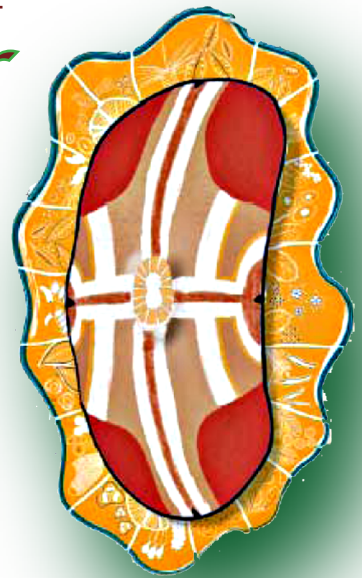


Aboriginal Rainforest Council Newsletter: April 2007



WELCOME to the first edition of Aboriginal Rainforest Council's newsletter (yet to be formally named!) which we hope will be relevant to Rainforest Aboriginal People across the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. In this issue: a word from our Executive Officer Allison Halliday, a progress report on the Cultural Heritage Mapping Project, a focus on staff, their roles, responsibilities, current and future activities, other bits of information and news and a round-up of what's going on below by ARC Co-chair Russell Butler Jnr (pictured left at Russell River, south of Cairns).



First and foremost I would like to acknowledge all Elders and Traditional Owners whose traditional homelands are part of the area now known as the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area.

To those of us who have lost loved ones over the past year, the Aboriginal Rainforest Council would like to pass on its commiserations to the respective families and to let you know that our thoughts are with you. Over the past few months we have grown, and will hopefully continue to grow as an organisation, with the addition of four new staff, all of whom have hit the ground running and bring a broad range of skills and expertise with them. You can meet all our staff members on pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter.

Very much a positive for us is the appointment of Allison Halliday as an Acting Director on the Wet Tropics Management Authority (WTMA) Board, which is something we have been pushing for. Allison should be congratulated and thanked for the work this will involve. Her thoughts on this and other matters are on page 2 of this newsletter. It should also be noted that we won't rest here, we need to ensure we have male representation on the WTMA board as well, which will be consistent with what we do as people in regards to gender issues.

This year as Co-chair of ARC I will be getting out onto country regularly to visit as many groups as possible, and I hope to visit as many groups as I can early in the year.

If I don't get to you soon please remember that any Aboriginal Rainforest person can contact the ARC with issues or concerns regarding country and we can either provide advice or send someone out to assist you as needed.

Also this year myself, Rhonda Brim and Uncle Danny Hooligan have been accepted into Indigenous Leadership Programs which involve attending one week blocks throughout Australia at various times. Rhonda's thoughts on this are on the back page of this newsletter and we would all like to say this will not stop us from carrying out our responsibilities to ARC.

We will also be working on the draft Memorandums of Understanding (MoU's) between the individual Traditional Owner Groups and the ARC. These MoU's will assist the ARC in identifying the specific Traditional Owner person/s who need to be contacted for specific issues in country such as land and fire management issues, mens' and womens' issues, etc.

I would like to finish up by saying that on behalf of the committee and staff of the ARC we would like to acknowledge and thank you all for your support over the past two years and we look forward to supporting Wet Topics mobs into the future.

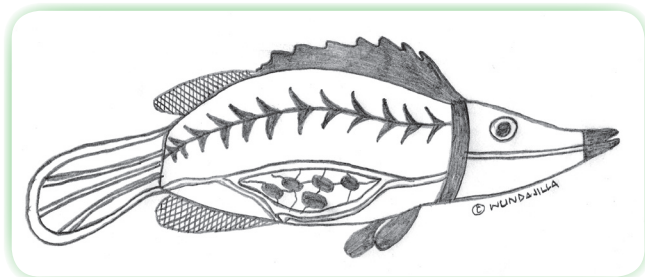
ARC Board Members 2007



L-R: Peter Wallace (Yalanji), Russell Butler (Banjin/Girringun), Rhonda Brim (Djabugay), Warren Singleton (proxy for Yirrganydji), Lillian Clubb (Yidinji), Allison Halliday (ARC CEO), Margaret Freeman (Jirrbal), Victor Maund (Ma:Mu), Lillian Freeman (Jirrbal), Warren Canendo (proxy for Ngadjon). Absent: Maureen Green, Hilton Noble, Yvonne Canendo, Danny Hooligan, Arthur Johnson, Jeanette Singleton.

The Regional Agreement Rainforest Shield on the front page has been adapted and used with permission.

Drawings throughout this newsletter have been kindly provided by Warren Canendo.



ARC Regional Workshop 14 - 17 June 2007 Mungalli Falls (Palmerston Hwy)

For more information contact the ARC office on 4035 5213 and stay tuned for consultations coming your way soon!

News from the EO's Desk ...Allison Halliday...

Opportunities are out there for TOs particularly to do with cultural heritage and land management issues. At a strategic level my work is about ensuring our people can maximise as many benefits as possible with cooperative management arrangements and looking at potential cooperative management committees.

That, to me, is vital.

Here in the State of Queensland it's different to other states where native title, land management and cultural heritage issues are all dealt with in the same bundle but here they make a clear distinction between the two - the ARC has been in operation for two years and now there is more of a balance.

The ARC is in the process of establishing an MOU with each of the three Native Title rep bodies who fall within our service area of the Wet Tropics.

At strategic and political levels, a lot of avenues have opened up for TOs and I sit on quite a number of boards and committees representing TOs interests.

I'm on the Wet Tropics Management Authority board as an Acting Indigenous Director to look after the strategic interests and involvement of TOs for cooperative management of lands within the World Heritage Area. I'm also on the Rainforest & Reef Research Centre - Marine & Tropical Science Research Facility (RRR-MTSRF) board that succeeded the Rainforest Cooperative Research Centre (CRC).

The RRR-MTSRF area of service includes the Torres Strait, Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef. RRR-MTSRF has got \$40 million to inject into these areas over the next four years.

I'm on three of the four RRR-MTSRF committees, including the Steering and Operational Committees for the Wet Tropics, Great Barrier Reef and Water Quality, and then there's the Torres Strait one which I'm not on for obvious reasons. I'm also on the overall Operational Committee.

Through RRR-MTSRF TOs have the opportunity to have input into research on our country, especially research identified by our mob that they would like to work on.

We've created the necessary links and at this month's ARC board meeting we'll be looking at an Intellectual Property Rights Sub-Committee to assist with the likes of RRR-MTSRF as well as the Cultural Heritage Mapping Project and a way forward as to how we look at nominating the World Heritage Area for its cultural values.

It's important we have those intellectual property rights in place because that's one of the main things Rainforest People and other groups ask us about all the time. I've also been conducting a lot of briefings with the various new Ministers at State and Federal level. I've had face to face discussions with Qld Indigenous Partnerships Ministers Warren Pitt and Environment Minister Lindy Nelson-Carr. I've yet to go and



see Federal Environment Minister Malcolm Turnbull but that should be happening within the next month or so.

The briefings are about the ARC's overall direction and to advocate at strategic levels with parties to the Regional Agreement to ensure the Agreement and the Aboriginal Plan are being implemented across the Wet Tropics Area. A lot of my dealings are in the political arena, a lot of the groundwork I'm doing is about lobbying for our mob in order to get further funds, or core funds, for the organisation itself.

At present we only have one full-time EO position as well as one full time admin officer position and those two places aren't going to cut it any more given the workload we have as the peak Indigenous land and cultural heritage organisation implementing the Regional Agreement and the Aboriginal Plan in conjunction with Girringun.

There are a few things that need to be inter linked and I'd like to ensure that those links are created.

ARC Cultural Heritage Mapping Project UPDATE

Developing systems to protect and effectively manage cultural heritage information through the Cultural Heritage Mapping Project is slowly but surely becoming a reality for Wet Tropics groups within the World Heritage Area of Queensland.

ARC Co-chair Russell Butler Jnr said the development of a regional cultural heritage information system, under ARC management but compatible with the Wet Tropics Management Authority's systems, would assist with supporting a bid for cultural landscape World Heritage Area listing.

"Over the past six months Wet Tropics Aboriginal people have provided us with the direction on how the most appropriate cultural heritage management system could be designed," he said. "In particular the regional system we're developing will show that there is a current system for managing the cultural landscape which will be outside of government and is Aboriginal-owned, driven and managed."

Project Coordinator Chantal Roder said the models they were developing had been drawn on from the examples discussed at a workshop hosted by ARC in November last year.

"Those examples included existing work by Girringun Aboriginal Corporation, Balkanu Traditional Knowledge Recording on Cape York and the Uluru and Vanuatu Cultural Site Management System," Ms Roder said.

Mr Butler said there were also four local system pilot programs the ARC Governing Committee had agreed to work with.

"These are groups who are ready to record and map cultural heritage and the programs will be exclusively managed by the groups in the country they speak for," he said.

The four groups involved in the pilot are:

- Kuku Nyungkul (south of Cooktown)
- Ma:Mu (around Innisfail)
- Ngadjon (around Mt Bartle Frere, Malanda, Topaz)
- Jirrbal (around Ravenshoe, Herberton)

"The approach we're taking is about developing two levels of cultural heritage systems, one at that regional level for more general information regarding the cultural landscape that is the Wet Tropics, and the second is about developing pilots at a local scale which other groups will be able to learn from," Ms Roder said.

"The development of these systems will help Traditional Owners to manage more sensitive information under their own cultural protocols which will be reflected in the restricted access ways in which this information system will work.

"In the case of Kuku Nyungkul, it's based a family clan scale which is the way this group would like to speak for country. The other local systems will be built at the tribal scale, with the regional system supporting



*Project Coordinator Chantal Roder with
System Developer Glen MacLaren*

general cultural landscape information that all Wet Tropics Aboriginal people will have access to."

"Each of these pilots will be developed and designed according to how each groups want them to operate and in accordance with their own cultural protocols, even though systems between groups may be similar.

"We'll all be learning as we go and then be able to support the other groups when they're ready and they'll be able to pick and choose the features of the systems they would like to tailor for their particular country and people."

Mr Butler said it was a case of not being able to start with everyone at once.

"We need to be able to support those who are raring to go and are ready with people who want to be trained up in these techniques," he said. "We won't be leaving anyone behind, this will actually allow the other groups to see what their options are and how it will all work to fit into the bigger picture for everyone concerned. It's all about working with the elders and the younger people who want to get trained up in ways to record cultural heritage information."

The Cultural Heritage Mapping Project started in May 2006 and will continue to be funded until June 2008. System Developer Glen MacLaren, who worked previously on Uluru's cultural heritage management system, has been contracted to assist with setting up the new systems which will be underpinned by appropriate intellectual property protocols currently being developed with the assistance of Bruce White.

ARC Cultural Heritage Mapping Project: Introduction to Staff

Chantal Roder

I grew up in Adelaide where I did my Degree in Geography and Marine Science before making my way up to north Queensland in 1994 to continue my studies at JCU. When I moved to Townsville to do my Honours on sea grasses as bio-indicators, I also studied a Caring for Country course with Dermot Smyth and TOs from the Wet Tropics region. That gave me a much deeper understanding of the environment and opened my eyes to a deeper ancient knowledge base. I've lived in Cairns since 1996 and have worked with State Fisheries Research and the National Oceans Office which really woke me up to the way that TOs are being engaged and that a lot of the planning and management processes could be greatly improved. I want to help to develop much more innovative processes which are more empowering for TOs.



Troy Mallie



I'm a TO from Kuku Yalanji country and recently employed as a Community Project Officer with the Cultural Heritage Mapping Project. My role is to help with the development of the proposed Cultural Heritage Information Management System as a technical support for the tribal groups of the Wet Tropics in developing these systems. I've recently come back from Vanuatu where I was a database coordinator and I've also worked at Uluru as a Project Ranger in their Cultural Heritage section where Glen MacLaren and I helped to co-develop a cultural heritage site management system which was done for the TOs at Uluru.

Cavel Cora

My name is Cavel Cora, I was born and raised in Rockhampton, I've spent the past 15 years up north in Innisfail. I've worked with Wet Tropics for four years, from 2002-2006 and went from there to Ma: Mu Aboriginal Corporation for four months and from there to here. I started in February this year as a Community Project Officer. The reason I took this job was because of the chance to self-empower Traditional Owners and get them back on country to manage and look after country the way it should be done.



CULTURAL HERITAGE RECORDING TRAINING COURSE DEVELOPMENT: ARC/TAFE

The Cultural Heritage Mapping Project team have been working closely with TAFE and Kuku Nyungkul TOs to develop a culturally appropriate cultural heritage recording technical training course. The course will mostly be delivered on country and involve Elders of that country. The course is up to 12 weeks training in computer operation, video, photography, interviewing, oral history recording and other related competencies. We are offering this course throughout the Wet Tropics wherever there is interest. **To find out more contact Chantal Roder at the ARC office on 4035 5213.**



Rainforest Aboriginal People

Aboriginal Rainforest Council

Executive Officer
(full-time)

Admin Officer
(part-time)

PROGRAMS STAFF

- ♦ Cultural Heritage Mapping Project Coordinator (full-time - NHT funded)
- ♦ 2 x Community-Based Project Officers (full-time - NHT funded)
- ♦ 2 x Grants Consultants (part-time - Christiansen Foundation funded)
 - ♦ Trainee Project Officer (full-time - DET funded)



ARC: Introduction to Staff

Hanz Spier

I was born in Holland and came to Australia 15 years ago after having worked and lived in India, Nepal, Kenya and Papua New Guinea. Since coming to Australia I worked in the Torres Strait, on Cape York and with Djabugay in Kuranda. Before I started my current job with the ARC I worked as Manager of Migrant Settlement Services here in Cairns. I applied to work for ARC because I wanted to work with Indigenous people again. Danyella Stoute and I are ARC's Grants Consultants. We assist communities to write and acquit grant applications. This work has been made possible through a grant from the Christensen Fund.



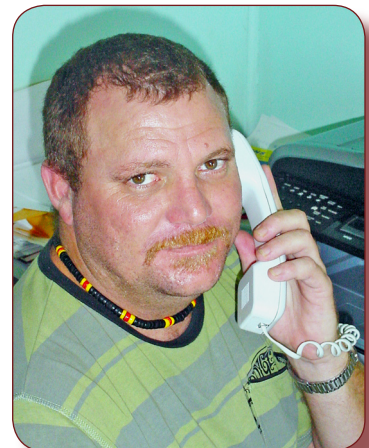
Danyella Stoute



I am a descendent of the Dulgulburra clan from the Yidinji Tribe and currently living in Gordonvale. For the most of my working career I have been employed on the PNG Gas Pipeline Project working with Indigenous Communities and in various other roles. My work with the Pipeline Project took me to Brisbane for eight years and I have just returned home with my two children so they can get to know their country and traditional family connections. I see working with the ARC as a tremendous opportunity for me to get back in touch with my roots and to assist all of us as TOs to preserve and protect our country for future generations to come.

Warren Canendo

I am a descendant from Ngadjon tribe and the ARC have employed me as a Project Officer trainee. I'm completing my Community Services Certificate III, which I started last year in May. I've also just started a Post-Graduate Diploma in Natural Resource & Cultural Land Management with Deakin University in Geelong. These days you need a piece of paper to work at high level within government agencies, after my traineeship I should be able to negotiate with government for better outcomes for TOs and their needs in the Wet Tropics area. Working and training play a role in management so we as TOs have a say in cultural heritage and land management within our traditional country and that's why I'm here.



DON'T FORGET ARC has now got its own website! The site offers information about ARC and our activities, and has links to the Regional Agreement, the Aboriginal plan and maps of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. It also has different sections including information about Permits, National Parks, Natural & Cultural Heritage Management, business support, tourism & news. **Check it out soon at <http://www.arc-inc.org.au>**

Leadership & Tourism focus for the ARC

Insight into cultivating leadership and developing tourism opportunities are on this year's agenda for ARC Co-chairs Rhonda Brim (pictured right) and Russell Butler along with members Warren Canendo and Danny Hooligan.

Ms Brim went to Canberra earlier this year to participate in a Women's Leadership forum while an equivalent Men's Leadership forum was attended by Mr Butler and Mr Hooligan.

Ms Brim said the experience, which will continue to be supported throughout the year, made her look differently at how to be a good leader.

"It's made me want to do more for the community," she said.

"I've got more insight now into how to become a good leader, what the roles and responsibilities are.

"The great thing about leadership training was they actually provided the funding to put your leadership opportunities into action and by doing so they are allowing my dreams to come true.

"My dream is to keep our culture alive for our people and the leadership course is giving me the opportunity to do so."

Ms Brim also participated in an Aboriginal Tourism Expo held at the Sydney Opera House in February where she said she met people from all over Australia who were already involved in, or thinking about developing tourism ventures.

"I learned where Aboriginal people could go to get into the tourism business, how to seek funding, how to deal with public relations and media, how to promote Aboriginal arts and crafts and how to get involved in the Australian Tourism Awards," she said.

Mr Canendo said the Tourism Expo was focused on ventures that



were 100 per cent owned and operated by Aboriginal people.

"The Tourism Expo was held at Macquarie University, outcomes were about finding out about Aboriginal people from around Australia who had started or wanted to start tourism businesses from an Aboriginal perspective," he said.

"Aboriginal Tourism Australia is about traditional knowledge and traditional experiences, so it's about supporting genuine Aboriginal tourism experiences instead of having other people talk about Aboriginal history and stories.

"There is an opportunity there because Aboriginal Tourism Australia can assist TOs from the 18 tribes of the Wet Tropics start up their own tourism businesses.

"There's a support system out there and we can help now, through the ARC, to access that."

Grants Funding News



Important at the moment is the Envirofund, which will allow people to apply for money to do activities on country like cleaning up, fencing, anything that has to do with the natural environment. Applications for Round 9 close at 5pm on Friday 27 April 2007. There's also the Water Fund which can help communities to get a good water system in place, build water tanks, clean up river systems or deal with sewage. Applications for the Water Fund close at 5pm on Friday 27 April 2007. For equipment there are the Gambling Community Benefit Funds (closing 30 June) and the Reef Casino Community Benefit Funds (closing on 15 July). And finally there's 'Our Place, Our Future', a funding initiative from the Department of Communities to assist communities to build capacity. This one can be widely interpreted and the closing dates for applications are on 30 April and 30 July. Information about all of these and more funding options is available on our website (see below). You will have to register to access the funding calendar but registration is free, all you need is a valid email address. Danyella and Hanz are at the ARC to assist with any Aboriginal Rainforest Peoples' funding application. Individuals who want to learn more about successful submission writing can also look on the Grants page of the website for Submission Writing where there are three articles on how to write a successful submission.

Aboriginal Rainforest Council Contacts

WEBSITE: <http://www.arc-inc.org.au/>

EMAIL: reception@arc-inc.org.au

PHONE: 07 4035 5213

FAX: 07 4035 5293

STREET ADDRESS: 277 Hartley St, Portsmith Qld 4870

POSTAL ADDRESS: PO Box 184 Bungalow, Qld 4870