



## NAIDOC Day

A picture is worth 1000 words. Billy and Polly can bring it down to one: 'NAIDOC'. Full story inside.



## Six new recruits



The new Community Police recruits receive cultural training at the Bamaga Court House.



From left: Sgt. Rob Colthorpe (Cross Cultural Unit, T.I.), Mr Dan Salee, Mr Paul Dai (P.L.O.-Horn Is.), Mr Albert Bond, Mr Reef Day, Mr Johnnie Mark, Mr Jeffery Toby, Mr Steve Tillfitt (Cross Cultural Unit, Cairns) and Ms Alison Sailor (not in the image). Mr Trevor Adcock (Cultural Liaison Officer, Q.P.S.) a now retired inspector was at hand to help guide the new recruits into their new roles.

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## Injinoo's future set for growth: ILUA authorised

Extra Classrooms, Playground, Library, Admin Building gets go ahead

*Reverend Mary Eseli is teacher at the Injinoo campus. She is also priest at St Michaels and All Angels (Injinoo, an Anglican Parish), a Justice of Peace and the President of the Justice Group at Injinoo.*

*Reverend Mary Eseli speaks of her time at Injinoo Campus. "There were no other buildings here, just kindy, pre-school and year 1. I wanted more classrooms, parents found it awkward in the rain season that the kids travel by bus to Bamaga campus. I talked to the previous principals about more buildings coming down. Their question was, 'Do you think you'll get the numbers if we get the buildings?' I said, 'Here, every year numbers expand.'"*



"Buildings started to come. The second building to come is on the other side. Last year the other two buildings came down. This year (2009), we are having another building at the back, and another two classrooms there, and a new library and an admin office. The library is going to be build at the end of September. Grade 6 and 7s will be at the new building," says Reverend Eseli. Funding for the new buildings comes from the Department of Education. Cape York Land Council invited all traditional owners of Injinoo and the community to attend a meeting, to share information and detailed briefing on the planned facilities, and allow the traditional owners opportunity to consider the proposed ILUA (Indigenous Land Use Agreement) and make a final decision, authorization and execution of the ILUA. This culminates nearly 2 years of negotiations.



Rev Mary Eseli opened the meeting with prayers. The three elders and traditional land owners of the Gudang Yadhaykenu, Seven Rivers Angkamuthi and Atambaya peoples, Mr Meun Lifu, Mrs Bethena McDonnell and Mrs Cecelia Ropeyarn, signed the ILUA\* authorisation that transfers Injinoo lands to the Department of Education. The 8<sup>th</sup> Sept. meeting, held at the Sport & Recreation Centre, Injinoo, is organised by Mr John Liston of Cape York Land Trust. Two properties relate to the ILUA authorisation, the vacant land behind the school (1805<sup>m2</sup>), within the school fence, and a triangular section (437<sup>m2</sup>) opposite the school, all located near Bowie and Lifu Streets.



Elder and Traditional Land Owner, Mr Meun Lifu.



Elder and Traditional Land Owner,  
Mrs Cecelia Ropeyarn,  
born at this very spot at Injinoo.

## Umagico road works



A section of Mara Street (Umagico) and the entrance to Umagico Supermarket is now resurfaced with new bitumen, funded by the 'Road to Recovery' grant. Other small road works carried out include Peter Street corner Massey Street, and Little Lui Street in Bamaga.



Elder and Traditional Land Owner,  
Mrs Bethena McDonnell.

The signing clears the way for construction to begin and completion is expected before the coming of this year's wet season. The buildings are already here. The older school playground equipment, presently at the rear of the school, will be donated to the Injinoo community. A new toilet block is also planned for the school ground. Injinoo Campus has approximately 90 to 100 students.

## I uba abudama mamos of Gudang an Eracan

**In the voice of an elder: Mr Meun Lifu, (Injinoo)**

*Mr Meun Lifu, locally know as 'Shorty' or 'Uncle Shorty', born at Cowal Creek, is one of the elders in the Injinoo community. He has seen a million changes happening in his lifetime. Mr Lifu has a joy for life and a very infectious laughter. Below, Mr Lifu speaks his mind in his own words, his personal views.*



"This time there is too much change coming. The good change is there is no liquor in the communities. We used to hunt and share. Today we no longer share. People today argue. You know, they argue, them sort of things. The attitude of people has changed. In our time, we love one another. Today, some people got hatred in them, in their hearts. They are good to you in the front, but... when you turn away from them, they run you down. They talk behind your back."

"In our day, we take all the youngster, we take them out, hunt, in the daytime. Night-time, we bring them together, sing songs and learn dance. They don't do mischief. That's because we didn't have no grog, no smoke. That time was very hard. If parents catch you smoke, you get a hiding for it. They catch you steal, you got a hiding for it. That was the thing that what happened before. If the kids swear, eat 5 chillies, swear again, eat 10. When the government come in, sit down, give us the smoke, give us the grog, the youngsters start break away. We had no shop; we only had a big store where they give us a ration. Those days we had pounds, shillings and pence."

"Today, we been trying to cut the grog out. We cut the grog out, but still we have grog in the community. Grog is like a sugar. When you drink tea with sugar, you want more. You drink tea without it, you don't like it. You're looking for a sugar. Now they think, no matter how far the grog is, they got to go looking for it. Whether they get it here or there, they got to go looking for it. If they don't get it here, they took off to Weipa. If they get nothing, they go down to Cairns. In early days, they stopped the grog, then all the people drink metho. That's how some people died very young, from metho, from mentholated spirits. When the beer come in, those people who been drinking metho thought the beer just like water. They can drink that much beer, without no tucker, after they sick and they die. All the alcohol in their stomach and no food... so them people die, it was very sad to see that. When I been reared up, my father was very strict on me, don't allowed to get a smoke. I was 22 years old when I started lung to lung smoke and after that I started to drink beer. I stopped drinking when I started working. In Mareeba Pub, they asked me to come in, to have a drink, I said, 'No, I don't like it.' I don't like the beer. When I get the beer and smell it, I want to throw it away."

"Give up on the grog a bit, practising singing, the young people, they got to follow now, making art and dance and practising. I get the young boys now, put them in a dance team, take them and show them how we can dance, so they look and follow, in our culture, how it's been done before. When they see, oh look, that's the way you do, you got to follow the leader. If you go away, you end up in a bad way, in the lock-up or in jail. If you follow the good way, you never lose out."

"When the kids were small, I gather them up, teach them to dance. Some are big girls now, some are women, they been taught by me, teach them to dance. See the beer, forget about the dancing. Now I grab them boys and the girls, and the young ones, they look up, oh well; we follow you, so now I teach them. They start catch up; they start follow, that's the good way to do. Now when you walk around the street, do something, so people look for... you still live in a community."

"The kids that don't go to school is a different problem. If parents hard with the kids, the kids all right. If kids all over them parents, the parents can do nothing. In our days... give them a belt, mostly go to school, today, you grab out a kid, you go to court, because the government put the pressure on to protect that kid, that's wrong. Our way, we look from two sides. If one way right, one way wrong. If government protect kid, what can we do? We all tell the kids, 'go to school', they won't let them, because mother and father try to force them to school, give them a hiding. But parents frightened, if they touch them, go to jail. They used to get 10 each, on their behinds, from the teacher, 10 from the police, 10 from the assistant teacher, all with a cane. You couldn't sit down, you went to school."

"In the old days, if you steal a woman that's when you get speared through a leg or through the body, but when you steal something... but when you're taking (something else), you still go share with everybody. Before we had... from the beach (Injinoo), that's where the main street was, right through the inside, that's the one they called the Government Street. Then we got the street split up. One (street) coming up on school, where the coconut tree is, and the other one coming off from that way. That one come from the beach, that's where the road had to be clean, they had a stonewall on the right with the white coral, smashed them in a drum, boil, make a white paint, then put them on the stone. It's like a white paint, all the way. We had a stone wall right around the school. All them kids pulled all the weeds out, with the roots, otherwise you get poked with the sharp... always pull the thing out. And them things was really clean. When boy drinking metho, or steal a woman, what they do, put them in the jail. When they come out, 8 o'clock in the morning have a breakfast, then two people on the side; they go out and clean the streets, all the way, every house, every village. Them boys who do the stealing and drinking, go clean up the village. There was nothing left, no coconut leaves, nothing. That's the job for them boys; it's like a prisoner, to clean the village. If the schoolyard is dirty, get them boys out to clean the schoolyard. The police organised that. They walk around and clean up, and when evening comes, supper finished, clean them and back into jail. They got to go back into jail for sleep. In the morning again, take them out again. Not any more, now the government puts them in the big jail. Now they walk around in that little space like a dog, in Lotus Glen (Lotus Glen Correctional Centre, south of Mareeba), small space, nothing to do. They do work there, they do carpenter, drawing. But when they used to come out, them boys knew what they done, when they do stealing, that belong to us, but when you steal, you got to get up in the street, that's the punishment. But they don't worry (now), they're not going away, they stay home. Whole family here, they only go to jail. Before you clean the village up, the council was good with that, today it's not real punishment. I'd like to see that. We had a local police before. Now with the white police that's changed by the government. When the white police come in, the government changed the rules. The community police got the law from the white. They have no authority to arrest. The white police got authority to arrest. The community police should have the power to arrest. I used to take the young boys on hunt, camping in the bush, go out in boat, dinghy, hunt for dugong, hunt for turtle. Wake up at daybreak, back at night-time."

(Continued next page)



## I uba abudama mamos of Gudang an Eracan (continued)

"My first job was in T.I. in a furniture factory, cutting tin for armchairs. The money was too small, when I worked in T.I. I was working for 14 pound, before I was working for 7 pound a week in a factory making drinks, lemonade, coke, sarsaparilla, what's the other one... them sort of things. From there I went to Coen, started to work as a stockman, cattleman. Eleven years, riding horses, a drover for 3 years, we drove (cattle) from Bramwell to Mareeba, take us 10 weeks, 3000, 4000 cattle. I wanted to become a diver, but my mother stopped me, she said to me, 'If you go to be a diver, you gonna die.' I go on a boat, but not going down."

"Tourism is a good thing here, but you got to have a ranger to guide the tourists, to protect wildlife. In Injinoo, you got the original tribes of the Wuthathi, Yadhakgana, and Gudang people; they live along the waterside, Red Island. In the middle of the community are the Angkamuthi people. On the south side, along the creek are the Atambaya people. Each had their own language, but now mostly Angkamuthi is used, it is an easier language, while Gudang and Atambaya languages are heavier.

Boys might go outside to island, bring in girls and also from outside, and the culture starts breaking down. We're trying to bring it back. The kids in school ask me, 'Hey, when is the next dance?' We go to Melbourne, but it's a bit far for the young ones, so we'll take the bigger ones. Here too, like in New Mapoon, it (the culture) is breaking down. The kids go on the grog, start stealing, because you try to stop the kid and belt him, the cops come and grab you, because the government behind this, all the time. When you explain to the police they say no, you got to go to court. My father (but meaning uncle) used to deal with that, he been a teacher, stealing something, put down on bed and with the cane, bang, bang. Sometimes I got 10 smacks, not with belt, with cane. In our days we work hard, lot of exercise. We not eat in the morning, we do work first. When come 10 o'clock, we only eat 2-3 bread, enough, in the evening time, night-time is more better when you eat, you walk around, the tucker will settle down. Kids were healthy (then). Sometimes kids dive in the water, never run the water out again, it stays in there (the ear), then it starts running, infections. Young ones with running ears, probably by mother, if mother has the running thing, then kid must have it from mother."

"Teacher talk to us, teach us how to do banana, cassava, pumpkin, watermelon, teach us which sort of soil we can plant on. This soil might be no good to plant on, this might be good for pumpkin, cucumber and them things. Sweet potato and cassava, they got to be in good soil. We learn that way. I told all my grandkids, we got to do something, yam, we got to dig a hole, that far down, bigger one. (Make) small hole (and) yam only that small. [Yam tubers can grow up to 2.5 meters in length and weigh up to 70 kg (150 pounds) Source: Wikipedia]. You fill the hole, then you plant the yam at the top and take a stick and stick it down with the branch, so it go down. In the first rainfall the vine come up, it grow with the branch. Then kai kai (food) go down, it go straight down, depending how big the hole was."

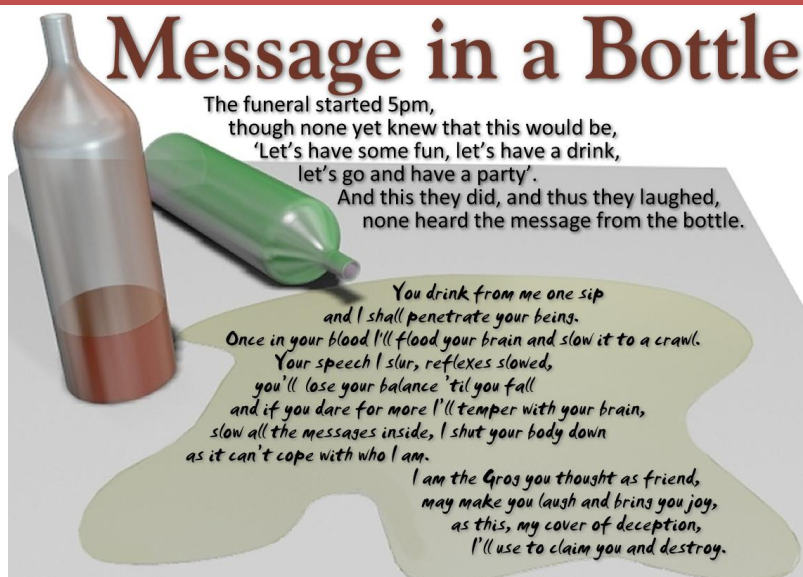
"We tried to have a council of elders to change the future of our people, sit together and talk. All the elder too much shy from talk. You shy, you hold your people back. If you not shy, come in the open you put your people ahead, that's the way we do it. There are still some elders left in the community. There's me and Jacob, my brother and Seriba and Mrs Mac Donald, not a real lot."

The elders of Injinoo are:

Mr Meun Lifu, Shorty (Gudang), Mrs Celia Ropeyarn (Atambaya), Mrs Bethema McDonnell (Angkamuthi), Mr George William (Angkamuthi, Erecan), Mr Morris Were (T.I.) (Atambaya, Gudang), Mrs Seriba McDonnell (Atambaya) and Mrs Meriam Crow (Atambaya).

"Sometimes we get together and yarn, and then we sing, drink tea, alright. In our law, you got to be over 60 to become an elder, not under 60. That's the old law. We talk about our lifestyle, how it was before. We tried to stop them, bringing this sort of things in, this is wrong. Everywhere you see that. We lost the law and we can't keep our people in line. If the government just let us do what we like, our law, things would be running straight. Teach kids from small to have respect. We don't like to see them go into jail, they do more damage. If people do to our own law, people been healthy and they work hard. Parents slag off, policeman laugh, kids can do anything. If I was frightened to go out to hunt, my father strap me to a tree. You frightened of devil? ... (my father) left me standing to look devil in the eye, to face my fears."

"If an elder is losing his or her memory, they have to pass on the reigns to a younger elder," says Mr Lifu. "My father was the Chief of the Gudang and Eracan peoples. Before he died, he passed it on to my older brother. When he died, he passed it on to me. I am the Chief of the Gudang and Eracan peoples ('I uba abudama mamos of Gudang an Eracan', in the Gudang language)."



The cost of alcohol consumption is high, too high. The cost are the innocent victims of 'accidents', of rage and violence, the ones that are left behind to care for the maimed, to bury the dead, all as a result from the decision to drink. The families that need to cope when the breadwinner is in jail, the children that need both parents, financial ruin, the pain and agony of all those that become victims of one's decision to drink. There is a choice to say 'No.' There is a challenge to say 'No.' There is a consequence to say 'Yes.'

There is help available from the local NPA Family and Community Services (located at Family Resource Centres) and/or the local Healing Centre. Save your life and that of many others.

## NPA Animal control measures

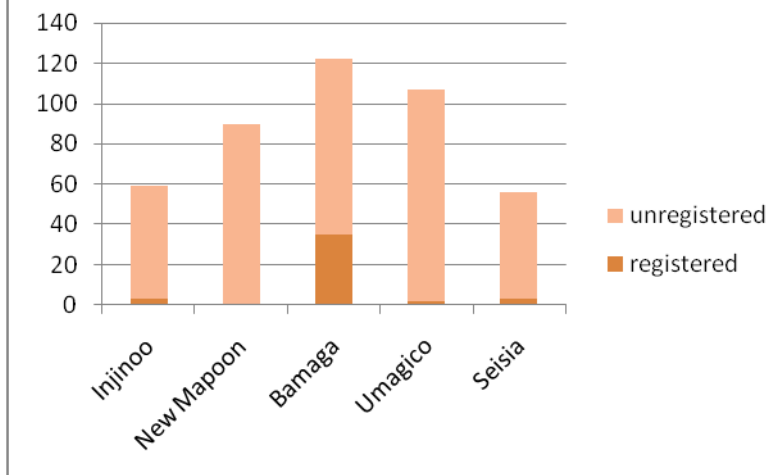
Mr Billy Daniel, Environmental Health Worker assisting Animal Management explains current Animal Control measures implemented in the NPA.

**Dogs and cats:** "Dogs need to be registered, so they can be monitored by the animal management service team," says Mr Billy Daniel, who is an Environmental Health Worker, assisting Animal Management. "The Tenancy Agreement states that only two dogs are allowed in the house. This is for all houses. We made exceptions for hunters who may have more dogs. A hunting dog is different from a domestic dog. They are dominant dogs. When they go out to hunt, they'd like to win. We know the female dog is the best sniffer for hunt. The male dog is the fighter that blocks that pig. The female scouts it out, finds it, the male backs it up and holds it there."



"Since July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008, the Cat and Dog Act requires the registration of dogs. Cats need to be declared as well. They need to be cared for and housed. If a cat becomes feral, it becomes a threat to the native species. Dogs and cats get put on a database. Those animal not on the database will be collected."

Numbers of dogs in the communities 43 registered out of 391 dogs, (June 09 figures)		
	unregistered	registered
Injinoo	56	3
New Mapoon	90	0
Bamaga	87	35
Umagico	105	2
Seisia	53	3



"We will make a recommendation to the Council that a vet can come in twice a year. When the vet comes up he/she can have a look at the database and can treat them. We put (unregistered dogs) them in a pound and keep them there for 3 days. Whoever owns the dog can retrieve it, for a price. Council has looked at the neglect of dogs; only keep two dogs, so people can afford to treat their dogs. We're trying to get dogs off the streets," says Mr Daniel.

**How to register an animal:** Each Council Office handles the registration for their communities, except Injinoo. Injinoo's tags and registration books will be handled by Umagico Council Administration Office. The year starts at 1<sup>st</sup> July and a dog registration costs \$45 per year. Mr Billy Daniel can be contacted at work on 07-4069 3992, or ask for Mr George Mara, Manager for Environmental Health Services and Essential Services, or Mr Frank Mau, Supervisor of Animal Control.

**Horses:** "This report will make recommendations to the Council for all the things that were mentioned at the Injinoo public meeting: Assistance for building paddocks for horse owners, assistance for materials, machinery, to build the paddocks and keep the horses in there, this for each of the communities," says Mr Billy Daniel. "Because of local knowledge, I know Umagico only has 3 horse owners. That is not going to be a big paddock, assisted by the Council and operated, managed and maintained by those three owners. New Mapoon has 7 horse owners. They already started building their paddocks from scrap materials."



They made three sections, so horses can be moved between the paddocks. Within those sections they have spring heads (water source). When the mares have foals, one can't keep them with the stallions. We want to brand the horses so we can identify them and we can relocate when we find horses in another area. Some horses wander off, but also the little boys want to ride them, they just use a halter instead of bits. They ride them at night, they tend to leave them, hide them in the scrubs. 'Leave them there for tonight,' they say, 'we'll go for a ride.' When I go around and find those horses, I look at the brand and I'll know, 'this belongs to so and so', and it can go back to the paddock where it belongs. That is the purpose of the brand. The brand needs to be registered at Mareeba."

**Pigs:** "We used to fatten pigs up for Christmas dinner. That was an old custom from before. When dengue and all the other diseases came through the local Government stopped it. That was before the amalgamation. We asked them, if they wanted to keep pigs, they should be 4km away from a residential area, in a wind path from east to west, so that the wind would carry mosquitoes and whatever it was, east or west, but not towards the community. It's about good animal management."



## Mango Rain

The late winter 'Mango Rains' have come and gone. The end of August early September rains lasting 3 days are believed to kick start the mangoes, sweeten the fruit, and without fail have come regularly over many years.





## Somerset

**Road works upgrade:** “Our largest road works project completed was the upgrade of the road to Somerset. It has now become a major tourist destination,” says Mr Jim Foody, Director of Engineering Services. “It looks like we just about have to redo the road again,” adds Mr Foody with a grin, “... worn out from tourists travelling on it, but it has become an extremely popular spot, Somerset and the Albany passage. Instead of going to the Tip, people go to Somerset now. There is a lot of history out there. It was once the government centre in Cape York.”

“A 10km long section between Pajinka turn-off on the road to Somerset is now re-sheeted with a new road surface, and we replaced an old bridge, as well as construct new sections of road. That’s the major goal we’ve achieved with the road works. All funding came from the unspent funds in the 4 year funding block from the ‘Road to Recovery’ grant. Due to weather restrictions we had to put in a lot of work in a short time, up to the end of the financial year, but we achieved quite a bit. It helped with road signage and construction. The funding now is very quiet and very small. We’re doing a lot of these smaller jobs that also need doing,” says Mr Foody. There is now excellent signage to local attractions in the area.

**Campground upgrade:** The campground upgrade at Somerset is complete with funding provided by Tourism Queensland.

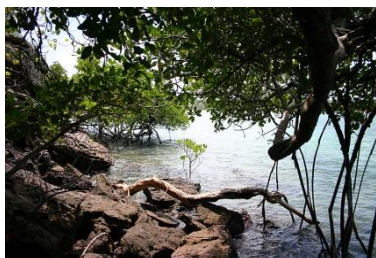


**Traditional owners:** The traditional owners of the area are the Injinoo Aboriginal people, comprising of five major tribal groupings, Angkamuthi (Seven Rivers - western), Atambaya (MacDonnell - central), Wuthathi (Whites and south-eastern), Yadhaikgana (Cairn Cross - eastern), and Gudang (Red Island, Somerset – northern). The Apudthama Land Trust is the custodian for Injinoo traditional country, which extends from the Skardon River on the West Coast, and Captain Billy’s Landing on the East Coast, up to Pajinka at the top of Cape York.

**History:** Much of Australia’s western and northern coastlines were chartered by the Dutch during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, then known as ‘New Holland.’ Sir George Bowen, the first Governor of the Colony of Queensland proposed settlement of the Cape York Peninsula. Initially, the western side of Pabaju (Albany Island) was considered as the location for government administration, however, in 1864 Somerset became the centre of government administration for the Torres Strait. Administration was moved to Thursday Island in 1877. Albany Passage becomes a fast flowing channel in the changing tides and does not offer safe anchorage.



Somerset Beach Camp Ground is located directly on this beach with views of Albany Passage (about 16km south of the Tip, 20km east of Bamaga) and Albany Island across.



A cave located at the north side of the beach contains the white ochre rock, which is still used for traditional body painting. The ochre dust is mixed with a little water; the resulting paste is applied with fingers to the skin.

The well, located at the southern end of Somerset Beach, once had a windmill. The walls around meant to prevent saltwater from entering the well. Outside view of the well (left), inner view of well (above), now with trees growing.



### Tenders closed

Tenders for the construction of the NPA airport fence are now closed.



### Shell pulls out

Shell pulls out of aircraft refuelling operations on NPA airport. Full story on page 9.





## 'The hands were coming out of the ground'

Reverend Mary Eseli, "Why was I dreaming this?"

*Reverend Mary Eseli, Injinoo, speaks of her memories.*

"When I was ordained in 1995 as a deacon, we were in Melbourne when I had a dream. We were in the University College, during the holiday, all the students were out. The rooms were empty. The dream that came to me that night were hands that were coming out of the ground, drowning. It didn't make sense to me to what the dream was about. But when I went for breakfast with all the other reverends and the bishop, I said, 'The hands were coming out of the ground, they were groaning.' Why? Why was I dreaming the hands coming out? Reverend Gloria from Dubbo, she said to me, 'It's best we sit down and put it into frame.' We went in the study room and everybody sat around in a circle. We were holding hands and we started to pray. She was holding my hand and she started to shake. When everybody finished praying, she turned around to me and said, 'The hands that you've seen coming out, drowning, that's your people. They are crying out to you, to help. They need prayer. But they're at a place where the grave is so shallow'," recalls Reverend Eseli.

"She described it to me and I knew exactly what she was describing. She was describing Somerset, because all our ancestors, when Jardine shot them, they just covered them in the shallows. No one took prayers. When Reverend Mary Eseli came back to Far North Queensland, she spoke to her late brother, Mr Dan Ropeyarn (Chairperson of the then Injinoo Shire Council), who arranged a public meeting at the basketball area, in the middle of Injinoo Park. We all knew that our ancestors were shot there. We know there was no decent burial. He had the rangers there (at Somerset) to shield the area, because the bones started to come out (from the shallows). We took our prayer out there. It's like a July 1<sup>st</sup> celebration. Every community was out there, camping and praying. We had two bishops out there, Bishop Malcolm and Bishop Matthew. Bishop Matthew is the one who ordained me. When I told him 'I'm going to have a service at Somerset' he said, 'Ama Mary... that is a very good idea.' He sent me all the books, history of Somerset, he said, 'You're chosen and now you need to get that out there.' When we had the service, all the ancestors gave, what I mean is when the men went out for hunting they all came back with seafood. It was a really great day."



"Before, when tourists go out there, they hear people playing on the beach, children yelling, baby crying, babies crying. But after we had the service... it was peaceful, really peaceful. You don't hear them anymore."

"The boss of the sawmill went out there, he built the monument in front of where the house was. On a Sunday he said, 'Come on, I'll take your photo', and we were standing, the background was the ocean. When the photo came out, the sun wasn't even up yet, but it was bright in the back. When I took the photo and showed it to my granddad, he said, 'This is where the light came first in the Torres Strait. The light came first to Somerset.' See, I didn't know that, I didn't know he knew about that, but he never tell us. 'That's where the light came, the gospel came', he said, 'to there, big, bright.' When he (late brother) was in hospital, he was dying now and he gave me his blessing. I thought it was just a blessing, but out of all the grandchildren I was the only one... My grandmother told me, 'Your granddad gave you this blessing', and she gave me her blessing too before she died with all the grandchildren there. I didn't think of that, but when I do all my helping the visiting priest in the parish, I didn't know that one day I'd be ordained. My uncle said, 'You are the chosen one from the whole family.' I'm now looking at my granddaughter; she is very close to me too. She is doing what I'm doing and she's doing that for her friends. My granddaughter, she is always next to me, she is 15. Even when we sing in church, she's standing next to me. She likes to sing, whether she's in the bathroom or the bedroom, she'll be singing. I said to my husband, 'I think she is going to be the one following my footsteps.'" (Reverend Mary Eseli is married to Deacon Erris Eseli)



Deacon Eseli ordained into priesthood.

"By intermarriages we are putting the two cultures together. On NAIDOC Day (National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee) I'll be telling history, what NAIDOC is about and from the case of Eddie Mabo, when he fought for the land at his island. He wasn't only fighting for his island, it covers around... everybody start to get determination of the area."

[NAIDOC's origins can be traced to the emergence of Aboriginal groups in the 1920s, which sought to increase awareness in the wider community of the status and treatment of Indigenous Australians]

### Tips for a better Committee

To help increase the skills of local committees, Department of Communities, Sports & Recreation Services hosted a workshop for committee members in August at New Mapoon. The presenter, Ms Leisa Donlan, offered advice to anyone on committees, to make their experience as valuable as possible.

**Be Tolerant:** Understand that it's ok for everyone to have a different opinion than yours. This doesn't mean they don't like you or that if you don't all agree, nothing can happen until you do.

**Have Short Meetings:** About an hour is the best length of time for a good meeting.

You can do it, if you stop telling each other how you did your job and simply report what has been accomplished and any problems you had the committee should know about.

**Be Prepared:** Try and get some information out to the committee before the meeting and encourage everyone to discuss bigger issues before the meeting.

**Know Your Job:** Position descriptions are an important tool to help committees understand what everyone does and get everyone working immediately.

**Practice Conformance:** Understand what laws apply to your particular committee and make sure you are meeting all your obligations.

**Get More Help:** These days the most effective way of getting more help is simply to ask someone, face to face!



## Artist, Mr Billy Daniel

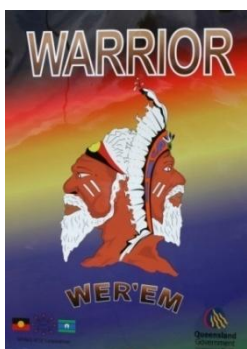
Mr Billy Daniel of New Mapoon was a BRACS operator, promoting animal management on the radio. "I used to be a recreational officer, work with kids. Then I worked for the Council. I was a councillor in New Mapoon for one term, and the chair person for one term. Then I worked, cleaning up the sewerage pump station in New Mapoon. I was asked if I wanted to be trained in environment and I agreed to that. I'm now diploma graduate in Environmental Health, looking to go to degree. I focus with this animal management issue, trying to get one of our own blokes or an indigenous person to become a vet, so that we have one base here. I wasn't an artist before. This is leading onto it, being an artist came later. I do what I can do on canvas. My mind was focused on environmental issues."



"When I got my diploma, down in Cairns, I walked around an art gallery in the afternoon. I see all these paintings, carvings... 'hey, gee, nice, beautiful, some with a \$1500 price on it.' Then I started with a small canvas, then my canvas grew bigger, started to fill in all the spaces. Then my next painting came up with a turtle, slowly, slowly, getting to where I am today. People come and ask me, I do it on their request. I'll ask, 'What sort of art, a turtle and two crayfish, a sea creature or land creature?' I've never had an exhibition, I only showed (my work) around here," says Mr Daniel.



"I've done **'The movements of Dugong'**, because I used to hunt dugong and I know how and when they move into a creek and the formation when they move. This I have seen at night. You can't see them in the day. I see the light from the moon that comes off their backs when they move. In a formation you have the head leader there (in front), like elephants, two males on the sides and on the tail another male, the female and kids in the middle. There are sharks around too; they are after the babies in the middle. When you hit that group, you see one head this way, another head that way, that's when you go for the middle one, that's the best meat. Don't use torch. Torch kills that luminous light off their backs or in the water. We just see the formation of it, male leader, males each side, mothers, pregnant ones and calves are in the middle, and another male at the tail end. They move in a nice slow motion so the babies can breathe. If you come with a dinghy in the middle you see them scatter outwards. That is the pattern. They are trying to say 'Chase me, but don't get the little ones.' The ones that don't understand the formation do chase them and everyone is safe, they go into the creek, they hide in the mangroves. I've done a big canvas with that formation."



"**Warrior** symbolises our two races. We have to stand up, stand strong, to fight sexually transmitted infections. It is about the survival of the next generation, as STIs can lead to infertility. United we stand, divided we fall."

"**Spiritual Dancers** (right) shows two dancers preparing to get ready to fight. During the dance they call the spirits for strength, fearlessness and guidance. They may ask for the spirits to share fighting secrets and strategies when fighting in a different or unfamiliar territory. Methods for island fighting are different to fighting on the mainland. Other warriors may have taken their secrets to their grave. During such dances they are called upon to share their knowledge. These dances are performed away from preying eyes so that any shared secrets do not benefit the 'enemy'."



**Freshwater Turtles** from Galaway Swamp, Cape York, (NPA). "That is a food source for us, the green turtle, I've done grayfish. I will be exhibiting my works at the Youth Centre in New Mapoon, next to the Health Centre. I will try to get onto e-bay, trying to sell my work there, but will need an email for that."

**Punsand Bay**, Peak Point Look-out, looking to Roma Islands Flat, (NPA).

Mr Billy Daniel can be contacted privately on:  
61-7-4069 3585.





## Punsand Bay workshop



The serene Far North location of Punsand Bay, the place to be, for learning about culture, leadership and survival.

Mr Richard Tamwoy (left), Menshed Coordinator, and Teacher, Mr Jonathan Foley, organised a workshop bringing students, teachers and elders together at Dugong Camp.

Activities such as safety training for rock climbing, becoming familiar with abseiling techniques, low rope walking, bush spotlighting and more, all part of a day's work, organised by NPASC and Menshed Australia.

Earlier in the week, female students had a camp with outdoor activities, followed by male students for the remainder of the week. NPASC teacher, Mr Jonathan Foley acted as instructor for the day's activities. Seisia Councillor, Mr Jeffery Aniba addressed the group, speaking about responsibilities and leadership and answered many questions the students raised. Learning about culture was part of the activities.

Menshed Australia is an Australia wide Health Promotion Charity. The recent visit by Menshed Australia CEO, Mr Peter Sergeant, resulted in the signing of a trial Outdoor Education and Re-engagement program with NPA Regional College. Initially only senior students from years 8 to 12 will have a chance to take part, but if successful will also include students from other schools. Menshed is a place to meet, undertake activities, a place of learning and sharing.

Contact Mr Richard Tamwoy, Menshed, Bamaga, on 07-4069 3961, mob 0417 200 172, or email: rrtwy@hotmail.com



From left: Mr Jonathan Foley (teacher), Mr Richard Tamwoy, with Students Mr Tre Riddle and Mr Denzel Aniba.

## Shell pulls out of NPA

Mr Andy Crouch of Aviation Refueler (Cairns) is accredited trainer for Shell, currently training NPA Regional Council and Police staff in the refuelling of aircraft at NPA airport, following Shell's decision to pull out of the operations.

Shell is likely to leave its infrastructure in place (currently in negotiations) and following the complete training of local staff no interruptions to air services are expected. "NPARC intends to run the refuelling operation as a cost only service to the community," says Mr Jim Foody.



## NPARC plumber about to visit

"A plumber of NPA Regional Council is about to visit homes in the communities, to check if toilets or taps are leaking, if water is getting away anywhere," advises Mr Jim Foody, Director of Engineering Services. "Because what we've done so far has started to make a significant reduction in our water usage, which is probably 3 times the national average. A lot of that comes not so much from personal usage, but from leaking and dripping taps, broken infrastructure. The best way we feel we can get on top of this, is to become pro-active and check everybody's house to see if everything is right. It is a small expense to Council. If we do find something then we put it through the Q-Built maintenance system to cover our costs. Indications from Sunwater (the supplier of water) are, that we are making a significant reduction in water consumption, even though we are only halfway through (inspecting) the 5 communities."





# A teacher for 25 years

**In the voice of an elder: Reverend Mary Eseli, (Injinoo)**

*Reverend Mary Eseli, deacon and priest at St Michaels and All Angels (Injinoo), an elder and active member of her community speaks of her past and shares her knowledge of the times that have brought so many changes.*



"When I was 3 years old, I went to Thursday Island and did my schooling there, up to high school. After school, I started working straight away with the Department of Native Affairs. Then they changed to the Department of Community Services. I worked in the administration area in Bamaga. Later on, in the 80s, I didn't want to sit in the office, I wanted to be with the children, so when the Teacher Aid job came up I applied for it and got the job, here at Injinoo. Later on, I did my studies at the TAFE college, for two years, for a certificate and diploma in teaching.

Then I came back as a teacher in charge of this (Injinoo) campus. I did further studies, instead of going away, the teachers came up here, and you do it in the community. Then I went away to James Cook University and graduated as a qualified teacher. A couple of years back I was teaching in Bamaga, grade 1, 2 and 3, and then I transferred back to Injinoo. I have now been teaching for 25 years," says Reverend Eseli.

"The late Mr Pablo had been involved in (teaching) traditional stories and dancing. He came to the school every day and takes one class at a time. It's a process to teach culture. The tribal people from Yadhaykenu came from Somerset way, Escape River, and the Gudang are from Seisia up that way. The Injinoo is the Angkamuthi tribe from Seven River. I teach the kids in language, the body parts in different languages. The traditional stories I will start teaching next year, two days per week for cultural."

"The late Mrs Pablo, she came young with the first group that travelled up from Seven River, looking for a good place to live. They camped, stayed for a couple of months. Plenty older people came with them, she said, but they got sick, we buried them, we leave them. Some moved on canoes to Crab Island, some of them stayed there. Some came back to the mainland, some moved because of water to the mouth of the Jardine River. The freshwater was there, but still they said, 'No, we're not going to stay, we are going to keep looking.' So they travelled up this way until they find this place. They started to build their huts and started walk-about. That's when they meet other people and they speak different language. But they too, they come; they want to live here too. It was hard for them because of different languages. When the Atambaya came they lived this side, the Angkamuthi lived out there, at the mouth of the river. When the whirlwind came it damaged their houses and trees and then they moved inland. They start building their houses. But they were still fighting, fighting with spear. The missionaries heard that there was a village here and they brought Christianity here."

Reverend Mary Eseli's grandfather, Canon Francis Bowie, broke the spears of the warring tribes at Injinoo. He was a healer, a teacher and Anglican Missionary, who brought people from the different tribes together, settled disputes and married the young from different tribes. Canon Francis Bowie's remains are buried under St Michaels and All Angels Church at Injinoo. The first Anglican Aboriginal priest ordained in Australia is also buried under the church. He was the late Father Patrick Brisbane, a man from the Atambaya tribe of Injinoo.

"The people of Gudang, Yadhaykenu, Muralug, they already knew some of the gospel, because of Governor Bowen, he came at that time and he saw Somerset and said, 'We make administration area.' He lived there and said, 'I bring in the missionaries.' The missionaries came from England, they were Church of England, he brought them here and he started the ministry to the Aboriginal people who were there. That is before the London Missionary Society came here. They came 4 years after the missionaries arrived at Somerset. That was 28th of February 1867 that the missionary started at Somerset. They said 'The Light came first to the Torres Strait', I said 'No, they are wrong', it wasn't. The Light, the Gospel came to Somerset four years ahead. They couldn't get it out into the Torres Strait so they got the other group in, to go to the Torres Strait. Governor Bowen started the Church of England here. The name changed to Anglican."

"My grandfather did his training in St Pauls on Moa Island in the college. In August we had 12 students confirmed at Injinoo. Every year we have 11 to 12 students confirmed and we get a visit from the Bishop. My great-great-grandmother is from Saibai Island. My grandmother (dad's mother), the father is from Western Samoa. He married a native from Saibai Island and there are 13 children that is Nona's family, 9 brothers and 4 sisters. Two sisters married Tamwoy's and she married Bowie. My grandmother is from Nona background. My granddad is from Malay. All the Nona brothers married the Bowie sisters. My grandma's brothers married my granddad's sisters.



The first 'St Michaels and All Saints' church at Injinoo. Opening of new council of church, including villagers and visitors, 1932.



The second church was built in the 30s or 40s at the same location.



The current church, 'St Michaels and All Saints', at the same location in Injinoo.



Centre of image is detailed below, Reverend Mary Eseli's father as a child with Rev Mary's Grandparents.



(All historical images courtesy of Rev Mary Eseli)



# NAIDOC Day: Honouring our Elders, nurturing our Youth



NAIDOC Day, 2009, at Injinoo, and what a day it turned out to be. The celebrations started from Injinoo P-6 Campus, carrying the Australian, Aboriginal and Torres Strait flags, as well as the hand painted NAIDOC banner around the streets of Injinoo, followed by all the students and teachers of P-6 Campus.

NAIDOC stands for National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee. Its origins go back as far as 1924 when the Australian Aborigines Progressive Association (AAPA) was formed in Sydney to raise awareness of the struggle of Aboriginal people.

Today the acronym NAIDOC is used to refer to celebrations during National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander week, with the aim is to increase awareness in the wider community of the status and treatment of Indigenous Australians, to celebrate history, culture and heritage. It is celebrated throughout the country.



Coconut husking, weaving, dancing, singing, traditional games, face painting, kapmaurie (hungie) and displays, all part of the day long celebrations. To cap it all off, a feast which not even the best 5 star Hotel in the country is able to match, with freshly caught crayfish, green turtle, dugong, and a list of culinary delights as long as the table. Elders, community members, kids and staff, all enjoyed a most memorable day.



The 'Sea Dance' is performed using feather decorated crown shaped hand-held pieces, called 'Csik', symbolising the rolling surf of the ocean. Songs of the Torres Strait accompanied the dancers. 'Palgas', handheld bamboo pieces which are split at one end, were used in other dances, adding sharp clapping sounds to the performance.



Mrs Fanny Bowie

Mrs Fanny Bowie (left), mother of Reverend Mary Eseli, celebrated her 75<sup>th</sup> birthday on the day, surrounded by the young, old friends and family. Following the customary 'Happy Birthday' song, the enthusiastic 75 count clapping from the Injinoo kids inspired Mrs Diana Tamwoy (right) to get up and perform an impromptu dance of joy to the delight of everyone. Mrs Fanny Bowie is daughter-in-law of the late Canon Francis Bowie (she was married to the late Mr Wilfried Bowie). Mrs Fanny Bowie now lives in Townsville but is a regular visitor to Injinoo.



Mrs Diana Tamwoy



The men caught and prepared a large female green turtle, dugong and crayfish.

The Feast...



Green Turtle



Dugong



Crayfish





# Basket weaving



Mrs Zilla Zaro  
shows how

As part of the NAIDOC activities, Mrs Zilla Zaro shows how to make baskets.

- 1.) Split a coconut leaf at the midrib.
- 2.) Cut off four sections, each having four leaflets.
- 3.) Join the two parts like this (it's a bit difficult with the fingers).
- 4.) Combine two sections by weaving them over and under.
- 5.) Weave first leaflet from one part into the other.
- 6.) Continue with second leaflet.
- 7.) End to end, interweave both woven parts to form centre of basket.
- 8.) Tidy up the outsides.
- 9.) Gather the ends of the leaflets.
- 10.) Pull the ends through on each side and knot them together.
- 11.) Fill with goodies.
- 12.) Enjoy the goodies. Bon Appétit.



Articles on display (far left). Mrs Lila Whap (left) fashioning a headband. Artwork in process (right). Watercolours on the line (far right).

## Out of its tree

Slightly dazed and out of its tree, this possum was found in the middle of the road, between the Croc Tent and Bamaga (NPA). Turtle Project Officer, Mr Brett Leis and Mr Roger Bartlett, identified the species as a young female spotted cuscus (*phalanger intercastellanus*), the largest of all the possums.



"It came down from New Guinea when Australia was still linked to New Guinea," said Mr Leis. Mr Muen Lifu suspects the injuries it received may be the battle scars from fighting with a large carpet snake. "It's good tucker, tastes much like chicken," says Mr Lifu with a grin. For a few moments it stopped all traffic, giving tourists a rare close-up photo opportunity, before climbing back up again. The tree tops are its natural habitat.

