



ABOVE: Kurongkurl Katitjin's Graeme Gower presenting the Mark McKenzie Prize to Bachelor of Health Science graduate, Jonathon Nowers

Country student wins the 2011 Mark McKenzie Prize

Each year, the Faculty of Education and Arts recognises the outstanding achievements of its students through student prizes.

Held on Sunday 22 January 2012 at the Perth Convention Centre, students, their family, and prize sponsors were invited to a ceremony to receive their prize. A particular highlight, is the presentation of the *Mark McKenzie Prize*, named in honour of Aboriginal graduate Mark McKenzie.

Story continued on page 3

Kurongkurl Katitjin, pronounced 'koor-ong-kurl cut-it-chin', is a Nyoongar phrase meaning 'coming together to learn'.

Inside This Edition



Farewell Brenda



YouMeUnity
Report



Orientation at
ECU



NAIDOC Theme
announced



Rock Solid Books
available

Welcome from the Head of Centre

Welcome to the Birak edition of *Our Place*, the official newsletter of Kurongkurl Katitjin, Centre for Indigenous Australian Education and Research at Edith Cowan University.

This edition of *Our Place* farewells another year and welcomes readers to 2012. With that in mind, I do hope that you and your loved ones have had a safe and happy break.

2011 was a year of many achievements for Kurongkurl Katitjin, most notably, the establishment and recognition of ECU's Indigenous Alumni.

We are very proud that this piece of work will have a lasting impact, not only for these graduates, but for the graduates of the future. It is my belief that this is just the beginning of what will be a fantastic legacy for generations of Indigenous graduates of Edith Cowan University.

After finishing 2011 on such a high, we are very excited at what 2012 will bring. Keeping the momentum going into this new year, not only makes us motivated, but reminds us of what we have achieved and what it takes to get it.

Finally, with a new wave of students about to embark on their educational journeys, we welcome them to Edith Cowan University and wish all our students the best in their studies.

Happy reading!



Professor Colleen Hayward



About the Centre

ECU's Kurongkurl Katitjin has a vital role in assisting the University to meet its commitment to Indigenous peoples.



Our mission is to "provide excellence in teaching and learning and research in a culturally inclusive environment that values the diversity of Indigenous Australian history and cultural heritage".

Consistent with this mission, the Centre provides support and academic pathways for Indigenous students and opportunities for non-Indigenous students to enhance their professional knowledge and cultural competence.

Country student wins the 2011 Mark McKenzie Prize

Continued from page 1

Mark graduated in 1983 with a Diploma of Teaching (Primary) and was the longest serving Chairperson of ECU's Indigenous Consultative Committee. He was also a strong advocate for encouraging Aboriginal students to study at University, particularly those from country locations.

Awarded by ECU's Indigenous Consultative Committee, this prize is presented to an Indigenous graduate who has made a significant contribution to the well-being of the Indigenous student body as well as achieving academic success.

The 2011 recipient, Jonathon Nowers is a country student from Port Hedland, who has just completed a Bachelor of Health Science. Jonathon received \$1000 and a certificate.

Lecturers described Jonathon as a very positive and engaged student, who worked diligently to achieve all learning outcomes.

Now enrolled in a Bachelor of Education (Secondary), Jonathon would like to return to Port Hedland to teach upon completion. Congratulations Jonathon.

ECU farewells Professor Brenda Cherednichenko

After almost four years of prodigious contributions to ECU, our Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Engagement, Equity and Indigenous) and Executive Dean (Faculty of Education and Arts) Professor Brenda Cherednichenko has accepted appointment as Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Arts and Education at Deakin University in Melbourne.

With a teaching background in schools and then in teacher education and the social sciences, Brenda's research has focussed on educational equity and community-university partnerships for improved educational opportunity and socially just outcomes.

She has also worked on many projects and partnerships with Indigenous Australian leaders and communities to enhance educational and social experiences for Aboriginal peoples.

Within ECU more specifically, Brenda has been instrumental in driving key initiatives including the development and launch of ECU's inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan, and establishing the Indigenous Australian Knowledge and Engagement Network.

Brenda has demonstrated strong leadership and an extraordinary commitment and passion to the advancement of Indigenous education and her valuable contributions to ECU will be missed.

Kurongkurl Katitjin would like to especially acknowledge Brenda, not only as a leader and colleague, but as a friend.

Brenda took up her position at Deakin in December 2011 and we wish her all the best in her new role.



ABOVE: Farewell Brenda

Nyoongar Season: About Birak *as written by Jason Barrow*

Birak season usually sees the rain ease up and the warm weather really start to take hold. With some cooling sea breezes along the coastal areas, people seek respite. However this time around, we can expect to see a continuance of good summer rainfalls that will accompany the summer wildfires, which are often started with lightening strikes at this time of the year.

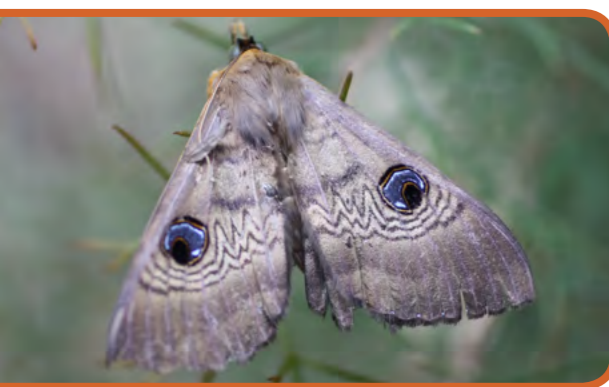
Fortunately, an almost clockwork cycle of easterly winds in the morning and seas breezes in the afternoon, meant that traditionally this was the burning time of year for Nyoongars.

They would burn the country in mosaic patterns for several reasons including – fuel reduction, increasing the grazing pastures for animals (game), to aid in seed germination for some plants and for ease of mobility across the country. Interestingly these days, Birak season is the start of the fire ban season.

Traditionally, this was also a good time to collect bush honey made by the many different native bees that had made good use of the abundance of flowers. It was also a good time to make reed bags for carrying things as life was centred adjacent to the wetlands where various reeds could be utilised. In addition to this, it was also a good season to collect wattle seeds after their flowering from the previous season for grinding into flour for breads and dampers.

Around the gardens of the Kurongkurl Katitjin building, you'll see the wonderful flowers of the Coral Gum (*E. torquata*) and the Fuchsia Gum (*E. forrestiana*). As well the flowers and seeds that we see at this time of the year, you'll also see loads of new growth on many of the Eucalypts (or Gum trees) and the Banksias as they all look to put their new leaves out to work in the sun shine before the full force of summer arrives.

For the animals, there are now many fledglings now venturing out of nests, though some still staying close to their parents. There have even been some second nesting's in some locations which have seen the Magpie swooping season last longer in these areas. You may even be fortunate enough to come across the odd sloth or old skin from a reptile. As they look to shed their old ones for new, their activity levels will be on the rise with the temperature.



Unlike last year's Makuru and Kambarang which were a little dry, we have had good rainfalls spaced out over time with some warm days leading to an increase in the insect numbers.

Of particular note, we should see an abundance of Old lady Moths (*Dasypodia selenophora*) pictured inset and the emergence of the Christmas Beetles (*genus Anopognathus*), if you frequent places with stands of Eucalyptus trees nearby that the beetles like to graze upon.

With the rising temperatures and the lessening rainfall, it's also a time of the baby frogs as many complete their transformation into adulthood. So on those warm still nights as the humidity increases, listen out for the frogs in your area calling to each other (or just keeping you awake!).

Wongi Nyoongar – Talking Nyoongar

With every edition of *Our Place*, we always receive great feedback from our readers, including particular requests for various words, lists or theme ideas.

So in this edition of *Wongi Nyoongar*, we will explore a simple counting list using the numbers one through ten.

Nyoongar name	Pronunciation	English name
Kenny	Keen-Nee	One
Koodjal	Kood-jarl	Two
Doombart	Doom-bart	Three
Koodjal Koodjal	Kood-jarl Kood-jarl	Four
Marr	Marr	Five
Marr Kenny	Marr Keen-Nee	Six
Marr Koodjarl	Marr Kood-jarl	Seven
Marr Dommbart	Marr Doom-bart	Eight
Marr Koodjarl Koodjarl	Marr Kood-jarl Kood-jarl	Nine
Marr Marr	Marr-Marr	Ten
Bulla	Bull-a	Biggest mobs

Nyoongar Story Time *as told by Dr Noel Nannup*

Mangka: Fishing

With the people living on the coast, this time of the year was a great for fishing and gathering along the coastal shores. With the *Kwella* (Dolphins) travelling along the coast, along with the *Mammong* (whales) we mentioned in the last edition, the old people and skilled hunters would 'call' the dolphins to help on fishing trips.

Of particular focus would have been the *Kwalla* (Mullet). By using stone fish traps, nets, baits and 'calling' the Dolphins to help herd large schools in close to shore, people always had good catches of fish. Occasionally, whale standings too provided large amounts of food in the one go. At these times, big gatherings were often called so many people could come together and share in the resources available.

Along the coastal shoreline and the nearby reefs, people gathered an abundance of shellfish and other animals living in the shallow waters. This would include baler shellfish, crayfish, abalone and stingrays to name a few.

In some of these inshore areas, fresh water springs would flow into the ocean creating special opportunities for people to hunt much larger predatory fish. These fish would come into these areas to cleanse their gills of parasites that build up over time.

Whilst in close to shore and being a little more docile than usual, these larger predatory fish become easy targets for those skilled with the use of a *gidgi* (fishing spear).

Explore the hidden treasure at the Joondalup Campus

Built around natural flora and fauna, ECU's Joondalup Campus is surrounded by a diverse natural environment.

ECU's Green Officers are encouraging people to explore the natural treasures at the Joondalup Campus with a new walking trail app for smart phones and Android-compatible devices.

The app provides GPS data, photographs of the flora, fauna and landscapes as well as audio commentary and web links, with 18 points of interest throughout the 1.9km route.

Green Officers Caroline Bishop, Wendy Morris, Brian Trump and project coordinator Belinda O'Brien developed the app to showcase ECU's diverse environment and encourage the local community to explore it.



ABOVE: Joondalup Campus flora

"The trail is 1.9km long, providing information on ECU's biodiversity and sustainability initiatives," Computing, Health and Science Faculty Officer Caroline Bishop said.

"We would really like to encourage the ECU and local community to come and see what the Campus has to offer."

The trail highlights areas such as the ECU lake, plant specimens and the extensive sculpture and art work on Campus, as well as Edith Cowan's own home.

The app can be downloaded from the Everytrails website and is free for smart phone and Android-compatible devices.

To download, visit: www.everytrail.com/guide/edith-cowan-university-biodiversity-walk

You Me Unity Report

A report on how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples could be recognised in the Constitution has been finalised and presented at a recent ceremony held at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra.

Presented to the Prime Minister on the 19 January 2012 by members of the Panel on Constitutional Recognition, the comprehensive report draws on the Panel's extensive consultations across the country, more than 3500 submissions received, research and national surveys as well as meetings with Indigenous leaders and the advice of constitutional law experts.

It's recommendations include recognising and respecting the continuing cultures, languages and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples, removing racist elements from the Constitution and prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of race, colour or ethnic or national origin.

To view the full report online, visit: www.youmeunity.org.au/final-report

Orientation at ECU

ECU's Orientation program runs at the start of each semester to give new students information about what to expect in your course, how things work at ECU, and some fun events and opportunities to meet other students.

Orientation for all new students, except the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), will run throughout the following periods:

Semester 1:

Wednesday, 15 February - Saturday, 25 February 2012

Semester 2:

Friday, 20 July - Saturday, 28 July 2012

2012 WAAPA Orientation events will commence on Monday, 13 February 2012.

Students should work your way through the site before you start, to familiarise yourself with the University. Remember to register for the important Orientation Events.

For more information on Orientation, visit: www.ecu.edu.au/new-students/orientation

Tutorial Assistance for Indigenous students

Whether you are a new student or a continuing student, we could all do with some help from time to time with our studies.

The Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme Tertiary Tuition (ITAS) aims to improve the educational outcomes of Indigenous students in tertiary courses to the same levels as those for non-Indigenous Australians.

ITAS covers the cost of engaging a tutor to provide academic and study skills assistance to eligible students.

Kurungkurl Katitjin facilitates ITAS for Indigenous Australian students at Edith Cowan University.

To be eligible for ITAS, you must be of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, and enrolled (internally or externally) on a full-time or part-time basis in an undergraduate education program. Students will need to complete a student application form every semester.

First year students are strongly encouraged to apply for ITAS to help with your studies in your foundation year.

As the start of semester one for 2012 looms, the ITAS forms for students and those interested in becoming tutors are now available on the Kurungkurl Katitjin website.

For further information, visit: www.kk.ecu.edu.au/students/itas



Healthy Lifestyle Worker toolkit launched

On the 13 December 2011, Professor Neil Thomson, Director of the Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet attended the Canberra launch of a new Healthy Lifestyle Worker toolkit to help tackle chronic disease in Indigenous communities.

The *Healthy, deadly and strong, Healthy Lifestyle Worker* toolkit was produced by ECU's Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet on behalf of the Department of Health and Ageing. The toolkit was launched by the Minister for Indigenous Health, Warren Snowdon.

The toolkit, along with a new resource called *Medicines to help you stop smoking - a guide about nicotine replacement therapy (NRT)*, will soon be rolled out to a national network of Regional Tackling Smoking and Healthy Lifestyle teams.

A key part of the work carried out by the health teams is directly tackling some of the main causes of chronic disease and early death among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including smoking, poor diet and lack of physical activity.

Addressing a four-day workshop of the teams in Canberra, Mr Snowdon said the efforts of Healthy Lifestyle Workers were already having a strong and positive effect on the ground.

The toolkits take a grass-roots approach, encouraging communities to develop their own healthy lifestyle activities and messages that target health priorities in individual communities.

For more information, please visit: www.health.gov.au/tackling-chronic-disease

Spirit of the Tent Embassy: 40 years on - 2012 NAIDOC Theme

National NAIDOC Week 2012 will be held from 1–8 July and is an opportunity for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians to join together to recognise the valuable contribution Indigenous people make to Australia's national identity.

This year's theme, **Spirit of the Tent Embassy: 40 years on** was selected by the National NAIDOC Committee to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy and acknowledge the key contributors to its long history.

Entries for the 2012 National NAIDOC Poster Competition close on **Friday 30 March**. The winning entry, which receives a \$5000 cash prize, will feature on the 2012 National NAIDOC poster and be displayed across Australia in workplaces, schools and community organisations.

There are ten award categories including the prestigious Person of the Year and Lifetime Achievement Awards. Winners will be honoured during NAIDOC Week at the premier NAIDOC event, the National NAIDOC Awards Ceremony and Ball to be held in Hobart on Friday 6 July 2012.

Nominations for the 2012 National NAIDOC Awards close on **Friday 27 April**.

For entry forms and more information, visit:
www.naidoc.org.au



1-8 JULY 2012
SPIRIT OF THE
TENT EMBASSY:
40 YEARS ON

Staff Snapshot

Neil Thomson



Director,
Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet

Favourite book:

One day in the life of Ivan Denisovich – without doubt, the most memorable book I've read

Favourite music:

Gordon Lightfoot – I got 'hooked' during my three years living in Montreal

Favourite food:

North African and Turkish

Favourite TV Program:

Four Corners

Favourite Movie:

The Pawnbroker – Rod Steiger is my all-time favourite actor

If you could meet anyone, who would it be?

Leonardo da Vinci – it is also impossible to believe the diversity of his many talents.

What is something that people don't know about you?

I quite like red wine (well, perhaps a few people do know that!)

ECU hosts the Indigenous Higher Education Consortium

Held on the 1 and 2 December 2011, Kurungkul Katitjin hosted the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Consortium (NATSIHEC).

Over 20 members from different Universities around Australia attended the two-day meeting.

ECU's Vice-Chancellor Professor Kerry Cox had the opportunity to address the group to share some of the University's achievements in Aboriginal education.

NATSIHEC, formerly known as the National Indigenous Higher Education Network (NIHEN) is a cohort of professional bodies, established to provide a representative voice for Indigenous higher education knowledge networks.

NIHEN's mission is to provide a forum for the staff of the Indigenous higher education sector to pursue common goals and objectives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Rock Solid Foundations Commemorative Booklet

Produced especially for the Rock Solid Foundations event which celebrated ECU's Indigenous Alumni, the commemorative booklet is an important keepsake and contains the names of Indigenous graduates from between 1951-2010.

This list of graduates has been compiled based on a teacher qualification or diploma or higher.

Additionally, graduates have been identified through their status as an Aboriginal and /or Torres Strait Islander person.

NOTE: Graduates with multiple qualifications will only appear once (the year their first qualification was attained) and surnames recorded as at graduation.

The booklet is available in limited quantities (1 per person) or can be downloaded from Kurungkul Katitjin's website.

To order or download your copy of the commemorative booklet, visit: www.kk.ecu.edu.au

Our Place is Kurongkurl Katitjin's official newsletter and is produced six times a year.

It is circulated electronically to a range of stakeholders including staff, students and the broader community.

PRODUCED BY

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