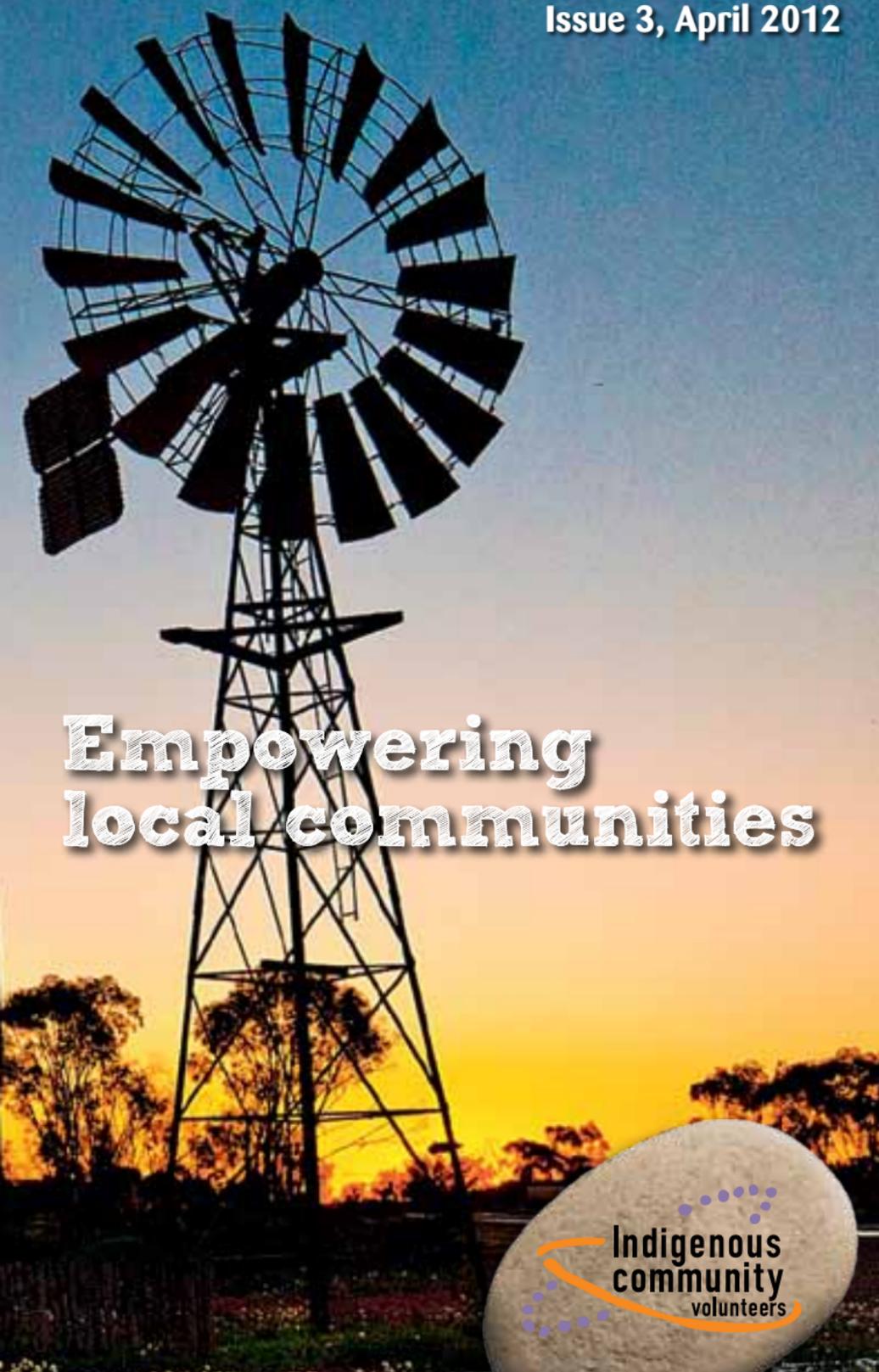




**stepping stones**

**Issue 3, April 2012**



**Empowering  
local communities**



**Indigenous  
community  
volunteers**

# Welcome to Stepping Stones



Stephanie Harvey, CEO

One of the most satisfying things about working for ICV is hearing inspiring stories from our people in the field, from Gapuwiyak in the Northern Territory to Nanjimup in South Western Australia, from Yuendumu in the Central Deserts to Palm Island in Far North Queensland. Stories of hope, vision, determination and resourcefulness

prove ICV's model of community-owned and driven development is changing lives and making dreams a reality.

In the last edition of Stepping Stones I talked about the importance ICV places on building lasting relationships to ensure the best possible long term outcomes for the Indigenous communities with which we work.

On the following pages you'll see some wonderful examples of thriving communities which have benefitted from ICV's help on diverse projects over the years.

Mungalla Aboriginal Tours in North Queensland (see page 14) has gone from strength to strength since ICV was first asked to lend a hand in 2009, receiving awards and national recognition for its success.

It's equally important for us to ensure there is whole of community participation in a community's development goals. And empowering men and women in equal measure can strengthen the very fabric of a community to produce profound change and long lasting opportunities.

Gunbalanya community in West Arnhem Land is a great

example of this. From sawmilling to sewing – there is no limit to what can be achieved when communities get a taste of what's possible! You can read about the Women's Sewing Group's successes on page 6.

While our primary focus is on the outcomes of projects for communities, we should never underestimate the impact of the resulting cultural exchange on ICV's volunteers. ICV really is reconciliation in action, and experiences in the field can have a life-changing effect on volunteers. ICV volunteer Allen Cameron shares his story with you on page 10.

And success breeds success... There is an ever increasing demand for ICV's services, and we are fortunate to have a growing pool of dedicated and skilled volunteers ready to donate their time. But we can't match one to the other without the help of our generous financial supporters. So a big thank you to everyone who has donated recently - you make all of this possible.



# Out and About



© James Mason

**BUILDING SKILLS:** Mentoring in construction at Thornhill

Gidarjil Development Corporation asked ICV to provide mentoring support in the practical application of TAFE construction course components. Under the guidance of ICV volunteer and qualified builder James Mason, eight local men laid a slab, built a shed, and successfully completed their Certificates. Three have since gained full time employment in construction, one has an apprenticeship with a local electrician, and one enjoyed the welding so much he has enrolled in a TAFE welding course.



**Laying foundations for Gidarjil**

Ngala Nanga Mai (We Dream) is a community program which works closely with young parents of Aboriginal children in eastern Sydney. Its vision is to use art to engage members and boost health and education opportunities and outcomes. ICV volunteers Jennie White and Brian Lenny spent five months with the parent group developing friendships, learning about their aspirations and supporting their goals with practical ideas and excursions

**We dream in La Prouse, Sydney**



**NGALA NANGA MAI (WE DREAM), Sydney**



© Liz Treweekis ABC Rural

**HANDS-ON HELP** leads to jobs in Gunbalanya

ICV volunteer Ian Straker has helped local Gunbalanya men learn more than just the basic sawmilling skills and safety. He has helped them use their newly acquired skills to make practical furniture items including beds, food storage boxes and picnic tables. And after seeing the men working on the furniture everyday, local construction company Territory Alliance has given all 19 men fulltime employment building new homes.



**Wood works in West Arnhem Land**

# Sewing-up a brighter future

When the women's group of Gunbalanya (formerly known as Oenpelli) in West Arnhem Land asked for help with learning basic sewing skills, ICV volunteer and qualified dress-maker Donna Osborne gladly offered her time and expertise.

The Gunbalanya community had identified developing economic opportunities for its residents as one of its key goals for the coming five years. Donna was asked to pass on skills including making clothing and drawing up patterns, providing new income and employment opportunities as well as giving the people of Gunbalanya the option of buying clothes locally at a reasonable price.

**"The confidence gained by the women and the informal support network they have developed all help foster a great spirit in Gunbalanya."**

The training was highly effective. Some women learned to sew from scratch, some refreshed their skills, and others learned how to make their own patterns. Skirt patterns, blouses and curtains were the main learning activity and in just the second week, items of clothing the women had made were being sold around the community. To ensure the sustainability of the group, some of the profits were used to buy more resources.

Towards the end of the project the women were able to sew pillow cases and library bags for school children, and the school organised for them to teach their new found sewing techniques to the children. To the delight of its staff and residents, the local Aged Care Centre even got new curtains!

ICV Volunteer Donna Osborne shares her dressmaking skills with the women of Gunbalanya



These additional benefits to the wider community, the confidence gained by the women, and the informal support network they have developed all help foster a great spirit in Gunbalanya.

Audrey Badari, the oldest participant in the project, demonstrated a strong commitment to the project and is now leading the sewing group to ensure its long term success. Audrey's attendance, quality of work, productivity and her encouragement and motivation of other women in the group was greatly appreciated.

The feeling from the community has been so positive that word and interest has spread to two other communities. ICV has been contacted to run the same programs for women in these communities this year.

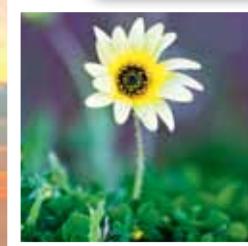


Katie Nayinggul cutting the pattern for a skirt

# Our land abounds in nature's gifts...



ICV has been working with the Yalgoo community in Western Australia on a number of projects aimed at engaging the youth and community. These breathtaking photographs were taken by local company Diamonds and Rust Photography. [www.diamondsandrust.com.au](http://www.diamondsandrust.com.au)



# Our volunteers

*I'm sure that on many a quiet evening at home, I shall no doubt hear the distant didgeridoo, clap-sticks and songs which fill my memories of my time with the Yolgnu people in Gapuwiyak.*

It all began 6 months after first signing up with ICV. I got a phone call from Eddie (ICV office in Darwin) who approached me regarding the feasibility of tanning leather in the community of Gapuwiyak, north-east Arnhem Land.

My initial thoughts turned to the potential difficulties of tanning leather in a tropical location with the wet season fast approaching. And I'd never tanned buffalo before!

But hearing about the community's needs and knowing my family's long term involvement in the industry, I gladly accepted the challenge and within two days all my travel arrangements had been finalised. My Arnhem Land adventure had begun.

Upon arrival I immediately felt supported by members of the community and within the first week I was out hunting with the Yolgnu men. Despite the hard work



Using a fleshing beam to prepare hide

associated with tanning, their energy and enthusiasm grew as they saw 'skin' being transformed into recognisable leather products.

While I had the privilege of sharing my skills, equally as rewarding was the selfless and genuine nature of the Yolgnu men who patiently shared so much of their knowledge and culture with me.

Who would have thought that my skills and experience could have taken me on this amazing journey with the Yolgnu people in Gapuwiyak! I strongly encourage you, no matter what or how obscure you believe your skills and experience to be, to begin your own adventure with ICV today. You might just change a life, I know it has changed my own.

***Allen Cameron, ICV Volunteer***



Making a leather seat template



Community made leather goods

# Walkabout for change



**Meet Desanka Vukelich,  
one of our enthusiastic  
Walkabout for Change  
participants!**

**Where are you from and what do you do for a living?**

I'm from Sydney and I work as a freelance editor and proof reader under my business name, For The Love Of Words.

**What inspired you to sign-up for ICV's Walkabout for Change?**

I've never been to the Northern Territory before and I knew this would be the adventure of a lifetime and a chance to help the Indigenous community in some small way.

**What response did you get from friends and family when you told them about it?**

Everyone has been so supportive and I already have a few bush walks planned with friends keen to train alongside me.

**What are you most looking forward to about the trek?**

Meeting people in the Indigenous community, talking to them about the issues they face. And seeing the spectacular scenery.

**What kind of activities are you doing to raise the funds?**

My mum's an excellent baker, so I've asked her to host an afternoon tea, plus I'm keen on films, so hope to organise a film night. A trivia night might be on the cards too.

Desanka is one of a group of people trekking the Larapinta Trail in July this year to raise awareness and funds for ICV. The money she raises will help create a sustainable future for Indigenous communities across Australia.

You can help Desanka reach her fundraising target here:  
<http://trekthelarapintatrail.gofundraise.com.au/page/VukelichD>

For more information about ICV's Walkabout for Change, visit [www.inspiredadventures.com.au/ICVWalkabout2012](http://www.inspiredadventures.com.au/ICVWalkabout2012) or call us on 1800 639 565

## Communities in Focus

Mungalla Aboriginal Tours continues to reap significant rewards for the Nywaigi community, and ICV volunteers have helped in more ways than one...

The Mungalla Aboriginal Business Corporation is enjoying more well-deserved recognition for the success of its tourism business, Mungalla Aboriginal Tours, which it runs at Mungalla Cattle Station 111km north of Townsville.

Just last month Mungalla Aboriginal Tours won national recognition and the silver award in the Indigenous Category at the Australian Tourism Awards. Last year the Indigenous owned and operated business won the North Queensland Tourism Award and the Indigenous Tourism Award at the Queensland Tourism Awards.

Mungalla Station was handed back to the Indigenous people of the area in 2000. The Nywaigi Aboriginal Land Corporation holds title to the Station and is dedicated to improving the social-economic position of the local Indigenous people – as a legacy to and for the Nywaigi Traditional Owners and children.

Managing Director Jacob Cassady belongs to one of the family groups who are the Traditional Owners of the land. After living in Redfern for many years, Jacob, a father of 5 boys, headed home to help run Mungalla Aboriginal Tours. He now conducts historical tours of the Station which allow people to experience the magic of its natural environment and the pioneering story connected to it.



**“Its success is largely due to the much appreciated support and contribution of the ICV volunteers.”**

*Jacob Cassady*

ICV has worked closely with Mungalla Aboriginal Tours on different projects over the years, and we are delighted with its continued success. In turn, Jacob and his wife Joanne are deeply grateful for the help they have received from ICV.

ICV volunteers have helped in many ways, including developing an event management plan to position Mungalla Festival - a key marketing event for the business - as a leading annual event in the region. “Its success is largely due to the much appreciated support and contribution of the ICV volunteers”, Jacob says.

“We now have a solid platform on which to build for the coming years. The Festival will be one of our best marketing tools and could be the showpiece event in our district. It benefits the Nywaigi community greatly by boosting the local economy and sustaining employment and training opportunities for our people.”

**The 4th annual Mungalla Festival will take place on 3-4 August 2012.**



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