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NEWSLETTER

FROM THE CHAIR

The Northern Territory Education Mob would like to acknowledge Don Christophersen as the inaugural Chair. While Don has stood down from the role, he remains committed to our efforts and we look forward to him continuing to share his knowledge skills and experience. His advice during the Truth Telling Project was instrumental to its success.

A name for our Digital Keeping Place. in an Aboriginal language that is inclusive of the whole of the NT is still under consideration and we hope to bring news soon.

PROJECT UPDATES

Truth Telling Project

The Truth Telling Project, *Tragedy and Triumph*, has now been acquitted with over 12,500 items collected.

There were many challenges faced and lessons learned in the process of working on this project. We chose to write a comprehensive report to record and share these. Our hope was to enable collecting institutions, church archivists and members and descendants of Stolen Generations to appreciate the issues.

Many of the collections requested are in the process of being worked on and we remain committed to continuing this important reconciliation work.

The State Library of South Australia worked hard to digitise a collection from teacher Jessie March. Jesse went to Croker Island as a teacher in June 1941 Jesse, with Margaret Somerville and Olive Peake and the 95 young men, women and children were the party who spent 44 days walking, travelling by boat train and cattle and Army trucks and then trains to Otford.



Students from Croker Island at Scarborough School in 1942
Source: State Library of South Australia, Jessie March Collection PRG1140_1_4

The Queensland State Library has assisted in the digital return of another two collections of images mostly relating to life on Alexandria Station and other nearby cattle properties from the 1920s. The images are extraordinary quality and the language in the captions reflect the attitudes towards Aboriginal people at that time.

We are very privileged to have returned the collections to families who have heritage there.

Assisting with Events

Two schools are having anniversaries in coming months. Schooling in Alekarenge commenced in 1956, not long after the community was established in the Welfare days.
Willowra is celebrating its 50th Anniversary of Bilingual Education on Tuesday 18th August.



Two girls sitting astride a camel with a man holding the reins, and two women and a child standing nearby, Avon Downs Station, 1918
Source: State Library of Queensland James Broadbridge Album

Groote Eylandt Community Making project

Work on Northern Territory Government History Grant is well underway. It builds on the content of and collections from the Truth Telling Project. The intent of the project is to visual material which tells stories of the of the people and events that shaped the early cross cultural contact history.

The work plan contains more stories than funding. However is a fascinating. history of cultural contact, conflict continuity and connections that helped shape the communities on Groote.

A reference group is established and images have been provided to the Anindilyakwa Land Council staff for the dual purpose of digital return and cultural sensitivities in terms of publication.

Cecil Neilson Collection

The Cecil Neilson Collection is held at the Arafura Archives at Charles Darwin University (CDU). It is a large collection which contains material related to Teaching English as a Second Language, Bilingual Education and Homeland Centre Education.

For quite some time a small team of dedicated volunteers have periodically been assessing, rehousing and cataloguing this important collection We look forward to working more closely with the CDU Library to digitise relevant material in this important collection.

Posters

Our two poster series, Language Champions and Deadly Educators continue to be labours of love. They are very time consuming and we thank Batchelor Institute for their continuing support.



Significant dates

We have added a section to our website called Important Dates. To recognise dates of importance, remembrance and celebration. We are taking a continuous improvement approach to this.

One of the important dates we recognised recently is Volunteer Week. We are powered by volunteers and without their willingness to contribute time, knowledge skills and experience, we wouldn't be. Our volunteers have different interests and abilities. Some are fantastic at detail and help with managing collections from numbering, capturing, housing, adding metadata; others have an interest in particular communities. Still others are helping us move towards tax deduction status by writing policy. Thankyou all.

Shortly it is NAIDOC week (Sunday, 5 July to Sunday, 12 July 2026). The theme is **50 Years of Deadly**.

It serves to remind us of the Remote Area Teacher Education (RATE) program beginnings in 1976 and the amazing journey's many Aboriginal educators undertook to become teachers.



RATE Trial at Yirrkala 1976
Photo: John Bonney, NTEM NE1-0007095

NEW COLLECTIONS

A small collection came through our extensive network from the daughter of former teacher and colleague of many Mary Liddy (dec). It is in the process of being returned to family and Batchelor Institute.

Jim and Lorraine Clark have also sent up two more albums of images. On the back they have written information that really helps with knowing the (metadata) who what where and when that is so important in helping with the story of each image. Like all new collection, a digital copy will go back to community (in this case Milingimbi), a digital copy returned to the donor and be loaded onto our Digital Keeping Place initially as restricted until we received advice about any cultural sensitivities.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We have put in a submission to the Northern Territory Professional Teachers Association (NTPA) to run four online events which train people to navigate our Digital Keeping Place. It will highlight some of the material held in the Digital Keeping Place. In terms of content, our current thinking is to have an introductory session, possibly one session on bilingual resources and one on the work we are undertaking on Stolen Generations. We are open to suggestions about days, time and content.