



# Institute NEWS

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Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

## Council Welcomes Steve Larkin as New Principal



**New AIATSIS  
Principal  
Steve Larkin**

The AIATSIS Council has announced Steve Larkin as the Institute's new Principal.

Mr Larkin took up the five-year position in early June. He had acted in the Principal's position since October last

year, after two and a half years as Deputy Principal.

AIATSIS Chairman, Professor Mick Dodson, said the Council was delighted that Mr Larkin had accepted the position, particularly given his ongoing close working relationship with the Institute's staff and the Indigenous research community.

"Steve has extensive experience and contacts throughout the government and research sectors and within Indigenous communities. These will be vital in pursuing the Institute's goals in

the current climate of change in Indigenous Affairs," Professor Dodson said.

"Steve's personal and scholarly interest in Indigenous Australian health, as Adjunct Associate Professor in Indigenous Health at James Cook University, demonstrates his commitment to sound and relevant research for Indigenous peoples."

**"My priorities in the job reflect the Institute's, that is integrating our considerable and valuable collections with rapidly changing digital technology, developing and expanding our research profile, aligning our research to the public policy framework, and building a critical mass of Indigenous researchers."**

Mr Larkin said he relished the challenge ahead.

"I'm honoured to have been asked to lead such a dynamic institution at this time," he said.

Steve Larkin is a Kungarakany man from Darwin. He spent more than 17 years working in health and community development programs in urban, rural and remote Aboriginal communities throughout the NT. In 1995, Mr Larkin moved to Canberra as the Australian Medical Association's National Aboriginal Health Adviser. This was followed by positions as inaugural CEO of the Secretariat of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), Assistant Secretary in the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (OATSIH) within the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, and a short stint with the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business.

### AIATSIS Conference 2004

The AIATSIS Conference 2004 will be held at the Manning Clark Centre at the Australian National University in Canberra from 22 to 25 November.

The AIATSIS Council has adopted the theme *Indigenous Studies – Sharing the cultural and theoretical space*, and has suggested several approaches to a 'shared' Australia through the discipline of Indigenous Studies.

The aim of the conference is to encourage and provide for discussion of intercultural approaches to research and related matters.

Sessions proposed for the Conference include:

- Indigenous Tourism in Australia: Is it a case of one step forward, two steps back?

- Sharing land and the politics of property.
- Making space for Indigenous cultural expressions of well-being in Aboriginal health research and practice.
- Indigenist research.

This triennial conference was last held in 2001. Substantial Indigenous research involvement and many disciplines were represented with the last conference attracting close to 500 delegates.

Following the conference (25-27 November) will be a workshop entitled *Making Dictionaries for Indigenous Languages* convened by Dr Patrick McConvell (AIATSIS) and Jenny Green (Institute of Aboriginal Development).

**For further information about the AIATSIS Conference 2004 program or to register, go to: <http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/rsrch/conferences/aiatsis-conf2004/firstnotice.htm>.**

### New AIATSIS Seminar Series

The AIATSIS Semester 2 Seminar Series Profiling AIATSIS Research: Current Research Themes of AIATSIS Staff, Grantees and Members will run from 2 August until 25 October. The seminars will be held in the Mabo Room at AIATSIS in Lawson Crescent, Acton.

Speakers will include AIATSIS staff, Dr Betty Mehan and Professor Marcia Langton.

The seminar series will be co-ordinated by the Director of Research, Dr Peter Veth, and Research Officer, Dr Lynley Wallis.

**For more information, go to the Research Section of the AIATSIS website at [www.aiatsis.gov.au](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au)**

## Naming of Laura Mandima Dixon Room

Laura Mandima Dixon believed passionately that her Wangkumura language should live on. In the early 1970s, she began to work closely with linguists to ensure that the Wangkumura language was recorded — something she did until she passed away in 1976.

Mrs Dixon's passion for language maintenance was recognised recently with the audio visual access area at

AIATSIS named in her honour.

About 40 members of Mrs Dixon's family travelled from Dubbo, Brewarrina and Bourke to Canberra to watch her son Don Dixon and daughter Noelene Edwards cut black, red and yellow ribbons at the threshold to the room.

Mrs Dixon's daughter Patricia Dixon said her mother's recordings meant that, for the Dixon family: "the Aboriginal dreamtime stories will live on and encourage us to be better people in our lives, to set goals and to carry them through."

AIATSIS Chairman Professor Mick Dodson said the Laura Mandima Dixon Room was one of the most important places within the Institute's building. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people use the room to view and listen to some of the estimated one million audio visual and photographic items held at AIATSIS.

The room naming occurred during a "Keeping Your History Alive" archiving workshop for community language workers from Lismore, Kempsey, Deniliquin, Sydney and elsewhere throughout NSW.



Members of the Dixon family who travelled to Canberra for the naming of the Laura Mandima Dixon Room.

## Scholarship Award

ANU first year arts degree student Lleila Smith has been working part-time at AIATSIS with Dr Graham Henderson and the Principal Steve Larkin on a peer reviewed paper on 'Evidence-based policymaking in Indigenous health'.

She also assisted in the preparation of a paper entitled 'Practical re-colonisation: A new direction for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health'.

Recently, Lleila was announced as one of two Indigenous students at ANU to receive the Joseph and Lindsay Croft Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship recognises academic achievement and community involvement.

## Time to re-define Indigenous Studies

AIATSIS Council Member Professor Martin Nakata has used this year's Wentworth lecture to encourage a re-definition of Indigenous Studies — one that better reflects Indigenous concerns.

In his lecture entitled 'Indigenous Australian Studies and Higher Education', given at the National Museum of Australia on 28 May, Professor Nakata said that Indigenous Studies in the academic realm would always be study about Indigenous people,

"But it is time to generate a new purpose for Indigenous Studies, to shape it to ensure that it is also study and enquiry for Indigenous people," he said.

Professor Nakata said the 'Indigenisation' of universities had achieved a measure of success through the creation of spaces within them that were recognisably



Professor Martin Nakata presenting the 2004 Wentworth Lecture

Indigenous, the employment of Indigenous people in a range of roles, recognition of cultural ways that require different policies, and through academic content issues.

However, he said there was a deepening concern by Indigenous academics in Australia about the difficulties of the cross-cultural aspects

of the education task.

Professor Nakata said that studying 'Indigenous' knowledges in a Western institution was a very different enterprise from 'learning' the deeply embedded cultural and social meanings of those knowledges in their own context.

He said that the learnings attached to social practice surrounding different systems of knowledge needed to be negotiated and woven back into something quite different from both Western and Indigenous traditional contexts of education practice.

The Wentworth Lecture was established by AIATSIS to honour the contribution of the late Hon W.C. Wentworth AO to the Institute's establishment and development.

Professor Nakata is the first Torres Strait Islander person to graduate with a Doctor of Philosophy in Australia. He is currently Director of Indigenous Academic Programs, Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning at the University of Technology Sydney.

## 2004 Native Title Conference

More than 400 native title holders, academics, legal counsel and government representatives attended the 2004 Native Title Conference in early June.

The conference was convened by AIATSIS' Native Title Research Unit (NTRU) and the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement of SA's Native Title Unit with funding from ATSIS.

UN special rapporteur on Indigenous

issues Professor Dr Erica-Irene Daes, Canadian Indigenous lawyer and scholar Professor John Borrows, the Attorney General the Hon Phillip Ruddock, and Mrs Bonita Mabo were amongst the national and international speakers at the event.

AIATSIS Chairman, Professor Mick Dodson, and Executive Officer of ALRM's Native Title Unit, Parry Agius, encouraged conference delegates to actively participate in setting the agenda for genuine change in native title practices in Australia.

"If Indigenous people of this country are to gain lasting and concrete native

title rights, then the necessity to build strong relationships is critical. It matters for all Australians that native title works," Professor Dodson and Mr Agius said.

Professor John Borrows presented the annual Mabo Lecture on Mabo Day, 3 June. Professor Borrows is Visiting International Indigenous Fellow at AIATSIS and the UNSW Faculty of Law, and Law Foundation Chair of Aboriginal Law and Justice at the University of Victoria Law School in British Columbia.

The conference was preceded by a day of workshops for Native Title Representative Bodies (NTRBs) and included separate youth and Indigenous forums.



Prof. Dr Erica-Irene Daes, Parry Agius and the Hon Phillip Ruddock at the conference opening session.



Professor John Borrows and Mrs Bonita Mabo.

## Indigenous Facilitation and Mediation Project (IFaMP)

The website for the Indigenous Facilitation and Mediation Project (IFaMP) was launched at the Native Title Conference 2004. It is available at: [www.aiatsis.gov.au/ifamp](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/ifamp) and provides comprehensive research materials on Indigenous facilitation and mediation.

The key sections of the web page are: The Project; Decision-Making and Dispute Management in Native Title; Practice Issues in Facilitation and Mediation; Events, Training and Academic Pathways; Research and Publications; Stories and Talking Points; and Links.

### Native Title Representative Body Workshops for 2004

The National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT) sponsored the IFaMP to hold workshops in May and June 2004 with representatives from NTRBs including Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), board members, anthropologists, lawyers, field officers, and native title holders.

The workshops were aimed at assisting NTRBs to reflect upon decision-making and conflict management processes and identifying training needs.

Workshops included Bundaberg (10-11 May), Cairns (13-14 May), Perth (24-25 May), Adelaide (NTRB CEOs Workshop and Community Justice Mediation Models and Native Title Workshop, 1 and 2 June respectively).

Findings and issues from the previous four workshops were presented to the CEOs workshop which provided

advice about future directions for the Project. Recommendations from the Community Justice Mediation Models and Native Title Workshop included the need to create a network of regionally-based Indigenous facilitators and mediators, and for employment by the NNTT and Federal Court of Indigenous mediators and facilitators.



Community Justice NSW Workshop at the Native Title Conference 2004. The workshop was facilitated by Sarah Mills and Bill Pritchard and coordinated by the IFaMP Project Team

## International Visitors

The Institute hosted a number of international visitors during May 2004, namely Professor Dr Erica-Irene Daes, the UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples' Permanent Sovereignty over Natural Resources and a past Chairman of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations; a group of South African Land Restitution Commissioners who were undertaking a study tour in Australia; and a delegation of about 20 Indonesian officials undertaking human rights training in Australia.

The visits provided an opportunity for exchange and discussion of a diverse range of views and information about Indigenous and other issues. In February, the Deputy Minister for

Justice for Nunavut, Nora Sanders, and the Canadian High Commission, Jean Fournier, visited AIATSIS.



**Professor Dodson (in hat) and Principal Steve Larkin (standing, far right) with the South African Land Restitution Commissioners**



**Professor Dodson and Mr Larkin (back, centre) with Indonesian human rights officials**

## New Collections

AIATSIS has acquired the personal papers of a former top-ranking bureaucrat in national Indigenous affairs.

The 'Papers on Aboriginal Affairs of Barrie Dexter' were transferred to the AIATSIS Library in 2002 and underwent extensive cataloguing and archiving.

The 35-box collection dates back almost 40 years, chronicling the period from 1967 to 1976 when Barrie Dexter was Executive Member of the Council for Aboriginal Affairs, Director of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs and later Secretary of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

While the papers were not part of the official filing system, they include a considerable amount of material originating from, or relating to Herbert ('Nugget') Coombs and Professor William Stanner, Chairman



**(From left) AIATSIS visiting scholar Dr Gordon Briscoe, Mr Jack Horner, Mr Barrie Dexter, AIATSIS archivist Ms Jann Kirkham and AIATSIS Principal Mr Steve Larkin with one of 35 boxes which form the 'Papers on Aboriginal Affairs of Barrie Dexter'.**

and Member, respectively, of the Council for Aboriginal Affairs.

Some of the Dexter papers have closed access. For a complete listing of material by or about Mr Dexter, held by the Institute, consult the Institute's *Mura*<sup>®</sup> online catalogue at [www.aiatsis.gov.au](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au).

## Rockefeller Fellowship for AIATSIS Research Fellow



AIATSIS Visiting Research Fellow Dr Jane Anderson has been awarded a prestigious Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship for a residency at the Smithsonian

Institution Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage in Washington DC.

The Fellowship will focus on questions of intellectual property and the protection of intangible cultural heritage, reflecting the primary focus of the 2004-2005 fellowships – the relationship between cultural heritage and political representation.

Rockefeller Foundation Humanities Fellows at the Smithsonian Institution are drawn from academic institutions, public organisations, and cultural communities. Dr Anderson was one of only two successful overseas candidates from a field of 600. The intention is both to cross-fertilise sectors of cultural heritage work and to expose international and American thinkers to one another.

Dr Anderson will spend three months in Washington from January next year.

## Professor Dodson appointed to UN Body

AIATSIS Chairman, Professor Mick Dodson, has been appointed to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

Professor Dodson will represent Indigenous peoples of the Pacific region on the influential body for three years commencing next year.

The Permanent Forum was established by the UN Economic and Social Council in July 2000, on the recommendation of the Commission on Human Rights. It reports and makes recommendations to the Council on economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights.

AIATSIS Principal Steve Larkin said that Professor Dodson had been a vigorous advocate on land rights, human rights and other issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as well as the interests of other Indigenous peoples.

## New Press Initiatives

Aboriginal Studies Press, the publishing arm of AIATSIS, has a new(ish) Acting Director, Rhonda Black, and a new Deputy Director, Gabby Lhuede. Between them, they have plans to ensure ASP meets its stated aim of publishing 'a limited but quality publishing list of academic and general works'.

They want to actively help shape the publishing list to meet the Institute's goal of 'excellence' in publishing. To help do this, new systems are now in place for authors submitting manuscripts, for peer assessors, and for ASP to gather marketing information from contracted authors.

A marketing consultant is working with Rhonda and Gabby to help ASP reach the widest possible range of readers. This work supplements the trade distributor and the AIATSIS bookshop.

AIATSIS members receive a discount on ASP books and so ASP encourages everyone, particularly AIATSIS members, to keep abreast of the latest releases — and to recommend others do too.

Both Rhonda and Gabby invite members to consider sending their manuscripts to ASP for consideration,



Members of Sydney-based Indigenous dance group Descendance performed at the WHDL launch

if they fall within the guidelines for publication (visit [www.aiatsis.gov.au/asp/index.htm](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/asp/index.htm)). ASP has launched three books since January: *Very Big Journey* (Hilda Jarman Muir) in Darwin; *Reading Doctors' Writing* (David Piers Thomas) in Melbourne and Darwin; and *Woven Histories, Dancing Lives* (Richard Davis) at the Sydney Writers' Festival in May. ASP will soon launch *A Record in Stone: The Study of Australia's Flaked Stone Artefacts* (Simon Holdaway and Nicola Stern).

There was an ASP bookstall in

Canberra on Sorry Day and at the Native Title Conference 2004 in Adelaide in June. The AIATSIS Bookshop annual sale, held during NAIDOC Week, was very successful. The ASP will have a presence at other festivals and conferences and would be happy to hear from Institute News readers of other suitable forums.

**If you'd like to know more about ASP's new initiatives, contact [asp@aiatsis.gov.au](mailto:asp@aiatsis.gov.au) or call Gabby Lhuede on tel +61 (0)2 6246 1184.**

## Illicit Drug Research

The National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund has funded AIATSIS and the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) to undertake a research project on the policing implications of cannabis, amphetamine and other illicit drug use in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The project aims to improve the law enforcement sector's understanding of illicit drug use by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and to develop best policing practices that will help prevent and minimise harm from illicit drug use in Indigenous communities.

The project focuses on communities in rural and remote locations. Study sites have been identified in five jurisdictions – currently Laverton and Warburton, Rockhampton, Tiwi Islands, the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands, and Queanbeyan. Heading the project is Dr Peter Veth, the Director of Research at AIATSIS, with contributions from the Principal Steve Larkin and Health Fellows Drs Graham Henderson and Heather MacDonald. AIC staff include Dr Judy Putt and Kate Charlton.

## Eye Care in Indigenous Australia

During April, Dr Gordon Briscoe and Jilpia Nappaljari Jones attended the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE) 18th World Conference on Health Promotion and Health Education *Valuing diversity, reshaping power: Exploring pathways for health and wellbeing* held in Melbourne.

They presented an oral poster/paper

entitled 'In search of a health promotion policy on eye care in Indigenous Australia'. The paper described the collaborative research between AIATSIS and the Australian Centre for Indigenous History at ANU on the history of the National Trachoma and Eye Health Program directed by Professor Fred Hollows from the mid 1970s to the early 1980s. Gordon and Jilpia were actively involved in this famous program, Gordon as Assistant Director to Fred Hollows, and Jilpia as a nurse.



Dr Gordon Briscoe and Jilpia Nappaljari Jones

# Likan'mirri

Objects and works of art collected by AIATSIS researchers, anthropologists, linguists, musicologists and archaeologists over the Institute's 40 year history were exhibited at Canberra's Drill Hall Gallery earlier this year.

Most of the pieces in *Likan'mirri – Connections: The AIATSIS Collection of Art* had never been seen in public before.

The exhibition featured approximately 130 pieces, including 19th Century sketches, early bark paintings, crayon drawings from the 1950s, feathered poles and bird sculptures used in rituals of diplomacy and contemporary photographs. The exhibition also featured two paintings entitled *Toyota Dreamings* which depict distant ancestral lands that the artists were able to visit for the first time in decades after

they exchanged the canvases for two AIATSIS cars.

Among the earliest works in *Likan'mirri – Connections* was a set of sketches by one of the few recognised Indigenous artists of the 19th century — Mickey the Cripple (c.1820-1891), or Mickey of Ulladulla as he is commonly known.

AIATSIS Chairman and Convenor of the ANU Institute for Indigenous Australia, Professor Mick Dodson, said the collection was an integral part of the continuing story unfolding through connections between ancient and modern, and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australia.

The theme of connectedness inspired the exhibition. *Likan'mirri* is a Yolgnu (eastern Arnhem Land) term with a range of meanings from 'elbow' or 'the fork in a tree', to more spiritual connotations such as the connection between the secular and sacred worlds.

The *Likan'mirri – Connections* exhibition was curated by Wally Caruana and presented by AIATSIS and the ANU Institute for Indigenous Australia (ANUIIA).



Lowanna Williams was mesmerised by a painted turtle shell from Arnhem Land



An installation piece from *Likan'mirri – Connections*



Professor Mick Dodson and curator Wally Caruana at the exhibition opening

## SHORTCUTS

### New Institute Members

In May 2004, Council appointed the following Institute Members: Gordon Briscoe, Jody Broun, Russell Taylor, Simone Tur and Eric Wynne.

### Council election

In May 2004, Professor Mick Dodson, AM, Emer, Professor Robert Tonkinson, Professor Larissa Behrendt and Mr Michael Williams were re-elected to Council for a further two years. Appointed Council members are Mr Eric (Dickie) Bedford, Ms Jackie Huggins AM, Ms Natascha McNamara AM, MBE, Ms Raymattja Marika and Professor Martin Nakata.

### New portfolio for AIATSIS

In April 2004, the Federal Government announced that ATSIC and ATSIS would be abolished and program responsibilities would be transferred to mainstream departments and agencies. On 24 June, AIATSIS was transferred to the Education, Science and Training portfolio.

### Condolences

It is with great sadness that we advise of the deaths of two long-term Institute Members: Mr Ephraim Bani and Mr Wilfrid Douglas. Condolences on behalf of Council, Members and staff have been forwarded to their families.

### 2004 Stanner Award

The shortlistees for the AIATSIS 2004 Stanner Award have been announced:

- *Shadow Lines* by Stephen Kinnane (Fremantle Arts Centre Press);
- *Piercing the ground: Balgo women's image making and relationship to country* by Christine Watson (Fremantle Arts Centre Press);
- *Achieving Social Justice: Indigenous Rights and Australia's future* by Larissa Behrendt (Federation Press); and
- *Aboriginal Economy and Society: Australia at the threshold of colonisation*, by Ian Keen (Oxford University Press).

**The Award, comprising a certificate and a cash prize to the author of \$1,000, will be announced later in the year.**

## NATIONAL INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE SURVEY (NILS)

The National Indigenous Language Survey is currently being undertaken by AIATSIS and the Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages (FATSIL) under contract to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services (ATSIS).

The survey is being carried out to collect information on the current state of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. This information will be used to write a report to ATSIS which will identify languages and numbers of speakers, review existing research, primary source materials and other language resource materials, and provide recommendations

where languages may be considered to be endangered. The survey and report will be finalised by the end of 2004. It is important that this survey collects accurate information from as many different sources as possible.

Survey forms can be downloaded from the AIATSIS website at [www.aiatsis.gov.au](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au).

**The NILS team can be contacted at FATSIL on tel +61 (0)7 3846 3738 or via email [carolyn@e-soup.net](mailto:carolyn@e-soup.net), or through AIATSIS on tel +61 (0)2 6246 1166, via [nils@aiatsis.gov.au](mailto:nils@aiatsis.gov.au) or via post to NILS, AIATSIS, GPO Box 553, Canberra ACT 2601.**

## YAMAJI VISIT

*"It has been like putting a jigsaw together."*

So said Geraldton's Coralie Dann when the AIATSIS vaults were opened recently to members of WA's Yamaji community.

Coralie was one of seven women from Geraldton who spent five days at the Institute discovering the extent of film, video, audio and photographic material while there on a community access visit.

She was joined by Janie Ronan, Elvie Dann, Kathleen Gregory (originally from Turkey Creek), Myra Ronan, Elizabeth Dalgety and Gaye Abednego.

Janie Ronan said she would take copies of some of the material back to

other families in Geraldton.

"We saw some material about our Nan and that opened the floodgates," Ms Ronan said.

"It was very emotional, there was joy because we could hear something of our Nan and we could hear our mum's voice. A lot of it was in language and we were picking up a lot of words."

Terrilee Amatto of AIATSIS' Audiovisual Archives (AVA) Unit said that community access visits enabled people from throughout Australia to immerse themselves in AIATSIS' extensive collections. She said that AIATSIS benefited from the visits too because staff were able to piece together more information about the material held.



Back row – Di Hosking (Director, AVA), Kathleen Gregory, Caroline Carmody (AVA), Council member Michael Williams and Professor Mick Dodson (AIATSIS Chairman). Front row – Janie Ronan, Elvie Dann, Coralie Dann, Terrilee Amatto (AVA) and Myra Ronan

## Dawn and New Dawn Online and on CD



The historic *Dawn* and *New Dawn* magazines are now online on the AIATSIS website ([www.aiatsis.gov.au/dawn.htm](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/dawn.htm)).

A CD Rom Library of the rare publications is also underway.

All 252 editions of the magazines published by the NSW Government between 1952 and 1975 were digitised by staff in the AIATSIS Library under the Institute's pilot Digitisation Program funded by ATSIS.

The magazines contain irreplaceable Indigenous family history information and numerous photographs. They are a key source of information and photographs for Indigenous people who were separated from their families.

The CD Rom Library will provide keyword searchable access to the magazines. It will be distributed to NSW, ACT libraries, as well as Link-Up offices, *Bringing Them Home* Counsellors, and Aboriginal Medical Services in NSW.

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's *Bringing Them Home* Report estimated that between one in three and one in ten Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families between 1910 and 1970. The report made wide-ranging recommendations, such as the need for family tracing and reunion services and other support for Indigenous families and children.

## NAIDOC Posters Online

NAIDOC posters produced between 1972 and 2004 are also now online at [www.aiatsis.gov.au/naidoc.htm](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/naidoc.htm)

Since the early seventies, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have used the NAIDOC posters to communicate important NAIDOC themes. For example:

- *1979 International Year of the Child*. What about our kids!
- *Treat us to a Treaty on Land Rights* (1980)
- *Gurindji, Mabo, Wik. Three strikes for Justice* (1997)

The posters illustrate in an extremely powerful way the evolution of issues and concerns of Indigenous Australians and shifting priorities in contemporary Indigenous affairs.

## Safeguarding Indigenous Heritage through Digitisation

AIATSIS has received a \$1.5 million grant to protect Indigenous research and cultural materials through digitisation.

Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Senator Amanda Vanstone, said in May that the grant funding would be used to preserve and transfer records and materials to digital format, to ensure their long-term protection.

"This work to protect these materials will help ensure the material is preserved for generations to come and provide new opportunities for access for Indigenous Australians and others," Minister Vanstone said.

"While AIATSIS stores these materials in state-of-the-art archival facilities, they are vulnerable to

deterioration. Many of the original field recordings of language use and cultural activities are at risk as films and tapes age."

"This funding will also allow AIATSIS to be able to repatriate some materials to Indigenous communities."

AIATSIS Chairman Professor Mick Dodson welcomed the funding and said he appreciated the Minister's commitment and support of the project.

"AIATSIS' archive of written material and audio and visual recordings about and by Aboriginal and Islander people is the largest in the world, and should be viewed as a global treasure," Professor Dodson said.

"The funding will allow the Institute to 'stop the clock' on the deterioration of some of this priceless material, the loss of which would have been a tragedy. We will use cutting-edge technology to rescue recorded aspects of our ancient cultures."

## From the History of the Institute Past Principals

There have been eight Principals (including Mr. Steve Larkin, whose appointment was announced recently).

The second Principal from November 1972 until October 1980 was Dr Peter Ucko. The following is an edited extract from *AIAS Newsletter*, Vol. 3, No. 4, p. 10, May 1972, announcing Dr. Ucko's appointment:

*'After graduating and being awarded a doctoral degree in prehistory, archaeology and Egyptology in 1962 at University College, London, he has continued with this College and is at present Departmental Tutor and Lecturer in Anthropology. He has participated in excavations at Knossos, Blasia Kastritsi and Aghias, and is at present directing an investigation of an important site of Palaeolithic cave art, Hornos de la Pena, in Spain ... His wide interests are reflected in his active association with many scientific organisations – he is an Honorary Member of the Centre for Prehistoric Studies, Val Camonica, Italy; member of the Committee on Bibliography and Documentation of the International*



Past Institute Principal, Dr Peter Ucko

*Union of Anthropology and Ethnological Sciences (UNESCO); Member of the Association of Social Anthropologists and Corresponding Member of the AIAS. Dr Ucko is a Fellow and Member of the Council of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, and is Chairman of the Ethnographic Film Committee, a member of the Publications Committee and Joint Founder of the Art Panel; he was the Curl Lecturer for 1969. Dr Ucko is the joint author, with Dr. A. Rosenfeld of Palaeolithic Cave Art and of many scientific papers, and is editor of a new series of thirty books on Art and Society being published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson.'*

## Follow Our Tracks

The Aboriginal Studies Press (ASP) has established a new virtual place for reading, sharing and enjoying the stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

*Our Tracks* is part of the ASP presence on the AIATSIS website and features short stories excerpted from full-length works. The writers are of varying ages and backgrounds but each has a powerful storytelling voice.

The Director of ASP, Rhonda Black, said that *Our Tracks* writers were doing what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples had done for thousands of years - telling stories, sharing knowledge and providing entertainment.

"The idea is to create a new and different space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' stories to be read," Ms Black said.

"These stories haven't yet been published in book form, so this is a way for the stories to reach everyone with internet access, Australia-wide. It's a non-traditional approach to the great tradition of having a yarn."

ASP hopes that many readers — and potential writers — enjoy reading the stories, and are moved. Readers can leave their comments at [asp@aiatsis.gov.au](mailto:asp@aiatsis.gov.au).

*Our Tracks* is a pilot project. If it proves successful, ASP will trial audio-on-demand and/or a CD-Rom of the writings involved and possibly a moderated bulletin board.



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