



Kapululangu News

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Kapululangu Women's Culture Learning Camp was a Great Success!
- Reflections on the Women's Camp
- Camps for 2011
- Achievements of the Past Year
- Thanking our Supporters

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Women's Culture Learning Camp



On 23 to 29 August, Kapululangu held its first Women's Culture Learning Camp. Eleven Kartiya (Non-Indigenous) women lived for seven days with the Elders in the Kapululangu Women's Law House on the Balgo Women's Law Ground. They participated in three Tjarrtjurra Women's Healing Rituals and one Deep Yawulyu Law Ceremony. This was coupled with training in the Art of the Tilitja (Culture Worker), with included connection with Self, Country and Tjukurrpa (Dreaming). More Camps will be held next year. (See inside.)

Some Reflections on the Women's Culture Learning Camp

It touched my soul in a very deep and profound way. Being welcomed into an Indigenous community is embedded in my whole being.

The Camp culminated my deepening awareness of 'living culture' – bringing together the elements of paintup, dancing, Tjukurrpa and the ancient energy of the Dawn Ceremony linking Aboriginal and White Tilitja.

I realised the importance and urgency of ensuring the survival of Indigenous culture in a way that I hadn't before.

Depth of commitment and understanding. Gratitude and love for the Elders and those who serve them.

Very dirty nails and feet, traces of ochre seeping slowly into my soul.

Photos: Welcome Ceremony for Women's Culture Learning Camp



MORE FROM THE WOMEN'S CAMP

Please let the Elders know how much I love, respect and thank them for their generosity in welcoming and teaching me. I was touched by the Elders' trust and humour. I am in awe of their wisdom and commitment to holding Yawulyu (Women's Law). I feel the task, the vital work of holding Yawulyu is momentarily exhausting, essential and so under resourced.

It gave me a broader understanding of the urgency of passing on the Law. I cannot begin to understand how the elders feel with time marching on.

Brilliant! Brilliant! Brilliant! Thank you for the experience of a life time. I truly have cherished 'growing up' and all that the Elders shared with us.

Women's Culture Learning Camps Give You

- Six days Indigenous Elder-led Women's Culture Learning Program
- Unique opportunity to live with Women Elders on Women's Law Ground
- Learning Program Participation in Women's Ceremonies and customary activities under guidance of Indigenous Cultural Knowledge Custodians
- Intimate experience of a remote Indigenous desert community
- Develop one-on-one relationship with Women Elders & their Apprentices
- Cultural Awakening Workshops led by Culturally-skilled facilitator with 10 years experience in the community
- Training in Art of the Tilitja/Culture Worker
- Safe place to unlearn your racism with on-site qualified Counsellor

The Activities you will enjoy

- Welcome Ceremony
- Women's Ceremony
- Traditional Healing
- Traditional Body-Painting
- Dancing and Song
- Sand-drawing Stories
- Connection with Country
- Camping out Overnight
- Cultural Awakening Workshops
- Arts and Crafts
- and much more....

From Our Diary

Kapululangu was nominated to the Indigenous Governance Awards—just one of 21 Indigenous organizations in operation for over 10 years.

Kapululangu's Chairwoman Ruby Darkie Nangala was nominated for the NAIDOC Elder of the Year (female) award. Kapululangu held a party and presented Ruby with a Certificate for Strong Work for Kapululangu.

Kapululangu's (residential) Women's Law House has been repainted, and the Culture Shed scrubbed clean from layers of ochre left by 10 years of ceremonies.

The Tjarttjorra Women Healers have been very busy recently. Lots of people have been asking for healing. Recently they held a ceremony for two men who were really sick (one having had a stroke). The next day

the men were very happy. The man with the stroke told the Elders that he could move his paralyzed arm and leg. They were really happy too.

The Middle Generation women (those who were raised in the mission's dormitories) have formed a Young Elders Group to support the Women Elders. They want to help them to hold the Law strong by learning it from them and then teaching it to younger women and girls.

Tilitja Workers In Balgo

Kapululangu has some really strong supporters in the world—some of whom have received training in the Art of the Tilitja (Culture Worker).

Rachael Stacy and Anne Delmas from the Maleny Kapululangu Support Group organised the travel for, accompanied, and were Team Leaders for the women attending the August Women's Culture Learning Camp.

Rachael accompanied the Camp participants back to Darwin and then returned to Balgo with her nyupa/partner Kevin Smith. They were going to work as Tilitja for the planned Nakarra Nakarra Dreaming Track Trek but it was cancelled due to Sorry Business. Instead they assisted with other cultural activities.

Indigenous Community Volunteers (ICV) supported Rachael, Anne and Kevin to work for Kapululangu. Many thanks ICV! See www.icv.com.au

Amanda Bailey, a participant of the Women's Culture Learning Camp took no time at all to return to Balgo after the Camp. She returned to Balgo within weeks of the Camp to be a Care-Taker of the Women's Law House providing daily support to the Women Elders, and assisted with writing grant applications.

Camps in 2011

2011 Women's Culture Learning Camps

19 to 24 April; 5 to 11 September; 3 to 9 October

Six days of living with the Kapululangu Women Elders on the Balgo Women's Law Ground. Ceremonies, Country & Cultural Awakening. Only 20 positions available in each Camp.

Mothers and Daughters Culture Learning Camp 8 to 14 August

Will be held only if 10 Mother & Daughter (ages 12 to 18) pairs are interested in attending. Otherwise will be a normal camp.

Women's Law Camp 3 to 8 May

Six days of Deep Ceremony under guidance of Women Elders at bush-based Women's Law Ground.

Ceremonial Dreaming Track Journey 14 to 19 June

Six days of travelling along a Dreaming Track conducting ceremonies at sacred sites with the Kapululangu Women Elders.

Who can Attend: All Camps are for Indigenous and Non-Indigenous women aged 19 years and over, unless stipulated.

Costs: Each Camp costs \$3000 for adults aged 19 and over & \$500 for ages 12 to 18.. This cost covers the Cultural Program, accommodation & food, Elders' tutor fees & a contribution to Kapululangu so its Elders can teach their young people.

Other Expenses: All participants must cover the cost of their own travel to and from Balgo, includes flights & hiring own 4WD vehicle, and their own food while travelling.

Indigenous Women: Indigenous women from the Kutjungka Region are free and don't need to do the Women's Culture Learning Camp first. Discounts are available for groups of Indigenous women travelling from beyond the Kutjungka region.

Girls and Young Women: participants aged 12 to 18 years must be accompanied (paired) by one adult guardian each.

More Info: www.kapululangu.org
To apply please email: ceo@kapululangu.org



Kapululangu Women Taught Dancing to Children on NAIDOC Day at Luurnpa School

Balgo Girls are very proud to have paintup and dancing with the Elders



Balgo Boys enjoying the fun of dancing with the Male Elders supported by the Kapululangu Women Elders



I believe that what the women Elders are doing for and with their community is vital, unique and fragile. I want to support them physically and financially. I want to honour their work by accepting the gift they are offering— an opportunity for me to experience their living culture for this precious week.

Napangarti's Death a Message of Urgency

There's seldom a day where Balgo's small isolated community of 400 people doesn't have at least one Sorry Camp—bereavement camp—happening somewhere. Often we've got three Sorry Camps happening at the same time.

Recently Kapululangu lost one of its Elders. Napangarti was a wonderful woman who always sought out and encouraged a positive view of life—

quite an achievement in Balgo's traumatized community.

Because Napangarti was the youngest among the Kapululangu Elders her death really threw the other elders around. Especially when another Elder was rushed to Derby hospital with a possible heart-attack.

The Elders want to pass their Law (philosophy) and Culture (custom practice) to their younger

generations. They feel that their people are hurting because they have lost contact with their Country and Tjukurrpa/Dreaming.

This connectedness is the missing piece of the jigsaw without which their peoples' trauma can not heal.

The death of Napangarti has also woken up the Young Elders (the generation who were raised in the dormitories) to the importance of learning Culture from the Elders so that they can hold it for the future.



Kapululangu

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Donate to Kapululangu

Kapululangu is a Benevolent Institute and a Deductible Gift Recipient with Tax Charity Concessions. All donations \$2 and over are tax deductible. Arrange a Direct Monthly Transfer to Commonwealth Bank Kununurra BSS 066 530 Account: 10107707

The Kapululangu Women's Law and Culture Centre:

- ◆ is one of Australia's most remote women's centres—and it's Aboriginal!
- ◆ the only women's centre in the Kutjungka/Tjurabalan region of the south-east Kimberley
- ◆ the only Law and Culture organization in Balgo and the Kutjungka/Tjurabalan
- ◆ a key provider of Aboriginal Law and Culture opportunities in the Kimberley
- ◆ was established in 1999, but traces its history back to 1983
- ◆ is mandated by its founding women elders to revitalize Women's Law and to care for Women and Community.



Thanking Our Supporters

As this is the first Kapululangu News at the end of the 2009-2010 fiscal year, we'd like to recognize our grantors, supporters and partners. For 2009-10 they have been:

- Department of Family, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (Federal)
- Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (Federal)
- Lottery West (Western Australia)
- Christensen Fund (Global/USA)
- Quaker Service Australia (QSA) (National)
- Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (National)
- Central Aboriginal Land Council's—Granite Mines Aboriginal Affected Areas Committee
- Mercy Works (National)

Achievements of 2009-10

- ◆ In 2009-10, Kapululangu provided 698 activities and services to 3430 participants.
- ◆ This included, 94 cultural activities provided to 1816 participants; 85 governance and leadership training events to 341 participants; and wellbeing and safety services to 1273 Balgo residents on 519 occurrences.
- ◆ In total there were 2270 female and 972 male participants. This reflects both Kapululangu's wide involvement in the community—and increased servicing of the male residents.
- ◆ Of the total of 2270 females, 1470 were Women Elders—just more than half of all female participants.
- ◆ There were 369 Middle-Generation Women involved indicating a keen interest by this generation to learn their cultural heritage from their Elders.
- ◆ There were also 166 Young Women, and 265 Girls involved, totalling 431 or 1/5 of female participants, evidencing increased involvement of younger generations learning their cultural heritage from their Elders.
- ◆ There were also 159 Non-Indigenous residents involved in Kapululangu's cultural activities.

