

Country

ABORIGINAL NRM NEWS FROM THE SA ARID LANDS



Anita Patterson, right, presenting her speech with her mother and Yandruwandha elder Gloria Patterson nee Kerwin

CONTENTS

YANDRUWANDHA YAWARRAWARRKA RECOGNISED AS NATIVE TITLE HOLDERS	01
TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE	
BORN ON COUNTRY	04
UP AND DOWN TO THE DESERT WHENEVER WE CAN...	06
IKARA-FLINDERS RANGES NATIONAL PARK	08
REGINA BRIDGING THE GAP	10
HARD YAKKA	12

YANDRUWANDHA YAWARRAWARRKA RECOGNISED AS NATIVE TITLE HOLDERS

After a near 20-year legal journey for the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka people, the day had finally arrived – their Native Title claim was upheld. As part of the momentous day, applicants Theresa Bottrell and Anita Paterson gave heartfelt and moving speeches to the hundreds in attendance, bringing many to tears. Extracts from these speeches are shared here, with their kind permission.

Continued on Page 03





WELCOME BACK

It brings me great pleasure to welcome you back to *Connected to Country*, this time with news from three of the region’s language groups: the Wangkangurru Yarluyandi, Kuyani Adnyamathanha, and Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka.

This third edition is a proud one and is straight from the heart as Traditional Owners – Theresa Bottrell, Anita Paterson, Jean Barr-Crombie, Valerie Naylor-Fuschtei, Uncle Mark McKenzie, and Regina McKenzie – share their pride, often with hints of pain, in their continuing journeys to protect their culture and their country.

As you read this edition you will find common themes are shared – of the importance of respect, recognition, and partnerships; of sharing knowledge, protecting cultural sites, preserving language; of acknowledging elders past and present while finding employment opportunities for the young; and, most

of all, of their delight in being on country, sharing stories with the young people so that they too may look after their country and pass down those stories.

On behalf of the Board, I thank Theresa, Anita, Jean, Valerie, Uncle Mark and Regina for allowing us to share their words here.

Janet Brook

Presiding Member
SA Arid Lands Natural Resources
Management Board

Connected to Country is a space where we share the variety of stories and natural resources management activities that are occurring on traditional lands across the SA Arid Lands region. We also welcome contributions from other government and non-government agencies, native title holders and individuals so that we can collectively present ideas, stories and knowledge to raise awareness of natural resources matters in the region.



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

Connected to Country readers can also keep up to date with natural resources management activities in the SA Arid Lands region by liking the Natural Resources SA Arid Lands Facebook page. This page brings you news from the Co-management Boards and Advisory Committees that are taking care of our national parks, the SA Arid Lands NRM Board, Pastoral Board and our six district-based NRM Groups.

Our page is here www.facebook.com/naturalresourcesaaridlands or search for Natural Resources SA Arid Lands on Facebook.

CULTURAL SAFETY WARNING

Readers should take care when viewing this document. This publication may contain images of deceased persons, significant places or items and may cause unintentional grief or upset.

All references to Aboriginal culture within this document (including images, quotes, stories and language) have copyright and cultural use protocols which apply. Any reproduction of this material must seek appropriate authority.



...from Page 01

A special bush hearing of the Federal Court was held at Cullyamurra Waterhole on 16 December, where the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka were formally recognised – by consent – as the rightful native title holders of approximately 42,000 square kilometres of north-east South Australia.

For Theresa, a Yawarrawarrka woman, her journey began at a young age when she was first introduced back to her country.

“...I stand here today on the beautiful Cullyamurra Waterhole banks – the place where my uncle, Fredrick Brown, was born and the place where my beautiful grandparents, Snyder Brown and Mable Harrison-Brown, first introduced me to this amazing and wonderful land at the age of seven – accepting our consent to determination,” said Theresa.

Filed in 1998, the original joint claim covers an area that includes Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park, Innamincka Regional Reserve and the Strzelecki Regional Reserve.

However, this was not the first claim lodged over the Innamincka area.

Theresa recalled the story of how the Yandruwandha and Yawarrawarrka came together to lodge the joint claim.

“In 1996 Uncle Jack Guttie, Uncle Charlie Moore and Leslie Harris Senior lodged a claim on behalf of the Yandruwandha people.

“It wasn’t until 1998, when a meeting was held in Broken Hill... with the Yawarrawarrka, Yandruwandha, and the Dieri people with the Aboriginal Land Legal Rights Movement, and after discussions between our elders it was recognised that Yandruwandha and Yawarrawarrka people had a connection to the land, therefore forming [the] Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka joint Native Title Claim.”

Years of tireless negotiation with the State Government, pastoralists, mining, gas and petroleum companies would follow before native title – and formal recognition of the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka people’s connection to country as the Traditional Owners – would be determined by consent.

“My journey and my family’s journey is quite a significant one...”

“It has been one for me made up of knowledge, sacrifice, and love, and most of all respect.



Theresa Bottrell accepting the consent to determination from The Hon Justice J R Mansfield AM

“Without the knowledge of the history from our past and present Yawarrawarrka elders, we would not have been so lucky to have walked on this beautiful land and [be] recognised as our true traditional people of today.”

Despite her tears Anita – a Yandruwandha woman – said the day was a happy one, marking the culmination of years of work.

“For me it’s a form of closure, for all these years being here and recognition for my cousins who took our uncles and went in and got the claim registered,” said Anita.

“We are recognised in the history books as stone-chip people, but today I’d like to be recognised for where [we’re] standing – by Cullyamurra – where the water runs in and out and through our country.

“For me, it’s representative and symbolic of how we are. Long through the ages; deep as it is and through our spirit, and our body and minds; and wide as our people are scattered all over this country at time to time when we come here – so that’s how I would like to be remembered here today.”

For both women the celebration was a bittersweet one, with many that started the journey 18 years ago passing as the years trickled by.

“We have lost many of our old people along the way. Aunts, cousins, sisters, brothers – but we are representatives us people who made the journey here today – those who could get here and others who aren’t able to be here,” said Anita.

“I’d like to say to our elders, past and present, who have... paved this foundation for us all to walk on – thank you all... we so wish you were here today but we know you are here with us in spirit,” said Theresa.

The final words of the day went to Kyam Maher, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation where he touched on how important this determination was.

“A person’s place in the world, their identity and where they’ve come from, is critically important to everyone, but for Aboriginal Australians – the oldest living culture on the planet – it is especially important.

“Today is a step in the right direction...”

“Nothing has been given, it is a mere recognition of what all of you know. This always has been, and always will be Aboriginal country.”

The Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka Traditional Land Owners (Aboriginal Corporation) administers land on behalf of the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka people of far north eastern South Australia. Visit www.nativetitle.org.au for more information



Traditional Owners are playing a key role in helping to understand, preserve and protect the cultural heritage of the Diamantina catchment as part of the SA Arid Lands NRM Board's Channel Country project. Here, Wangkangurru Yarluuyandi Traditional Owners Jean Barr-Crombie and Valerie Naylon-Fuschtei share what it means to them to get out on country and for their traditional knowledge to be respected.

BORN ON COUNTRY



Valerie Naylon-Fuschtei and Jean Barr-Crombie, Wangkangurru Yarluuyandi Traditional Owners at Tepamimi Waterhole

Jean Barr-Crombie

I was born on Alton Downs Station in South Australia. Looking back on my special day makes me feel very much connected to country. As I've got older I'm more into looking after country and culture which has been passed down through generations. I live on country in Birdsville and I am one of many Wankgangurru-Yarluuyandi women.

We're a big family. Twelve born to mum and dad: Frank and Linda Crombie. I'm the ninth child in the family.

ON LANGUAGE

We weren't allowed to speak our language at school so we did lose a lot but my mum and dad spoke it at home.

We're still not very good at having a big conversation in language but we do understand it and we talk it whenever we can.

I guess I was luckier than most: my family had it at home and we sort of picked up on it from there. Mum was right into stuff about native title and teaching her children the dreamtime stories – but when you're younger you don't take any notice. Now I've taken a lot of interest in it. My sister Joyce and I pass on our story through canvas, our traditional art and books so that the kids will understand it. Hopefully we will do more in the future. They can also use this to teach language to kids in schools.



Left: George Reid is happy with his catch at Yammakira Waterhole

Below: 'Scar Tree' at Yammakira Waterhole



SHARING KNOWLEDGE

I love going back on country. I share my knowledge with the younger generation of my family.

I think it's about time we started sharing our stories so people can understand us a bit better and where we come from. If we're not going to share then we're going to lose it.

I do my cultural talk and explain my family connection to country and talk about my artwork that explains these stories that connect us.

Sharing our stories is a way of keeping our culture alive.

I tell my stories – the dreamtime connection and about my grandparents and my Mum and Dad working on stations around Birdsville.

I talk about my grandfathers – they were healers – we call them MinpaRu, the clever men, like a doctor, they had their own way of healing in the past that's different to how we live today – today we have the flying doctor!

That's what I talk about with the artwork. How they lived back in those days and how we live today; it represents the past and the present. It's important to respect country.

After I do my cultural talk there is a lot more respect and understanding. A lot of people tell me that it's great to learn about my culture and this really encourages me to keep doing my talk.

ON WORKING WITH PASTORALISTS

Respect goes both ways with pastoralists, I respect what they do and I have known them all my life. My family worked on stations around Birdsville for many years and we know the country really well and we're looking forward to going back there to see the places we worked and the cultural sites.

If clearance needs to be done on country I am the contact person for the pastoralists and I take things to the Board of Directors of the Wangkangurru Yarluyandi Aboriginal Corporation and we help organise someone to do the clearance.

It's about respecting both ways – it's about sharing knowledge and acknowledging each other and working on looking after country together.

We have a great relationship and we hope this continues. Sharing stories with the pastoralists is very important to us so that there is an understanding of our connection to country – there's always an open invitation for that to happen. We are always willing to talk and share and look to the future.

ON WORKING WITH THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

You know if I feel that something should be done properly. I tell them to go through the Board people. I'm a member of the Wangkangurru Yarluyandi Aboriginal Corporation and we talk, so put it through the whole lot of us.

ON THE FUTURE...

For me I think being more responsible, caring and sharing, and looking after country is important and that everyone looks after our cultural sites.

We need to encourage our young people to learn about country, and maybe working alongside the current park rangers in Queensland here could be a good thing to do in the future.

We haven't done anything for a very long time, other than going out with Henry [Mancini, Diamantina Channel Country project manager] where we were able to show the younger generation what's out there.

If we get a younger person who is a Traditional Owner who has got the love for country, the knowledge, the learning then I reckon that would be pretty good. If we can teach the younger generation what it's like to get out on country and show them where the places are, then the battle's nearly won.



UP AND DOWN TO THE DESERT WHENEVER WE CAN...



Left to right: Videographer Rob Nugent records Jean Barr-Crombie, Henry Mancini, Valerie Fuschtei Jnr., Eddie Fuschtei, Terry Crombie, Jimmy Crombie, Don Rowlands and noted linguist Luise Hercus as they share their stories of the country they are meeting on

Valerie Naylor-Fuschtei Born in Marree, 1949

Yeah, you don't know how happy we all get when we get back there. All we want to do is go for walks. It's amazing how all the old stuff's left behind... You know the things we've seen so far. There's plenty more. We just have to take the time to go and find it.

[My people] come from right across the desert. The [main] families of [the] Wangkangurru...are the Macleans, the Lumpkins, the Naylor...the Reeses, and the Macumba.

They're the main ones for the desert and the Naylor...represent approximately two thirds of the Wangkangurru group and trace their ancestry through two brothers who married two sisters all of whom were Wangkangurru.

The [old people] all moved out of the desert in the 1930s because the big drought come there. That's when they decided. Some stayed in Birdsville, some went to Oodnadatta, Alice Springs, Western Australia, Port Augusta. Some went to Marree and stayed there. Some went to Anna Creek.

Some of them were too frightened to come out.

That's where they met husbands from the other side then. Lower Southern Arrernte, Arabana, Dieri.

So we all still acknowledge each other from both sides of the desert. All our children are connected. They all know us and we all know them no matter where we live.



Left: Traditional Owners along with language, history and ecology experts gather at Koonchera Waterhole, an important cultural heritage site, discussing traditional use of implements such as grinding stones

Above: Tepamimi Waterhole on Clifton Hills Station

ON LANGUAGE...

When I grew up they took to the mission me and my sisters. We learned everybody else's language: Yankunytjatjara, Pitjantjatjara.

[Luise Hercus' recordings of language] were the best thing she could have ever done because now some of these young ones they talk two languages. We've got no old people to carry it on more or less, only a few old people to carry it on.

[I didn't hear my language until] after I left the Umeewarra mission, Port Augusta: seventeen, eighteen. And I go back and met all my old people. Went up to Alice Springs, Birdsville, Oodnadatta and met all that mob.

Travelled around catching the Ghan train... there were no busses up to Birdsville. Just when they came down we met them. We could tell by their faces. We all had the same features.

ON COUNTRY...

We've been going back there ever since we had the Central Land Council hearing. Up and down to the desert whenever we can. Sometimes we'd go to the Birdsville Races and see the family if we can...and they...pop in and say hello if they're travelling through to Adelaide or wherever.

We used to go up to the Simpson Desert and camp there for weeks on ends looking at all the sites and showing where they got their water from out of the desert and where the old people died, we see a lot of their skulls, skeletal remains... tours would come into the desert, jump on any track and go. Some of our stuff was stolen. And we'd go back the next year and everything was gone.

Us elders like to be there to show, to tell them, teach them where this and that and the stories about the area. We see Jimmy and Don – we usually like to be there to show them and point out a few things on the ground or in the sky or wherever it is.

ON THE FUTURE...

Well I hope those young ones listen and learn in the future. I know some of the ones in Birdsville are trying to get rangers jobs up there. [When I pass on] I just want to know that the children are interested and look after the place.

AND A FEW WORDS FROM THE GRANDKIDS...

Val Jr: Yeah, it's good to find out the history and things like that. I think it means something special just finding out everything, like Nanna, she's always told us about it so going out there and seeing it for ourselves is a big deal. There's lots to take in sometimes.

Eddie: It really does mean a lot being back there and finding out where all of nanna's family came from. I've never seen country like that before. I'm used to seeing all these big buildings. Big eye opener.

I don't know how to explain it. It was really nice. I've never really got to connect with my nanna on that kind of level before so it was different too. Yeah, it just felt really comfortable out there too. Felt like home I guess.

The concerns and aspirations of the Wangkangurru Yarluuyandi people, many of them reflected here in Jean and Valerie's words, are being incorporated into the Diamantina-Channel Country project in multiple ways – with visits to country, casual employment through the project, recording of knowledge and cultural sites, and sharing knowledge with pastoralists. Importantly planning and updates are being made in conjunction with the directors of the Wangkangurru Yarluuyandi Aboriginal Corporation. For further information on how traditional knowledge is being respected through this project, check out back editions of *Connected to Country* or contact Henry Mancini 8648 5300.

The Wangkangurru Yarluuyandi Aboriginal Corporation administers land on behalf of the Wangkangurru/Yarluuyandi People. Visit www.nativetitle.org.au for more information.





WITH ONE LITTLE WORD A WHOLE LOT CAN CHANGE...



Ikara-Flinders Ranges



Above: Uncle Mark McKenzie giving his speech at the ceremony

Below: The Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park Co-management Board; Traditional Owners; Minister Ian Hunter and staff from the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources were in attendance at the co-naming ceremony

The Flinders Ranges National Park was officially co-named Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park in February, recognising the Adnyamathanha people's long standing connection to their country. As part of the co-naming ceremony, the oldest living Kuyani Adnyamathanha man – Uncle Mark McKenzie – shared the importance of 'Ikara' as a meeting place where decisions got made, and the meaning of other Adnyamathanha words that were common in the Flinders Ranges area.





While the word Ikara may be new to some, for the Adnyamathanha people it has always been connected to Wilpena Pound, explained Uncle Mark.

"...Wilpena Pound has many names; it's in the very strong ceremony area..."

"Ngarrri Mudlanha [means] your mind gets funny when it [reaches a] height – [that] is Saint Mary's Peak; Wartuwarru Yurru is rock...Arkaroo Rock area; Ikara, [is] where they sit down...and Ikara is also the group of people...women, children and men."

Uncle Mark shared how the two sides of the Adnyamathanha people – Matheri and Arraru – passed laws at Ikara.

"Muta is a...strong [and] unchangeable law...This side of the house, they've got to agree, we've got to agree with them before it is passed.

"...Arraru get together [and] talk; Matheri get together [and] talk...and they come together and make decisions...and then it only takes...Matheri and Arraru [to] agree and it's carried.

"So when it came to Ikara they sat down...and [the big mob of people] sat in the pound waiting for...[the] big morning star to come up... and it was coming up right at the Arkaroo Rock.

"But one day, and one time, it wasn't a star: it was [the] serpent's eye – they got caught out.

"Only four got out of the pound, one first initiated man, [a] second initiated man, and... [then the] Kingfisher flew out.

"...[The] first...man is this side [of] Wirrealpa...and the...second [is] this side [of] Mount Chambers.

"So Wilpena Pound itself is like...a Stonehenge; it's like a capital to all our histories in South Australia."

Uncle Mark also talked about the importance of handing down language, explained the meaning of a number of station names and called for the meaning of those names to be acknowledged.

"There's no teachers in Aboriginal language...and there's no stories in Aboriginal language – they are missing.

"Now there are many Aboriginal names on the stations and in the country, in Aboriginal language, but it doesn't tell you in English what they mean.

"Marnbi Awi is bronze wing pigeon waterhole...up north [there is] a station called...Murnpeowie so that should have been underneath, what it means; Mudluwartanha is [at the] end of the Flinders Ranges, and there is a station... called Moolawatana...very close [to the] end of the Flinders Ranges.

"Wira alpa, Wirrealpa station, that's... gum leaves; that should be written underneath.

"Awraprinha means meditating of the mind and is far away; Oraparinna: that's coming close now...and maybe Parks and Wildlife can...put [its] name, what it means."

Minister for Environment Ian Hunter also spoke to the gathering about the importance of words.

"I think there is an awful lot of power in words.

"What we're doing is actually saying, we recognise that for a long, long, time before it was called Flinders [Ranges] National Park, there was a long history of people here in this area, who belong to this area and belong to the park.

"We're acknowledging long, long, before even the notion of National Parks was thought of...the Adnyamathanha people were here and have been here for a very long time.

"...We acknowledge that connection by renaming the park... to you [the Adnyamathanha people] Wilpena Pound has always been known as Ikara... this change in name will be a constant reminder to all of us – all the visitors from around the world – that this is Adnyamathanha country."

Michael Anderson, chair of Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association, also spoke of the importance of the name change and what it meant to the community.

Left: Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association Chair, Michael Anderson, welcomes the delegation to country

Above: Minister for Environment Ian Hunter chats with Michael Anderson; Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association Chief Executive Officer, Vince Coulthard; and Adnyamathanha elders

“Today is a significant milestone in the Park’s history, it’s welcome back to the future, where the old name is now being brought back to the forefront – which makes us very proud, proud, people today.”

About 50 people representing the Ikara-Flinders Ranges Co-management Board and members of the Adnyamathanha community attended the special co-naming ceremony in February.

The Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park is managed by a partnership between the Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association and the State Government; the Ikara-Flinders Ranges Co-management Board oversees the management of the park through the combination of traditional knowledge and contemporary science.

LANGUAGE DISCLAIMER While every effort has been made to ensure the Adnyamathanha words used in this article are spelt accurately, however some discrepancies may still be present.



Hookina Spring (Punkga Pudanha)

REGINA

BRIDGING THE GAP

It was a big night for Regina McKenzie in September when she took home the 2015 Premier's NRM Award for Aboriginal Leadership at the State Landcare Conference in Waikerie. *Connected to Country* caught up with Regina to discuss the win and her work in the Flinders Ranges.

The Premier's NRM Award for Aboriginal Leadership recognises one male and one female whose involvement on a natural resources project shows exceptional leadership.

Regina, a Kuyani Adnyamathanha woman, was nominated for the community leadership she has shown, most notably through her role in protecting Hookina Creek in the Yappala Indigenous Protected Area.

"It's something that I never expected, even when I was nominated I didn't expect to win it," said Regina.

"...We concentrated on the Hookina waterhole area...because of the erosion...

"That's why we are trying to get it fenced off – it was to try and bring...the waterhole [back] to its pristine self so that the natural flora can come back and also the animals."

Water in the arid landscape has always played a significant role to the Kuyani Adnyamathanha people.

The Hookina Creek system – and in particular the waterhole known as Hookina Spring (Punkga Pudanha) – provides a crucial water supply in the arid areas and also facilitates access to other important resources such as medicinal plants, tools and food.

"Water in that area is the most...precious commodity...it's the key to everything."

The site, which had long been a stock watering point, had slowly been degrading over the years. Regina's work highlighted soil erosion, severe loss of vegetation and destruction of priceless cultural heritage at the site and in the wider area.

Working with landholders, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands staff and many other experts Regina helped map the area, plan recovery activities – such as fencing and developing alternative stock watering points – and was heavily involved in developing a strategy for Hookina Creek's future.

.....

This work has led to the regeneration of native vegetation at key waterholes, such as River Red Gums, and the preservation of ecosystems that provide vital refuge for local plants and animals – especially during times of drought – something that brings joy to Regina.



HARD YAKKA

Big thanks to Desmond Crombie who put in some hard yakka during the annual Date Palm removal at Dalhousie Springs in November.

A Wangkangurru Yarluyandi man, Desmond joined park rangers and maintenance staff at Witjira National Park as part of the cultural works program, lopping branches and spraying plants that had sprung back after previous treatment. Some of the larger trees took up to two hours to remove and the team had to pull out the chainsaw. Date Palm management has been an essential activity in Witjira National Park since 2004.

Individual plants consume as much as 180,000 litres of water from the Dalhousie Springs every year and their removal returns important water back to the environment.

Accessing Date Palms can be very challenging work particularly in the soaring summer heat and weeding them out amongst the dense reed thickets (Phragmites) found around the springs.

These annual works were supported by the Witjira Co-management Board and the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board with Australian and State Government funding.

Left: Works Supervisor, Nat Staniford, saws through a Date Palm

Above, left to right: Natural Resources SA Arid Lands staff Sam Gitahi, Chris Parsons and Nat Staniford with Wangkangurru Yarluyandi Traditional Owner Desmond Crombie

Below: Desmond weeds out Date Palms amongst the Phragmites



LIKE TO SHARE A STORY? DISCUSS A NEW NRM PROJECT?

Natural Resources SA Arid Lands Community Engagement Team would love to talk to you about your *Connected to Country* story or NRM project ideas.

Contact us on 8648 5300, email SAAridlands@sa.gov.au or drop into the Railway Station at Port Augusta.

TO JOIN OUR MAILING LIST...

Contact Natural Resources SA Arid Lands (08) 8648 5300 or email SAAridlands@sa.gov.au

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

Connected to Country reports on Aboriginal NRM activities in the SA Arid Lands region. It is prepared and edited by Natural Resources SA Arid Lands, a division of the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources. It is supported by the SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board with funding from the Australian Government. We welcome contributions from individuals, community and other agencies.

