOOD INDUSTRY

With the growing popularity of bushfoods comes questions about ownership, rights, and economic benefits in an industry built on First Nations cultural knowledge.

On your trip to the average Australian supermarket, you can find kangaroo next to the beef and sausages, kakadu plum hand cream in the toiletries aisle, and even lemon myrtle air freshener along with the cleaning products.

In an increasingly health-conscious public, with the rise of wellness influencers and environmental concerns, finding the next acai berry, quinoa or manuka honey has the potential to rock the food market. Especially if this product claims to be ethical.

But there's a forgotten element in this race: bushfoods are about much more than just sustenance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and they certainly aren't a novelty. They are an indivisible part of First Nations peoples' identities, rituals and Country, and part of a priceless cultural inheritance that has been passed down for thousands of years.

But despite this legacy, research shows Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples comprise less than 15 percent of producers in this AUD $20 million a year market.

For the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and businesses in the industry, it's not just a race to find the next big thing. It's an urgent mission to build safeguards and respect for traditional knowledge, so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the ones who lead and benefit in an industry built on their cultures.

More than business as usual

Peter Cooley, Bidjigal man and founder of IndigiGrow based at LaPerouse, Sydney, has a vision for the commercialisation of bushfoods for First Nations peoples.

"The potential of the market is huge," says Peter. "It's a way of increasing resources and developing intergenerational wealth and sustainability for our people and communities."

But for Peter, starting IndigiGrow was not about establishing a profitable business. As a social enterprise, it employs six full-time First Nations young people, and it works to regenerate the critically endangered native ecosystem, Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub.

"IndigiGrow is all about culture, opportunities and sustainability," he says.

"We started off to provide employment and cultural learning for our young people, for them to better understand our local plants and the environment, and also our strong connection to Country through these plant species."

"It's an opportunity to express sovereignty through culture and to care for Country in the way we have for millenia."

"All of funds generated through IndigiGrow go back into these young people."

"They learn traditional knowledge, as well as being equipped with a trade."

"This is not only providing opportunities and capacity-building, but it's protecting cultural knowledge. It's keeping it strong in our community, making sure it's safe for the next generation, and caring for and healing Country."

Responsibility over bottom lines

Inclusiveness of community is a crucial part of the mission of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses in the bushfoods industry.

"The challenge for us is that we are the holders of Ancestral knowledge about native foods and medicines that have been passed down for more than 100,000 years," says Peter Cooley.

"With this knowledge comes responsibility and obligation – to care for Country and community, and to make sure this knowledge is not abused or exploited."

"Non-Indigenous businesses have no such obligation. They can grow their business any way they want to without consequences, in ways that First Nations businesses cannot."

Rayleen Brown, a Ngangiwumirr and Eastern Arrernte woman and founder of Kungkas Can Cook, Alice Springs' famous catering business and cafe, is a veteran of the industry, and also feels this pressure.

"There are layers of issues in this industry that haunt me. I came from a very sorry background, and I want to be successful in my business. I want a secure future for my family," she says.

"But I have this heavy burden on my shoulders which is we need to get things right in this industry first. I've had lots of opportunities to partner with people but I've said no, because it doesn't feel right."

Kungkas Can Cook is renowned for only using local First Nations women to supply their wild harvested bushfoods, continuing an ancient tradition of women caring for their communities.

"Where I'm from in the Central Desert, there's been a continuous sharing of knowledge down through the generations," she says.

"Culturally women are the gatherers and foragers in this region, whereas men are the hunters. Ultimately it was the women who sustained their communities, because eventually animals and game moved on. You would be relying on grains, tubers and small lizards to survive."

"A lot of these stories are really strongly connected to these women to this day. Each seed and fruit is enriched with a song and story that connects them back to their Country and their people."

Rayleen believes that it's this community-first approach that has allowed her to be successful.

"The reason we've achieved what we have is because we've always been ethical in what we do. We've always brought our communities along with us by building that knowledge," she says.

But she also acknowledges that as the industry grows, potential for exploitation grows too.

"There is a lot of interest in the industry because it's starting to generate money, but only a small percentage of Indigenous people are benefitting from all this growth."

"We can take every opportunity as they come, but we also need to respect that story and connection to Country that these women have carried for many thousands of years."

"It's such a beautiful part of the whole story, so it would be such a pity if it wasn't a significant part of this industry."

Better protections needed

Paul Saeki, Business Development Manager at the Northern Australia Aboriginal Kakadu Plum Alliance (NAAKPA), has seen first-hand what can happen when demand for bushfoods increases in a market with few protections.

Kakadu Plum is seeing rising popularity because it's been found to be a superfood, with the highest known levels of Vitamin C content of any fruit – but with this discovery comes opportunities for misuse.

"There are many organisations making claims which can be difficult to verify, and sometimes Indigenous stakeholders are not aware they are being referenced."

"A variety of different Kakadu Plum powders are being sold overseas by overseas producers. None of them have anything to do with Australia, even though Kakadu plum is only grown in Australia," he says.

NAAKPA is an alliance of Aboriginal-owned enterprises supplying Kakadu Plum fruit and extracts for the Australian market.

"We desperately need to build rules around the supply chain – to protect Indigenous knowledges and economic opportunities for Aboriginal people, who are amongst the most economically marginalised population in Australia, one of the richest countries on Earth," says Paul.

Coming together for capability

In 2019, the first Bushfoods Symposium brought together 120 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders from the industry, forming the First Nations Bushfood and Botanical Alliance Australia (FNBBAA).

"We just don't have that expertise and capability to keep up with what's happening in the wider industry. FNBBAA is about building capability on the ground," says Rayleen Brown, who is on the Board of Directors.

FNBBAA aims to increase awareness, set national standards on working with First Nations people, as well as change laws to protect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge.

"I would like to see a recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights to retain cultural intellectual property, as well as certification marks" says Peter Cooley, who is also a Director.

In the meantime, it's up to all of us to make sure we are making the right choices when we buy bushfoods.

"Really do your homework," says Rayleen. "Please just check who you are buying from. Don't just talk the talk – walk the walk."

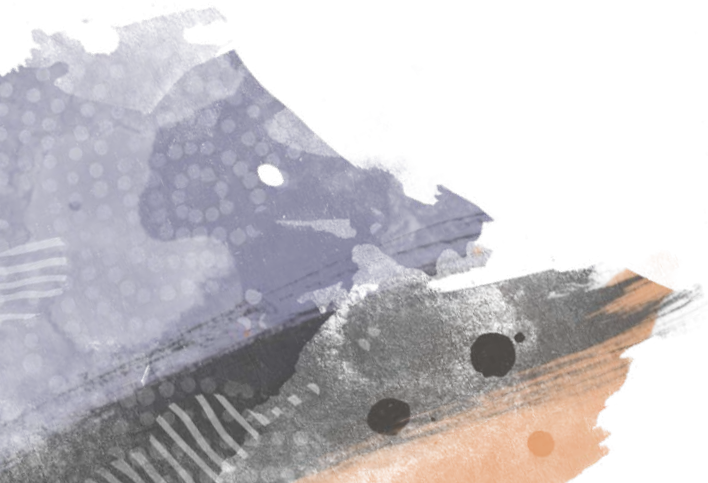
Dancers from the Kimberley region standing on the Ngurrara Canvas at the Ngurrara native title determination at Pirnini near the Kurlku community in the Great Sandy Desert. Photo: AAP Image/Supplied by Kimberley Land Council.

‘ART IS OUR VOICE’

Why the government needs to support First Nations arts, not just sport, in the pandemic

By Angelina Hurley

This article contains mentions of the Stolen Generations.



The golden rule when organising an arts event with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is to never hold it at the same time as a sports event. If there is a choice between attending one or the other, chances are our mob are going to that footy game.

Maintaining support for the arts is hard and the COVID-19 pandemic has made it even more difficult. There have been many discussions about the preferential treatment given to sports during the pandemic, while heavy restrictions are applied to arts and cultural events.

While NAIDOC week celebrations were cancelled, the football is still operating. There is annoyance at the complaining commentary about the inconveniences football codes have suffered, not to mention the anger towards the players who don’t follow restrictions.

In the wake of every lockdown, my emails and social media feeds have been flooded with cancellations and closures from local to state theatres, festivals, museums, galleries, residencies, conferences, and workshops. Most temporarily, but some permanent.

Art as voice

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art is the first art of this nation, an ancient visual gift of culture and learning. It communicates history, story, and language.

Recently, rock art in the Drysdale River National Park in the Kimberley, the land of the Balanggarra people, has been recognised as "Australia's oldest-known rock paintings."

The 17,300-year-old painting of a kangaroo and the 12,000-year-old Gwion figures are breathtaking. They vary in artistic style, identify different social groups, and record ceremony. Rock art is more than just pictorial records, they are historical monuments of Aboriginal culture.

Through our art, the cultural connections of songlines and dreamings continue. Deep principles and concepts are taught through art to tell us the right way to relate to and live with each other. Knowledge is maintained and instructed through art.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people share histories that are too often ignored. Our art creates spaces for us to remember, mourn, and educate as well as opportunity for social change.

Community Development Worker, Grant Paulson, a Birrah and Bundjalung man, says:

> *It is important to me to point to something that is a direct reference to me and my culture. It's nice to see something that is representative of you and your own mob in a world that ignores you most of the time.*

Art is our voice. There was none louder in 1996 than the Ngurrara people, who embedded their voice in the creation of an 80 square metre canvas. The beautiful and complex Ngurrara paintings I and II are a depiction of the Walmajarri and Wangkajunga people's Country, the Great Sandy Desert. They are a communal statement of sovereignty.

Created by 19 Traditional Owners, the paintings are evidence of the Ngurrara people's connection to Country and were submitted as part of their 1996 native title claim. They expressed their rightful claim to land through art.

It was affirming to see as a final declaration each artist stand on the area of the painting they created and speak about the connection they had to Country. After ten years, their native title was officially recognised.

Another example of how the selfless nature of Aboriginal people displays itself is through art, and the work of renowned Yankunytjatjara, Pitjantjatjara artist and Ngangkari (traditional doctor) Betty Muffler, which graced the cover of Vogue in September last year for NAIDOC week.

Betty transfers from her hands to the canvas touch, motion, energy, and vibration into her work. For years, this senior cultural woman has walked across Country providing healing to areas in need.

A history of silencing Aboriginal art

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have endured ongoing discrimination due to colonisation and settler laws.

Under the guise of stopping the illegal drug trade, the 1897 Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act increased police freedoms. These freedoms included permitting the removal of Aboriginal people from one reserve to another and the removal of Aboriginal children, as well as deciding who these children were to be placed with.

Cultural practices were also banned under the Act, which included no speaking language, no dance, no ceremonies, and no teaching it to their children.

These laws were enforced up to the mid-1970s. It was an attack on our being, our identity and existence. As a result, intergenerational traumas developed. Removing the practice of art and culture significantly affected the lives of Aboriginal people. The physical and spiritual disconnection from art was detrimental.

Musician Toni Janke, a Wuthathi and Meriam woman, says:

> *It is about education, responsibility and sharing through communal identity and belonging. It is about passing on our gifts and leaving a legacy for others at a point in time. I believe we are all artists in our own right by virtue of our rich cultural ancestry.*

In its modern form, Aboriginal art has allowed for a shared expression of our culture and become world-renowned. Aboriginal culture can be revived through the power of art. As a result of commercialisation, it has become more popular, developing economic sustainability that has enabled some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to remain living on Country.

The field of art therapy widely acknowledges and documents the connection between creativity and healing. A creative framework for decolonisation, making art can help combat ailments, reinvigorate and aid emotional well-being. Assertions and expressions of culture reinstate power.

Through visual media, performance, music and the written word, art conveys a story, an experience, a perspective, and an attitude. Sport has even gained from artistic inclusion by putting the designs of First Nations artists on jerseys and merchandise, and through performances at the being of games.

An obvious way to address health and other societal inequalities affecting Aboriginal people is to support their long-standing connection to art and culture.

The government and society as a whole need to prioritise support for the arts during these times — as much as they do for sports.

Angelina Hurley's ancestry is Gooreng Gooreng, Mununjali, Birriah and Kamilaroi. A PhD Candidate at Griffith University, she has worked in Indigenous Arts, Education and Community Cultural Development for over 20 years.

This article was originally published on The Conversation. Head to theconversation.com/au *to read more.*

Judge of the 2019 Narragunnawali Awards, Sharon Davis, at a visit to Moolap Primary School. The Narragunnawali online platform has terminology guides for teachers and educators. Photo: Rob Corrigan

BLAK, BLACK, BLACKFULLA **LANGUAGE IS IMPORTANT, BUT IT CAN BE TRICKY**

By Jack Latimore

If you followed the last year's Black Lives Matter uprisings, you will have noticed the word Blak being used by writers and commentators. If you're curious, interested, baffled, or thinking of super-casually dropping some words into a conversation or piece of writing yourself, this handy usage guide is for you.

Aboriginal or aboriginal

Let's start with a worrying trend I've observed creeping into common practice over the past decade: the reversion to the uncapitalised aboriginal. I'm not even sure it's due to not knowing better. I think in most instances, it's deliberate because it's usually surrounded by other, grammatically correct capitalisations. It's been common and correct practice since the late-1970s to capitalise Aboriginal, so, you know, get the "caps" right then proceed to the next black tile on the pathway to personal Recognition. Blak Tip: Language is important and respect goes a long way.

Indigenous or indigenous

Same thing with Indigenous – you better put a cap on it, as Queen Bey would say. This is more recent practice and many publications and newsrooms (though not this one) are yet to shift with the times and update their house style. Insistence on its usage is also sometimes belittled, usually along the lines of: "There's more important things in Aboriginal Affairs that we should be worried about." Snore. Watch how we walk and chew gum at the same time.

Also, it's weird that everybody accepts and celebrates the sporting parlance: "It's the little, 1 per cent efforts that make a real champion", but are quick to dismiss the same logic when it applies to communication. So be a champion, uppercase the I.

Blak or Black or Blackfella or Blackfulla

Let's get back to Blak. The provenance of this term goes back to 1994 and Aboriginal artist Destiny Deacon, who urged art curators Hetti Perkins and Claire Williamson to use Blak instead of Black for an exhibition. It ended up being titled Blakness: Blak City Culture. Last year, I asked Deacon the reason she advocated Blak and it came sharply back to the issue of representation. Growing up, Deacon always heard white people calling Aboriginal people "black c---s". She wanted to take the "c" out of Black.

Between then and now, the use of Blak has taken on additional functions. It still signifies urban, contemporary Indigeneity, but has also become important in differentiating the Blak experience from the racialised experiences of non-Indigenous communities of colour. Blackfella or Blackfulla is now often used for the same purpose, but Blak also carries with it connotations of actively engaged, critical-political conscience, which Blackfella or Blackfulla, arguably, doesn't always convey. The concept and relational use of Blak also continues to emerge, which adds to its dynamism.

There's no difference in meaning between Blackfella or Blackfulla – usage is just a matter of individual choice.

Can white people use these terms? All the mob I know have no issue with whitefullas using Blackfulla/Blackfella, but I have heard strange tales of people employed in "human resources" taking issue with white staff using it. So, probably best to just try to avoid that HR mob altogether. No problem with white people using Blak in writing, but like Black it is more fraught in speech. Avoid swanning around liberally calling Aboriginal people Blacks. That won't end well.

Country (note the capitalisation)

Recently, my use of Country (capped and personified) in an article about the significance and power of traditional language momentarily baffled my non-Indigenous editor. It was important, I wrote, that the initial screenings of a film happened outside and on Noongar Boodjar (homeland) "so that Country could hear its language being spoken". My editor, who was applying conventional Western perspectives and grammatical rules not equipped to convey the philosophical and spiritual cosmology, and time-space continuum of First Nations people's notions of Country, was stumped. Yeah, it's pretty heavy. That's why we capitalise it. Same as you probably do with God.

Mob

Mob is another dynamic word, and a bit of a shapeshifter. It can refer to Blackfullas; it can refer to Whitefullas; it can be deprecating; it can be dignified. Always be careful of them top-camp mob telling you good mob you shouldn't use mob.

Also be wary of over-use.

Indigenous or Aboriginal or First Nations

This one will get me into trouble because it really boils down to personal choice. Some mob rail against the use of First Nations, viewing it as being imported from North America in the 1990s during a period of rich cultural exchange with our brothers and sisters over that way. I've found that the mob that reject the application of First Nations, generally prefer to be referred to as Aboriginal.

Indigenous is a tricky one in this context. It came into common usage during the reign of John Howard and many mob continue to hold Indigenous in a similar regard to which they hold him. It is permissible in bureaucratic circumstances, and to interchange with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and First Nations in a piece of writing, but it still makes some of us cringe inside. The Howard years were tough to stomach. Younger mob seem to be more accepting of Indigenous, generally speaking.

Abbreviations like ATSI or TSI? No. Disrespectful. Stop it.

Be even more specific when you can too. Which brings us to the final entry for this round of *Ask An Aborigine*.

I'm a Goori not a Koori

Goori/Koori/Murri/Noongar communicate the region we hail from and perhaps some of the traditional languages, cultural beliefs and practices we carry, and the nexus of our familial relations. Broadly speaking, Murries are from up Queensland; Murdies are from kind of south-west Queensland and parts of western NSW; Koories are from up there too, but carrying on down into Victoria and around southern NSW from Newcastle down. Goories are coastal mob from Newcastle areas and heading north. Then over southern WA and some ways into SA you get Noongar. And I can already see how I'm going to get growled at for attempting this.

My advice is to get to know the First Nation you have settled on and the neighbouring First Nations that surround you, and continue to work outwards. It's also always good to ask. Blackfullas will tell you, if you are willing to listen. Sadly, listening is not common enough. Yet, when it comes to the elements of writing, editing, or just talking about Blackfullas, it's the little things that are most likely to yank your coat-tails over your head and deliver a kick up your djutu. No need to explain what that means.

This article was originally published by The Age. Head to **theage.com.au** *to read more.*

Reconciliation Australia's three-part, on demand Reconciliation in Education series includes the Talking the Walk webinar, exploring the importance of using respectful and inclusive language and terminology as a key part of engaging in reconciliation. Explore terminology guidelines, webinars and more at narragunnawali.org.au

Nornie Bero, outside her all-day bar and kitchen, Big Esso. Photo: supplied

MEET NORNIE BERO, FOUNDER OF MABU MABU

Nornie Bero is the head chef and business owner of Mabu Mabu. Originally from Mer Island in the Torres Strait, Nornie has been a professional chef for over 20 years, and is on a mission to put First Nations ingredients in kitchens across Australia. We sat down with her to chat about cooking, damper, and whether or not you should put your knives in the dishwasher.

When did you first start cooking and what does it mean to you?

I started cooking from a young age. I'm born and bred on the Islands, so as soon as you can reach over the stove top, it's a part of life to be cooking and it's everybody doing their bit. We cook as a family, hunt as a family, we plant, we fish. As a child you don't go home for lunch, you just have a snack down the beach, eating what the island offers you.

For me, culture is everything. My dad was a very cultural man and he made sure I knew who I was, speaking English as a second language and Meriam first, knowing those cultural ways of life.

What is Mabu Mabu and how did it come about?

I've been a chef for over 20 years, mostly here in Melbourne and Europe, but I'm still always an Island girl. Mabu Mabu is an extension of who I am. I started off as a condiment business, now I have a big catering arm to my business and I have a café and now a restaurant and bar.

I wanted to put Island people – my awesome culture – on the map and [show people] how amazing our cuisine is. I've always had this dream that we have our own street. Why don't we have our own hub? I want it to be normal that you come to Lygon Street that's all Italian and maybe one day we'll have our own Lygon Street.

I'm ambitious, I'm a dreamer, I get that from my dad. My father was a dreamer but he was sick so young and he never got to achieve the things he wanted to in life. I think I do so much because I am achieving it for both of us.

Why is it important for us to be using, eating and celebrating native ingredients and First Nations ways of cooking?

Australia has so much to offer and we need to start showcasing it, we need to start taking care of our land because we overplant things that don't belong here. We're so consumed by having everything we want, whenever we want, that we forget about seasonal produce.

My whole purpose is to get native ingredients in every kitchen because if we're planting what our state needs then that's great for the environment, great for the land, great for us in general. A simple thing like warrigal greens; it's not hard to grow, why are we not using it as our natural spinach? It's an easy thing, it should be on the shelves at the supermarket. I want it for everyone.

What's a recipe using native ingredients would you start off with if you're a novice chef?

I've been teaching people to make damper using native ingredients. Everyone loves damper. Remember as kids, how we always go to those school camps and eat that hard damper? I've got a foolproof recipe where it's always nice and soft and spongy every time.

Do you have any kitchen pet peeves?

It's definitely putting knives in the dishwasher. I tell all my staff, do not ever give your knives to the dishwashers to wash, it's not their job and you should take care of your own knives. If you don't take care of them I'll take them away (laughs). And I even tell my wife all the time, why do you put knives in the dishwasher? It blunts them!

Things have been tough in the hospitality industry recently - how can people support Mabu Mabu and other First Nations businesses through this period?

We're doing heat and eat packs, and little takeaways that are grab and go. We try to keep it fresh and new every week. Social media is the biggest thing now. I would suggest share the love around, support all those Indigenous people and businesses out there doing amazing things, because I want everybody to be open at the end. I don't want anyone to miss out because they didn't make it through [this] time.

[Check out the online shop at **mabumabu.com.au**!]

We hear you have a cookbook coming out?

I do! I have a cookbook coming out in February next year. I'm super excited about it, it's another take on my upbringing. Little stories of each recipe and talking about native ingredients in a way that everyone understands. I never thought I'd write a book so it's kind of a cool thing that I've done.

Pre-order Nornie's cookbook now at bit.ly/3khJWda

Nornie Bero's damper, wrapped in banana leaf. Photo: supplied

MABU MABU DAMPER RECIPE
(pumpkin, saltbush, or wattleseed)

INGREDIENTS (FOR ONE DAMPER):

3 cups self-raising flour *(or gluten-free self-raising flour)*

4 x 30cm sheets of Banana Leaves *(can substitute for baking paper)*

500g Japanese Pumpkin **OR** 1 tbs Wattleseed *(can substitute for other nutty spice)* **OR** 1 & 1/2 tbs Saltbush *(can substitute for oregano or other savoury herbs)*

2 tbs room temperature butter *(or vegan butter/Nuttelex)*

1&1/2 cups water

INGREDIENTS FOR GOLDEN SYRUP BUTTER:

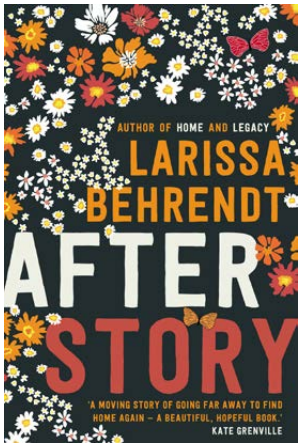
1 & 1/2 tbs golden syrup

3 tbs room temperature butter *(or vegan butter/Nuttelex)*

METHOD:

1. Pre-heat oven to 200 degrees celsius.
2. If making a pumpkin damper, start by roasting the pumpkin. Cut the pumpkin into cubes and roast in the oven until soft - almost mushy.
3. In a bowl, add the flour and butter. Mix together using your hands by pressing together, until fully combined.
4. Add the cooked pumpkin or wattleseed or saltbush.
5. Add water to the flour and butter and mix a little at a time and mix with fingers until you have a nice sticky dough. Use less water when making pumpkin damper.
6. Place some flour on your surface then knead until you have a bread-dough consistency.
7. Heat banana leaves on gas flame or in a frying pan to release oils.
8. Place dough on centre of banana leaf (or baking paper). Wrap in banana leaf then wrap in foil
9. Place on oven shelf for 35 - 40 minutes.
10. To accompany pumpkin damper, whip room temperature butter with golden syrup and serve.

LOOK FOR A BOOK!

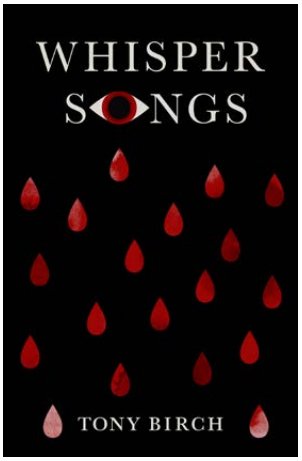


After Story by Larissa Behrendt (UQP Books)

Are you a book-lover who loves books about book-lovers? How about sweeping stories centred on a mother and daughter, peppered with snippets of Austen, Woolf and Dickens? Then look no further! *After Story* sees Behrendt expertly delve into the mother-daughter relationship between two First Nations women, to ask questions about memory, culture and colonialism.

Jasmine and her mother Della are somewhat estranged from one another. Jasmine is a high achieving bibliophile lawyer in the city; Della still resides in the tight-knit hometown where she is still haunted by the long ago disappearance of Jasmine's sister. Hoping to heal the relationship, Jasmine invites Della on a trip to England to attend an organised tour on her beloved historical literary giants.

Told from alternating mother-daughter perspectives, *After Story* follows the two women as their travels bring everything they've left behind into sharp relief. The institutions they walk through make them question what is and isn't allowed to be memorialised in European culture, and a local sensationalised event brings a wealth of pain. Deftly manoeuvring between grief, art, colonialism and trauma, *After Story* is ultimately about the bonds between mother and daughter, and the power of storytelling as healing.



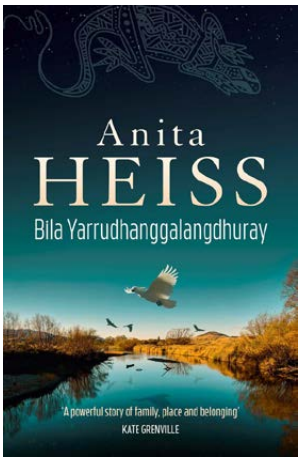
Whisper Songs by Tony Birch (UQP)

as the site of the common grave
he carries the face of my brother
catches the wind in infant hands
soft unmarked unscarred loving
a soul resting here with the many
born on Good Friday and gone
before the sun went down

Whisper Songs, a rousing collection of raw glimpses into the many moments that wove together to form Birch's life. Written as dedication to his late brother, *Whisper Songs* explores his connection to family, identity, and the land as he invites you along for this journey of reflection.

The anthology is split into three sections: Blood, Skin & Water – in each Birch asks you to examine the world along with him, this is especially clear in Skin where he begins to bridge a connection between Australia's colonial past and relationship with immigrants now.

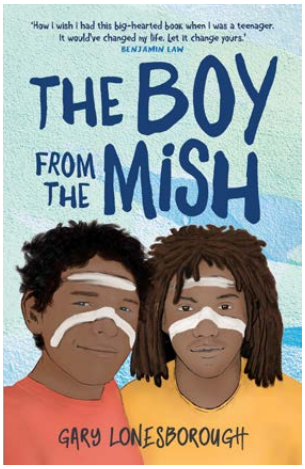
The book is personal, extremely personal at times where Birch discusses the dark moments in his own family history, yet, at no point does he ask the reader to shy away. Birch contrasts his love and loss against the colonial history of violence and his own connection to Country. In *Whisper Songs* the personal is also intensely political.



Bila Yarrudhanggalangdhuray by Dr Anita Heiss (Simon & Schuster)

Bila Yarrudhanggalangdhuray means 'river of dreams' in the Wiradyuri language, and it is this titular river that incites the unfolding events of Heiss' breathtaking new historical novel set in central New South Wales. It's 1852 and only two members of the Bradley family survive when the Marrambidya Bila (Murrumbidgee River) bursts its banks, ripping through the small town of Gundagai. They pack up to restart their lives in a new town, bringing with them the young protagonist, Wagadhanaay. And so begins Wagadhanaay's story as she grieves and longs for what she is forced to leave behind: her family, Country, and the river of dreams..

Despite delving into a devastating and brutal era of Australia's history, this novel is at its heart a love story. There is the fledgling romance that helps heal Wagadhanaay's wounds, but so too is it a love story told to Wiradyuri Country and to the Wiradyuri language. Heiss' passion for words is evident, and her considered weaving of Wiradyuri language through the book is a timeless and generous gift to the reader. Pick up *Bila Yarrudhanggalangdhuray* if you love historical fiction, or even just to bask in Heiss' perfect prose.



The Boy from the Mish by Gary Lonesborough (Allen & Unwin)

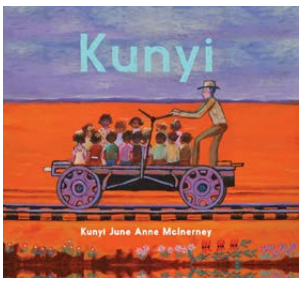
It's the Christmas holidays, and Jackson and his mates on the mish are ready for a summer of fun, partying with their girlfriends and the white tourists that visit their sleepy beach town each year.

Also visiting is Jackson's Aunty Pam and his cousins, who have brought with them a mysterious stranger. Tomas is fresh from 'juvie' and there's something about him that unsettles Jackson. As their connection grows, Jackson struggles with the idea of losing his family, friends and community.

Written by Gary Lonesborough, a Yuin man whose experiences growing up on the Far South Coast of NSW no doubt helped him build this rich and believable world, Jackson and Tomas' story is a vital own voices narrative for queer and First Nations youth. Lonesborough also doesn't shy away from showing the realities of racism and mistreatment at the hands of the police.

The Boy from the Mish is a young adult novel, but it's also an extraordinary and heart-warming story for anyone who remembers being on the precipice of first love and self-discovery.

Find joy and hope in the beautiful story of two young Aboriginal gay men, finding themselves and each other.



Kunyi by Kunyi June Anne McInerney (Magabala Books)

"I'm telling my story now so that our lives at the Children's Home will never be forgotten."

Kunyi recounts the experiences of Kunyi June Anne McInerney when she and three of her siblings were taken from their family in the 1950s. Alongside more than 60 vivid paintings by the author, Kunyi details life at the Oodnadatta Children's Home in South Australia where she was forced to live under the supervision of missionaries from the ages of four to nine.

Her retelling provides insight into the courage, struggles and survival of day-to-day life. Detailing the games and toys the children would make, how they would sneak books to read while missionaries slept, and the harsh punishments handed out for the most minor of events.

Kunyi may be a children's picture book, but it is one to be read by all ages to remember the injustices faced by children like Kunyi and the ongoing resilience of members of the Stolen Generations.

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