

## Youth Off the Streets in Walgett



Above: Youth Off the Streets Deputy Director of Services Jayne Power and Youth Program Co-ordinator Cheryl Kinchella visited Walgett in March to research the design of their future Walgett youth program. While they were here they volunteered with the publication of Yundiboo magazine. They are seen here with Lewis Beale.



Above: Leon and Michelle Penrith from Youth Off the Streets spent time in April and again in May with the Dharriwaa Elders Group and other local organizations developing their new Walgett youth program for teens. The Dharriwaa Elders Group looks forward to the implementation of their service for this so far unmet need in Walgett.

## Pre-school reading day

Right: The Walgett preschools and primary schools collaborated to hold a Book Parade in September which ended in front of the local library. Dharriwaa Elder Tim Creighton gave the book awards to the best dressed book characters.



## Council resumes youth program after DEG lobbying

Left: November's member's meeting met with new Council youth co-ordination officer, George McCormick to hear about his plans for his new position, particularly as they involve Aboriginal cultural activities. DEG had pressed the Council to rapidly improve their youth program or lose it to another service.

## Students win state art prize

Dharriwaa Elders Group was proud to congratulate Walgett Primary School students in December upon their success at winning a state art prize conducted by the Aboriginal Justice Advisory Group. Their artwork was printed in a colour calendar which went around NSW.



## DEG greets Administrator Vic Smith



Dharriwaa Elders Group launched its new Elders Centre in Walgett on NAIDOC Day in July. Vic Smith, Walgett Shire's new Administrator, attended and was welcomed by George Rose, DEG's Speaker. In August the DEG



made sure Vic attended the important annual community event - the Ricky Walford, George Rose Jnr and Jenny Wright football and netball carnival.



Above left and right: Walgett Shire Council Administrator Vic Smith met the Dharriwaa Elders Group in September re the discussion document which would form the basis of an MoU between DEG and Council. At this meeting Vic



said he would obtain advice from staff re the document but no further news was received by the DEG for the rest of the year.



Staff and Speaker George Rose and Elders Councillor Lewis Beale met with the new Community Facilitator Gilbert Nolan (funded by the Commonwealth's Murdi Paaki Regional Partnership) to fully brief him on DEG's plans and activities in November. Very little facilitation in our



direction was forthcoming. Mission Australia officers visited the DEG in November to discuss their plans for a new mental health support program for Walgett. Mental health is a huge issue in Walgett and DEG welcomes new services to meet this need.



## DEG works to improve Walgett services



In November DEG learnt about a new federal program which promised to facilitate youth employment and training in our region. The DEG's youth plan of 2004 saw the need for a locally-based employment and training facilitator who would match local youth with businesses and training opportunities in a systematic way. Staff and elders present believed they demonstrated little understanding of our recommended approach.

Below right: A scene during the June monthly meeting with guest speaker Brad Delaney from NSW Attorney Generals Dept. He had come to negotiate the implementation of Circle Sentencing in Walgett after it was halted for months due to staffing problems and poor management. Below left: Staff of the Walgett Violence Prevention Service regularly meet with DEG staff to plan services and events. April meeting pictured.



Above left: Staff from the new Walgett early childhood "Better Futures" program met with DEG staff and Virginia Robinson from NSW Outback Division of GPs in March to introduce their program. Jacinda Scutt has been recently employed by Mission Australia to conduct the program in a region including Walgett, which is funded by the Commonwealth Government.



Above right: Scott from Best Employment answered DEG's invitation to discuss a potential enterprise for Walgett and Lightning Ridge which could provide employment and other benefits for the Aboriginal communities in both towns. DEG was trying to interest Best in buying the newspaper Opal Advocate in March. No vision was forthcoming and another enterprise opportunity was missed.



## First arts and crafts shop opens

George Rose welcomed guests and DEG's Treasurer Valerie Collis performed the opening ceremony 27 June of the new Walgett Aboriginal arts and crafts shop in the front of the DEG's elders' centre 37 Wee Waa St. Look for the "open flag" as we cannot afford to staff the shop full-time until full sales are achieved. *Photo courtesy Outback Arts.*

## First DEG art buying

Stella Sands co-ordinated the Dharriwaa Elders Group's first buying session in June to stock the DEG's Aboriginal arts and crafts shop. All art purchased for the shop is bought with the approval of the Elders Council. Artists are asked to bring in their artwork, leave and return when the Elders Council has made its purchasing decisions. The art is then bought on the spot. All art is sold with a 30% commission to cover the DEG's costs and support its non-profit activities.



## Secretary attends symposium

DEG's Secretary Fay Sands attended the Business Development Symposium and Corroboree Indigenous Tourism Expo organized by the Macquarie University Graduate School of Management, with staff member Stella Sands in February. Fay and Stella's attendance assisted the set up of DEG's new arts and crafts retail enterprise.





## Uni of NSW students sharing ideas



Above left: DEG were pleased to meet students from the Uni of NSW Faculty of the Built Environment students in August.. They were invited by DEG to come to Walgett for a “studio” to assist the community with innovative ideas to improve our built environment. Above right and below: Students and their lecturers presented the outcome of their work to the DEG in November.



This included work on the DEG’s proposed Walgett Wellbeing Centre and Foundation Community Hall projects. The students returned with many ideas and conceptual plans for developing the Skillshare building site for the Wellbeing Centre project. DEG continues to encourage further collaboration and research to assist Walgett to build these dream projects. Glenda Simpson of TAFE indicated they would conduct courses to assist the projects as well.



## Griffith Uni visit Narran Lake



DEG and ranger Michael Heinz from NSW Dept of Environment and Conservation hosted a study trip in September by environmental science students from the Griffith University, Brisbane.





## Registrars' visit



Overseas-trained doctors attracted to work in Australia are required to undergo training before they finish their Australian accreditation process. They were training in Walgett so they could better serve rural and remote Aboriginal

communities. The Dharriwaa Elders Group invited the group to lunch in June and enjoyed meeting the student doctors from many different countries.



## walgett health forums

George Rose and staff attend the Walgett Health Forums to lobby for the addressing of health issues as they arise. George is seen here with the NSW Outback Division of GPs CEO Stuart Gordon, a senior nurse from Walgett Hospital and local GP Vlad Matic, at the Walgett Health Forum in April.

Right: George Rose welcomed those who were meeting from the Bourke, Brewarrina and Walgett Shires with Greater Western Area Health Service to plan future health services in the region at the Combined Shires Health Forum in August.



## Liquor Accord

Left: DEG member Virginia Robinson, Chair of the Walgett CDAT and Walgett Liquor Accord, delivered the opening speech at the February meeting of the Walgett Liquor Accord. DEG attends CDAT and Liquor Accord meetings when they are convened.



## New elders' preventative health program begins November



Above left: The DEG convened a meeting in August with health providers and Dept of Sport and Recreation to invite them to offer preventative health programs to the elderly in Walgett. After another meeting in October, the above meeting pictured at right was conducted in November, to plan the elders health program .



Individual meetings had already been conducted with WAMS, Walgett Hospital, Outback Division of GPs, and Sept Sport and Recreation. Sandra Suey (Walgett Hospital) agreed to co-ordinate the weekly program, and the Outback Division of GPs agreed to cover the costs.



Left and below: Exercise physiologist Danielle Post and her team took elders group members through a gentle exercise program. Allied health specialists including exercise physiologists, dieticians, diabetes educators and podiatrists will conduct a health program tailored to specific health issues suffered by elders e.g. diabetes, heart disease, etc.

The NSW Dept of Sport and Recreation's Angie Crisp organised to provide local masseuse Rae Cochrane's time, to conduct two half hour mas-

sages a week. After a few introductory massage sessions in the Elders Centre, massages were conducted in her rooms, allowing full use of her massage table and facilities.



Right: DEG members learning about health cooking and foods from the visiting dietician at the regular Monday health sessions.



## DEG's women's program

The DEG's women's group was formed by Casual Project Officer Rose Simpson in October. From the 24 January - 30 June Stella Sands took over organising Women's Program activities, after Rose Simpson (Missy) suffered a heart attack in December. At their first meeting for 2007 (pictured at right), the women planned their activities.

The women set up a weekly cooking class for elders with TAFE in February. Below: Cooking tutor Jodi McLeod with DEG members Fay Sands and Lewis Beale.

Below right: Women's program co-ordinator Stella Sands, conducting a meeting to set up a cooking class for elders with TAFE.



## DEG girls talk

Fay Sands from the DEG's women's group met with primary school girls in March to begin a series of "girls' talks". The students asked many questions of Fay and the teachers were very pleased with the sessions.



## New Women's Group meets

The DEG's women's group attended the first session of a Walgett women's group started by workers from the Walgett Violence Prevention Service, in May.





## First AGM

The first AGM of Dharriwaa Elders Group Incorporated was held 27 October 2006. George Rose OAM was returned as Speaker, Fay Sands Secretary, Valerie Collis Treasurer. Elders Councillors elected were George Fernando, Tom Martin, Margaret Rose, Marjorie Weatherall, Thelma Thorne, Lewis Beale, Tim Creighton. DEG members meet monthly, as does the Elders Council.



## Foundation Hall update



*Above: FACSIA officers from Dubbo ICC Felicity Taylor-Edwards and Simonne Goolagong meeting with DEG for first time. in March*

In February 2005, the Dharriwaa Elders Group made an expression of interest to the owners of the derelict Walgett community hall, Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation, for ownership. Soon afterwards, the board of the MPRHC voted to give the hall to the Dharriwaa Elders Group. DEG then produced a business plan and lobbied

NSW DAA to commission a scope of works. Because of a caveat put on the title of the building by the federal government, Dept of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs has to approve the disposal of this valuable asset. They finally met us about this in March 2007.



In April representatives of the Dharriwaa Elders Group met for the second time with officers of Dept of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, to discuss the future of the Community Hall in Walgett's main street. The FACSIA project officers said at the above meeting that federal funds could not be used to fix the building unless ownership and /or management by the whole community could be demonstrated. They had heard that factions in the community had apparently opposed



DEG ownership of the building. The assumption that DEG will not make the hall available to the "whole community" offended, and DEG advised that their proposal for multi-organizational management was not practical. FACSIA convened a meeting with service providers in May which DEG could not attend where the Land Council proposed to manage the building. The DEG did not learn about this meeting's discussions until the notes were made available to the DEG in August 2007.

# Language program develops



Above left: Primary School Principal Jonathon Harvey works with Richard Lake in June undertaking the risk assessment process for DEG's elders school program.



Above right: St Josephs Language program worker Karen Flick assists Lewis Beale in June to learn a welcome speech in Yuwaalaraay language.



Above: In April the DEG conducted a workshop for members who wanted to improve the traditional welcome speeches they make at Walgett events. Those present were the hard-core leadership of the DEG.



Above: Yuwaalaraay / Gamilaraay language teacher from Walgett Community College Kaylene Hall met with the DEG members in March at their management committee meeting to plan the elders school program.



Above: One of the aims of the DEG's Yuwaalaraay / Gamilaraay Language program is to encourage and support those working in language teaching in Walgett. The first meeting of the Yuwaalaraay Gamilaraay Language Group met this month, co-ordinated by DEG's new casual project



officer Leslie Tighe. The Group included Kaylene Hall and Jonathon Harvey (Walgett Community College), John Brown and Karen Dumas (St Josephs' School), and Glenda Simpson (Walgett TAFE). The first task was to develop a Strategic Plan for Language teaching in Walgett.



# Lunch to celebrate year's end



## DEG NAIDOC dinner



Left: The DEG held a dinner for NAIDOC Day, after our successful Elders Centre launch during the day. Christine Smith from NSW Dept of Ageing, Disability and Homecare attended, which gave us the opportunity to thank her for recognising the benefits of the Dharriwaa Elders Group.

## Melbourne Cup sweep



Left: Ruth Sullivan, Lewis Beale and George Rose presided over the DEG Melbourne Cup sweep in November. Below left: September's monthly members meeting presided over by Speaker George Rose. Below right: Thelma Thorne took possession of the DEG's scooter in November when Constable Tim Preston visited the office. He helped her down the step and appraised her of scooter road rules.



# Financial sustainability study



DEG, with the assistance of the Dept of Employment and Workplace Relations and the NSW Dept of State and Regional Development commissioned consultants GHD Pty Ltd to advise it regarding its future financial sustainability. A DEG subcommittee met to consider GHD's final report in March. The study ended up advising the DEG not to invest in Walgett property as a way of securing its financial independence from government.

## The Dharriwaa Elders Group was supported financially or in kind this year by:

### 1. the Commonwealth Government through

- \* the Maintenance of Indigenous Languages and Records Program of the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts
- \* the National Indigenous Heritage Program of the Department of the Environment and Heritage
- \* Indigenous Small Business of Dept of Employment and Workplace Relations

### 2. the NSW Government through

- \* Thubbo Aboriginal Medical Co-operative and NSW Dept of Ageing Disability and Homecare
- \* NSW Dept of State and Regional Development

### 3. and by the following companies and individuals

- \* Gilbert + Tobin
- \* Heritage Concepts
- \* Blakes, Dawson and Waldron
- \* volunteers Stella Sands (before she was employed), Rose Simpson (before she was employed), and Ruth Sullivan
- \* Robyn and Jim Rose

**DHARRIWAA ELDERS GROUP INCORPORATED** - a charity endorsed by the ATO INC9883394 ABN: 26 795 240 948. <http://www.dharriwaaeldersgroup.org.au>, PO Box 174 Walgett NSW ph: 02 6828 2619

The primary object of the Association is to promote Aboriginal interests and in particular to:

- \* encourage and support Aboriginal elders to resume leadership roles in the community;
- \* assist Aboriginal elders to work for the development of the Walgett Aboriginal community;
- \* manage local Aboriginal cultural heritage and natural resources;
- \* record, protect and promote local Aboriginal knowledge and cultural heritage including to establish a collection of local Aboriginal cultural heritage information that is accessible to the local Aboriginal community;
- \* promote the voice and opinions of Walgett Aboriginal elders;
- \* conduct programs to promote community unity and improve the relationship between elders and other Aboriginal age groups; and
- \* do all things ancillary to the above.





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## ANNUAL REPORT JUNE 2007



### We will remember them

Active DEG members Mary Creighton and Ted Fields Snr passed away in August 2006. Ted Fields Snr was one of the founders of the Group and Mary was a very active member in more recent years. *Mary's image used with permission from husband Tim Creighton.*

Yanaaya Baayaamibiyaay - *Go with Biami*



Above: Elders travelling to Sydney in September were invited by the Dubbo elders group for lunch. George Rose



thanked the group and presented them with a copy of the DEG's reading banner.



Above: Margaret Rose, Val Collis and George Rose presented Marj Weatherall with the scooter provided by the NSW Dept of Ageing Disability and Homecare through our auspicing organisation Thubbo AMS, in October.



Walgett expatriate Kenny Morgan brought a group of elders to Walgett from the Lismore Elders Group, on their way to attend Bourke's Yaama festival in September. They enjoyed afternoon tea with the Dharriwaa Elders Group.

Baayaami gimbila ngiyangu dhiyaan wilaygu milanda Dharriwaaga. Giirru. *Biami let our people live as one through Dharriwaa. Amen.*

# Grassroots governance



Above: Lewis Beale (DEG member) and Virginia Robinson (DEG member and Chair Community Working Party) raised the Aboriginal flag outside Council Cham-



bers for NADIOC Day in July. Above: Walgett Council Administrator Vic Smith, Community Liaison Officer Gai Richardson and community members looked on.



Left: In October George Rose and Lewis Beale presided at the Walgett Community College assembly. Right: Lewis Beale welcomed participants in October to the Walgett Small Business Awards on behalf of the Group. Far right: Tim Creighton made a speech at the Presentation Night for Walgett Community College students in December.



## Pilliga Forest and Namoi CMA advising

Right: The November meeting of the Pilliga Forest Aboriginal Management Committee in Narrabri. Richard Lake represents the Dharriwaa Elders Group and Walgett community at these meetings.



Right: The Namoi CMA Aboriginal Advisory Committee met in Narrabri 22 November 2006. Richard Lake represents the DEG on this body as well. So far both bodies are tied up working out the roles they play.



# IT'S COOL TO STAY AT SCHOOL



## Bandit wins heritage award

NSW Heritage Minister Frank Sartor presented George Rose OAM with a NSW Heritage Volunteers Award in the Jubilee Room of NSW Parliament House in November. The award was made for George's role in his capacity of Speaker of the Dharriwaa Elders Group for its work to preserve and promote Aboriginal cultural heritage and language knowledge. The Dharriwaa Elders Group wholeheartedly congratulates its hardworking volunteer Speaker, and is proud of his work in this area. It can be hard battling government, mining interests and your own community when working in the cultural heritage area. Recognition like this can boost morale and help volunteers carry on with what they know is important work, knowing that it may not be valued fully until years after they have passed.



## DEG launches Walgett Elders Centre



Above: George Rose OAM welcomed visitors to the new Walgett Elders Centre that the DEG moved into in April 2006 and launched in July 2006. Above right: Thubbo AMS Chair Mrs Howie presents the DEG's new scooter and car



to the DEG Speaker George Rose. Both assets were purchased with funding from the NSW Dept of Ageing Disability and Homecare after years of lobbying from the DEG.



George Rose laid a wreath on behalf of the Group on Anzac Day at the Sheepyards Community War Memorial. The Women's Group of the DEG did the same in Walgett, but forgot to document the event by photograph.



Above: Lewis Beale assisted School Captain Margaret Ward to cut the Harmony Day cake in June.

## IT'S COOL TO STAY AT SCHOOL

# DEG archaeological survey

In May DEG worked with consulting archaeologist Lori Sciusco from Heritage Concepts. Lori was engaged by NSW Dept of Mineral Resources to report on cultural heritage in the OPA 4 area for its first Review of Environmental Factors 2004. We met her then, and so added to her work in our area by engaging her to produce a plan for protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage in the OPA 4 region. An important part of the plan is documenting what is on the ground - which hasn't been done by anyone system-

atically yet. We have found that evidence is needed to persuade governments to implement state and federal laws to protect areas of Aboriginal cultural significance in our region. Richard Lake accompanied Lori to rural properties in the Walgett district including Kia-Ora, Terewah, Kigwigil and Llanillo. They were greatly encouraged by the enthusiastic support of all landholders contacted. Thanks to Heritage Concepts for their financial contribution towards this important project.



*Left: Lori Sciusco and Richard Lake after completing their week of surveys. Right: Lori demonstrating documentation techniques.*



## Cultural mapping continues

DEG Project Officer Richard Lake continued his weekly monitoring and identification project mapping places of Aboriginal cultural value this year. He is seen here at a scarred tree near Walgett, making a GPS reading of its location near the Barwon River.

## Joint schools cultural awareness



Above left: Walgett Community College's Carmen Ryan with St Josephs School's new Principal Tony Spiller. In June DEG attended a meeting with Walgett schools to plan a combined schools teachers' induction program. This



is very important as many new teachers have had no experience working with Aboriginal children. Above right: DEG's George Rose with Fay Green, from St Josephs School, and Walgett Primary's Principal Jonathon Harvey.



## DEG works on its collection

In November Associate Member Virginia Robinson presented a certificate she received when attending a community archives course at the National Library on behalf of the Group. Her knowledge will be used by the Group to manage its archive.



Left: DEG staffers Stella Sands and Richard Lake worked with University of New England's Heritage Centre chief archivist Bill Oates in March, to develop a Collection Management Plan for the Dharriwaa Elders Group's archive. The National Library of Australia is funding Bill to train us to plan how to safely manage our collection and prepare it so that it will be accessed by the community in the future.

## Angledool meeting



Lightning Ridge LALC consulted Angledool elders for a submission they made to the Western Catchment Management Authority for remedial work to be undertaken around the old mission in May.

## Tools and weapons donated

Lightning Ridge elders Roy and June Barker were invited to join the Dharriwaa Elders Group for its final meeting for 2006, and Christmas lunch afterwards. They made a surprise donation of a full set of tools and weapons made by Roy. They said they had observed the growing strength of the DEG over the years, and decided to give them to the Group so that young people can learn from them in the future. In the future the items will be archived and displayed appropriately, according to the advice of our archivist consultant from UNE Heritage Centre, who will assist the DEG staff and members to develop the organisation's collection management plan.





# DEG organises local Aboriginal site training



The NSW Dept of Environment and Conservation held an Aboriginal Cultural Site Assessment and recording workshop at the request of the Walgett Dharriwaa Elders Group on the 16<sup>th</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> October. The course was held at Narran Lakes. Tim Creighton and Richard Lake (DEG) and community members Alan Rose, George Ashby and Neil Weatherall successfully completed the course. The DEG



hopes that these men will now be able to inspect areas within OPA 4 and report to the DEG so that it can better protect these places from opal mining and other damage. Above left: In August Brad Trindall and Simon Smith from the NSW DEC with TAFE officer Daniell Flakeler met with George Rose and Richard Lake to organise the course.

## DEG's multimedia site register



Stage One of the multimedia site register that was begun in 2000 was launched to a DEG meeting in September. The DEG decided to lodge a safety copy with the UNE Heritage Centre, a NSW State Records depository for north west NSW. Access will be granted in writing upon consideration of requests. Right: George Rose OAM travelled with Gladys Kennedy and Wendy Spencer to Armidale in October to lodge the safety copy. Chief Archivist Bill Oates received and accessioned the material. While we were there, we took the opportunity to research many valuable station records relevant to members of the DEG





# Human remains reburial project



In April Margaret Rose went with Project Officer Richard Lake and member Lewis Beale to select a suitable site for the reburial of Aboriginal human remains that were removed from what is now known as Bugilbone Quarry in the 20th Century. The Walgett Shire Council owns the land and readily agreed to the Dharriwaa Elders Group reburying the remains as close as possible to where they originally rested. Margaret Rose was the Group's expert for this area as her mother, Mary Buckalbone, came from there.

## DEG attends "In Living Memory" photo exhibition launch

Below: Tim Creighton and Lewis Beale with archivist Kirsten Thorpe and Sue Williams at the exhibition launch in September. Right: George Rose shows Tim the photos of his family in the exhibition.



## sights revisited Community volunteers



George Rose and Lewis Beale visited Mrs Macquarie Chair in September and admired the Sydney Harbour view while watching busloads of Japanese tourists do the same. They were on their way to the opening of the NSW State Records photo exhibition the DEG had facilitated and featured in.



Neville Beale and Fred Walford volunteered to BBQ for a Legacy fundraiser at the Walgett Sporting Club in September.

## DEG's ongoing voice regarding OPA



Left: In October the DEG's Elders Council met with NSW Primary Industries staff, and then staff of the Dept of Environment and Conservation (at right) regarding opal mining in the area known as OPA 4 at Narran Lake. The DEG is concerned to protect Aboriginal places and threatened species there, and had its legal advisers Gilbert + Tobin on speaker phone at the meeting.



## National media interest in Bandit



Above: Journalists for the Weekend Sydney Morning Herald and Weekend Australian interviewed DEG Speaker and founder George Rose in May. They both produced fea-



tures about Walgett and the region 30 years after the 1967 referendum and 20 years after the Inquiry into the Stolen Generations. DEG was very pleased with the SMH story.

## DEG visits Australian Museum



Above: Tim Creighton and George Rose visited the Australian Museum in September. They viewed a wooden tool taken from Narran Lake and message sticks displayed as part of the Aboriginal Australians permanent display which was opened in 1996 and is outdated in many ways. DEG



elders discovered that because the exhibition was made with limited resources it had a Sydney-centric flavour which needed correcting. Above right Aboriginal Education officer Cheryl Connors showed the DEG visitors the display she planned to update.





## DEG presented with archaeology report

Left: DEG's Speaker George Rose was presented with a copy of the 1996 Katrina Geering archaeological report on the opal fields by Debbie Frail, Simon Smith and Brad Trindall from

the NSW Dept of Environment and Conservation (previously National Parks and Wildlife Service) in October.

## Cuddie Springs work continues

Richard Lake (DEG) and Burt (Blackie) Gordon WCMA visited the excavation site at Cuddie Springs on 6 October. This is the site where prehistoric animal bones are being unearthed. Unfortunately the pits were being filled in as work had ceased and would not begin again until late in 2007. Judith Field, Archaeologist from The University of Sydney promised to notify both organizations before the next dig takes place.



## Intervention required at sacred site near Angledool

NSW Dept of Natural Resources staff and a community member informed DEG in October of clearing undertaken at the sacred Yuwaalaraay creation story site Gawurragil Spring near Angledool. DEG checked that NSW Dept of Environment and Conservation (DEC), administrator of

the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act which protects Aboriginal sites, was aware of the problem. Since then DEC reported to the DEG that the sites have been fenced within a large buffer zone and are now protected by the landowner.



## Movement re AP Nomination

In 2002 the Dharriwaa Elders Group nominated Dunglear and Narran Lakes to be gazetted under the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act as "Aboriginal Places". We have been advised that gazettal will protect against mining and other threats. After letters were written by DEG's legal advisors regarding protecting places of significance in OPA 4 from mining, the NSW Dept of Environment and Conservation acted and began assessing in May 2007 the worthiness of the 2002 nominations.

## Another successful wills workshop



Law firm Blake Dawson and Waldron offered a second workshop in January for the Dharriwaa Elders Group



and its guests, for the writing of wills and related documents.

## donate or bequeath!

**DEG is a tax deductible gift recipient** [www.dharriwaaeldersgroup.org.au/donate.htm](http://www.dharriwaaeldersgroup.org.au/donate.htm)

## DEG produces & launches cultural awareness video



In September 2005 the Dharriwaa Elders Group began producing a cultural awareness video for non-Aboriginal professionals arriving to work in Walgett. It was launched in June 2007. The video script was written by Tim Creighton and Wendy Spencer, and produced by Heuristic Video Pty Ltd for Dharriwaa Elders Group. The NSW



Departments of Education, Police, Attorney General and Health were all involved and modified the script, and provided workers and locations for recording scenes depicting new workers coming to Walgett. The Dept of Environment and Heritage made a contribution to the costs of the project.





## DEG's video production continues



DEG's project manager wore her other hat as resource producer in June when she co-ordinated recording of the DEG's sustainable emu egg video. While cameraman Peter Oldham was here, she made the most of his time by organizing the recording of Community Service Announce-



ments during wet weather breaks. Below: Elders Colin Kennedy, Lewis Beale, Val Collis, Tom Martin, Richard Lake, Margaret Rose and George Rose participated in this production.



## Hi-tech elders go global

DEG set up Skype in March to take full advantage of its newly acquired broadband facilities. Lewis Beale and George Rose were shown by staff Richard Lake and Stella Sands how it can be used. We plan to use it mainly when working with linguists, archaeologists and other professionals when they can't travel to Walgett to work with us.



## Magazine volunteers

Volunteers Rose Simpson and Aunty Ruth Sullivan prepared the mail out of November's issue of Yundiboo magazine. Rose and Stella Sands were volunteers for the organisation before they were offered part-time employment.

# Mobile PCYC Launched

The launch of the mobile PCYC coming to Walgett for a year's trial two days a fortnight, was timed to co-incide with the Walgett Community Working Party's NAIDOC celebrations at No. 1 oval in July. Funding for the CWP's NAIDOC event was auspiced by the DEG for the community. The PCYC came to Walgett as a result of lobbying by the Inter-agency Youth Subcommittee which the DEG convenes.



## Youth Music & Video project

In March the Dharriwaa Elders Group took great pleasure in viewing the draft copy of the finished music and video clips made by Walgett youth during the MAD (Music Art Dance) project implemented by Sydney company Kezang.



## New teachers welcomed

Right: Carmen Ryan regularly introduced new teachers to the DEG (seen here in September).



## Youth arts encouraged

Two Walgett High School students and their teachers presented the work of their award-winning Yaama Maliya project to the March meeting of the DEG members. Yaama Maliya produces and markets Aboriginal arts and crafts. The DEG was very impressed and encouraged their enterprise.

## DEG meets the State Govt candidate

Right: Meryl Dillon, the ALP candidate in the March NSW State Election for the electorate of Barwon, visited the Elders Centre on two occasions in March.

We didn't see the National Party or Independent candidates at all.







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## we will remember

Active DEG member Norma Suey left for the sky camp 23 March 2008. Highly respected friend of the DEG Ted Simpson passed away 26<sup>th</sup> August 2007. They are much missed by their brothers and sisters of the Dharriwaa Elders Group.

*Images used with family permission.*



## DEG moves into new premises



*The Dharriwaa Elders Group launched their new premises to invited guests in March. After being forced to leave their premises by Walgett AMS and receiving no help from government or Council, DEG found a benefactor to buy the building until the DEG can raise funds needed.*



## New Prime Minister listens



*Left: Two weeks after the February Apology, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Jenny Macklin, made a flying visit to Walgett. They especially wanted to meet with George Rose and members of the Dharriwaa Elders Group. Housing, education, employment and health were the main issues discussed. The Prime Minister fulfilled a pre-election promise to George last time he was in Walgett, to return.*

Baayaami gimbila ngiyangu dhiyaan wilaygu milanda Dharriwaaga. Giirru. *Biami let our people live as one through Dharriwaa. Amen.*

# Grassroots governance



## Kevin meets DEG

Kevin Rudd, Australian Labor Party leader, visited Walgett in September to meet with cockies about the drought. George Rose and Richard Lake introduced themselves and took the opportunity to have a quick kerbside meeting. He promised to return and meet with the DEG should Labor be elected to government. When this photo was taken he was referred to by members as "Kevin 07". When he was elected PM he was referred to as "Kevin 007".

## Walgett receives Govt. apology

In February the Dharriwaa Elders Group organized an occasion to view the broadcast of the Commonwealth Government's Apology to the Stolen Generations. Significantly, it was the first occasion organized by the DEG with the Walgett Shire Council. Community members and school students joined the DEG members, staff and their friends to be a part of history. Primary school students danced and a high schools student made a memorable speech. We were honoured that George Rose OAM, a survivor of Kinchella Boys Home in the 1930s, was present, as were the children of other Stolen Generation survivors.



## Elected representatives meet



*Above: Mark Coulton, National MP for our Commonwealth electorate, made a quick introductory visit in May.*



*Kevin Humphries, NSW National MP for Barwon, met with DEG staff in December.*



*DEG Director Tim Creighton met Minister Kenneally (NSW Minister for Ageing) in Parliament House in March, to make representations for the DEG model.*



## DEG published policy



Above: A subcommittee of the DEG works in April finalizing a paper sent to Jenny Macklin, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs which had been extensively workshopped with members over the previous month since her visit to Walgett late February. The DEG wrote three substantial policy documents during this year.



Above: November meeting of a DEG subcommittee to discuss the DEG's submission to the NSW Legislative Council's Inquiry into Indigenous Disadvantage, which was submitted late November and is available on DEG's www site.

## walgett shire Council's Aboriginal Community Development and Reconciliation Plan 2007 - 2010

a submission from the Dharriwaa Elders Group was published in January and can be found at [www.dharriwaeldersgroup.org.au/reports.htm](http://www.dharriwaeldersgroup.org.au/reports.htm)

## Lee Rhiannon MLC visits in May



Member of the Legislative Council of NSW Parliament, and Leader of the NSW Greens, Lee Rhiannon visited Walgett 1 May, at the invitation of the Dharriwaa Elders Group. Tim Creighton had met Lee in Sydney as part of the DEG's ongoing campaign to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage, currently the area known as OPA 4 which



borders on the Narran Lakes wetland, from the threat of potential damage by opal mining. She is seen above with her media advisor, Alison Orme, and DEG members Virginia Robinson, Tim Creighton and George Rose who were their hosts for the day. Ms Rhiannon reported in Hansard her thoughts after her visit with the DEG, twice.

## DEG's ongoing voice re OPA 4



*Representative of Canberra University scientists working at the Narran Lakes Nature Reserve, Scott Rayburg, visited the DEG in March to facilitate communication regarding their work with the Walgett community, and so that we could make sure their work will*



*be used by government to protect the wetland from the imminent threat of opal mining. Above right: DEG met with its legal advisors Gilbert + Tobin when Tim and Wendy were in Sydney in March to review the legal work to be done in the OPA 4 matter.*

## DEG assists scientists to review NSW Govt. reports re local environment



Above right: Terewah landholder Jamie Foster with DEG director Tim Creighton, during a June tour of Terewah undertaken by the DEG. The object of the exercise was to photograph examples of native vegetation, animal habitat and water flow areas in a property within OPA 4 which is



due to be mined for opal. The property is adjacent to the Narran Lake Nature Reserve and contains parts of the Narran Lake wetland, and the waterways that feed the wetland. For these reasons it was important that DEG's scientific consultants were aware of its features.



## DEG encourages NSW to protect sites

Above: Interim archaeologist for the western region of NSW, Mariah Cotter, visited DEG for the first time to explain how the dept was preparing for opal mining at Narran Lake RAMSAR wetland in April. The DEG provided her with lengthy written advice after this meeting.



# DEG archaeological survey



In April the DEG conducted a second archeology training survey so that three local Aboriginal men who had already voluntarily attended some Aboriginal site identification training for the DEG last year. The aim is to provide the Aboriginal community with the skills to conduct surveys for the DEG resources permitting. Archeologists Heritage Concepts offered to provide the training exercise so they could



train their staff as well. In this way, the DEG could also undertake some surveys of private lands within the area known as OPA 4, which are threatened by opal mining. We aim to enter as many sites as possible into the NSW Dept of Environment and Climate Change's database, so that they can be better protected under NSW laws (if they are enforced).

## Landholders meet

The Dharriwaa Elders Group called a meeting with landholders in the Opal Prospecting Area 4 in December to feedback results from our archaeological survey on their properties, and to discuss issues of common concern. We believe valuable information was exchanged and appreciated the opportunity to work to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage in the region. Left to right: Richard Lake, Cath Deshon (Llanillo), Louise and Jamie Foster (Terewah), George Rose OAM.



## Movement re AP Nomination

In 2002 the Dharriwaa Elders Group nominated Dunglear and Narran Lakes to be gazetted under the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act as "Aboriginal Places". We have been advised that gazettal will protect against mining and other threats. After letters were written by DEG's legal advisors regarding protecting places of significance in OPA 4 from mining, the NSW Dept of Environment and Conservation acted. This year we heard that announcements were immanent.





## Heroic Italian ranger visits

Cristina Rovelli, a wildlife ranger from northern Italy, visited Walgett with her family in May. Dharriwaa Elders Group members George Rose, Ted Thorne, Richard Lake and Lewis Beale took the party of travellers to the Narran Lake Nature Reserve so they could visit our internationally significant wetland and learn how important it is to the local Aboriginal community. DEG friend Frances Pike from the Border Rivers CMA organized the visit and provided translation.

## Cuddie Springs dig continues



September 9<sup>th</sup> DEG elders Neville and Lewis Beale along with Ted Thorne and Project Officer Richard Lake attended another Sydney University open day at Cuddie Springs. About sixty people turned up for the event with the archaeologists.



September 19<sup>th</sup> Walgett's Kids Excel Class along with their teacher Deb Walford and Principal Jonathon Harvey were taken by Dharriwaa Elder Neville Beale and Project Officer Richard Lake to archaeology digs at Cuddie Springs. Judith Fields the archaeologist in charge remarked that this was only the second group of school children to visit the dig since it began about fifteen years ago.

## NAAC representation

The Namoi Catchment Aboriginal Advisory Committee which includes Richard Lake - a delegate from the Dharriwaa Elders Group, met at Breeza Station in February. They learnt about nearby pasture regeneration projects, and discussed issues like the impending changes to the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act.. The DEG looks forward to learning of outcomes from the Namoi and Western CMA Aboriginal Advisory Committees in the future.





## Ongoing work with/despite government



Above: In April Pamela Young and Berenice Carrington from the NSW Dept of Environment and Climate Change used the facilities of the DEG to interview community participants in a DECC project carried out by the Walgett AMS.



Above: In November the DEG's members met with new Narran Lakes Nature Reserve ranger Mike Mullholland. Elders welcomed him to the area and updated him with their interests and concerns about the lakes.

## Council forced to consult



DEG responded to a Council meeting agenda by making a written submission to the open forum of Council's November meeting. DEG's advice was ignored, in particular in relation to the spelling of the word "Gamilaraay" on a proposed road sign. Neither the Gamilaraay or Yuwaalaraay languages have a "k" sound, and to ignore this fact is insulting, especially when the local elders group provides a correction. A DEG member was so incensed that the Aboriginal community would have to put up with a road sign welcoming visitors to Walgett in "Kamilaroi" country that she made representation to Kevin Humphries (our local MP) and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. Once prompted by these authorities, the Acting General Manager, Emma Darcy quickly resolved the situation by consulting with the DEG in December. Progress!

## Foundation Hall update



Left: Des Jones, the Chair of the Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corp, visited the DEG in February to discuss the future of the Walgett Community Hall, which it owns and agreed to give to the DEG. The DEG has worked hard to attract funds to renovate the derelict building, but got nowhere fast. Efforts were hampered by the Commonwealth which blocked the transfer of ownership. The DEG remains concerned that this community resource be accessible, but has been given no support by government or community to renovate it under DEG ownership. No practical alternative has been proposed.

## Grassroots governance contd.



Left: the March monthly meeting of the Dharriwaa Elders Group Elders Council.

The second AGM of Dharriwaa Elders Group Incorporated was held 8 November 2008. George Rose OAM was returned as Speaker, Thelma Thorne Secretary, Lewis Beale Treasurer. Elders Councillors elected were Victor Murray, Ted Thorne, Marj Weatherall, Margaret Rose, Fay Sands, Tim Creighton, Leonard Simpson. During the year the members met monthly, as did the Elders Councillors.

## Walgett learns of CDEP takeover June



DEG was invited by FACSHIA staff to attend a community information meeting about the Walgett CDEP service in June. Elders and Staff attended but were asked to leave by Gary Trindall, the Chair of Walginnam ETAC, the local organization which has declined to run the Walgett CDEP in 2008/09. Left: FACSHIA officer Tracey Shillingsworth with Kathleen Shields of DEG note taking, and elder Fay Sands. Above: Dept of Family and Community, Housing and Indigenous Affairs' Tom Warren informing the community and CDEP participants.



## Leadership activities continued..



Above: FACISA officer Tom Warren visited the DEG in June when it was convening the monthly Youth Subcommittee meeting of the Walgett Interagency. He is seen here with staff from the Community College, Council, Youth Off the Streets and TAFE. He was surprised to find that the DEG works hard to assist the effective implementation of youth services in Walgett.



DEG met with journalist Russell Skelton and photographer Brendan Esposito in May to discuss the poor planning by government for the future of Aboriginal communities in regional and remote NSW. The story "Where babies are a mixed bonus" was published by the SMH 17-18 May 2008 and contains accurate reporting of some DEG concerns.



## DEG supports Walgett-Gosford “sister cities” initiative



*Gosford City Council's Mayor Laurie Maher and Walgett Council Administrator Vic Smith sign the sister city agreement between the two councils in August. Above right: The mayor and his staff met with the Dharriwaa Elders Group when they first arrived in Walgett. The Rural / Metropolitan Sister City Agreement confirms a commitment between the two councils to “foster*



relationships between the citizens of their shire and city to promote awareness and understanding of: business, culture, economic, education, industry, sports and tourism opportunities, as well as promoting excellence in local government, business and other fields through exchange and communication.”



## DEG meets new Council GM

Left: Vic Beale, Walgett Council Aboriginal Liaison Officer, introduced the new General Manager, Ray Kent, to the DEG. He is seen here with Acting General Manager Emma Darcy and DEG members. The DEG tries to meet with all new service providers when they arrive.

## Gosford cultural exchange



*Left: Walgett elders and school children with Gosford elders in the Gosford Council chambers. DEG elders travelled to Gosford in March to visit elders at the invitation of the Gosford City Council. It was an interesting experience which helped DEG see its work in others' eyes.*

# Community Service Announcements produced for Walgett CDAT



The Dharriwaa Elders Group completed shooting its series of community service announcements for television with alcohol messages, in June. Seen here are Tim Creighton and Fay Sands being recorded by the Heuristic Video pro-



duction team. The producer Wendy Spencer will be completing the announcements in the new financial year. Financial assistance was received from the Walgett CDAT.

## DEG's media production continues



Dharriwaa Elders Group 2008 calendar



Above left:: This year the DEG produced a fundraising calendar which provide popular with elders' families.

In June the Dharriwaa Elders Group completed shooting its tourism video which we expect to edit in the new year. Above right can be seen Leonard Simpson - one of the few elders with a speaking part in the project, with DEG Speaker George Rose during a break in the recording of a key scene down by the river.

Left: DEG continued to produce its monthly magazine Yun-diboo which is distributed to the community and schools.





## DEG's Christmas activities



This year in December the Coolabah Motel donated lollies to the DEG. Thelma Thorne led female staff and volunteers Robyn Rose, Georgia Rose and Kiesha Sands, in gift-wrapping the lollies, and then presented them to preschoolers.



Members and staff attended a Christmas dinner offered by the Walgett Homecare and Balyarta services at the RSL.



## Artists support DEG

Georgina and David O'Neill visited the DEG in January and sold us a series of paintings for a very generous price to assist the organization to raise funds to purchase its new premises. The DEG Elders Council and Stella Sands are seen at right with Georgina and the works.



## Teacher induction experiment



Two teachers induction sessions were held at the Walgett Primary School on 24 July.

Elders and teaching staff watched the Dharriwaa Elders Group video "Welcome to Walgett". A question and answer session then took place. The DEG are hopeful these sessions help new teaching staff to settle in and to gain knowledge.

## Teachers visit Angledool



September 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> a cultural awareness trip was conducted for teachers from the Walgett Community College, Primary and High Schools. The teachers were taken to the old reserve at Angledool where the totems the snake (dhuyu) and turtle (wayamba) were shown to them, the significance of these totems were explained to them. Also visited at the time was the Angledool Reserve Memorial which contains the list of residents who lived there before the reserve was closed down. On the return journey to Walgett lunch was eaten on the Narran River where Virginia Robinson told the story to the teachers of how the Narran Lakes was formed.



*Above left: Ted Thorne presented Walgett Community College Director Peter Partridge with a two year screening license for the DEG's new cultural awareness resource "Welcome to Walgett" in July. Above right: Walgett Primary School Principal Jonathon Harvey introduced new teachers to Tim Creighton, Thelma Thorne and Virginia Robinson in July. They wanted to check some curriculum items they were introducing and discuss teaching generally.*