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Azlan Martin is the new Guild President in 2014

First Indigenous leader of ECU's Student Guild

Azlan Martin has been elected as the new President of the ECU Student Guild in 2014, making her the first Indigenous Australian student to undertake the role, since the inception of the university.

After previously serving as the Guild's Chair of Equity and Diversity, Azlan is passionate about ensuring University life is equitable and inclusive for all students, as well as finding positive ways of bridging gaps between student groups and support services.

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

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* welcomes readers back for another big and exciting year. I hope you all had a safe, happy holidays and ready to take on 2014.

This time of the year is generally a quieter period for us, especially with students completing exams and heading into a well earned rest. But even with the quiet period, there is always work to do, including sharing good news.

Of particular note, we saw current student Azlan Martin recently appointed as the new President of ECU's Student Guild, making her the first Indigenous student to undertake this role since the inception of ECU. We are so excited for Azlan and wish her all the best in this role throughout 2014.

We have also introduced a new column titled: 'Kurongkurl Katitjin Out and About'. This section of the newsletter aims to showcase some of the meetings, activities and events with which my staff and I are involved. Establishing and maintaining strong links to the community beyond university walls is so important to us. We hope this column gives readers a better idea of the breadth and depth of our work.

Happy reading!

Colleen W .

Professor Colleen Hayward AM
Head of Centre, Kurongkurl Katitjin;
Pro-Vice Chancellor (Equity & Indigenous)



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.

First Indigenous leader of ECU's Student Guild

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Currently studying a Bachelor of Arts (Psychology), Azlan hopes use the knowledge and skills through her experiences at ECU, to work in public health promotion; particularly around empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples, to 'close the gap' in modern Australia.

About the Guild

The Student Guild acts on behalf of all students, providing services that aim to protect students' rights and enhance their study experience at ECU.

The Guild ensures that the university is made aware of student concerns and issues, and provides welfare and support services, as well as organising social events and cultural activities; supports student clubs and societies.

For further information on the ECU Student Guild, visit: www.ecuguild.org.au

Let's Talk: 26 January

What does 26 January mean to you? A day off, a barbecue and fireworks? A celebration of who we are as a nation? A day of mourning and invasion? A celebration of survival?

Australians hold many different views on what 26 January means to them.

For many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, it isn't a day for celebration. Instead, 26 January represents a day on which their way of life was invaded and changed forever.

For others, it is Survival Day, and a celebration of the survival of people and culture, and the continuous contributions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make to Australia.

Some quick statistics

15,000 Australians attended the Freedom, Justice and Hope march in 1988 to celebrate the survival of Aboriginal people and culture.

Around **16,000** people attend the Yabun festival—the single largest Indigenous festival in Australia, and one of the most important music events in the country—in Sydney to mark 26 January each year.

In **1992**, the first Survival Day concert was held in Sydney.

There have been **8** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people awarded Australian of the Year since the award began in 1960.

In 2014, there were **14** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander state and territory finalists for the Australian of the Year Awards.

For more information, visit: www.reconciliation.org.au



Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue, Australian of the Year in 1984

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Nyoongar Season: About Birak

Birak season is the start of the fire ban season these days, but traditionally it was the time for burning.

As mentioned last season, we can now see the many Moodja or Australian Christmas trees (*Nuytsia floribunda*) that are now in full bloom and this was a signal for the Nyoongar people to now be close to the coastal areas in preparation for the coming hot weather.

Whilst here on the coastal plain with the fresh water lakes, fires would be lit in the morning with the easterly winds pushing them towards the coast; then in the afternoon, the sea breezes would push the fires back on themselves. These fires were used in mosaic patterns for several reasons, including keeping the bush in a constant state of regeneration, formation of grazing pastures for game, for ease of movement across the country and of course, fuel reduction, in readiness for the Bunuru season's lightning storms that will come from the north with extremely dry and hot winds.

As the days become longer and warmer and drier, being on the coast now would provide some respite with the afternoon sea breezes helping to bring a cooler change, which is why the coast was, and still is, a well favoured place to be at this time of the year.

With many flowering plants having had their peak flowering period throughout Djilba and Kambarang, this was a good time to collect bush honey made by the many different native bees. And as people started to make full use of the wetland environment, it was also a good time to make reed bags for carrying food stuffs that were collected throughout the banksia heathlands, between the lake chains across the coastal plain.

Around the gardens of the Kurungkurl Katitjin building, you will see the wonderful flowers of the Coral Gum (*E. torquata*) and the Fuchsia Gum (*E. forrestiana*), as well as the masses of yellow flowers from the Candlestick Banksias (*B. attenuata*) on the south side of the building.

Across the metropolitan area, not only will you be able to see many examples of the Candlestick Banksias, but also the wonderful florescent orange flowers of the Moodja trees and to the eastern areas on the white/grey sands, the Orange Morrisons (*Verticordia nitens*).

As people made their way across the coastal plains they also started to make use of the various waterways that now provided good sources of various animals to also harvest. These included the starting of the crabbing and prawning season in the estuaries, long neck turtles in the fresh water lakes; as they've already laid their eggs that are now starting to hatch; and of course the frogs that have emerged with the warmer and drier weather.

You should also notice that the Coolbardies (Magpies) have at last started to stop swooping as their young are now fledging and can be seen out foraging alongside their parents. Look out for the grey, older looking dishevelled birds in the family groups and you will actually be looking at the newest members of the group, before they get their full shiny adult feathers.



Jason Barrow

Kurungkurl Katitjin Cultural Awareness Officer

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Wongi Nyoongar – Talking Nyoongar

In this edition of Wongi Nyoongar, we take a look at some of the names associated with Dyundalup otherwise known as Point Walter. Traditionally, this was a place for women and children.

As the name suggests, Point Walter is a point in the Derbarl Yerrigan (Swan River) and is located on the southern shore and forms the western end of Melville Water.

Nyoongar phrase	Pronunciation	English translation
Nop	Nop	Boy
Yok	Yok	Girl
Yorga	Your-gah	Woman
Koorlangkas	Cool-ung-gahs	Children
Moort	Moor-t	Family
Bilya djenang kolong	Beeliar jen-ang cool-ong	River bank
Kwilena	Qu-ill-ena	Dolphin
Booldarlung	Bool-a-dar-lung	Pelican

Nyoongar Story Time

Over the next few editions, we will be looking at some of the cultural reference points at places of interest along the Derbarl Yerrigan (Swan River).

Dyundalup – Point Walter

The Nyoongar name for Point Walter is Dyundalup and means 'the place of the long shimmering hair' - a reference to the sandbar that extends over 1km into the river. Sections of the sandbar often submerge under high water.

It has always been a place for the women and children and I take a great deal of spiritual satisfaction out of knowing that the greater percentages of people that visit the area today, are still women and children.



Dr Noel Nannup

ECU Cultural Ambassador and Kurongkurl Katitjin Elder-in-Residence

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Racism and reconciliation advocates take top honours

Role model, youth advocate and footballer Adam Goodes was named Australian of the Year 2014 at the Australian of the Year Awards held recently on the 25 January 2014 in Canberra.



2014 Australian of the Year Adam Goodes

Honoured for his leadership and advocacy in the fight against racism both on the sporting field and within society – Adam's stance has won him the admiration and respect of people around Australia.

An Andjamatthanha man, Adam is a champion Australian Rules football player with the Sydney Swans. Adam holds an elite place in AFL history, winning two Brownlow Medals and two premierships. The 34 year old footballer is a four-time All-Australian, member of the Indigenous Team of the Century, and has represented Australia in the International Rules Series.

Adam is proud of his Indigenous heritage and is actively involved with several Indigenous sport and community programs. He has spent time working with troubled youth, including those in youth detention centres. Together with his cousin and former teammate Michael O'Loughlin, Adam established the Go Foundation which empowers the next generation of Indigenous role models in all walks of life. Adam co-chairs the foundation, focused on promoting education, employment and healthy lifestyles.



2014 Senior Australian of the Year
Fred Chaney AO

The Senior Australian of the Year 2014

Also honoured was Western Australia's Fred Chaney AO who was named Senior Australian of the Year 2014 for his commitment to reconciliation and human rights.

Fred's decades of hard work in support of often marginalised people has never faltered. As founding co-chair of Reconciliation Australia and an early advocate for Aboriginal voting rights in 1961 and for the 1967 referendum, Fred's contribution has included helping establish the Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia to his national role as Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

For many years, Fred was Deputy President of the National Native Title Tribunal and, more recently, is Chair of Desert Knowledge Australia and chaired the Board of Central Desert Native Title services. He was instrumental in establishing the Graham (Polly) Farmer Foundation, which supports Indigenous young people to reach their potential.

Now 72 years old, Fred's long history of public service is rooted in his fierce commitment to social justice and a belief in the inherent equality of people. In all his leadership roles, Fred inspires others to work collaboratively, respectfully and ambitiously to overcome the barriers that inhibit people's full economic and social participation in Australian society.

For more information on the Australia Day Awards and recipients, visit: www.australianoftheyear.org.au

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Staff Snapshot

Jesse Fleay



*Inaugural RAP Working Group Member
Student/Alumni Representative*

Favourite book:

Aristotle's Metaphysics

Favourite music:

Baroque

Favourite food:

Asian Food

Favourite TV Program:

ABC's The Drum

Favourite Movie:

To Kill a Mockingbird

If you could meet anyone, who would it be?

George Washington

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

I used to be an actor on stage and in some films. I was a featured extra in a film called Wasted on the Young, produced in 2009 by Paramount Pictures, and filmed at ECU campuses.

Elders celebrate end of year

Throughout 2013, a small group of Aboriginal Elders have been gathering at Kurongkurl Katitjin to socialise, relax and work with Elder-in-Residence, Dr Noel Nannup.

These gatherings have helped facilitate and strengthen networks between Edith Cowan University and local Elders.



(L-R: Back Row) Dr Noel Nannup, Brian McNamara, Albert McNamara (L-R: Front Row) Mingli Wanjurri-McGlade, Irene McNamara and Oriel Green

Together with some staff from Kurongkurl Katitjin, the Elders were invited to a Christmas luncheon to celebrate a great year. Each Elder was gifted with a Jukurrpa Diary, complete with the dates of gatherings planned throughout 2014.

The diary is illustrated with 26 examples of contemporary Aboriginal art from communities in the central and western desert regions of Australia and is produced by the Institution for Aboriginal Development, who invest in language resources for young Aboriginal people.

Jukurrpa (pronounced joo-kur-pa) means Dreaming, Story or Law in some Central Australian languages.

Kurongkurl Katitjin Out and About

Introducing a new column that will be featured each edition, **Kurongkurl Katitjin Out and About** will showcase some of the meetings, activities and events Kurongkurl Katitjin staff were involved or attended 'out and about' in the community.

Here's what we got up to in the first month of the new year:

January 2014	
15/1	Launch of Perth Writers' Festival Program
21/1	Dr Tim Soutphommasane – Race Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission
31/1	WA Universities Teaching & Learning Conference

About this Publication

Our Place is Kurongkurl Katitjin's official newsletter.

Produced six times per year, each edition coincides with one of the six Nyoongar seasons and highlights key activities of the Centre and the University, as well as other significant events and information relating to Indigenous education and research.

It is circulated electronically to a range of stakeholders including staff, students and the broader community. Editions can be found online under the News and Events section at www.kk.ecu.edu.au.

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