



stepping stones

Issue 1 July 2011



Welcome to
Stepping Stones



Indigenous
community
volunteers

Welcome to Stepping Stones



Stephanie Harvey, CEO

The new look newsletter reflects the vibrant and exciting work ICV is engaged with to make permanent changes to increase the quality of life for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This first edition of Stepping Stones comes soon after we completed all staff training on whole of community

development, building on existing skills and experience to ensure we are leading best practice development. The training was developed after consultation with staff, community members and volunteers and I would like to pass along my sincere thanks to all of those people who participated in the working groups.

Following this, community members and volunteers may notice some changes to the way we do business as we expect to undertake fewer projects in the coming year. Instead we shall be focused on longer, more robust projects in order to more holistically support key communities across their development priorities.

I believe whole of community development includes building relationships with community members and our volunteers and making a commitment to long term, sustainable engagement. Together, we build on local strengths and knowledge.

ICV works with volunteers on projects that have been identified as part of a community's vision for its future. It is important for us to acknowledge projects are always undertaken in partnership with community and continue to focus on developing human and community capacity.

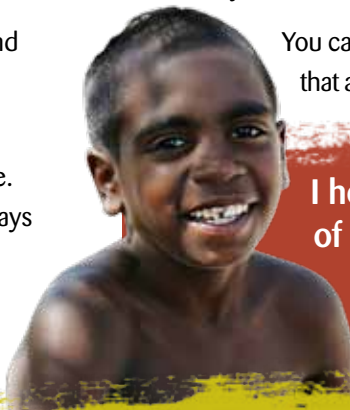
By working in fewer communities and centering our work around genuine, long term relationships and development, I believe, will achieve valuable, sustainable impacts for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Our projects cover such a broad spectrum and I particularly like how linked they are to whole of community development, leading from one thing to the next such as the story on Page 8. When looked at superficially, you may think it is a story about teaching a young man how to take photographs. And at its very essence, you would be right! But it is also about increasing economic development opportunities for Lewis. This in turn may lead to better access to health services, housing and general better quality of life opportunities.

And who knows where all of this could lead? Are we developing and supporting the next leading Indigenous photographer in Australia? Will his work later go on to be exhibited overseas? What about an increased income stream from sales of Lewis' work which in turn flows back to the community providing even more opportunities? Who might Lewis mentor in the future so the development cycle continues?

You can see what we are so excited about, projects that are part of whole community development!

I hope you enjoy this first edition of *Stepping Stones*. Pass it on to your friends who may want to walk with ICV.



Out and About



Doug filming on Croker Island

Using cyberspace to improve communities' quality of life is becoming increasingly popular. ICV, in partnership with the Minjilang Community on Croker Island, produced a video that shows why the community would benefit from financial assistance to build a swimming pool. The video can be seen on YouTube and received some media coverage. Following its success, a number of other communities have approached ICV with similar ideas.

YouTube used to promote community needs



Volunteer cooks have been supporting the Kapulungu Women's Law and Culture Camp in the Balgo community, south of Halls Creek, WA. The camp focused on the preservation of law, culture and social business and was a learning opportunity for the young women and girls of the community, helping to foster pride in their cultural heritage. The volunteers shared their catering skills with trainee cooks within the Balgo community.

Cooking for knowledge



ICV team prepares for camp



The Corporation Working Group

ICV husband and wife team Terry and Barbara are assisting Mer Gekdem Le Corporation Chair, Douglas Passi. The role of the Corporation is to look after the interests of the Native Title body for Mer Island in the Torres Strait. The team are streamlining bookkeeping and implementing smoother administration, whilst at the same time training local workers in office skills. Next steps are to assist with applications for future funding.

Administration support for future growth



Whether it is in the suburbs or on an island in Australia's northern waters, a bit of lippy, make up and nail polish go a long way in helping a young woman's self-esteem and wellbeing.

This was certainly the case for some teenage girls on Croker and Goulburn Islands.

Making up for self esteem



A project involving deportment and grooming for young women was put together by the West Arnhem Shire Council in partnership with ICV and the Dutch Embassy.

It was to address a number of health and social issues that confront young Aboriginal women. Poor self image and low esteem can be key factors leading to Indigenous youth suicide.

The workshops were run by Danielle who was employed by the council to work with older members of the community on such things as meals on wheels.

She was determined that there should also be something done for the young women.

"It's amazing what a bit of nail polish and a facial can do.

There is never any special attention to the girls," Danielle observed.

Shireen Watson from our Perth office spent several days with the young girls. Shireen says the girls have to have good

school attendance in order to participate in the project, it was a lot of fun.

"I was at the store getting groceries and one of the students came up and thanked me. She was so proud of her beautiful nails, she was the envy of all her friends."

One of the girls who benefitted from the project is PunPun who is in year 8. PunPun says the workshop helped them better understand how to look after their skin and general health. It is usually difficult for them to lay their hands on many of the products that they were able to practice with.

The health and beauty workshop supported the young women in their grooming, giving them confidence in their appearance. This project benefitted the young women of both communities and the community as a whole by promoting women's wellness.

The older women of the community are now exploring the idea of building a business that caters for health and beauty needs.

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Focussing on life



Life on Poruma (Coconut Island) in the Torres Strait has been recorded by a young resident with encouragement from an ICV volunteer.

Lewis Cook, who has a mild intellectual disability, spent around a fortnight working with Nancy, a Melbourne-based volunteer, who believes Lewis has a natural talent. This project aimed to improve social and emotional wellbeing by utilising photography as an art medium. Lewis has newly refined skills which have already resulted in one exhibition.

Our volunteers



Bruce with the team at KEE

What I get from volunteering

Having spent a large part of my working life in a number of countries I wanted to put something back to the local community when I retired.

I first came into contact with ICV around 2000. Since then, I have been involved in projects in the Torres Strait, Fitzroy Crossing and Geraldton through to the present project in Shepparton in northern Victoria.

That project is with the Koori Employment and Enterprises Co-Operative (KEE). CEO John Martin recognised KEE had to vary the way it offered services after changes to government policies and approached ICV for assistance.

I've made several trips to Shepparton from my Sydney home working with John and his senior staff to reorient the business. I have been mentoring John and some staff while formulating a 5-year business plan which includes reinforcing existing services and introducing additional services.

My overall experience with ICV has been extremely rewarding and I now better understand the difficulties Indigenous people face in accessing services mainstream Australians take for granted.

Bruce, ICV Volunteer

Keeping them active

Being able to keep up with the young people of Martu in Western Australia's Pilbara was just one challenge faced while working as a volunteer during a children's holiday program.

I spent two weeks earlier this year at Parrngurr community after first meeting with sisters Sonia and Natasha Williams in Perth to devise a curriculum.

We brainstormed ideas for activities and decided on a mix of traditional activities and sport to promote a healthy lifestyle.

The children loved the activities and would frequently wait near my accommodation in the mornings even before I was out of bed so they could be first in when the day starts.

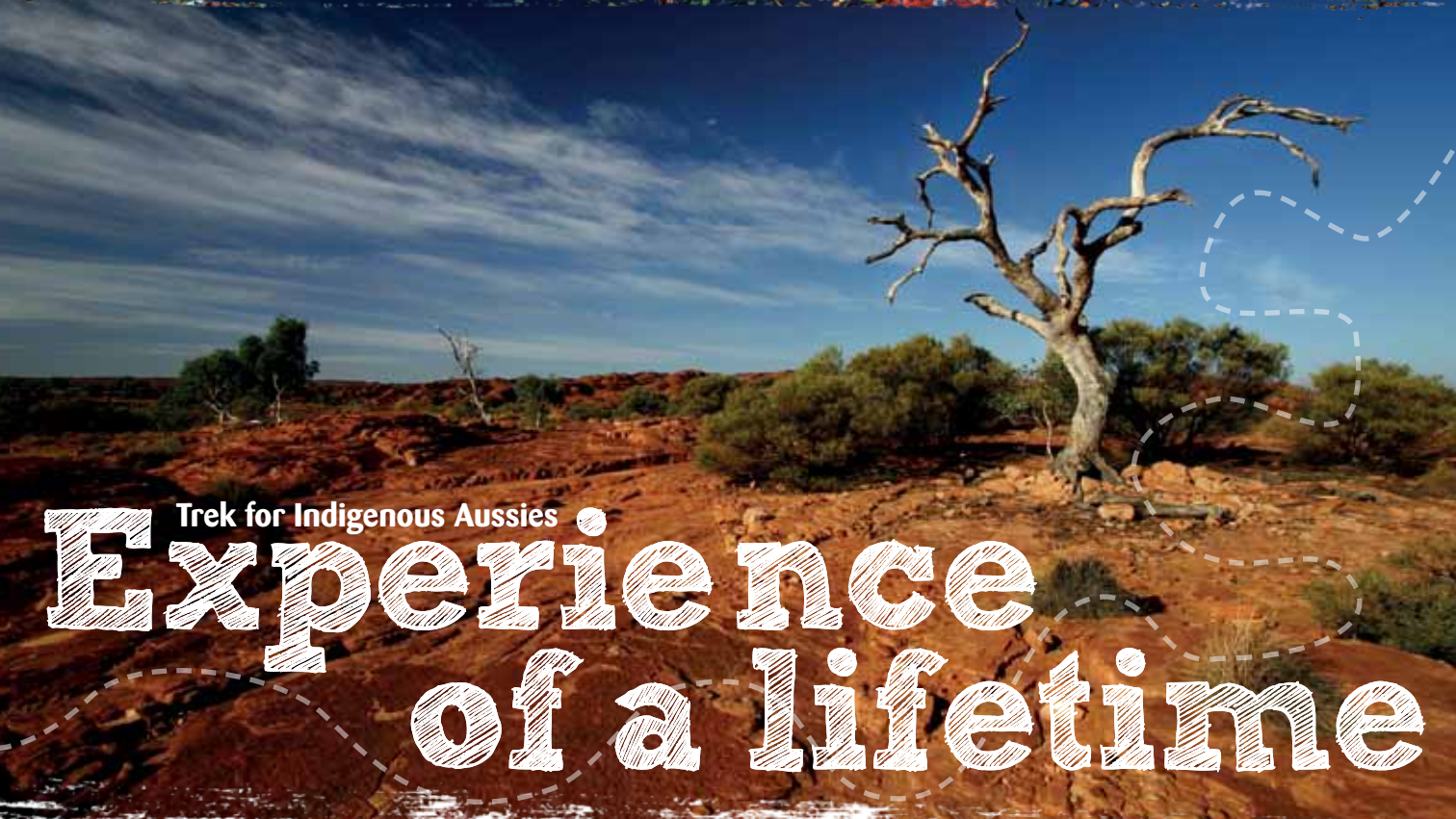
The youth diversionary program helps to relieve the boredom which sets in over school holidays as teachers depart the community leaving no one to work with the young people.

Over the next 3 years, the community will be working with ICV and qualified youth workers to train local Aboriginal people to staff the project. It will help create real employment in the community and give children something to look forward to in the holidays.

Paul, ICV Volunteer



Paul with children from the Parrngurr community



Trek for Indigenous Aussies

Experience of a lifetime

Get involved

You can support our work in community and human development projects to improve wellbeing and create a sustainable future for Indigenous Australians – while challenging yourself on the trek of a lifetime.

The Larapinta Trail, running through the rugged West MacDonnell Ranges in Central Australia, provides an unequalled opportunity to discover the remote mysteries of the Australian living desert.

The changing hues of the mountain peaks, rolling hills, and dry river valleys have inspired centuries of artwork showcasing the never-ending red landscape area which contains many sacred sites of the Arrernte People.

Please join us

ICV will take a party of intrepid walkers next year along the Larapinta Trail as a fundraising venture.

The money will provide essential funding for ICV to help create a sustainable future for Australia's Indigenous communities.

What are you waiting for?

Phone 1300 905 188 or visit www.inspiredadventures.com.au/icvwalkabout2012





Communities in Focus

A number of ICV projects combined with the dynamism of a Mount Isa woman has helped a long running women's refuge get back on to a sound footing.

Marlene Speechley is an Eastern Arranda/Waluwarra woman born in Mount Isa. She has spent the past 34 years working at the Nawamba House/Aboriginal & Islander Development Recreational Women's Associations Mount Isa & District Inc.

Nawamba House has six units providing refuge for women and children who are victims of family violence. However the success of Nawamba, which means "place for women to sit down", may also have contributed to its near demise. Just over a year ago a substantial deficit nearly led to "the plug being pulled on all projects."

"We had to start looking for quality help to get things right," noted Marlene. She approached ICV after reading one of our brochures. Subsequently a number of volunteers over different periods worked at discharging the debt, through "streamlining the bookkeeping" and fundraising activities.

The first two volunteers were women and could be accommodated in one of the units that was vacant.

However the next volunteer was male and therefore could not stay in one of the units. Marlene contacted the mining firm Xstrata which couldn't resist her charms and agreed to provide housing for the male volunteer.

The fourth volunteer was also a male from Mount Isa so Marlene didn't have to worry about accommodation.

As a result of the ICV financial training, the organisation is now able to comply with all Government accountability processes.

This will also help when applying for future funding so that Nawamba continues to operate without the past concerns that clouded its future.



To help us keep you informed about all the great news from Indigenous communities around Australia, please update your details using the form on the reverse page.



Please update your contact details. Thank you.

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