

Local Indigenous Partnership Agreement *signed*

The Northern Peninsula communities of Injinoo, Umagico, Bamaga, New Mapoon and Seisia through their regional council now have a Local Indigenous Partnership Agreement (LIPA) with the State and Federal Governments.

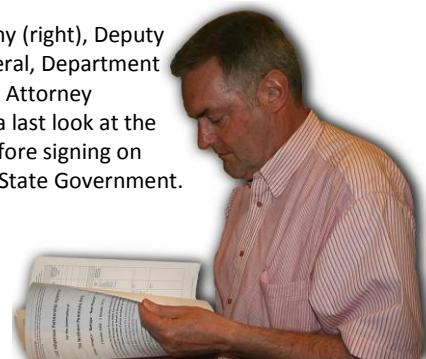
NPA Regional Council and Queensland and Federal Governments agreed and signed the LIPA at the Council meeting, 6th October. Individual community members contributed to the priorities in this historic document through community engagement forums conducted in October 2008 and, in follow up discussions in the lead up to the document being put into action.

NPARC Mayor, Mr Joseph Elu, individual Councillors, NPARC CEO, Mr Stuart Duncan and staff, Queensland Government agencies and the Federal Government's Indigenous Coordination Centre, Cairns, contributed to the actions that will come about over the next year. The local Family Resource Centre was also a key contributor to the building of this document.

The delivery of actions included in the LIPA will be evaluated at meetings of the relevant people on a six monthly basis, held around March and Aug/Sept, 2010. NPA Regional Council in conjunction with the co-Government Champions will review and comment on progress in April and Oct 2010.

NPARC Mayor, Mr Joseph Elu, (right) about to sign the agreement. The timetables are set for the coming year, for regular 'round table' discussions, community engagement sessions, community liaison and public consultations. (continued next page)

Mr Barry Leahy (right), Deputy Director General, Department of Justice and Attorney General, has a last look at the document before signing on behalf of the State Government.



In this issue:

wa!

- opening of Blue Light Disco
- opening of Early Learning Centre
- opening of Somerset Camp Ground
- opening of Recording Studio
- opening of Yumpla Cultural Festival

...and more

New Mapoon: Storm brings down trees



Two mango trees came crashing down in New Mapoon during strong winds. NPA Regional Council workers cut the branches with chainsaws and removed the debris.



The Local Indigenous Partnership Agreement is a working document. It is not set in stone, as it is designed to grow and change to meet the communities' needs over time. The set of goals in this draft document contain affirmations and actions that will be completed and added to, modified or removed by agreement of the parties over time.

Importantly it is a partnership between all levels of government and community members.

"LIPA is a good step forward," says NPARC Mayor, Mr Joseph Elu, adding, "I

look forward to working with all parties, to ensure the LIPA contributes to the work NPARC is doing, for the future progress and development of the NPA and the people of all our five communities."

Co-Government Champions for the NPA, Mr Alan Tesch, Associate Director-General, Department of Transport and Main Roads, and Mr Barry Leahy, Deputy Director-General, Department of Justice and Attorney General, are also looking forward to assisting with the implementation of the agreement. Both see the LIPA as a means to further progress and build upon the already significant achievements made by NPA communities since early 2008.



LIPA's objectives are the seven building blocks of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG):

**Early Childhood
Schooling
Health
Economic Participation
Healthy Homes
Safe Communities
Governance and Leadership.**

NPA community engagement forums all put forward the need for a strong emphasis on the affirmation of local traditions, in particular education in culture, traditional and creative arts.

This objective is included in this document as an eighth building block.

During the meeting the Council's 'Corporate Plan (2009-2013)' was also endorsed with the Council's vision stated as:

**'Prosperity
for our communities
and our people.'**



7million visitors since opening.

The Seisia Blue Light Disco was first, followed by New Mapoon, with a great turnout at the Injinoo Disco. Many of the local businesses provided free gifts, distributed to the young.



Graffiti artist caught in the act



Actually, no, it's Mr Tony Snell, a surveyor, marking lines along the road from Seisia to Bamaga, at every 20 metres. It's for a proposed pipeline between Seisia to New Mapoon pumping station, to continue to Bamaga. The topography of the area had never been properly surveyed. The surveyors were in consultation with local elders about a possible route for the pipeline. At this point in time, the data collected is for analysis, in consideration for the future sewage needs of all five NPA communities.



On the road between Seisia and New Mapoon, Mr Victor Sere holds the transmission post.

Danalaig Niai-Idid Project (Our way, our life to live longer)

Mr Poi Pensio and his wife, Mrs Marcia Pensio, and their daughter, Ms Phoebe Pensio, are on a mission, a mission to help others **combat**, as they did, **obesity and chronic disease**.

"Everything we shouldn't do, - I did."

Mr Pensio explains: "There is an epidemic of chronic disease throughout the indigenous population that is South Sea Islands, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and Europeans as well. It is important for us, because we are only a minority. The issue is we are dying 20 to 25 years younger when compared to non-indigenous Australians. We die 30 years younger than our grandparents. It's a lifestyle disease. Because of the introduction of western system, policies, procedures and constitution, it disrupts us from not doing our stuff from traditional perspective. Over time, over the years, our lifestyle has been turning. We are getting obese people. These are the signs of chronic disease, obesity, high blood pressure, cholesterol, low blood sugar, heart disease and stroke. We changed our lifestyle. That is why we ended up in this situation."

"In 2000, I was 120kg; I had a slight heart attack on Thursday Island. The hospital thought I had triple pneumonia, because they didn't have the capacity or adequate resources to properly screen, and to identify what was the main problem for me to end up in this situation. They were giving me massage on my back. I had fluids in my lung. They diagnosed that I am Type II diabetic and that I had sclerosis. They flew me down to Cairns and sucked 3 litres of pass out of my lungs. Everything we shouldn't do, - I did. They said my lung would be scarred for life. They tested my liver and said ¾ of my liver is not functioning. I could drink (at that time), drink you under the table, every day. I go to work and go to lunch and stay there. You can wait for me, I'm not coming back. The fastest food that you could find, that's how I lived. They were going to put me on dialysis machine, in Cairns, I had only 5 years to live, in 2000, they told me."

"But I didn't come to the party. I said to them, 'I want you to send me back home, and if you can put me on medication, such as insulin injections and also on tablets, put me on those two things that can do similar of what dialysis can do. If it's not better but close, then that is close enough. Because I admit, it was my mistake; I rather go back and live for 5 years with my family.' I went back to Thursday Island. But when I went back to T.I., from experience growing up, gardening, I remember all the elders, the elders saying to me, old pastors, they said, 'The garden place for our grandparent was not only a place for diet and exercise, what it is, they spent most of the time in the garden, it's stress therapy and you drew strength from the land. We drew strength from the land from our ancestor. That's where you drew your strength from. You need to go back and do gardening if you want to get out of all this mess.'"

"Now spiritually, what they say also is, 'When God made Adam and Eve, where did he place them? He placed them in a garden. He didn't say this is only for diet and exercise.'"

"You got to get up and walk."

Mr Pensio continues: "We live off the garden and lean meat. Because we go through a new regime, we had counselling every month."

Management of chronic diseases: "There are 4 conditions, risk factors: **Weight, Blood Pressure, Cholesterol and Blood Sugar Level**. These are common terms the doctor uses when a patient comes in. We are going to look at the lifestyle changes in order to address these four conditions. The system we are having in place to get a family on the program is: **Health, Community and Family**."

"He said everything in there is good.' So what they are saying to me, 'if you wanted to find out what's good for you, you go in there, because God will speak to you in the garden. Ancestor will speak to you in the garden. This is where your faith will grow. This is where your strength will grow. This is the first point of contact in terms of dealing with your chronic disease.'"

Image from left: Mr and Mrs Pensio with daughter Ms Phoebe Pensio.

"Look at your wholeness, not only the physical part of it, but the spiritual, the mental, the emotional, the cultural, the economic, all those well-beings are start coming together, when you walk in the garden. If you want to become chronic disease free, you need to look at the whole person, everything, inside and outside."



"When I started in the garden, I go back, traditionally, how they used to plant before. I don't go down the hardware shop and get fertilisers; I was thinking what substances our grandparents used as a fertilizer, organic type of gardening. I went right back in time, like my grandparents lived, without stove, without refrigeration. We cook on the outside. Firewood, underground roast, we went back to these ways, how they used to live. My daughter, my wife, they were both obese also, we all were in the program."

"Too often, we put individuals on a program, there is no strength, there is no sustainability. It lasts for a month and then it folds. What we found out, historically, everything in terms of sustainability, strength and keep on going, it is family dynamics. We were eating one diet as a family. The first 3 months we went on a lean meat diet. We need to eat the foods that will purify ourselves. We need to get rid of the toxins, get all the poisons out of you."

"After six months when the poisons are out, the diet shifts to more red meat, building muscles. So the first 6 months is to purify the body. The next 6 months is to turn the fat into muscles. These are different foods that complement each other. That's what we did. We focused on lean meats, chicken, goats, fish and deer. The body can digest that in 8 hours. But if you eat pig, red meat, some of it can take 48 hours to digest. So just imagine you have a big red meat meal at tea time and you don't exercise, and at breakfast you fill it up with more, and tea time you fill it up with more. You can imagine how you're packed up over the years. And this is how you get chronic disease. The exercise is not there. There is no balance."



Chronic Disease

Danalaig Niai-Idid Project (continued)



Mr Pensio explains: “**Health** = Health department, hospital, primary health care centres, responsible for treating disease. **Community** = Council, Youths, Sports and Recreation, Health programs, Kindergarten, Schools, responsible to look after the wellbeing. **Family** = Lifestyle.”

“**Health** and **Community** are in support of the **Family**. Because chronic disease is caused by lifestyle, the Family is responsible to turn their lifestyle around to combat chronic disease. Let’s look at how we link the support groups and interact, in order to combat chronic disease. We engage them in the program. We call it: ‘**Danalaig Niai-Idid**’, it means, ‘Our way, our life to live longer’. The Health program gives you all the information you need about blood pressure, cholesterol, about kidney and what are they and the effects of it, and what medication to go on. People need to know that, before they can start moving to diet and exercise programs. Between Community and Health there are 5 core services.”

“**Primary Clinical Care**: They check your blood pressure, refer you to a doctor, disease screening and prevention. They are responsible to find out what’s wrong inside of us. Phoebe, my daughter, runs the ‘Inside out challenge program’. When a family wants to join the program, we screen them, also school screening. We work with the family, then we also need the results from the kids. Then we have health education. The first 6 months we need to educate about health. They need to know what cholesterol and blood pressure is, and if they take medication, they need to know what it does to them. If people are on a diet, they need to know how the diet compliments the medication in order to treat your condition.”



“From **Health Education** we move on to Health Promotion. In this model it is action promotion, meaning: **You got to get up and walk**. You got to stop eating rubbish in front of people. You got to stop smoking in front of them, drink in moderation in front of them. **Health promotion is action**.”

“... part and parcel of your life forever.”

“Funding for this comes from various sources. Health is the State’s responsibility. Community is the Commonwealth’s responsibility, ‘Closing the gap’. There are funds for us, council, whoever, to tap into, to get some funding to deal with chronic diseases. Commonwealth, Health and Education provide funding through ‘Closing the gap’. It is Commonwealth’s responsibility to deal with chronic diseases, but run and managed by the families themselves. Realistically, we are only here to support. Every 3 months we screen again, we educate so that people fully understand. Once people are educated, you can look and how you are going to move into your life. From 6 to 9 months we start promoting. By the end of 12 months, it is not a program anymore. That should be **part and parcel of your life forever**, because you **turn your lifestyle around**.”

“Next is **Community Development**. We need to develop something in the community that will cater for exercise and diet, a gym, community gardens, backyard garden for every house, competition to run on every garden, so we can get people back to do gardening. But first of all, they got to start at their own house. Between the Community and the Family you have the six wellbeing principles. Your **physical** wellbeing, your **spiritual** wellbeing, for us, the spiritual is number one, because you drew from the spiritual from both sides, from the Christianity side and the traditional side. There is a different belief. A lot of people don’t want to go to hospital, they believe in bush medicine.”

“The **Environment**, we need to clean the yard and help people establish their backyard gardens, fruit and vegetables, lovely flowers. That way you develop your community, you develop yourself. You have a healthy community you have a healthy person. You start with the house and look in the kitchen, what sort of food, the method of cooking, the method of storage, all those things when we talk about community development. In terms of economical, they buy the right foods or waste. In big shopping, people try to eat all of them, because they are fresh.”

“**Physical**: Drugs, alcohol, diet and exercise are the areas we find in ‘physical’. **Spiritual**: We look at the Christianity side and the traditional side. **Environment**: We look at the kitchen and how we cook and store food; throw all the grease stuff out. We look at steaming; BBQ, underground cooking, and we need to work on the backyards. Jeffery Aniba is the one who brought the program here, focus on youths groups, school camps, backyard gardening, those kind of things. We look at the strength and weaknesses of individual areas. In the resulting weaknesses, we will get the community in to strengthen the weaknesses. If we look at diet and exercise, we have the people from the health program, the dieticians, the nutritionists; they will come in and do the assessment.”

The program runs for 12 months with the family, but we develop several 3 months plans and work with the family. In the first 3 months, we develop strategies for the weaknesses based on the four conditions (physical, spiritual, environmental and cultural).

“We review quarterly. I developed this, out of my life. Between the models there are shared responsibilities. It’s not only the responsibility of the health staff, it’s the responsibility of all the organisations, it’s the responsibility of the family, **it is the responsibility of the individual to turn the lifestyle around and become chronic disease free**.”

“The Doctor won’t do it for you, the nurse won’t do it for you, the diabetes educators won’t do it for you. When community comes into hospital we have no responsibility at all, because they qualify in that field, they are technicians.”

Danalaig Niai-Idid Project (continued)

"... now I'm on no medication."

"Out of my lifestyle changes, I used the framework to develop this program. We have now 24 families, four who turned around, coming off medication, become chronic disease free. When they send me back (from Cairns hospital) they put me on insulin and tablets. Because I worked in the garden, the cooking methods changed, I exercised a lot, about 5.5 hours per day. I only had a short time to prove to the government that it works, for the funding to come through. In 2006, they took the insulin off me. In 2008 they took the tablets off. Now I'm on no medication. When I got my final check, all those organs that they said were scarred for life, become alive. I'm 55 years old, but I have the body function of a 30-year-old. That is how our grandparents lived for long, 100 years or more, because of this process. They didn't have the doctors and nurses at that time. They managed themselves. If one family can't make garden, there were a lot of other families that had fruits and vegetables. They helped them. So they were caring and sharing all the time."



Mr Jeffery Aniba (Councillor for Seisia), invited the Pensio Family to the NPA. How did it change his life?

"One of the basic messages that Mr Poi Pensio is trying to get across is, that we are a dying race," says Cnr Jeffery Aniba, "... at this stage we are dying pretty young. The message to me is to change the lifestyle, of us, the indigenous people. How can we change our lifestyle? We are influenced by all sorts of things. Our lifestyle is (now) totally different. If we believe in our own cultural lifestyle, I reckon we'd be different people today. By Poi implementing what he was saying it made sense to me. I said, 'I take this on board and have a go at it, which I did.' The problem with that is, that everyone in your household needs to change as well. I did it for nearly two years. It changed my life. I stopped eating what I was eating before. I ate veges and whatever Poi was recommending, but I put on another 12kg since that time. I haven't done it for one year and just (re) started a few weeks ago. But in saying that, it made me a different person in thinking, in the morning when you get up, and you see things different as well, not like before, being a more reactive type of person. Being pro-active by taking this aboard, you control your life instead of other people telling you what to do. It changed me a lot. I even get my kids out in the mornings, we do different things. But it's hard work, in terms of willpower and your commitment. You can't do it on your own."



"Before, I was having breakfast, bacon and eggs, at smoko had a pie and a coke. It's a quick way to filling you up. It's unhealthy and it's addictive. It was ongoing. If I want to see my grandkids, then I need to change my lifestyle, which I did. Poi's story identifies that our forefathers lived up to 80, 90, and 100 years old. Sometimes it's the peer group that you hang around with. Some say, 'bugger it, it's too late, I don't care. The sickness is already there, who cares anyway. Everybody is going to die.' We all die, but you die because you are sick or because it's your time, as of old age? It is that mentality as well, the 'I don't care' type of reactions. Some people don't value their lives."

The World Health Organisation reports some frightening results:

Chronic diseases are the major causes of deaths and disability worldwide. The number of deaths per annum due to chronic diseases: **33.33 million**.

The majority of causes: High cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity, smoking and alcohol.

The change in eating habits and lifestyle changes are the root causes for the massive number of deaths, right across the world.

"When I grew up, my vision was to be a leader, but how was I able to get it? I used to drink and all sorts of things, but in my head I had a leadership vision. I even left school at grade 10, thinking, 'Oh, I know everything'. But no. Not when you've matured. There is more to life than what you think. You value those things again, you dwell on the stuff and you say, 'This is what I should have been doing'. If I had the chance to rewind my life again, I'd be a different person today. If we all had the chance..."

"Now it's too Americanised, too Westernised. Before mobile phones came here, kids were behaving differently. Before television came, they were behaving differently. If we had the lifestyle that our forefathers were doing..."

"Well, I'm an example of it, because my grandparents grew me up. Today I'm trying to teach my kids that, but it's hard, because of the influences around them are so different. Prior to that, they were home at 9pm, go to bed, go to school ...everything."

"We can run programs, through youths, cultural programs, that can keep the kids away from TV. This needs to happen through education, through health, and through community programs. If you have programs, outside of TV, it will influence the kids, their mindset, taking them hunting, camping, and at the same time do something exciting at the camp. But I don't know how we can shut the TV off."

"When I went to school here, we were proud of our school. We had Daru people (Daru is a small Island off New Guinea) coming over, sports exchanges, T.I., Weipa. We were proud of our school and we were achieving really high scores. Our school was top in sports, and we were proud of it. When our (school) bus broke down, we left at 7 o'clock and got there by 9 o'clock, walk to school... every day. This wasn't an excuse not to go to school. Today it's an excuse when the bus breaks down, and how many cars we got these days? They (the young) haven't got the commitment or the focus for going to school anymore. But do we blame the parents? Do we blame the education department, or do we blame whatever is happening around the community?"

"We got to stop this blaming game. It's just whinging at the end of the day. You got to have action."

Heart attack and strokes: **12 million** deaths per year.

Hypertension and other heart conditions: **3.9 million** deaths/year.

People affected by diabetes: **177 million**.

Overweight: more than **1,000,000,000,000** (1 billion) worldwide.

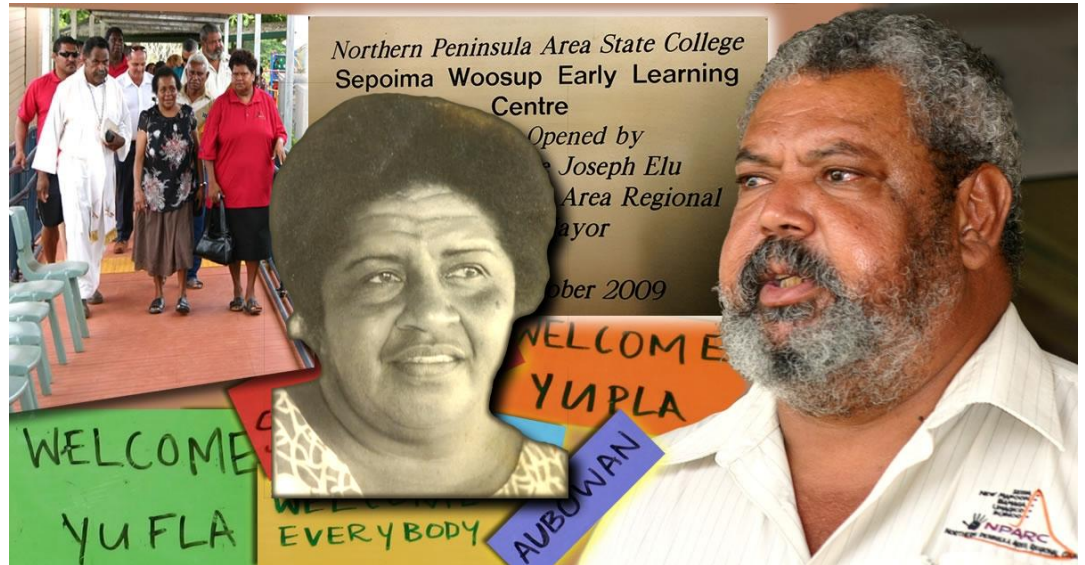
30% percent of cancers, up to **80%** of cases of coronary heart disease, and **90%** of Type 2 diabetes cases can be avoided by changing to a healthier diet, increasing physical activity and stopping smoking (sourced from: W.H.O.).

Sepoima Woosup Early Learning Centre opens in Bamaga

Education Week, 1991, and Mrs Sepi Woosup received a Certificate of Appreciation for 'Special contributions and outstanding service to Education in the Peninsula Region'. Mrs Sepi Woosup passed away on 29th Aug, 1995, never knowing that one day a house of learning would be named in honour of her work. October 6th, 2009, Father Dalton Cowley blessed the building, located at Bamaga P-6 campus, and NPARC Mayor Mr Joseph Elu officially opened the **Sepoima Woosup Early Learning Centre**.



During the opening speech, Mayor Elu informed the guests that a day earlier he had addressed the school workshop, stressing the importance of education to society. "Not only here, but around the globe," says Mayor Elu, "the Greeks, the Romans, the Muslims, all peaked at certain times. They all fell down when their education systems failed. Today we can take this as a lesson. For us to prosper, we need an education system in this far flung community. The lady this building is named after was an educator. She was the daughter of an educator. I hope her descendants will carry on that profession. It is a profession that has special significance within society. It is a profession that really looks to the future. Building the future starts at school. It begins at home and is perfected at school."



Picture from left: Manai Woosup, Mr Charles Woosup (son), Samuel Woosup, Illile Woosup, Ms Enid Namok (sister), Mrs Sandra Sebasio (daughter), and Joyiera Sebasio (all children are grandchildren of the late Mrs Woosup).

The late Mrs Woosup was born at Cowal Creek, 1937. She married Mr Silas (Snowy) Woosup in 59, having three children (Charles, Margaret and Sandra), who eventually blessed her with 12 grandchildren. She recorded her memoirs in 92. The following are quoted from those memoirs. Text and images reproduced here with the family's kind permission.



(quote from page 3, growing up in Injinoo)

"The Bowie family and our parents were adopted by the people (of Injinoo) and when we were born we sort of grew up in foster families. I was fostered by the Ropeyarns, because we lived close together. As we grew up we would understand the language but we could not speak it -- at that time people were still speaking in their language."

(quote from page 6, recalling memories of her father)

"At the beginning, my father had to come and stay in the Mission House with Canon Bowie. He started to build the school. In the old village out of bark and trees, and the floor was of palm, palm cut in half. That was Cowal Creek's first school. It was so hard at that school, he changed the flooring. When we were going to school at first there were holes in the floor and the wind would come in through the bark roof and walls, and we had to be pretty careful about kids lighting fires, because they pulled the bark out. This 1936 school was where Salee's place is now. The Army left a big Red Cross building, and that became a temporary school. In 1953 another, better school was built on the original site. In this one room school, with its corrugated slate roof, he taught the children. The school was very good. We had no problem with absentees. He taught the kids during the day, the morning, and in the afternoon they would go out to do gardening. He would show them how to plant food."

(continues next page)



Spacious and stimulating, with large indoor and covered outdoor spaces.

Sepoima Woosup Early Learning Centre opens in Bamaga (continued)

(quote from pages 12 and 13, about 'My teaching career')

"This part of my story is about my long teaching career – a career of over 30 years. I started to become a teacher in 1960 as an assistant to Dad. I stayed on here in the upper school and then went on to Bamaga. I taught Grades One, Two and Three until 1970, all of this was in Bamaga. Then the State Education Department took over but I was still employed until 1974 in Bamaga by the D.A.A. A Teacher's Aide position was advertised in 1974. It was better paid so I applied and got it. I remained in the Education Department until 1992, obtained my certificates by doing correspondence courses through ABSTUDY and passing in the late 70's."

"In 1975 I became a foundation member of Q.A.T.S.I.C.C. (Qld Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee). In 1980 I was appointed to the National Education Committee, the member for Torres Strait and as a member of the National Committee, travelled all over Australia, including Tasmania. This appointment was for three years. A Q.A.T.S.I.C.C. tour of PNG was particularly enjoyable and educational. We learnt about their vocational schools and cottage industries schools for students who do not pass their grades. Another wonderful experience was an overseas study course in Canada which lasted eight weeks. Now I'm slowing down a bit...."



(quote from page 14, about alcohol and fighting)

"Injinoo has changed a lot from way back. We have better houses, better jobs, higher wages, better living standards and good education. The thing is we have a problem; we have a problem with alcohol. There are times when people start drinking and fighting. There is no one else to help. We have only local police and local police have no powers of arrest. If there is a fight and someone fires a gun, who would go and stop them? There is a State policeman, but he is miles away. You cannot get in touch with him at night, only during the day. At night you cannot find him."

(quote from page 15, about the future of Injinoo)

"A lot of different things have been happening. We only hope that we will have the school down here, which is what we are trying to get the Government to give us our school back, so we don't have any problems about kids staying away from school. The thing is they are missing out on a lot of schooling. They are running around the village, they are hiding in the bush somewhere, or playing on the river. There are police but the police say it is not part of their job getting kids to go to school. If you look now you can see that we are getting ahead in almost everything. We have a good store, good transport, everything. We can get in contact with other places just like that. We have computers; we can get in touch with another world in just five seconds. I hope Injinoo can keep up like this. Some people think the old way of teaching was better and that kids taught in the old school can read, spell, add-up better (math) and they know their tables. In some ways it was too strict.... On the whole I think Injinoo is better, going well. In nine or ten years time it will be quite different. If we have things more controlled, people would understand the rules, like if there is a disco until midnight, they should know the rule not to disturb the peace. If you could give me a wish, I would like to live for maybe another decade to see Injinoo getting on. One of my kids in school doing a drawing "Injinoo in Ten Years" drew a high-rise with a café underneath. I hope I live another decade! Maybe I will see a top Motel with a coffee bar underneath, here in Injinoo!" **(end of quotes)**



Many of the late Mrs Woosup's hopes and dreams have come true, in particular relating to schools and education. Injinoo now is well placed in becoming a Centre of Learning, especially for the young, only because of the vision, dedication and actions of educators, such as the late Mrs Woosup, who paved the way for many. If you can read this, reflect, then thank your teachers.

Bamaga Swimming Pool

Bamaga Swimming pool upgrade work is completed. The outer fence is repaired, having received a new gate and some new sections on the opposite side. The failed 400 l/min pumps are replaced with five 600 l/min pumps, which can circulate the volume of water in 4 hours. The pool has been cleaned and is re-salted. Two taps at each end of the pool have been added. Repairs to the lights are also complete.

Prior to the upgrade:

Parts of the fence were in need of repair, two of the existing pumps had totally broken down, all pumps were underpowered for the size of the pool. The pool contained debris and the shade sails were in a state of disrepair.

The pool is now inviting, thanks to Mr John Unwin's care in maintaining grounds and equipment, and enjoys regular attendance from school groups and individuals.

Image from left: Parima, Jeanette, Jalaya and Sabrina enjoy the cool on the first day of their school holidays.



Opening of Somerset Camp Ground

Oct 12th, and Somerset Camp Ground was officially opened. Mr Richard Tamwoy welcomed the many guests and visitors and conducted the prayer, asking for the blessing of the grounds. Mr Steve Wettenhall MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Tourism and Member for Barron River respectfully acknowledged the past and present owners of this land of Gudang and acknowledged Councillor Gina Nona, as well as Member for Cook, Mr Jason O'Brien and Mr Darren Cleland. "It is an honour and pleasure to be here this afternoon to officially open the new camping ground, which may seem modest to some, but marks a significant step forward to tourism in Cape York," says Mr Wettenhall. "This camping ground offers visitors a sense of peace, of space and getting away from it all." Mr Wettenhall continues, "This is the first bush camping facility developed under the Cape York Peninsula and Torres Strait Tourism Development Action Plan. This camp ground was deemed to be the number one priority camping site under the plan... there are more bush camping sites to come."



Top image from left: Mr Bernard Charlie, Cr Gina Nona, Ms Enid Namok and Mr Richard Tamwoy at Somerset Camp Ground.

Left image from left: Mr Richard Tamwoy, Mr Jason O'Brien, Mr Bernard Charlie, Mr Steve Wettenhall, Cr Gina Nona

Mr Darren Cleland, Director of the funding body (Qld State Government, Cairns Centre, Department of Employment and Economic Development and Innovation), explains the workings of Somerset Camp Ground: "Apudthama Land Trust will be able to regulate the camping at Somerset, charging \$20 per site for overnight camping for each of the 12 sites. The revenue from the camp site will in turn be used to fund the maintenance of it. NPA Regional Council is contracted for the first 12 months to undertake the maintenance of the grounds. A system of self registration is in place. Envelopes are provided, campers are to fill in their details (car's registration number, dates), add the correct amount and display the receipt on their dash board." A locked steel container is used to collect the takings, securely bolted to the post of the shade construction. Mr Cleland, "We are very appreciative for the Council and the work they have done on the roads, compared to what it was last year."



Mr Jeff Gillies, Tourism Queensland, Cairns, looks after the area from Townsville to Cape York. "We've been involved with the Cape York Development plan. We had some team members up here through the best part of last year, creating a priority camping site list for development. We're looking for the high line vision for tourism and implementation steps, tourism viability and tourism trends, make sure that we're advising or listening to what local concerns are, advising the development departments in terms of the type of activities or type of client that is likely to come through."

"This place has particular history for the traditional owners for what happened here," says Mr Jason O'Brien. "We should never forget what happened here when the Jardines came. We need to learn from those lessons. When people come from all over the world and Australia here perhaps they learn something about the history of this place, how it was settled initially and how we live on together as well."



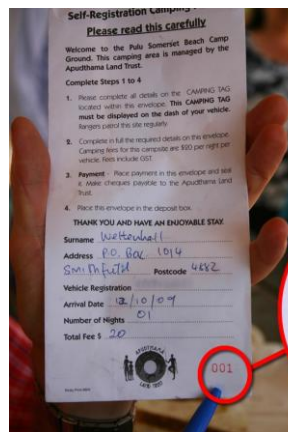
On the same day, students from NPA State College, in conjunction with Mensheds, had a camp at the site, unrelated to the opening ceremony. Opportunity for Mr Gillies to take some snaps, memories for another day.



Mr Bernard Charlie, who is chairman of the Apudthama Land Trust, said "On behalf of the Apudthama Land Trust, the people of NPA and traditional owners, I welcome economic growth and further opportunities for economic growth."

Continues next page

Opening of Somerset Camp Ground (continued)



"Jason and I are delighted," says Mr Wettenhall, "we have the Number 1 envelope into which we..., we borrowed some money..." the sounds of laughter drowned out his final words. "Jason and I will be trying out this land here tonight, in preference to staying in Bamaga."



The placing of the envelope marked the official opening of the camp ground.

Site construction: Yorkston construction.
Project management: Mr Angelo Finocchiario.



From top left. NPARC Teacher, Mr Jonathan Foley with his hands on teaching style on how to prepare a damper. Mr Richard Tamwoy checks the fireplace and before long, the fruits of their labour are enjoyed by all.



The difference between the boy and the man are discussed in this lesson.



Views across Albany Passage from Somerset Beach.

Mayor opens Recording Studio: "Take your chances... take it... strive for results !"



Bamaga, 13th Oct, 2009, NPA State College opening of Recording Studio at Bamaga Campus.



NPA Mayor, Mr Joseph Elu, officially opened the facilities by cutting the red ribbon.

"You certainly have a lovely school and a lot of money has been spent on the school in the last 18 months," said Mayor Elu. "When it was built



(in 1973) it was a residential college. The school was meant to educate kids from here and the islands. The school that was built replaced an old school, where the post office is now. That is where I went to school. It was a very run down building. Some of us didn't have books; some of us had to share books. It was very rough. It was not much of an education. There was no high school here."



"When we were 15, we were kicked out of school, because they wouldn't keep us in there. I left school at 15 after doing grade 7 for three years. I did grade 7 when I was 13 years old and couldn't go any further, so I did it again for another 2 years, but you now have a good chance. You have a chance of a high school education, right up to year 12, right here. And then of course you have a chance to go to further education, university of TAFE, and you should take it. When we left school we tried to get work outside of here. It depended on how far you went with your education, and when you say, 'Grade 7,' that's not so good. That's all the school I did. When it is time for learning, you come here and learn, because **this is all the chance you get at school.**"

Mayor opens Recording Studio (continued)

"Once you leave here you could go to university, but it will depend on what you'll learn here. It is very important that you come to school every day, and when I opened the school this year, I said the three R's to you what you should do. First of all is Respect. Respect your parents, respect your teachers and respect my position, which is your Councillor. Everything in this village is run by me and my staff."



"Danny is the deputy CEO (Mr Danny Sebasio)," continues Mayor Elu, "All your homes, the streets, the rubbish bins, he controls, we control. These are the people you must respect all the time, your parents, your teachers, and government. The second R is Results. You must always strive for results. It is no use doing something if you don't get results. Whether it is school, going fishing, getting mangoes, you got to have results after effort. The third R is Rest. Your body, your brain needs rest. Every night you have to have a good sleep. Otherwise it's no use coming here if you don't have sleep. Whatever the teachers tell you, you will not register in your brain. You got to have a sleep every night, at least 8 hours."

Mr Ben Gebadi, explained that funding for this project came from the 'Priority Criteria Program (PICAP)'. "For the Radio Station, PICAP has funded \$80400.-," says Mr Gebadi, who is a member of the PICAP Committee since 1980. NPARC Deputy CEO, Mr Daniel Sebasio, attended the ceremony, as did a large group of students, parents and members of the community.



The studio consists of a recording room with microphones, drum set and musical instruments. The adjacent control room features a 24 channel mixing desk and related computer equipment.



Future expansion of the existing facilities will see the addition of a Radio Station at NPARC.

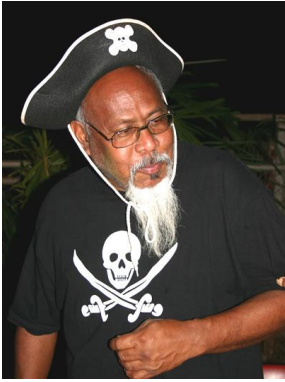


'The Music is everything' is the first recording by the Studio, a pre-recording for the upcoming Yumpla Cultural Festival. The recording will be used in an Australia wide televised event (22.Oct), linking all schools in one song across the country. As the radio station is not yet operational, the pre-recording is televised instead from another station. Mayor Elu is giving a helping hand on the drum.

Pirates in the Straits

The first sighting of pirates in the Torres Strait was at Seisia, late September. Three savage looking buccaneers, one was a 'Cap'n', commandeered the 18m catamaran 'Torres Magic', made their intentions perfectly clear. "Arrr there me hearties, me foot," they were after the passenger's loot. Once the vessel left Seisia, heading out to croc and shark infested waters, they held the land lubber passengers to ransom, 'Ahoy there matey! Hand over t' doubloons! Arrrr, arrr! Donate or else!' The passengers, who had earlier been subjected to songs that only pirates know, had little choice but to comply. Unfortunately no photos were taken for fear of consequences. After filling their coffers with looted booty the threat appeared to ease. However, some weeks later, pirates were seen again in the Seisia area. This time, men and women gathered, although a different group, for a night of 'swashbuckling, shiver me timbers, eye patch disguised fun' on the mainland, to celebrate their spoils, no doubt.



Pirates in the Straits (continued)

While taking a closer look at the pictures, there appears to be great similarity between some well known local identities.

It turned out the two events were not at all related. The 'Torres Magic' pirates handed over all their loot to 'Childhood Cancer Support', and the reason for their 'Arrr' and 'me heartie' speak was 'Talk like a Pirate Day', an international event in support of a worthy cause. The second event turned out to be 'The Pirates and Wenches Ball' held at Seisia Fishing Club in October. A word of warning: The 2010 'Talk like a Pirate' events are already being planned.

**Top of Tip Sign: gone**

Cape York has changed forever. The sign, indicating the most northerly point of the Australian mainland is no more. As a consequence thousands of tourist



photographs have become dated. All tourists who have been at the Tip before are welcome to take new pictures, once the new sign is erected.

New Staff at NPARC, Cairns

NPARC welcomes three new staff members to its Administration and Finance team. They are Ms Heather van Dort, who has joined as Office Manager, Ms Annette King, who will shortly be joining as new Grants Officer, and Ms Kerry Jarrett, who is providing support and assistance on a casual basis. All are or will be based at the Cairns office. Welcome to NPARC.

Pre Wet Season Clean-up

NPA Regional Council (Essential Services Dep) will have a clean-up drive in all communities, starting mid November, collecting tyres, old car bodies, tin and other rubbish. Please call Ms Charleen Lifu (4069 3419) re the disposal of vehicles and bulky items. Items for removal should be stacked on the footpath. A flyer will be distributed closer to the dates. This is a free service.

Vet in NPA

Dr Lauren Porter, BVSc (Vet), from the Katherine Vet Care Centre (N.T.), is in the NPA, treating animals as well as performing de-sexing operations, if owners wish to have this done. She carries out about 20 operations/day.

**Yumpla Cultural Festival**

The first drops of rain seen in a long while announced the second Yumpla Cultural Festival, organized by NPA State College. Yumpla is a celebration of culture, arts and education ('Yumpla' = all of us).

The two day event (plus a night concert) features workshops for students and an art show. Some of the senior's work is offered for auction, with work from prep to Year 12 students on display at Injinoo and Bamaga Campuses.

Former NPA student, Mr Teho Ropeyarn, now a professional artist, together with student/artist Ms Rhian Phineasa, creating a mural at Injinoo campus, featuring the totems of the five Injinoo tribes.



Image shows the work in progress with sunset and ocean in place.



bears). Yumpla is sponsored by skytrans.



Workshops in cultural cooking, dyeing and printing of bags, paint and face painting, jewellery making, guitar and music, as well as storytelling, leather work, science, hip-hop, hula and traditional dancing, all form part of the activities.

The Yumpla Concert, held at Yusia-Ginau Memorial Field, Bamaga, provided an evening filled with traditional dancing, singing and performances by NPA State College students, local talent and participating artists. October 28th marks the 20th anniversary of the opening of the sports oval (The late Mr Yusia-Ginau was brother of the late Mr Bamaga Ginau, whose name the township

More on Yumpla in next issue.

**heading off to Melbourne**

The Injinoo Dance Group is currently in preparation for the Australasian World Music Expo, held in

Melbourne, 19 - 22 Nov. The group is selected to open the event and perform in the closing ceremonies. More on this in next issue.

New Australian

Oct 20th, 2009, NPARC Mayor, Mr Joseph Elu congratulating Heinz Ross in becoming an Australian citizen, the first such ceremony performed at NPA Regional Council in Bamaga, and a first for Mayor, Mr Elu. Not quite sure of what to do with Vegemite, which does take an acquired taste to handle.



Housing: Major renovation work

New Mapoon is currently a work in progress, with major upgrade to three of the houses along Bond Street underway.



The remnants of another time (above and right).

Two of the houses (left) are well advanced in restoration work. The outer and inner paintwork, down-pipes and internal works are awaiting completion. The blue house will be restored next.



Ablution's confusion solution

In edition 2 of this Newsletter we covered the story '**Plug pulled before plumbing connected**' (page 3), and continued on the following page with "**Plug pulled... funding slammed... and we're not happy about it!**" The story related to the ablutions block at Umagico sports ground, NPA Regional Council believing that it was \$150,000 out of pocket, as government pulled the funding. News today is that the funding, which had earlier been withdrawn, has been reinstated by Tourism Minister Desley Boyle, following negotiations with NPA Regional Council.



...then



... and now!



"Continuation of the works are about to recommence," says a happy Mr Foody (Director of Engineering Services). Funding for this project comes from Queensland State Government (Sports and Recreation). True to his words, so the image shows, construction is already underway.