



## Inside This Edition



Inaugural 'Battle of the Didges'



Indigenous Student Games



Education Hall of Fame



Garma Festival 2009



Staff graduate from LEAP



ABOVE: King Balga on fire at the ECU NAIDOC Art Exhibition Opening

## **NAIDOC celebrations 'ignited'**

A number of events were held at ECU during NAIDOC week (6 July to 10 July) to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The 2009 celebrations were ignited in a unique fashion, with the lighting of three Balga trees at the official opening of the 'Celebration of Indigenous Art' exhibition at the Kurongkurl Katitjin Art Gallery in Mount Lawley.

More than 130 guests attended the opening on Friday 3 July 2009 and witnessed the ceremonial burning of the newly transplanted balgas at the Kurongkurl Katitjin entrance.

*Story continued on page 3*

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

# Welcome from the Head of Centre

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the inaugural edition of *Our Place*, the official newsletter of Kurongkurl Katitjin, Centre for Indigenous Australian Education and Research at Edith Cowan University.

Each edition of *Our Place* will coincide with one of the six Nyoongar seasons and highlight key activities of the Centre at that time, as well as the progress of the revitalisation of the interpretive gardens surrounding the building.

Since my appointment as Head of Centre in February, we have been actively working towards re-establishing Kurongkurl Katitjin's profile and links within the University and wider communities in Western Australia and nationally.

Another important aspect is the establishment of the Centre as a Cultural Interpretive Centre, that will incorporate specific ceremonial, social and teaching functions to encourage the use of the external environment as a learning facility for everyone with an interest in Indigenous cultures, especially Nyoongar culture.

I also invite prospective students and their families to attend our Kambarang Careers Day later this month. The day will provide an overview of Kurongkurl Katitjin and how we can assist you in pursuing future study at Edith Cowan University. There will also be stalls, workshops and motivational speakers. It's an event not to be missed.



We're excited about our future and are looking forward to keeping you informed as we make our way towards establishing Kurongkurl Katitjin as a Cultural Interpretive Centre.

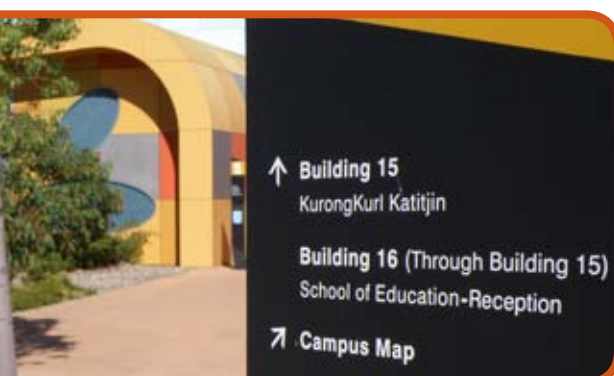
Happy reading!

*Colleen H.*

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.

## Reach your potential at the Kambarang Careers Day

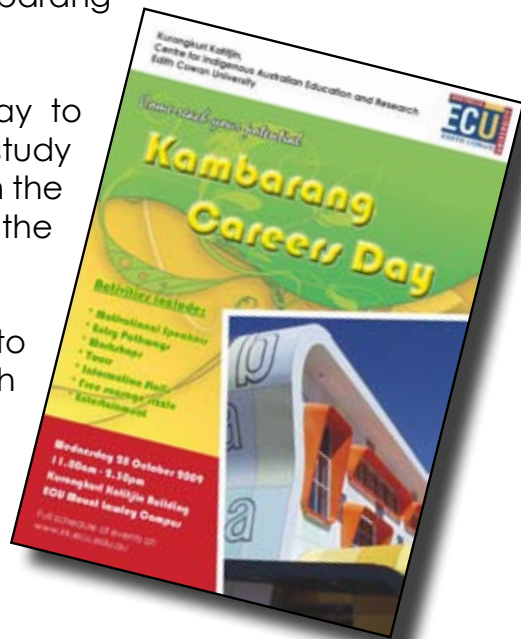
Kurungkurl Katitjin will again be hosting its annual Kambarang Careers Day on Wednesday 28 October 2009.

Since 2005, the Centre has held its October open day to showcase its educational products, promote Indigenous study pathways at Edith Cowan University and to build links with the Indigenous community, the University community and the wider community.

All prospective students and their families are invited to come along for an interesting and informative day, with plenty of activities and workshops to enjoy.

For further information, please contact 08 9370 6378.

A full schedule of activities will be available on the Kurungkurl Katitjin website at: [www.kk.ecu.edu.au](http://www.kk.ecu.edu.au)



## NAIDOC celebrations 'ignited'

*Continued from page 1*

ECU's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Kerry O. Cox and Kurungkurl Katitjin's Professor Colleen Hayward together set alight the largest balga.

Following the burning of the other two balgas, Justina Truscott performed a powerful and mesmerising dance in only the light of the flames.

Just as spectacular as the burning of the balgas, was the art exhibition itself. The exhibition, which ran for the duration of NAIDOC Week, featured art from ECU's own collection, works from Indigenous community members and students from various schools.

After a very successful start to NAIDOC Week, members of the ECU community gathered for the official flag raising ceremonies at both the Joondalup and Mt Lawley campuses.

Professor Cox encouraged all staff and students of ECU to acknowledge the contribution of Indigenous Australians and to embrace Indigenous culture and knowledge.

On Tuesday 7 July, the ECU Indigenous Film Festival was held, offering a unique opportunity to see a range of short films under the NAIDOC Week theme *Honouring our Elders, Nurturing our Youth*.

More than 100 guests attended, enjoying a free BBQ, soup, damper and other traditional 'bush tucker' before the screening of the films.

Overall, NAIDOC Week 2009 was enjoyed by all and plans to make it bigger and better next year are already underway.



*ABOVE: Professor Cox and Professor Hayward lighting the King Balga*

## Six Nyoongar Seasons

In the South West of Australia, there are six seasons in the Nyoongar year, rather than the four European seasons. The six distinct seasons: Birak, Bunuru, Djeran, Makuru, Djilba and Kambarang, serve to better represent and explain the seasonal differences that we witness each year.

These differences include many different flowering plants that flower throughout the year, the hibernation of reptiles, the molting of the swans and even the migration of other bird species are all indicators of the seasons changing.

Importantly though, these seasons can be long or short and are indicated by what is happening around us rather than by dates on a calendar.

Birak:	(Dec/Jan)	<i>Dry and hot</i>
Bunuru:	(Feb/Mar)	<i>Hottest part of the year</i>
Djeran:	(Apr/May)	<i>Cooler weather begins</i>
Makuru:	(Jun/Jul)	<i>Cold and wet</i>
Djilba:	(Aug/Sept)	<i>Coldest part of the year</i>
Kambarang:	(Oct/Nov)	<i>Warmer weather begins</i>

## Nyoongar Season: About Kambarang

During Kambarang, we see an abundance of colours and flowers exploding all around us. Some of the Banksias and many other smaller delicate flowering plants including the kangaroo and cats paws, orchids and climbing vines are in full bloom. Also during this time the Balgas (*Xanthorrhoea pressii*) will start to flower, especially if they've been burnt in the past year or closely shaved.



In the Kambarang garden of Kurongkurl Katitjin, you'll also start to see the bright red fruits of the Fuchsia Gum (*E. forrestiana*) and the yellows of the Wattles (*Acacia drummondii*) continue to abound (as pictured).

One of the most striking displays of flowers to be seen during Kambarang is the Australian Christmas Tree (*Nuytsia floribunda*) with its bright orange/yellow flowers that serve to signal the heat is on its way.

In terms of animals, October is the most likely time of the year that you'll encounter a snake as the reptiles start to awaken from their hibernation and look to make the most of the warmth to assist them in getting enough energy to look for food! It's also a time of many young families of birds, as you'll see many ducklings and cygnets and hear many other babies 'singing' out for their parents to feed them.

Coolbardies or Magpies will also be out in force protecting their nests and their babies, so this is a time to be aware of nesting birds and to give them space for a few weeks so you don't get swooped! Most of all, enjoy this fantastic season and all that it offers with many things undergoing huge changes with the warm change in the weather be it in flowering, raising young and protecting them or foraging for food after sleeping through the winter.

## The Arrival of the Balgas

Kurongkurl Katitjin's gardens have been given a huge boost with the addition of four king balgas. Each of these unique trees pre-dates the arrival of the tall ships, with the largest being about 500 to 600 years old.

This transplant project was coordinated by Kurongkurl Katitjin's Cultural Awareness Officer Jason Barrow.

"Balgas, or Grass Trees as some people refer to them, are synonymous with Nyoongar country, so to have them planted in pride of place is a fantastic entry statement.

This not only looks great but also serves to further connect the Kurongkurl Katitjin Centre and its built surrounds to the country upon which it stands".

The largest balga, which weighs about 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> tonne, required a 16 tonne crane in the bush and a team of 9 people just to extract it.

All four balgas would have been destroyed in land development if they were not excavated for this project.

After 14 hours, the balgas were set in place in preparation of the official art exhibition opening the next evening.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following people, who made this project possible:

Firstly, to Bruce Abbott and his fantastic team at *Replants*, who worked tirelessly to ensure the trees were treated with the utmost respect and care during their transfer from the bush site to the Mt Lawley campus.

And secondly, to the dedicated Grounds Services team here at Mt Lawley for their assistance on the day and the ongoing care, maintenance and support that the trees will receive.

The arrival of the king balgas will be the first step in several that will see a re-focus upon the six Nyoongar seasonal gardens that surround the Kurongkurl Katitjin building.

In time, we should also start to see many other significant plants from the South West make their way into the gardens. Stay tuned!

For more information on Replants, visit their website at: [www.replants.com](http://www.replants.com)



*ABOVE: The largest balga being retrieved from the bushland in Kwinana*



*ABOVE: Newly planted Balgas at Kurongkurl Katitjin's entrance*



*ABOVE: Finished at last. Some of the team after a well earned break*

## Our Students have 'Team Spirit'

A group of Indigenous ECU students received the 'Team Spirit' Award at the National Indigenous Tertiary Education Student Games held in Canberra on the 7 to 11 September 2009.

Held annually, the Games are a unique opportunity to bring together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander university students from around the country to compete at a national level in mixed sports including basketball, netball, volleyball and touch football as well as an Indigenous cultural game.

Hosted by the Ngunnawal Indigenous Higher Education Centre at the University of Canberra, this year's event was aimed at promoting past efforts of friendship, sporting abilities and Indigenous culture as well as a new focus on health promotion.



*ABOVE: ECU Indigenous Student Games Team*

The team received some ECU sponsorship and fundraised the remainder themselves to send the team of nine students; Glenn Moore, Leon Henry, Ashley Anderson, Kelvin Anderson, Douglas Ngaro-Kyle, Bianca Phillips, Shaydeen Thompson, Keryne Ronan, Mahala Woods and Kurongkurl Katitjin's Indigenous Student Support Officer Alisha Roberts.

The team increased in size by joining with four students from the University of Canberra: Gary Pappin, Krystal Hirst, Jordan Young and Jorge Kapeen, which allowed the team to compete in all activities and operate with substitutes.

Shaydeen Thompson, enrolled in a Bachelor of Health Science with the School of Exercise, Biomedical and Health Sciences, won the female Most Valuable Player Award and the All Star Team Award.

While sporting achievement was part of the games focus, so too was participation and sportsmanship. So it was with great honour that the Edith Cowan University team was nominated and received the Team Spirit Award.

Special acknowledgment also goes to Shaydeen and Indigenous University Orientation Course students' Douglas Ngaro-Kyle and Bianca Phillips in recognition of their additional achievements whilst at the Games.

Shaydeen and Douglas received excellent results in the Australian Sports Commission's National Talent Identification and Development program, with Douglas achieving well above average results in the Vertical Jump and 20m Shuttle Run. Bianca Phillips was approached to play with the National Indigenous Women's Rugby League Team.

The students who participated in this event have grown personally, gaining confidence and many new friends through the experience and are looking forward to the 2010 Games, to be hosted by the University of Newcastle, NSW.

The students also take this opportunity to thank the Vice-Chancellor for his and ECU's support.

## Nyoongar Art a Stunning Addition to ECU Art Collection

During NAIDOC Week 2009, ECU Vice-Chancellor Professor Kerry Cox unveiled a fantastic artwork called 'Minang' ('Bluff Knoll' in Djilba) by renowned Noongar artist Tjyllyungoo (Lance Chadd).



The artwork was generously purchased by the Vice-Chancellor's NAIDOC Art Prize, which seeks to acquire artworks by Nyoongar and South West Indigenous artists, as a special focus, for the Edith Cowan University Art Collection.

Although small, the current Collection is broad and includes traditional artefacts of Australian Aboriginal material culture, alongside important post war artworks from Western Arnhem land, Papunya, Balgo Hills, Turkey Creek and various urban centres.

© Photo of artwork reproduced with permission from artist Tjyllyungoo (Lance Chadd)

## Kurongkurl Katitjin hosts State Aboriginal Justice Congress

This year, Kurongkurl Katitjin has hosted two meetings of the State Aboriginal Justice Congress.

The Congress is the peak State-wide forum responsible for developing and implementing the Western Australian Aboriginal Justice Agreement (AJA). The AJA is a partnership between the Western Australian Government and Aboriginal communities.

It aims to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people through developing safe and sustainable communities, reducing the number of victims of crime, and reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system.

Membership of the congress comprises two Aboriginal representatives (one male, one female) from each of the ten Regional Justice Forums across Western Australia.

The Congress meetings focused on developing the State Justice Plan, which addresses a number of issues, including strengthening communities and the fair treatment of Aboriginal people in the administration of justice.

Head of Kurongkurl Katitjin, Professor Colleen Hayward, facilitated the meetings having been instrumental in progressing the AJA in her former role at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC).

ECU Vice-Chancellor Professor Kerry O. Cox met with members of the Congress and said the meetings were valuable for both the Congress and for Kurongkurl Katitjin in working towards improving outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

© Photo reproduced courtesy of the Aboriginal Services Directorate, Department of Attorney General.



*ABOVE: Some members of the AJA State Aboriginal Congress at Kurongkurl Katitjin*

## Nyoongar Elder in residence at Kurongkurl Katitjin

Respected Nyoongar Elder, Dr Noel Nannup has recently joined the team at Kurongkurl Katitjin as a Cultural Consultant.

A Nyoongar/Injabarndi man, Dr Nannup's career has been dedicated to promoting public awareness of the importance of caring for the environment, educating West Australians about the rich cultural heritage of Aboriginal people and their lands, while playing a leading role in cross-cultural awareness and reconciliation.



*ABOVE: Dr Noel Nannup*

From 1978 to 1989 he was a National Parks ranger, serving throughout the state and becoming Australia's first Aboriginal head ranger and the first Aboriginal head ranger of a national park staffed entirely by Aboriginal people.

Dr Nannup is also a Heritage Consultant with Indigenous Tours WA. His spare time is spent researching and mapping ancient Aboriginal Dreaming trails throughout the South-West.

We are very excited about working with Dr Nannup and utilising his extensive knowledge, experience and expertise in Noongar culture, heritage and protocols.

## LEAP Graduation 2009

The Centre for Learning and Development at Edith Cowan University is delighted to announce its fifth cohort of graduates from the Leadership@ECU Accredited Program (LEAP). In July 2009, nine participants, including Kurongkurl Katitjin's Deidre Cole and Jan Grosser, were awarded the Diploma of Management.

This is the nationally recognised accredited program in Management and Leadership that equips participants with the essential leadership and management knowledge, skills and behaviours that ECU managers, supervisors and team leaders require to be successful in the workplace.



*ABOVE: Deidre Cole and Jan Grosser with Professor Kerry O. Cox at the graduation*

Launched in 2005, LEAP aims to encourage best practice in the University, and is aligned to the ECU's strategic priorities, mission, vision and values.

ECU Vice-Chancellor Professor Kerry O. Cox, and Director of HR Services Raymond Bernstein both gave memorable speeches congratulating past and present graduates and also inspiring new participants in the program.

Congratulations Deidre and Jan on this wonderful achievement.

## Staff Snapshot

*Alisha Roberts*



Coordinator Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme/Indigenous Student Support

### **Favourite book?**

*Unashamedly a sci-fi/fantasy freak. Anything George R. R. Martin, Ian Irvine etc.*

### **Favourite music?**

*I listen to everything because it depends on my mood.*

### **Favourite food?**

*Chilli (add any meat/fish/vegetable), garlic, curry and ooh chocolate crackles!*

### **Favourite TV Program?**

*Little Britain, Vicar of Dibley, Kath and Kim and Dr Who (next Generation).*

### **Favourite movie?**

*The Lord of the Rings Trilogy, Transformers, Finding Nemo.*

### **If you could meet anyone, who would it be?**

*Evo Morales - President of Bolivia*

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

*I really do have a life outside work!*

## Glenn Moore wins inaugural 'Battle of the Didges'

ECU student Glenn Moore was crowned Perth's best didge player at Noongar Radio's inaugural 'Battle of the Didges', held during the Perth NAIDOC Week Opening Ceremony on Sunday 5 July 2009.

There were more than a dozen didgeridoo artists, including some international players, taking part in the first 'didge-off' that will become an annual event.



The 'Battle of the Didges' also marked the inaugural broadcast of Perth's only Aboriginal radio station, 100.9fm Noongar radio.

Noongar Radio was set up to serve the Noongar community of Perth, providing them with a media outlet that recognises, respects and affirms the distinct cultural identity of the Noongar people of South Western Australia.

Congratulations Glenn.

© Photo reproduced courtesy of NAIDOC Perth.

## Website under construction

The website of Kurongkurl Katitjin will be slowly undergoing a transformation over the next few months.

This is to coincide with various web sites across the University being migrated to a central system.

While information and content will be continually updated and monitored during this time, a new design and layout is planned and will hopefully be implemented in the new year.

Keep an eye on future editions of *Our Place* for the progress of our website developments.

## Head of Centre inducted into Education Hall of Fame

Edith Cowan University's Professor Colleen Hayward was inducted into the Western Australian Department of Education and Training's Hall of Fame in July 2009 for her achievements in Aboriginal Education.

Having started her working life as a teacher and maintaining ties to, and an interest in, Education and Training for more than 30 years, Professor Hayward joined Edith Cowan University this year as the Head of Kurongkurl Katitjin, Centre for Indigenous Australian Education and Research.



*ABOVE: Ken Wyatt, Carol Garlett, Sharyn O'Neill, Robert Somerville and Ted Penny with Professor Hayward after receiving her award*

Being inducted into the Hall of Fame caps off an outstanding 18 months for Professor Hayward, in which she attended the Australia 2020 Summit, was named a finalist in the national Deadly Awards, won the national NAIDOC Aboriginal Person of the Year Award, appeared in the Who's Who of Australian Women and was named as one of WA's 50 most powerful women.

Congratulations to Professor Hayward on this well deserved new honour.

© Photo reproduced courtesy of Aboriginal Education and Training Directorate, Department of Education.

## Finding postgraduate scholarships made easy by new publication

*The Indigenous Student's Guide to Postgraduate Scholarships in Australia and Overseas* was recently launched by Rachel Perkins at the AIATSIS 2009 National Indigenous Studies Conference in Canberra,

Produced by the Aurora Project and the Charlie Perkins Trust for Children & Students, this comprehensive and timely guide promotes postgraduate study and contains invaluable information on over 120 scholarship opportunities for Indigenous postgraduate students to universities in Australia and overseas.

It also includes reflections from 32 leading Indigenous postgraduates, a Preface by the Prime Minister and a Foreword by Tom Calma.

The easy-to-use format takes you through the process of choosing from the many prestigious scholarships on offer: from application to acceptance and will help make the possibility of postgraduate study a reality. ECU, through Kurongkurl Katitjin, assisted with the sponsorship of this publication.

Copies of this publication can be obtained by contacting the Indigenous Higher Education Units at your university or by downloading a pdf order form from the website at: [www.auroraproject.com.au/charlie\\_perkins.htm](http://www.auroraproject.com.au/charlie_perkins.htm)



## Garma Festival teaches some valuable lessons about protocol

The 11th Garma Festival, internationally recognised as Australia's premier Indigenous cultural exchange, was held on the 7-11 August 2009 at Gulkula, North East Arnhem Land, NT.

Garma provides a unique opportunity to share knowledge and culture, by experiencing and being directly involved in a spectacular display of cultural practice and cross-cultural learning, a unique line up of entertainment, education and real cultural interaction.

Each year, about 2000 Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians and international visitors gather for the Garma Festival.

A small team from Kurongkurl Katitjin attended Garma this year, with Professor Colleen Hayward invited to facilitate each of the day's wrap up and closing comments of the key forum.

Garma's key forum theme this year was *Indigenous Creative Industries: opportunities, culture and knowledge*, which allowed important and practical discussions about issues surrounding cultural outputs and commercial opportunities afforded to Indigenous Australians.

Of particular note was the importance and value of protocols when using Indigenous cultural material, and interacting with Indigenous artists and communities. These protocols cover industries such as visual arts, music, media arts, writing and performing arts.

Dr Mark Bin Bakar, Chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board and honorary ECU doctorate, spoke at the key forum and reinforced the significance of acknowledging and respecting Indigenous cultural protocols. The Australian Council for the Arts has produced guides (as pictured) on these various protocols, which can be obtained by visiting their website at: [www.australiacouncil.gov.au](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au).

In addition to the key forum, other activities included a youth forum, multi-media and contemporary music training programs, art displays, a Sorry exhibition, a cultural tourism program and daily live performances.

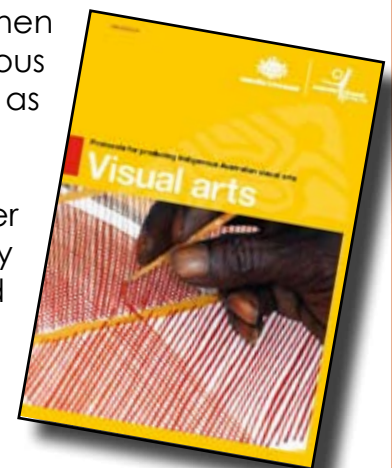
Outcomes from the ECU team's participation include the profile of ECU and Kurongkurl Katitjin; the gaining of knowledge that will inform cultural practice with ECU; the strengthening of networks and collaborations and information that will be used in a workshop at the forthcoming National Indigenous Education Conference.



ABOVE: Yolgnu women at the bunggul (ceremonial performance)



ABOVE: Kurongkurl Katitjin staff Jan, Tracey, Colleen, Jason and Heather with Dr Mark Bin Bakar at Garma



*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**

Tracey-Lee Edwards,  
Communications and  
Events Officer

**CONTACT DETAILS**

Kurongkurl Katitjin,  
Centre for Indigenous  
Australian Education and  
Research, Edith Cowan  
University, Mt Lawley

**HEAD OF CENTRE**

Professor Colleen Hayward

**MAILING ADDRESS**

Kurongkurl Katitjin  
Edith Cowan University  
2 Bradford Street  
MT LAWLEY WA 6050

**TELEPHONE**

1800 648 994

**FAX**

08 9370 6055

**WEBSITE**

[www.kk.ecu.edu.au](http://www.kk.ecu.edu.au)

**EMAIL**

[kk@ecu.edu.au](mailto:kk@ecu.edu.au)

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax to:**  
08 9370 6055

**Mail to:**  
*Att: Tracey-Lee Edwards  
Kurongkurl Katitjin, Edith Cowan University  
2 Bradford Street, MT LAWLEY WA 6050*

Office Reference: Kambarang Edition 2009



*Our Place* newsletter enquires to Tracey-Lee Edwards  
Phone: 08 9370 6618 Email: [tracey.edwards@ecu.edu.au](mailto:tracey.edwards@ecu.edu.au)