Garma
NARRATIVE REPORT
31 July – 3 August, 2015

YOTHU YINDI FOUNDATION
Message from our Director

The Yothu Yindi Foundation is proud to have produced, directed & hosted yet another compelling Garma at the Gulkula ceremonial grounds in northeast Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, Australia.

As an indigenous woman, it is difficult to put into words how much of an honour it is to direct this wonderful experience, as we seek to extract the raw beauty of Australia’s Indigenous people & our incredible cultural heritage.

Moreover, I take great pride in staging an event that also provides a healthy economic return to the Arnhem region by tapping the rich veins of the NT’s tourism market and beyond. It is a humbling experience to showcase northeast Arnhem Land to the nation and the world as we strive to shape the national & political conversation on Indigenous affairs from a grass roots perspective. The Yothu Yindi Foundation would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the success of Garma. I would personally like to thank our guests for making the pilgrimage north to join us; thank you all for your continued contribution to the reconciliation process between black & white Australia & thank you for taking part in some of the challenging conversations needed to further advance the cause.

As in previous years, the 17th annual Garma delivered a wide-ranging program that mixed the exciting with the informative, the eye-catching with the educational, as we sought to provide an action packed program appealing to everyone over four days & nights. Our aim is to develop our activities & objectives through the use of artistic and cultural practices which ensure Yolngu ownership, drive & direction are the foundational anchors to success.

The Key Forum, often described as Australia’s Davos, was again in the national spotlight, as debates about Constitutional Recognition, racism, & the future of remote communities resonated across the country. We heard heartbreaking stories of domestic violence, we discussed health & education policy, & lifted the spirits of our guests as we honoured special heroes from our communities.

At our Youth Forum, we played host to a record number of schoolchildren from local & interstate schools - a wonderful milestone for the Yothu Yindi Foundation, with our focus on education & opportunity for the next generation. This year we sent out a request for more assistance, and were pleased to find new friends weren’t too far away; friends who shared our vision & drive to tap the strength of Australia’s next generation of leaders.

Our Chairman, Dr Galarrwuy Yunupingu AM HonLLD, was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Melbourne in recognition of his lifetime of advocacy for Indigenous rights. This was a particularly historic event, blending Indigenous & the world of academia together with a conferral ceremony on the ancient bunggul grounds.

We also witnessed a moving show of support for footballer Adam Goodes from the dancers on the bunggul grounds, who added a red V & the number 37 to their traditional paint to express solidarity with Adam as a nationwide debate on racism & discrimination raged on.

At night, guests choose between a community-centric music program packed with highlights, & the stunning artworks in the open-aired art Gallery. Also very appealing to our guests were the many fireside chats taking place across this significant ceremonial ground.
We took another big step into the digital world with the launch this year of the Garma App, which proved to be a useful tool to keep our guests updated with news from around the site, & allowed those who couldn't attend this year's event to share in some of the magic from afar. Past guests based in Spain, Japan & Italy were thrilled to participate in Garma via the window of new technology.

In terms of Garma's cultural content, YYF has made a great effort to bolster programming elements with a push on education, with many of our guests expressing a thirst for knowledge about Indigenous cultural traditions.

Yolngu educators are at the forefront in delivering our programs, sessions and activities, and our classrooms are open, set amongst the family, and the questions come fast and furious. Yolngu matha classes provide guests with the language basics to get you by; spear making is fascinating fun for the boys; basket weaving enables a quiet moment where you can get to know the Yolngu ladies, and hear their stories. The bunggul teaches the importance of flora and fauna in song. Rangers provide an insight into the uses of our bush pharmacy, its toxins and its healing powers. Our women's program and dawn ceremonies are two exceptionally unique activities that cannot be experienced elsewhere. The smoking ceremonies, with their cleansing power, and the yidaki healing, are both focussed on guests' wellbeing and care.

With the event at capacity, & a large audience tuning in courtesy of Sky News, which broadcast much of Garma live, we are pleased to have boosted audience participation in the Garma experience to a level never achieved in the 17 years history of the event.

This tremendous success would not have been possible without the hard work & dedication of the YYF Board & our sponsors, & their commitment to an agenda that pushes the boundaries in a quest to improve the lives of the clans of northeast Arnhem Land & Indigenous Australians more broadly.

Already we are working hard to ensure Garma 2016 continues to raise the bar at what has become one of Australia's most significant annual community gatherings.

Denise Bowden
Director of Garma + Chief Executive Officer, Yothu Yindi Foundation
Acknowledgement of Sponsors

The Yothu Yindi Foundation Board & CEO sincerely thanks all of our sponsors & partners for their ongoing commitment to Garma. As Garma continues to affect change & prompt reform, it is important that we bring our sponsors & the general community with us along in the journey.

Your support is vital to our continued success. It is only with your help that we are able to make progress on our mission to promote Indigenous culture, preserve our stories & songlines, & maintain the rich & unique cultural traditions of the Yolngu world.

As we work towards new unique visions, & goals with renewed strength, we look forward to challenging new pathways with our sponsors come Garma 2016.

The Yothu Yindi Foundation would like to acknowledge the following Principal, Platinum & Gold sponsors of Garma 2015.

Communications played a vital part in the success of Garma 2015. Thanks to our media partners Sky News, which broadcast much of the event on its news and public affairs channels, we are able to draw attention to the many challenges faced by Indigenous Australians and further the national conversation on policy reform. We would also like to acknowledge the major upgrade to on-site communications thanks to the Telstra’s 4G communications service, which enables our guests to share their Garma experience on social media and elsewhere, and keeps us all connected.

Those who have supported our event through in-kind support & assistance are as follows, & again we’d like to thank & acknowledge these organisations

Acknowledging the creative expression of our official photographers:

Mr Peter Eve, Monsoon Studio E: http://www.monsoonastralia.com/

Ms Melanie Faith-Dove E: http://www.melaniefaithdove.com/
Garma Theme:

The theme for this year's event translates from Yolngu Matha into English - **Building Our Future, Strengthening Our Lives.** This theme is encapsulated in YYF's mission to be an agent of change for the clans of northeast Arnhem Land – to put in place cultural, health, education, arts & economic programs & policies which carry the promise of a better life today, & for future Yolngu generations to come. The theme of this year can also be applied against both a federal & state government vision, as the priority of both governments aim to advance & empower Indigenous communities dealing with the challenges of limited resources, training, education & employment, increased school attendance, economic development & safer communities.

We aim to achieve the outcomes of Garma via a number of ways, whether it be implementing initiatives which produce tangible results that make a difference to everyday lives, or stoking the spiritual fires which help nurture & maintain Yolngu cultural development.

The official Garma opening ceremony took place on the afternoon of Friday 31 July. It gathered our VIP's & special dignitaries together to celebrate YYF's annual platform, & bring clans, colleagues & families closer together. It is also a chance for YYF to highlight some of the special developments & projects that have been accomplished during the past year.

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Racism

The beginning of this year's Garma coincided with a nationwide controversy over the on field booing of Indigenous footballer Adam Goodes.

As a show of support for the beleaguered Sydney Swans player, members of the Gumatj clan added a red V & the number 37 to their traditional paint as part of the bunggul celebrations on the opening day to signify their solidarity with Goodes.
It was a powerful gesture, & the photos of the dancers were picked up by media outlets around Australia as debate raged over discrimination & racism.

The Director of Garma, Denise Bowden, said many of the guests arriving at this year's event expressed their empathy with Goodes.

"The idea was to send a message of support to Adam from a very isolated pocket of Australia," Mrs Bowden said.

"We were mindful that as an individual, Adam would have been experiencing a very trying time in his life, so we were pleased to learn after Garma that he had seen pictures of our gesture & we had managed to lift his spirits."

**Town Lease**

The challenge of living remote was a major focus of the official opening. Thus it was a delight to begin Garma on a high note with the unique signing of a township lease arrangement orchestrated and developed by the vision of the local Gumatj clan. This success story involved many negotiations, hard work, research, strategic development & a special determination to achieve the right outcome.

The Gumatj secured a pioneering township lease over their homelands at Gunyangara, a small community 40km’s from the Garma site. This has been a long-held dream, echoed in the calls of the YYF chairman to “bring land rights home”.

In the past, township leases have been struck between land councils & a federal government agency. Under the new arrangements for Gunyangara, a Gumatj-owned corporation will gain the power to issue sub-leases to promote development without having to seek approval from the Northern Land Council or the Commonwealth. All rents will be returned to the community.

YYF Board of Director Mr Djawa Yunupingu said locals wanted to keep control over development, & would use the lease to help establish new businesses & housing.

"If we give our land away, there will be nothing left for future generations," he said. “There will be housing right up to the causeway. Some of the land will be for industrial development.”

Federal Indigenous Affairs Nigel Scullion, who was a signatory to the deal signed at Garma, praised the “vision & leadership” of the Yolngu leaders & said the lease could become a model for other traditional owners.

"The community-entity, township-lease model that Gumatj has pursued ensures local traditional owners can make decisions about their own land,” Senator Scullion said.

“My focus has been to deliver a tenure system that supports better decision-making within commercial timeframes.

“If this lease model is successful, I will be keen to talk with other traditional owners to maximise the benefits of owning their own land."

Under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding signed at Garma:

- A lease term of 99 years, granted to a community entity owned & controlled by the traditional owners of Gunyangara.
- The community entity will be an Aboriginal corporation, will be representative of traditional owners & community residents, & will meet certain capacity requirements.
- The township lease will be able to be transferred to the EDTL if the community entity becomes unable to effectively hold & administer the lease or requests a transfer, & can be transferred back to the community entity when it regains capacity.
• The lease boundary will include the township & adjacent land, to provide for future economic development opportunities for traditional owners & the community.
• There will be an Advance Payment & an Economic Development Fund, for the benefit of traditional owners & to be used for projects that deliver long-term community benefits.
• The lease will support home ownership & future government investment in housing. Rent paid under the Housing Precinct Lease will be used to support better housing outcomes.

### Evening Lecture series

The Garma Evening Lecture series took place over two consecutive nights this year. The venue was the Garma Knowledge Centre. Our guest speakers were Minister for Indigenous Affairs Senator Nigel Scullion, on Friday 31 July, and Shayne Neumann, Shadow Minister for Indigenous Affairs, on the Saturday evening, 1 August.

Both politicians had words of encouragement to offer Garma guests.

Senator Scullion praised the work of YYF & the role Garma plays in improving the lives of local communities.

“This festival plays an important role in preserving & promoting local Indigenous culture & developing economic opportunities for Yolngu,” he said.

“Now in its 17th year, the festival attracts thousands of people every year & is increasingly putting Yolngu culture on the international stage.

“It promotes a greater understanding of, & respect for, Indigenous culture by demonstrating traditional lifestyle & activities & helps to inform the wider community about issues affecting Indigenous people & communities.”

Senator Scullion re-iterated the Government's key themes for Indigenous advancement.

“Children need to go to school, adults need to work. We need to make communities safer,” he said.

“I believe it is important to point you to the things which will strengthen lives & build a better future & the reason I continue to focus on these three areas is we know they make a difference.”

Mr Neumann said long-term intergenerational change would only come about if efforts to Close the Gap were successful.

“Change is difficult, & no change is more important than Closing the Gap in health, education & employment outcomes between Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples & other Australians,” he said.

“It is important to maintain our commitment to Closing the Gap – & to keep talking about it - because it is much more than the singular efforts of one government in one term.

“It brings together Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples, governments, businesses & individuals
to achieve measurable outcomes over the course of our lifetime.

“Closing the Gap requires a nationally coordinated approach & policy from governments that aligns with the Closing the Gap framework.

We are talking about long-term intergenerational change.

“We need to start with the kids being born today. This is how we will begin to close the generational gap.”

Erica Ficarra

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Honorary Doctorate

While YYF is firmly focussed on the future, there was some recognition of the work covered in the past. In collaboration with YYF & the University of Melbourne, a conferral ceremony was conducted on the bunggul grounds to award our esteemed chairman, Dr Galarwuy Yunupingu AM HonLLD, an honorary doctorate in recognition of his lifetime of advocacy for Indigenous rights.

The doctorate was announced during a moving ceremony attended by senior Indigenous leaders & University dignitaries.

University of Melbourne Provost, Professor Margaret Sheil said the award of an Honorary Doctor of Laws to Dr Yunupingu was to recognise & celebrate the significance of his work for Indigenous rights.

Professor Sheil said the doctorate was the University's highest honour.

“Dr Yunupingu’s relentless struggle for land rights & advocacy for the agency of his people have profoundly advanced the interests of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people throughout Australia,” Professor Sheil said.

“Dr Yunupingu has received the award of the Doctor of Laws honoris causa in recognition of the fire he has lit that will blaze ever brighter until Indigenous people secure their self-evident rights to property, their own way of life, economic independence & control over their lives & the future of their children.”

Denise Bowden, CEO of YYF, said the collision of two worlds – that of Western society, in harmony with a deeply religious Indigenous culture – was an historic moment for all who witnessed it.

“The blending together of both cultures on a significant ceremonial ground was a truly unique experience, & indicative of the contemporary outlook of Australia’s highest ranking learning institution, the University of Melbourne,” she said

“We are very proud to have played a significant part of this conferral ceremony, & I would like to thank
all involved for ensuring that Dr Yunupingu is honoured in a manner befitting a man of his seniority in both Western & Yolngu culture."

Dr Yunupingu said it was an honour to receive the doctorate. “Education is at the heart of everything we do,” he said.

“Each year, the Garma gathering reminds us of our duty to pursue knowledge, to discover, to learn & to teach, so that every individual can reach their full potential.”

You Tube link of this Garma Key Forum panel:

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2015 Annual Garma Lecture
Mr Joe Morrison, CEO of the Northern Land Council
Saturday 1 August, 2015

A full version of this speech can be viewed at this link:

I begin by paying my respects to the Gumatj people, and their traditional owners past and present, on whose land we are gathered today. And I thank the Yothu Yindi Foundation for the invitation to speak this morning at this prestigious cultural festival. It is indeed an honour and a privilege.

I acknowledge the presence of the Federal Minister of Indigenous Affairs, Mr Nigel Scullion, and the Northern Land Council’s chairman, Mr Sam Bush-Blanasi, who’s here at Garma with other members of the NLC Executive Council.

I also acknowledge my good friend David Ross, Director of the Central Land Council, the other big land council on the mainland, and of Mr Tony Wurramarrba, chairman of the Anindilyakwa Land Council, which administers land rights at Groote Eylandt.

The NLC Executive and I were briefed yesterday afternoon, before the formal opening and the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between Gumatj Corporation and Minister Scullion, to do with a 99-year Township Lease of Gunyangara - known more commonly, perhaps, to non-Indigenous people as Ski Beach.

Nigel yesterday said the MOU was entirely the work of Gumatj, and I want to acknowledge today the work and leadership of the greatest living leader of the Gumatj, Galarrwuy Yunupingu.

Galarrwuy served two long stretches as Chairman of the Northern Land Council and he led the organisation through those turbulent times of the 1970s and 80s, when Aboriginal land rights in the Northern Territory had to be so hard-fought for.

The MOU signed yesterday is HIS legacy. Behind it is an eight-year history of HIS advocacy. Galarrwuy wrote to our chairman last month, giving the NLC good notice that he was wanting our assistance to create a modern township that reflects and is consistent with Yolngu values. The MOU is the manifestation of that aspiration, and the NLC will work closely with the Gumatj and the Commonwealth Government over the coming months.
It envisages a 99-year township lease to be held over Gunyangara by a community entity owned and controlled by the Gumatj themselves. That makes it fundamentally different from the township leases that the Commonwealth government has negotiated on the Tiwi Islands, and at Grote Eylandt, just across the waters from here. Those leases are held in the name of a Commonwealth Officer called the Executive Director of Township Leasing - EDTL, we call that person. The EDTL consults with Aboriginal Traditional Owners about subleases.

But, ultimately, he -- and at the moment the EDTL is a he -- controls development in those communities and settles the subleases. That model was created by an amendment in 2006 to the Northern Territory Land Rights Act - the work of former Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough. It’s a model which the Northern Land Council Full Council has opposed, because it sidelines Traditional Owners - they can ultimately lose control about how their community is developed and who gets a sublease.

Minister Scullion yesterday mentioned the difficulties around his attempts to secure a 99-year township lease at Gunbalanya, or Oenpelli, in West Arnhem Land - that's in our NLC region. Before any deal like a township lease, the NLC has a statutory duty to ensure that Traditional Owners are consulted and that they give their free, prior and informed consent. I won't go into all the details, but the NLC and Senator Scullion have been at serious loggerheads as negotiations over a township lease at Gunbalanya have bumbled along.

Senator Scullion yesterday described the model being proposed for Gunyangara as an elegant solution, one that strikes the right balance. I’m inclined to agree, and I want to congratulate Nigel for his willingness to demonstrate flexibility. So, for the record, let me say that the Northern Land Council is not opposed to township leases per se. It’s just that we don’t want to see traditional owners having to forfeit control, and lose their property rights. We remain hopeful that that will not be the outcome at Gunbalanya.

I know that Minister Scullion spoke in a lecture here last night about early difficulties in his relationship with the Northern Land Council, and I can attest to that. I suppose we’ve both been a couple of stubborn beasts. But there are heartening signs that Minister Scullion is genuinely committed to resetting our relationship, and we are surely open to that.

In that context let me tell you about another 2006 Mal Brough amendment to the Land Rights Act, which was being pursued early in the term of this government. It’s caused much angst between the Minister and ourselves.

The purpose of the amendment was to delegate functions of the Northern Territory land councils to regional corporations that would not necessarily comprise Aboriginal Traditional Owners. We resisted that strenuously – because we would have inherited the liability if one of those corporations went belly up. And, the corporation’s devolved powers would have ended up with the Minister. We also thought it was preposterous that a corporation which receives delegated powers from a Commonwealth statutory agency could not be subject to normal fiscal strictures imposed by the Commonwealth. In March last year, we successfully lobbied the then Senate to disallow Senator Scullion’s regulations, which would have enlivened that Brough amendment. Again we were at loggerheads - and seriously too, I might say - with Minister Scullion. But he’s since agreed not to reintroduce those regulations to the NEW Senate. Rather, he’s prepared to negotiate a compromise with the land councils. He wants to hear from us, just as he listened to the Gumatj about their prescription for a township lease, and was prepared to be flexible.

At the opening here yesterday, he spoke a fair bit about listening with respect to Aboriginal voices. We take him at his word, and I only hope that that mindset could permeate whole-of-government thinking.

Only nine days ago, I was in Townsville to give a speech to a conference about developing northern Australia - very much the subject of our times as we ponder outcomes of the Federal Government’s recent White Paper. Isn’t it time, I asked, to bring Indigenous people into the planning paradigm?

Let me remind you, that in the Northern Territory Aboriginal people have freehold title to around half the Territory’s landmass, and title to 85 per cent of the Territory coastline, thanks to the High Court’s Blue Mud Bay decision in 2008. Native title has been granted, or is under claim across the remainder. So, Aboriginal people have an essential stake in the future of northern Australia. That has not been realised.
As I stated in Townsville, Aboriginal people must be front and centre in planning processes for the north? This is a fundamental gap in the national discourse about northern development.

It’s a theme that I’ve been pushing for a long time, long before I took up my job 18 months ago as the NLC’s Chief Executive, when I was heading up a research agency called the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance. I’m not one to despair, but I do wonder when the day will come that we have a seat at the planning table. Because Aboriginal people want economic development. The Gumatj want development. That’s why they’re pursuing their idea, on their terms, of a township lease at Gunyangara.

To my mind the abandonment of the Rio Tinto bauxite refinery here in Gove underlines the vulnerability of Aboriginal people in remote parts of the Northern Territory as development comes and development goes.

The Aboriginal community at Ngukurr in Central Arnhem Land has suffered too in the past year from the collapse of two nearby iron ore mines - Western Desert Resources and Sherwin Iron. Jobs and royalties were promised. Jobs and royalties have evaporated. And in the case of Western Desert Resources, Aboriginal Traditional Owners were owed hundreds of thousands of dollars when the company folded. That’s left them highly cautious when they hear promises of jobs and riches at a time when there’s all this talk about developing the north. They’ve come to realise that some of the economic development in northern Australia which they are expected to consent to comes with risk and cost. And it’s not all monetary risk and cost. There can be a cultural dimension too, like near the West Australian border where we are having to consult with native title holders about the planned expansion of the Ord River Irrigation scheme into the Northern Territory. It’s one of the projects touted in the White Paper on developing northern Australia. Aboriginal people are being asked to extinguish their native title in return for money and jobs. It’s one thing, of course, for Traditional Owners to consent to extinguishment. But its another thing for senior lawmen who are in charge of ceremony and preserving the many sacred sites and dreaming tracks which characterise that country. It saddens me to tell you that those consultations are causing heartache and strife.

So there are special dimensions to consider when grand plans for development are pushed in the north, where Aboriginal interests are dominant.

That’s why the Northern Land Council is proposing to develop what we’re calling a prospectus to identify opportunities for development on Aboriginal lands across our region. Not a prospectus in the stock market sense, but a document that will have Aboriginal landowners and townships themselves identify developments that embraces their cultural and environmental values as well as their economic aspirations. I believe we’re making real headway in our negotiations with the Federal government for support of this project. It’s a project that would certainly fit Nigel Scullion’s recognition of the need to listen with respect to the voices of Aboriginal people, to take account of their ideas and empower them.

And let’s hope that prescription is heeded when Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory are called to consider two fundamental questions which loom on our horizon.

The first is Statehood for the Northern Territory. The second is recognition of Indigenous peoples in the Australian Constitution - and that, of course will have to be considered not just here in the Territory, but by all Indigenous people across Australia. The revival of the idea that we should be the seventh state of Australia certainly came out of the blue when it was promoted a couple of weeks ago by our Chief Minister, Adam Giles. Sure, both major political parties in the Territory, Labor and the Country Liberals, have long supported a push for statehood. But this one took us all aback. Former Chief Minister Shane Stone QC famously had a go at becoming the first premier of the State of the Northern Territory back in 1998. He put Statehood to a referendum that was held in conjunction with the Federal election in 1998. The people of the Northern Territory voted it down, albeit narrowly, and Shane Stone lost his Chief Ministership a few months later. The ‘No’ vote of Aboriginal people has been credited with the loss of that referendum.

And that’s because they harboured serious reservations about the fate of the Northern Territory Aboriginal Land Rights Act, enacted by the Commonwealth Parliament in 1976. Various CLP politicians over the 39 years since then have called for the Commonwealth to surrender the Land Rights Act to the Territory, and Aboriginal people still fear the consequences of that. I say that the recent history of government here gives little comfort to anyone, least of all Aboriginal people, that this jurisdiction has attained the political maturity or has the machinery robust enough to deserve the recognition of being a state.
Only nine days ago, Chief Minister Giles won the support of COAG leaders for another go at Statehood, this time by July 2018. However serious the reservations that Aboriginal people continue to harbour, however extensive consultations with them about the implications of Statehood might be, I say the timing’s all wrong. Much more important is consideration by the Northern Territory’s Aboriginal people, one third of the total population, of how they will be recognised in the Australian constitution. Any campaign for Territory Statehood in the meantime would be a damaging distraction from this much bigger question. Constitutional recognition of our Indigenous peoples is a critical next step in this nation’s maturity. And it must come with a prohibition of racial discrimination by all governments.

Remember that Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory had to suffer the ignominy of the Howard government’s decision in 2007 to suspend the Racial Discrimination Act so that it could implement that dreadful suite of measures that was called the Intervention. What sort of a nation are we if our politicians can’t countenance a prohibition on racial discrimination by governments?

Yet some of them seem cripped by a caution that that would be a step too far, by a fear that the people would not stomach a change to the Constitution which would contain such a prohibition. But remember that the joint select committee of Parliament found overwhelming support for just that. More importantly, any referendum question on recognition will fail if it doesn’t first have the support of Australia’s Indigenous peoples. That’s why I support the case put by Patrick Dodson and Noel Pearson to Prime Minister Abbott that his Government resources a round of conventions just for Indigenous peoples so that they truly understand what this referendum question, once it’s drafted, is all about.

While we’re all here on Gumatj country, let’s remember that Galarrwuy Yunupingu in 2013 presented to then newly-returned Prime Minister Kevin Rudd a petition calling for Constitutional recognition of Indigenous peoples. That was on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the presentation to the Commonwealth Parliament of the original Yirrkala bark petitions. The petitions protested the taking of land on the Gove peninsula for the bauxite mine that’s now owned by Rio Tinto.

And they marked the start of the Aboriginal struggle for land rights in the Northern Territory. Galarrwuy helped draft those petitions. His father was a signatory. How fitting it is that, as he prepares to retire from public life, Galarrwuy Yunupingu will be honoured at this place later today.

And that leads me to recognise another great Aboriginal leader from East Arnhem land who will also be honoured separately here today. Wali Wunungmurra is a Mala leader and lawman from the Dhalwangu clan and he also signed those Yirrkala bark petitions in 1963. He, too, has a long history in the struggle for land rights. Born and educated at Yirrkala, Wali studied in Brisbane before returning home to assist the Yolngu clans during the historic Gove Land Rights case in 1971. And he too attended the 50th anniversary of the presentation of those petitions in 2013, the same year as he retired after two terms as chairman of the Northern Land Council.

So, the Aboriginal people of East Arnhem, two former chairmen of the Northern Land Council in particular, have been at the forefront of the struggle for Aboriginal rights, not just land rights, for much longer than I’ve been on this earth.

Recalling that history of leadership gives me nourishment in my job as chief executive of the NLC. It makes me feel proud to continue in the job.

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

Constitutional Recognition

Senator Nova Peris, Prof. Patrick Dobson, Prof. Marcia Langton, Mr Noel Pearson, Mr Mick Gooda, Mayatili Marika . Moderated by: Mr Stan Grant

Confirming the reputation of Garma’s Key Forum as the number one platform for the discussion & debate of Indigenous affairs, the panel on Constitutional Recognition became a hot button issue which resonated through the Australian political landscape.
The controversy began immediately as Patrick Dodson opened the session by informing the auditorium – & a live television audience – that 5 minutes before this event - Prime Minister Tony Abbott had rejected calls for a series of Indigenous Constitutional Conventions aimed at reaching a consensus position among Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people.

Fellow panellist Noel Pearson likened the progress of Constitutional reform to a doomed space mission, while fellow panellist Mick Gooda said he felt “despair” when told of the news.

Pearson explained why recognition was so important. "Recognition is a mirror. Recognition is also about recognising the whitefellas. Recognition is about recognising the whitefellas as much about recognising blackfellas. You will recognise yourselves when you recognise the original people of this country. The recognition process is not just a matter of formally recognising us in Constitution - it is about putting the mirror in front of your face & finally recognising yourselves as Australian."

Although the PM initially stuck to his guns regarding the conventions, the frustrations expressed by Indigenous leaders at Garma ultimately swayed him to change his mind, helping to put the recognition campaign back on track at a time when it threatened to be derailed.

You Tube link of this Garma Key Forum panel:

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Garma Panel: Economic Framework: economies, procurement & possibilities

Held on Saturday afternoon, this panel session focussed on the emergence and growth of the Indigenous economy. This Garma session looks to highlight the importance of community development utilising a local workforce through education, training and employment. This panel was facilitated by CEO of Indigenous Business Australia Mr Chris Fry, as he introduced the following speakers:

Mr Bobby Nunggumatjbarr, Chairman, Yugal Mangi Development Corporation
Mr Phillip Strachan CEO, Rio Tinto Alcan
Mr Adam Giles, Chief Minister of the Northern Territory
Mr Klaus Helms, CEO Gumatj Corporation

Each speaker brought their perspectives on Aboriginal wealth creation, providing examples of regional projects being developed with a better understanding of Indigenous culture being a focal point to success or failure. Time and time again it was reiterated that a deeper understanding of Indigenous culture is required to ensure success from the ground up. The importance of recognising mistakes made along the way was also highlighted. Rio Tinto Alcan in particular expressed their pride in being a large employer of Indigenous people, while at the same time noting their interest in increasing the number of Indigenous contractors they engage and ensuring a larger engagement in their business.
NT Chief Minister Adam Giles conveyed the importance of his government's regional focus, Aboriginal wealth creation and Indigenous people themselves being the masters of their own destinies. He spoke of the NT Government and Rio Tinto Alcan partnership in the formation of Develop East Arnhem Land (DEAL), a not-for-profit development body established in November 2014 to act as the front door for industry and business in the region.

Bobby Nunggumatjbarang and Klaus Helms gave a local perspective on Indigenous business development from the communities of Gunyangara and Ngukurr. Both communities are setting a business agenda via the drive and direction of people on the ground. The vision of the people to create wealth for their communities is vital, but with that it is important to be realistic about building an industry that will be sustainable in the long term.

The complete speeches are available here:

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Stamping out domestic violence

Perhaps the most moving & compelling session at this year's Key Forum took place on Sunday morning. This came from advocates in the fight against domestic abuse, Lani Brennan & Charlie King, whose No More campaign encourages men to take responsibility for stamping out the scourge of family violence.

Brennan spoke bravely of her own battle with a violent partner, & the courage which helped her to walk away from an abusive relationship & seek justice.

Seated amongst the audience was a large contingent of school students who were participating in the Garma Youth Forum, who made the time and effort to make sure they didn't miss this compelling session. Many of these students later said that they found Lani's speech emotionally confronting, and marvelled at her incredible ability to draw strength from her experiences and share her story with the general public. They also spoke of Charlie King's inspiring determination to raise the importance of
the No More campaign through the window of community sporting clubs as part of his efforts to curb domestic violence.

Fact: Each week in Australia, two women are killed by domestic violence, with Indigenous women experiencing disproportionately high levels of domestic violence compared with the broader community.

The link to this Garma forum is worthwhile viewing for all who read this report. We can and should all support the No More campaign by sharing this You Tube file with our own colleagues, family members and friends.

You Tube link of this Garma Key Forum panel:

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Focusing on kidney health

Introduced by Mr John Morgan, Chairman of Miwatj Health.

This Garma panels was sponsored by

With kidney disease being the number one health issue facing communities in northeast Arnhem Land, the Key Forum hosted an important session on the availability & provision of renal health services in the region. This session emphasised the need for greater resources in the local area.

This forum took place on Saturday afternoon, and we were particularly honoured to have Professor Alan Cass & Dr Paul Lawton of the Menzies School of Health join a number of panellists to discuss a matter close to the Arnhem region’s heart. Underpinning this panel was the memory of the late Mandawuy Yunupingu, who suffered from kidney failure. His wife, Yalmay Yunupingu, spoke of the difficulties she had experienced and the burden and toll it took on Mandawuy’s entire family. “It was a nightmare. We lived away from our family in Darwin for 5 years, and we were very homesick,” she said.

CEO of Miwatj health Mr Eddie Mulholland said it was one of the key challenges facing his community health service.

“In NE Arnhemland alone, today, 24 people suffer end stage renal disease. Of them, most attend care in Darwin. Few of those patients engage care in Yirrkala at our Miwatj health clinic. There are many others that choose not to pursue any care at all due to their having to relocate, to leave their families and cultural obligations.”

Professor Cass spoke of the harsh realities of renal disease: “In Australia, more than 2000 Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander people suffer severe kidney disease. Those people require dialysis or a transplant to keep them alive. Dialysis requires sitting in a chair three times a week for 5 hours in a hospital. In remote areas the burden of this disease is 50 times higher. For those, the majority are forced to relocate.”

Ronald Morgan, a 23-year-old Indigenous man from the Kimberley, brought a valuable perspective to this session. He spoke of his experience of undertaking two transplants, the first when he was 5, the second in the year 2000. Ronno spoke of having to move his entire family to Perth so that he could receive dialysis.

Facts:

- Indigenous people are more than four times more likely than non-Indigenous people to have stage-four or stage-five kidney disease, & almost four times as likely to die from chronic kidney disease.

- End-stage kidney disease is 18 to 20 times higher for Indigenous people in remote & very remote areas. Indigenous patients are also at least 20 years younger than in other areas.

Echoing the calls of healthcare practitioners & providers over many years, the panellists urged more funding & resources for remote dialysis.

You Tube link of this Garma Key Forum panel:

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Focus on government funding & financing

With so much debate in the media about the Commonwealth Government's new Indigenous Advancement Strategy, the Key Forum was fortunate to play host to a fascinating discussion on government grants and funding by former president of the Northern Territory Council of Social Services Barry Hansen. Joining him was researcher Professor John Taylor. This session was called Data snapshots – Opportunity costs, and it was held on the afternoon of Sunday 2nd August.

The purpose of this particular session was to highlight the frustrations felt when government funding grants amounting to a massive $4.1 billion dollars does not hit the veins of community, and why it's ripple effect is not felt on impact on the ground. Communities - remote ones in particular - struggle on a daily basis, and funding sources are vitally important to their functionality and long term survival.

Barry Hansen's explanation of Commonwealth-State financial arrangements gave a fascinating insight into the process and machinery of government and the direction of funding grants, while Professor Taylor spoke of the implications and costs of the existing financial arrangements.
The importance of this debate was underlined in the weeks after Garma, when the data presented at the Key Forum was picked up by the national media as a major story, one that continues to play out in the pages of *The Australian* newspaper.

You Tube link’s of these Garma Key Forum panels:

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**Garma celebrates our community Heroes.**

--- WARNING ---

**PLEASE BE WARNED THE FOLLOWING PAGES CONTAIN IMAGES OF THE LATE MR WALI WUNUNGMURRA.**

A relatively new component of the Garma Key Forum, the Yolngu Hero awards ceremony honours those people in our community who have contributed significantly to the development of their community. Scheduled: Saturday 1 August, 12pm.

2015 Yolngu Hero Mr Wali Wunungmurra  
Vale Mr Wunungmurra.

L to R Balupalu Yunupingu, Yolngu Hero  
Dana Yunupingu, Chief Minister Adam Giles  
& Mr Jack Thompson

Rarriwuy Marika & Minister Scullion  
Daniel, Barayuwa, Dana, Balupalu & Gapirri

“YYF would like to commend all of our Yolngu heroes for their generosity, and thank you for nurturing and caring for all of us who have felt your touch on society.”
Denise Bowden, CEO Yothu Yindi Foundation.

Four Yolngu Heroes were acknowledged for their influence upon the community, & the stand out Hero this year was given to Mr Wali Wunungmurra. YYF was saddened by the passing of senior Dhalwaŋu leader Mr Wunuŋmurra in the days after Garma. The YYF Board have chosen to retain the footage of Mr Wunungmurra in his honour, & therefore his image appears on footage & on our website out of deep respect for a gentleman we all love & miss dearly.

Mr Wunungmurra was a signatory to the landmark 1963 Yirrkala Bark Petition & an interpretor in the
Gove Lands Rights case. Mr Wunuŋmurra was honoured at Garma for his lifetime of advocacy on behalf of his people.

He was a Mala leader & law man of the Dhalwaŋu nation of northeast Arnhem Land.

An educator & a teacher at Yirrkala, Mr Wunuŋmurra also served with distinction as the chairperson of Laynhapuy Homelands, the Yambirrpa School Council & the Northern Land Council.

Also acknowledged were three Yolngu women, each leaders in their own unique ways. Dana Yunupingu was honoured for her work as the manager of the Gunyangara general store. Also honoured was the softly spoken Ms Rarrwuy Marika – an elder, an educator, a role model and a woman celebrated as being an enabler, one who was recognised for her ongoing role of supporting her community in any way she can find. We also recognised Ms Joan Djamalaka Dhamarrandji, from Elcho Island, both for her work in healthcare and her ongoing commitment to supporting individuals, families and her community. These women each had a positive impact on their communities, all in a gentle and quiet manner.

You Tube link’s of the Yolngu Hero Garma Key Forum panel:

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Emphasis on the beauty of Australia’s Indigenous arts & culture

The Garma “spectacular” takes place each sunset on the Gulkula bunggul grounds. Here guests reflect upon some of Arnhem Land’s oldest songs, oldest dance forms & Australia’s ancient dance in the form of arts. Each year, the arts and cultural component of our event grows in popularity, and we are especially proud of displaying an art form so deeply entrenched in history, philosophy & cultural complexity. The Garma “spectacular” is our version of a night at the opera.

Organising this component of Garma is often fraught with challenges, given dance troupes are based so remotely & communications so limited. As always, it was a pleasure to host the ten dance troupes
from our region.

Chairman Galarrwuy Yunupingu eloquently explains the significance of the Garma bunggul:

“It is through the ceremonies that our lives are created. These ceremonies record & pass on the laws that give us ownership of the land & of the seas, & the rules by which we live. Our ceremonial grounds are our universities, where we gain the knowledge that we need. The universities work to a moon cycle, with many different levels of learning & different ‘inside’ ceremonies for men & women: from the new moon to the full moon, we travel the song cycles that guide the life & the essence of the clan - keeping all in balance, giving our people their meaning. It is the only cycle of events that can ever give a Yolngu person - someone from north-east Arnhem Land - the full energy that he or she requires for life. Without this learning, Yolngu can achieve nothing: they are nobody.”

YYF’s thank you is extended to the following clans & families for showcasing the beauty of this ceremonial component of Garma, & for sharing such significant stories with guests of Garma 2015: Wangurri, Gumatj, Galpu, Madarrpa, Blue Mud Bay, Dhalwangu, Dhatiwuy-Ngamil, Groote Eylandt, Umbakumba, Mangalili.

Thanks to Ella Geia, Chris Yaltharr Munuggurr, Neiningamianga Russell Wurrawillya, Grant Nhurundiribala, Graham Maymuru, Eric Amagula, David Dingala, Robert Gunyabi Gunumbarr, Charlie Donald Yilipawuy, Buwatpuy Michael Gumana, Muwulyun David Wunungmurra, Yumutjin Jimmy Wunungmurra, Napurwarri David Marawili, Peter Manbanu Marawili, Gurrulkmungu James Gurrufiwi, Djalu Willy Gurrufiwi, Balupalu Yunupingu & Witiyana Marika,

For charter air service, the Yothu Yindi Foundation utilises the services of Laynhapuy Aviation.

The Gong Wapitja Women’s Healing Program is always a particularly moving programming element of Garma. The Yolngu ladies revisited the original Dilthan Yolngunha site after allowing a respectful period of time to pass in honour of the late Gulumbu Yunupingu.

Friendships forged.

Healing, busy djama (work)
This year the women’s program was slightly altered from 2014 so that the Yolngu ladies could focus on the healing favoured as being more significant. A schedule of activities was drawn up, & the ladies busied themselves some time in advance as preparations took shape.

Up to 30 ladies delivered steaming & sauna, bush pharmacy talks, Dawn Crying Ceremony & allocated some time to meet with the Health Minister, Fiona Nash. Many of the ladies took part in the cultural activities around the bunggul grounds, & many were happy to share their knowledge with the non-Indigenous women on a whim, whenever quality time presented itself. Collection of gunga (pandanus) takes some time, the stripping & then dying of colour requires great patience, skill & planning. Weaving, jewellery & painting exhausted many of the ladies, as they took it in their stride with much laughter & often a joke or two thrown in for good measure.

Special thanks to the following Yolngu ladies involved in getting such a lovely women's package coordinated on behalf of the Yothu Yindi Foundation & Garma 2015:


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Djamakuli (Youth) Forum

Sponsored by

The youth gathering this year was a great success story, & one that the Yothu Yindi Foundation has made a concerted effort to continue to improve and grow. Thanks to all who assisted with the coordination of the Youth Forum. Funded by the Australian Government and the Yothu Yindi Foundation, this year’s young leaders & school students produced an engaging and creative hot-spot of activities over the course of four days. A source of never-ending noise, music, dance and communications, here was a fun and safe haven to learn, build new friendships, and create memories that will stay with these youngsters for a lifetime.
The Youth Forum program is primarily initiated by the Garma Director Denise Bowden. This year she introduced a word theme for the Youth Forum: Pareidolia. Pareidolia is a psychological phenomenon involving a vague & random stimulus (often an image or sound) perceived as significant to an individual. Common examples include seeing an image of animal or a face in a natural element such as a cloud or the bark of a tree. This newly introduced component of the Youth Forum required participants to observe & submit over the course of four days a pareidolia example that was entered into a competition. This meant understanding what the word meant, how to work the equipment that was supplied to record their entry, & to communicate to their youth forum colleagues the details of their entry & where they'd found it. There were some exceptional entries, all very creative & unique. The winner, LC Johnson, was awarded a brand new Apple i-Pad for her contribution. Here is her winning entry.
We should like to thank Garma Director Denise Bowden, Minister for Indigenous Affairs Nigel Scullion & the Australia Government, Apple, Questacon, Ninja Circus, the Indigenous Hip Hop Projects, Miwatj Health, RuOK?, the Recognise campaigners, Foundation for Young Australians, IMPACT & NIYLA, Charlie Demplar, Emma Donovan & Garma’s musicians, Dhimurru Aboriginal Land Corporation, the Sydney Kings basketballers, Social Justice Commissioner Mick Gooda, NT Police Commissioner Reece Kershaw, Senator Nova Peris & members of the Fruit Fly Circus.

Leaving the best for last – a big shout out to St Columbans students & Principal Ann Rebgetz. The St Columbans students were an exceptional group, the largest group of students on record to participate in this years Youth Forum. YYF would like to commend St Columbans for enabling & orchestrating such a large group of 54 students to Arnhem Land. It was an absolute pleasure to host this contingent, & we hope that Garma has helped shape your thinking of remote & Indigenous Australia & our region.

Thanks also to Geelong Grammar. It has been interesting to watch the growth of the Geelong Grammar contingent over the past three years. In 2013, we were visited by 2 teaching staff. In 2014, numbers had increased to 6. This year, YYF hosted 11 Geelong Grammar students & teaching staff. Thanks to Phil O’Connor & team for joining us onsite at Gulkula; we look forward to producing yet another exciting event next year.

It was a thrill to host Wesley College in the Garma Youth Forum for the first time. Special thanks to Principal Helen Drennan for enabling the school’s journey north. Three local Yolngu students were able to re-acquaint themselves with their fellow students on their country of Arnhem Land, & the ability to display & share their own culture was an extraordinary development, & a particularly proud moment for the kids of the Arnhem region.

Schools from across the remote Arnhem region were also largely represented within the Youth Forum. YYF would like to thank you, the djamakuli, for bringing to the fore issues that affect you, that make you want to learn more, and to provide your thoughts on what a world under your leadership will look like.

Next year’s Garma Youth Forum calls on organisations & individuals to contribute to the programming of our 2016 event.

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Garma’s got the beats

Working in partnership with

With the assistance of ARDS and Yolngu Radio, each night Garma serves up a delicious musical cocktail lapped up by our guests as they sit under the stars and drink in the vast array of musical talent on show.
“The lads really appreciated the opportunity to work on the stage, and it has definitely kick-started an interest in working with PA gear on a regular basis. Garma definitely helped create a good local ownership feeling as well as bringing the local crew together professionally.” Ahva Dub, Musical Coordinator.

Music has always been a backbone of Garma, stretching back to the earliest incarnations of the event, when music was the primary focus.

As if to underscore this point, Garma 2015 coincided with the 25th anniversary of the release of the landmark *Yothu Yindi* song, *Treaty*.

This year’s event showed that Arnhem Land continues to produce outstanding songwriters & musicians, with the *KK Band, Next Generation, Yilila Band & Garrangali* band from Yilpara leading the way for local talent.

We were also blessed to have *Emma Donovan & The Putbacks, the Barra Band, Jaxon De Santis, Black Smoke, Warren H Williams, the Tjintu Desert Band, Eazy Five, Neil Murray, Sol Nation,* & local crowd favourites *Yirrmal & the Yolngu Boys*.

We would like to thank all who have been a vital point of contact through the development of the Garma musical programming. Always a source of great joy, the Garma stage is where we get to experience so many of those Yolngu kids carving up the dance floor at an alcohol and drug free event.

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**Gapan Gallery**

Stunningly set in the stringy-bark trees, & lit up against the night sky, the open air gallery was again a major attraction for all guests.

Showcasing works from new & emerging artists, the Gapan gallery featured prints which highlight the depth & complexity of Yolngu art, & the influence of modern techniques & attitudes on traditional art.
This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the Yirrkala Print Space. The print space began in 1995 when an area was designed to house a printing press and transfer the means of production into Yolngu hands. Since the very first print, the studio has made over 700 editions by 135 artists and is now an integral component of the art centre and community.

As one of the few printing studios based in the community, the philosophy of Yirrkala Print Space is to provide an environment to educate, engage and strengthen the vision of Yolngu through artistic skills development and exploration of non-traditional techniques. It acts as a training area for emerging artists and provides employment.

The studio uses a variety of techniques, from woodblocks, linocuts and etchings to screen-prints, calligraphy and lithography. While for many artists this is their first exploration into the palette of the western world, they can still use the marwat (human hair brush) on the printmaking surface to capture the highly refined style of miny’tji (sacred clan design) particular to the area.

Over the past 20 years, Yirrkala Print Space has given Yolngu artists a space to come and enrich their artistic endeavours. This platform has been the home of important bodies of work including the 2012 Seven Sisters Suite and the 1998 Yirritja ga Dhuwa Linocut Panels, both in the NGA Collection. Cross-cultural projects Djalkiri (2010), Midawarr (2103) and Landmarks (2013) allowed for cross-pollination of cultures and artistic dialogue. Yolngu youth at risk of anti-social behaviour engaged with projects Young Ones (2010) and Yuta (2012). Yirrkala Print Space is unique in training local Yolngu to become printmakers on site and has had local printmakers working consistently since instigated. To celebrate this remarkable achievement the print space has produced an exclusive Twenty Year Suite.

The suite of prints showcases twenty of the art centre’s top artists and printmakers and was available for view and sale in the trees of the Gapan Gallery.

Special thanks to Buku Larrnggay & the following artists -

Garma Corporate Group Dinner, Sponsored by

“It is important that business, Australian enterprise, is so well represented at Garma. You are essential to our doing better in all aspects of reconciliation. You are capable of closing the social & economic gaps particularly through employment, of expanding economic opportunities, & more subtle, expanding the understanding that relationships & recognition matter. I have not seen a successful education or employment program which was not based on respectful relationships & cultural recognition.”

Mr Fred Chaney AM

Over 300 registered Corporate Groups dined under the stars on the Gulkula grounds at the Garma Larrakitj. Corporate groups attending Garma now comprise the most popular stream of registrations, & YYF will continue to converse with Corporate Australia and attract further input from across the business sector.

Thanks to the National Australia Bank, who were the sponsors of this year’s dinner.
Paul Braddock, YYF’s local caterer, provided an outstanding menu as Mr Fred Chaney AO was invited by the Director of Garma to provide the Corporate Dinner Key Note evening address. Sky News broadcast the entire address, & the speech was received well by the 30 groups of senior executives in attendance. Mr Chaney spoke of the importance of a unified approach to the future of the Australian nation through Indigenous Affairs. He stated simply that it is easy through the eyes of the Garma platform to understand why constitutional recognition matters, why reconciliation matters, why respect, recognition & relationships matter in the practical business in which Corporate Australia is engaged, whether through growing employment or increasing economic participation. Mr Chaney’s entire speech can be viewed online here:

Garma's bush Expo

The Garma exhibition stalls attracted a very broad representation of organisations wishing to network and distribute their information to our many guests. This particular component of Garma has grown in popularity as organisations benefit from the ability to engage with remote networks. This year's expo comprised more than 20 organisations seeking to engage with guests, discuss their presence in the Arnhem region, and inform the general community what new services were being delivered locally. Groups who exhibited at Garma this year are as follows:

Rio Tinto, Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation, Recognise, Westpac, Miwatj Employment & Participation, Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet, NAILSMA, NT Department of Corrections, Federal Department of Human Services, NT Department of Education, Laynhapuy Association, Power Water, Flinders University, NAAJA, Menzies School of Health, NT Government, East Arnhem Regional Council, Developing East Arnhem Land, Department of Agriculture, Gove District Hospital & Primary Health.
Audience & Exposure

As in previous years, Garma 2015 sold out months in advance of the event, & the Gulkula site & its facilities were again at capacity. With Garma appealing to a broad cross-section of the community, we continue to play host to a diverse & vibrant audience.

Attendance figures continued to increase year by year, with up to 2500 guests entering the Garma gates. In terms of demographics, the state most represented this year was Victoria, followed closely by New South Wales. International guests visited from the United States, Japan & Poland. Corporate Australia has increased its attendance, & businesses & organisations continue to find lasting benefits from the cultural content, the Garma Key Forum & networking abilities with other guests & like-minded organisations. The high attendance of schools from across Australia is the second largest growing stream of Garma, & the level of student representation from schools this year increased on last year’s numbers. It is particularly pleasing to hear that students themselves are generating interest & fundraising to make the trip to Garma without requiring a prompt from their teachers & school principals.

Although our event attracts many types of people from all walks of life, the average Garma-goer is now a senior executive managing a business looking to assist the Indigenous economy, or aid reconciliation. Garma has played a significant role in promoting the importance of Indigenous Australia & keeping abreast of Indigenous issues, particularly given the restructuring of governments both state & federal at a policy level. Constitutional Reform remains a hot-button issue, and Garma will continue to focus on the key issues affecting Indigenous Australians as we program our event next year.

In addition to the many local Yolngu who deliver different components of Garma – as Keynote speakers, or in cultural workshops & dance troupes – the event also attracts Indigenous groups from throughout the Northern Territory. Clans from the northeast Arnhem region - Wangurri, Gumatj, Galpu, Madarmpa, Dhawangu, Dhatiwuy-Ngamil, Grote Eylandt, Mangalili, & Djapu - have a strong presence, & we also attract guests from the Central Desert.

Diverse language groups from Aboriginal Australia were represented, & we heard Luritja, Wiradjuri, Yorta Yorta, Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara, Ngandi, Kadjarong spoken at Garma. From the lands of the Kaurna people in the south, the Gubbi Gubbi to the East & of course the local Yolngu people’s
language of Yolngu Matha, all are given the freedom to express their group's unique identity.

And while Gulkula can only accommodate a limited number of people, YYF is pleased to report that we continue to grow the Garma audience as we extend our reach into the broader Australian community.

We were aided in this quest by the support of our key media sponsor, Sky News, which ran many of the Key Forum sessions live on its Sky News LIVE & A-PAC channels, taking the discussions & debates of northeast Arnhem Land into homes & businesses across Australia.

The significance of such prominent coverage is that it brings more people into the important conversations taking place at Garma, & at various times throughout the four days of this year's event, the Garma hashtag was trending on Twitter.

The Sky News broadcast was complimented by comprehensive newspaper coverage in The Australian & The Weekend Australian, which ran stories from Garma on the front page for four consecutive days.

We were delighted to have the local Aboriginal Resource & Development Service (ARDS Radio) assisting with the musical production & major broadcasting live from the event.

Other media to attend this year included Australian Associated Press, the Guardian, the ABC & NITV.

YYF continues to explore new ways to promote our brand & Garma. This year saw the pilot & launch of the inaugural Garma App, which became so popular, so quickly, it was trending as one Apple's most popular Apps over the Garma weekend. Previous guests of Garma were able to tune in to Garma events from Italy, from Asia & as far afield as San Francisco. We're excited to further develop this new digital tool to bring even more people into the Garma experience.

MEDIA

Below are links to some of the media stories generated by Garma 2015.


http://www.abc.net.au/pm/content/2015/s4284717.htm


http://www.theguardian.com/sport/2015/aug/01/noel-pearson-on-adam-goodes-booing-australia-is-
looking into the abyss of despair


http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/aug/03/let-this-conversation-over-adam-goodes-inspire-us-to-push-for-a-final-settlement


