



# **NYOONGAR TENT EMBASSY**

1 Nyoongar Way Matagarup(Heirisson Island) WA 6004  
facebook.com/NyoongarTentEmbassy  
email: matagarupcouncil@hotmail.com  
phone: 041 6376 210



**Nyoongar Tent Embassy**



# NYOONGAR TENT EMBASSY- MATAGARUP

## *Vision Statement*

***To unify all Tribal Sovereign people to pursue our inherent, universal and indivisible right to self- determination for all present and future generations.***

### **Goal Objective 1:**

To provide and exchange information on Tribal Sovereignty to all local, regional and national Tribal Sovereign people in the country.

#### **Methods:**

- 1) To organise a series of country and Perth metropolitan speaking tours to Tribal Sovereigns.
- 2) To share and exchange Tribal Sovereignty information with other Tribal Sovereign Embassies throughout the continent and with other relevant Tribal Sovereign organisations.
- 3) To organise a national Gathering of Tribal Sovereigns at Matagarup to unify and advance the knowledge and understanding of Tribal Sovereignty.
- 4) To participate in other Gatherings of Tribal Sovereigns.

### **Goal Objective 2:**

To provide and share full information on the enjoyment of the UN human rights regime and its applicability to Tribal Sovereigns.

#### **Methods:**

- 1) To enter into arrangements with human rights organisations to provide UN and other international legal human rights education to Tribal Sovereign peoples.
- 2) To enter into arrangements with research institutions, other interested parties and individuals to record all UN and other international treaty obligations and subsequent parliamentary legislations, reports and measures of the Australian government that impact on the lives of Tribal Sovereigns.
- 3) To engage with and effectively participate in United Nation and other international human rights forums and mechanisms to promote and defend Tribal Sovereignty.

### **Goal Objective 3:**

To produce a Charter of Human Rights for Tribal Sovereign Peoples that is based on the UN principle of the international rule of law.

#### **Methods:**

- 1) To enter into arrangements with Tribal Sovereign Embassies and Sovereign organisations to work towards the development of a Charter of Human Rights for Tribal Sovereign Peoples.
- 2) To facilitate treaty agreement arrangements with Tribal Sovereigns towards the adoption of a Charter of Human Rights for Tribal Sovereign Peoples.
- 3) To educate non-Tribal Sovereign peoples and call upon their adoption of the Charter of Human Rights for Tribal Sovereign Peoples.

### **Goal Objective 4:**

To work towards the creation of a Tribal Sovereign representative body to promote, protect and further advance tribal sovereignty at local, regional, national and international levels.

#### **Methods:**

- 1) To create a Tribal Sovereign Council to represent the interests of Tribal Sovereigns in the south west corner of the continent.
- 2) To enter into treaty arrangements between the Tribal Sovereign Council and other Tribal Sovereign peoples and their representative bodies.
- 3) To enter into treaty arrangements between the Tribal Sovereign Council and other non-Tribal Sovereign Council entities.

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# **THIS IS OUR COUNTRY**



**NIDJA NYOONGAR BOODJA**



# MATAGARUP

Matagarup (Heirisson Island) is a Registered Site with the Government of Western Australia Department of Indigenous Affairs (Site ID 3589).

Listed as a mythological site, with open access and no restrictions, Matagarup has been officially recorded as a Meeting Place, Plant Resource, Camp and Hunting Place.

Section 8 of the WA Aboriginal Heritage Act states:

Where the Committee is satisfied that a representative body of persons of Aboriginal descent who usually live subject to Aboriginal customary law has an interest in a place or object to which this Act applies that is of traditional and current importance to it, and which is in the custody or control of the Minister, the Minister after consultation with the Committee shall make that place or object available to that body as and whenever required for purposes sanctioned by the Aboriginal tradition relevant to that place or object.



source: <http://www.daa.wa.gov.au/en/Site-Search/Aboriginal-Heritage-Inquiry-System/>



The Nyoongar Tent Embassy is the sole Tribal Sovereign Embassy sitting on a listed Aboriginal Heritage site.

## GOAL OBJECTIVE 1:

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Sovereignty to local, regional & national  
Tribal Sovereign Peoples**



Courtesy: Battye Library [25341P]

## FANNY BALBUK YOOREEL

Fanny Balbuk Yooreel was born at Matagarup in 1840. She was the granddaughter of Yellagonga. Her father was Coondebung. Joojeebal/Doodyeep was her mother. Joobaitch was her uncle.

Fanny Balbuk witnessed the devastation of her traditional lands by the early Swan River Colony. She would walk through the area of the city of Perth, naming every feature and tradition of the land and recall the part played by her mother and grandmother in the kangaroo hunt at King's Park.

She gathered zamia fruit on St Georges Terrace. In the 1890s, Perth's railway station was built on the swamp where she gathered eggs and caught turtles and crayfish.

However, Fanny Balbuk was adamant to stick to her traditional rights of way. On finding that white men had built houses, and laid fences, on her traditional land, she would break down the fence, or walk right through any house and yard that had been built in the way.

Daisy Bates wrote of Fanny Balbuk at the time;

"To the end of her life she raged and stormed at the usurping of her beloved home ground. .... Through fences and over them, Balbuk took the straight track to the end. When a house was built in the way, she broke its fence-palings with her digging stick and charged up the steps and through the rooms."

Balbuk's grandmother, Moojorngul, is buried in the grounds of Government House, or Kooraree. Balbuk never let the settlers forget whose land they had taken. She would stand at the gates of Government House - where her grandmother's burial ground lay - cursing those who lived inside.

In 1907, Fanny Balbuk attended a luncheon at the Karrakatta Club, an exclusive club for women in Perth. Daisy Bates introduced Balbuk to all present as their landlady, since she was the original owner of the land on which the club stood.

The information which Fanny Balbuk gave to Daisy Bates about the traditional Nyoongar lands in the Perth area, played an important role in the Native Title claim of 2006, when Justice Wilcox of the Federal Court of Australia found that Nyoongar people held Native Title rights over the Perth metropolitan area and its surrounds. This was the first occasion when native title had been found to continue to exist in an Australian capital city.

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy proposes that the name of The Causeway be changed to Fanny Balbuk Way, to honour the spirit of this remarkable woman and to proclaim the traditional owners of the land.

*If anyone has any more knowledge on Fanny Balbuk, please pass it on to the Nyoongar Tent Embassy so that we can complete the information we have gathered so far.*

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## **ABORIGINAL WOMEN RECLAIMING MATAGARUP BIRTHING SITE**

Aboriginal women will reclaim Matagarup as a significant sacred site in ceremony and ritual where Noongar women have given birth in ceremony and ritual since the creative spirits formed the earth.

Aboriginal women throughout our cultural history have had a significant place in the cosmology of Indigenous Australians as creators of life. The land is connected to woman and fertility, giving birth to new life in a symbolic way. The land is referred to as 'the land my mother. The land becomes a symbol of transformation in which Aboriginal women have a sacred place. They are landowners, owners of ritual, sacred stories painted through art, dances that have a place in rites of passage, and aspects of the religious life of our ancient cultures.

Modern Aboriginal women are descendants of strong Aboriginal women who have been through times of great tragedy in Western Australian history and have survived the onslaught of colonisation with great dignity and pride but without bitterness and hatred. Aboriginal women have been the bearers of joy and pain, of being mothers and grandmothers, great-grandmothers to have children forcibly taken away from them. Sometimes the children didn't come back, they died in custody. Aboriginal women have had to walk the way of the cross, to be in the Garden of Gethsemane constantly and to walk through the valley of the shadow of death many times in their lifetime. We honour the women who have died through violence and abuse. We honour the women who have overcome rape and trauma. We honour the women who know what hatred is and have been able 'to know what love is' through the gift of forgiveness and truth telling. We honour the mothers of sons and daughters who have died through suicide in our communities.

These are stories about Aboriginal women that demonstrate greatness and a commitment to making a difference in the daily lives of Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal women writers promote the soft but powerful aspect of courage, Aboriginal women held executive positions in the international arena along with other Indigenous Peoples throughout the world.

There are fine examples of the multiple roles faced daily by Aboriginal women, as artists, mothers, workers in the community, public and private sectors including corporate executives. Countless Aboriginal women have worked for the healing of the nation. They ensure that Aboriginal culture and peoples are reclaiming their place at the centre of the heartbeat of Australia.

These life experiences are precious. None of the experiences need be lost in death. As the stories are told the stories empower the communities from which they came. Their stories enrich our collective identity, makes us stronger as individuals. It calls for a redefinition by Aboriginal women of the challenges ahead of us that need to be faced with extraordinary courage and truth.

Matagarup will now continue to hold the sacred stories of ceremony and ritual in a way that is culturally spiritually enriching to peoples in the Noongar Nation.

Courtesy of the Coalition of Peoples

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# **ABORIGINAL WOMEN PROMOTING, PROTECTING AND ADVANCING TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY**

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy honours Matagarup's significance as a sacred women's birthing site, which has also been recognised by the Swan and Canning Rivers Iconic Trails Project.

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy also celebrates the significance of the sheok trees that grow in abundance on Matagarup. It was a sheok tree that was cut down on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1829 to mark the foundation of the Swan River Colony in defiance of our Tribal Sovereignty, and it was a woman who was invited to strike the first blow.

Women members of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy reclaim the Matagarup sheok tree as a symbol of our inherent, universal and indivisible right, as Tribal Sovereign People, to self-determination for all present and future generations.



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# THE INAUGURATION OF THE NYOONGAR TENT EMBASSY

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy was established in commemoration of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Canberra Tent Embassy's inception on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1972. At the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations in Canberra, January 2012, at which several Nyoongar Tribal Sovereigns were in attendance, men's and women's meetings were held. The women were advised to start tent embassies in their communities to assert their sovereign rights and continue the sovereignty movement. On 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012, the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council and the WA Premier Colin Barnett staged a 'Working Congress Party' at Kings Park to communicate the State Government's offer of settlement and extinguishment of Native Title claims in the South West. The Nyoongar Tent Embassy was inaugurated at Kings Park as part of the protests against the SWALSC deal. The following Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2012, the Nyoongar Tent Embassy was formally established. Matagarup was chosen for the Embassy site due to its Aboriginal Heritage Register listing, therefore being a safe place for the Nyoongar Tribal Sovereign People.



Matagarup February 2012



Michael Anderson, Canberra Tent Embassy founder, visited the Nyoongar Tent Embassy at Matagarup in March 2012.



Kings Park February 2012



Matagarup February 2012

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## PRACTISING LORE AND CULTURE AT MATAGARUP



Photography: David Waller

Email: david\_photography@hotmail.com



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Email: david\_photography@hotmail.com



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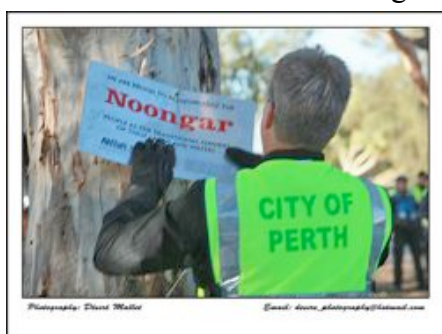
## MATAGARUP & RIVER 'DEVELOPMENT' PLANS

As Sovereign Traditional Custodians of the land, and under authority of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972, it is the duty of the Nyoongar Tribal Sovereigns to protect Matagarup and the Swan River from any person who alters or assumes possession, custody or control over these sites. Such persons include the City of Perth, and the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority, who are planning 'development' of these lands and waterways.

The City of Perth has stated that it intends to apply for Section 18 consent under the Aboriginal Heritage Act for proposed development plans for Matagarup, however it has also stated that Aboriginal groups consulted regarding the project thus far have been those identified by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC).

The Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority has been designated the power to resume land and undertake urban projects under specified redevelopment schemes in Perth, including Elizabeth Quay and the Riverside development. SWALSC did not make a submission to the amendment of the Metropolitan Regional Scheme, which gave the MRA such powers over these river front sites.

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs is currently undertaking a review of the Aboriginal Heritage Act which includes a proposal to provide the Department with powers to issue certificates that give the same indemnity as obtaining a Section 18 consent. The Nyoongar Tent Embassy is closely observing these developments and will continue to assert their inherent rights as Tribal Sovereigns to Traditional Lands and Cultural Heritage.



City of Perth Ranger removes a sign proclaiming Nyoongar traditional ownership of Matagarup, 2012

In May 2013, after the City of Perth announced it had approved the masterplan for 'development' of Matagarup, Nyoongar Tent Embassy Tribal Sovereigns asserted their right to practice culture on the island by performing a Smoking Ceremony on the causeway in peak hour traffic. They then invited the City of Perth to come speak with them on Matagarup. The City of Perth responded by promising community consultation with the Nyoongar Tent Embassy Tribal Sovereigns regarding the 'development' plans.



The Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority's plans for Elizabeth Quay and the Riverside Development  
source: <http://www.mra.wa.gov.au/>



The City of Perth's 2013 masterplan for Matagarup source: <http://www.cityofperth.wa.gov.au/>

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## FEBRUARY 2012 PERTH CITY COUNCIL & POLICE RAIDS

At 6am on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2012, more than 60 police and rangers from the City of Perth marched on Matagarup, pulled down and confiscated tents, took personal property and towed and impounded vehicles belonging to Nyoongar Tent Embassy Tribal Sovereign Peoples. Members of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy issued the police with a Statement of Rebuttal outlining Indigenous Tribal Sovereignty, however the police dismissed this legal document, continued to harass Tribal Sovereigns and attempted to extinguish the sacred fire. Following the dawn raid on the Aboriginal Heritage listed site, the Premier Colin Barnett reiterated his statement that he intended to shut down the Tent Embassy despite ignoring previous invitations from Embassy members to meet and talk. The Nyoongar Tent Embassy Tribal Sovereigns would not be moved from their rightful place at Matagarup and from their duty to protect their land and culture. More tents were erected at the Embassy site later that day.



Nyoongar Tent Embassy members assert their Indigenous Tribal Sovereignty as police and rangers raid the Matagarup Embassy camp.



photos: Alex Bainbridge/Green Left Weekly



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## MARCH 2012 PERTH CITY COUNCIL & POLICE RAIDS

On 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2012, as Nyoongar Tent Embassy members were enjoying a peaceful afternoon of talks and culture, over 100 police invaded Matagarup in a shocking display of force and brutality. Their ranks included a tactical response squad, mounted police, a hovering helicopter and police dogs. The Nyoongar Tent Embassy Tribal Sovereigns declared that the police violence was not welcome at the Embassy and walked away from the rows of police to the other side of the island, where they congregated at the statue of Yagan. The police followed the Nyoongar Tent Embassy members, intent on harassment and provocation. Two policemen on horseback lunged at a pregnant woman holding a baby. The woman received cuts to her face from the impact of the police horse. The police violently arrested four people and assaulted several others, in some cases causing serious injuries. Police and rangers tore down tents and dumped private possessions into large bins. Resolved in the pursuit of their inherent, universal and indivisible right to self-determination even in the face of police brutality the members of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy regathered at the end of the day around the Sacred Fire.



Nyoongar Tent Embassy Tribal Sovereigns peacefully walk away from the violence of the WA Police to Yagan's statue on the other side of the island.



photos: Alex Bainbridge/Green Left Weekly

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## COURT CASES

Nyoongar Tribal Sovereign Len Culbong Jr, after being violently arrested for acting on his right as a Tribal Sovereign to protect the Sacred Fire at Matagarup, had been given a specific bail condition that he was not to return to the island.

At his bail hearing, Len Culbong Jr asserted his Nyoongar Tribal Sovereignty before the court, and cited the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act – Sections 71 & 116. Section 116 states that the Commonwealth shall not make any law for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion.

Magistrate Elizabeth Woods had to leave the court twice.

The Magistrate reassigned the case to be heard on March 15<sup>th</sup> 2012, in a closed courtroom. Len Culbong Jr again asserted his request for the bail variation. The Magistrate asked for the prosecutor's opinion, which was a recommendation of no change to the bail conditions. The Magistrate took a ten second break then confirmed bail conditions were deleted. The bail papers were already finalised and Len Culbong Jr was free to return to the island.

Cheered by his family and supporters Len Culbong Jr immediately returned to the Nyoongar Tent Embassy at Matagarup.



WA Police brutality: violent arrest at the Sacred Fire

Photo: Alex Bainbridge/Green Left Weekly



Len Culbong Jr winning the right to return

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy has various documents on Australian and State legislation as well as a 'Guide to the Rules of Court', which are available to all Tribal Sovereigns and supporters.

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# **SERVING REBUTTAL STATEMENT TO THE GOVERNOR GENERAL & PREMIER**

In February 2012, members of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy marched on Government House to hand over a Notice of Rebuttal Sovereignty Statement to WA Governor Malcolm McCusker. The Rebuttal Statement outlines the argument for Indigenous Tribal Sovereignty.

In August 2012, after months of meeting requests with the Premier were rejected, and although a Rebuttal Statement had been filed through the traditional avenues at Parliament House, State Government administrators advised the NTE that the papers had been lost. The Nyoongar Tent Embassy decided to serve the Rebuttal Statement to Colin Barnett in person. The Premier's office failed to rebut the Sovereignty Statement but sent a response rejecting claims to sovereignty. There has been no response from the Governor General's office.



NTE Elder Aunty Maureen Culbong outside Government House handing over the Rebuttal Statement

photo: Alex Bainbridge/Green Left Weekly



Nyoongar Tent Embassy members wait outside Colin Barnett's house to deliver the Rebuttal Statement



Walking to Colin Barnett's office to hand over the Rebuttal Statement in person



Colin Barnett tells members of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy they "made a mistake" going to his house

## **GOAL OBJECTIVE 1:**

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## SOUTHWEST SPEAKING TOUR



Nyoongar Tent Embassy members travelled through the Southwest in April 2012 to meet and speak with Nyoongar Tribal Sovereign Peoples in Albany, Bunbury, Busselton and Katanning, among other places. After much hard work and preparation of sovereignty document kits the NTE members travelled great distances and camped outside on the ground in cold temperatures, all for the purpose of spreading the word about Sovereignty.



Busselton Police wish NTE members good luck



Waking up after a cold night



### GOAL OBJECTIVE 1:

To organise a series of country and Perth speaking tours to Tribal Sovereign Peoples



## SOUTHWEST SPEAKING TOUR



Asserting Tribal Sovereignty in Busselton

Supporters, both young and old, welcomed the Nyoongar Tent Embassy members on their Southwest trip, which was well received by the Nyoongar communities visited.

In Katanning, the children were inspired to march through the town, not once, but twice, to demonstrate their enjoyment of rights and self-determination as Tribal Sovereign People.



Children march in Katanning



### GOAL OBJECTIVE 1:

To organise a series of country and Perth speaking tours to Tribal Sovereign Peoples

# GNANGARA PROPERTY

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy was approached by Tribal Sovereign Peoples of the Gnangara Property with concerns about plans for subdividing and rezoning part of the land. The NTE researched the history and recent developments regarding Gnangara and found the following information which has been passed on to the local people:

In 1886, the following petition was presented the Governor of Western Australia, Sir Frederick Broome, signed by Nyoongar Tribal Sovereigns, Tommy Dower and Johnny Carroll;

“Whereas certain aboriginal / natives living near Perth and Fremantle / are desirous of securing a piece of land, on / which they may erect their huts and plant / gardens, where they and their families may / live. They think that a grant of land / near Waneroo [Wanneroo] would be a suitable locality, / and they respectfully petition your Excellency / to accede to their wishes, and take / such steps as Your Excellency may think / best to put them in possession of some ground for the purpose contemplated”.

In response, on June 23<sup>rd</sup> 1887, the Governor set apart 2000 acres (809 hectares) of land at Gnangara as “Public Reserve” 1229 for the “use and benefit of Aborigines”. The land was vested in the Aborigines Protection Board. After the Board’s dissolution in 1901, the Under Secretary for Lands cancelled Reserve 1229 to make the land available for conditional purchase and homestead farms.

In 1975, the late Nyoongar Tribal Sovereign Elder Ken Colbung, secured the transfer of part of this land for the Nyoongar community. The Aboriginal Lands Trust paid \$200,000 for 65 hectares of land west of Lake Gnangara, which was leased to the Nyoongah Community Inc. in 1987 for a period of 99 years.

Linc Property Ltd. approached the Aboriginal Lands Trust and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in 2010 with a joint venture partnership proposal for rezoning and development of part of the Gnangara Property. Under consultation with SWALSC, a land holding body named the Noongar Charitable Trust was established as the joint venture partner. The Aboriginal Lands Trust has since agreed to transfer the property to the Noongar Charitable Trust as an outcome of the SWALSC Native Title settlement negotiations. In 2011, the City of Wanneroo recommended approval of the rezoning of the land for light industrial use.

Reserve 1229, which was reaffirmed in 1975 and 1987 by the 99-year lease secured by Ken Colbung, was granted under the rule of Queen Victoria, who with the addition of Section 7 to the Pacific Islanders Protection Act in 1875 recognised the Sovereignty of all Aboriginal Peoples of the Pacific, including Western Australia;

"Saving the Rights of tribes - Nothing herein or in any such Order on Council contained shall extend or be construed to extend to invest Her majesty with any claim or title whatsoever to dominion or sovereignty over any such islands or places as aforesaid, or to derogate from the rights of the tribes or people inhabiting such islands or places, or of chiefs or rulers thereof, to such sovereignty or dominion..."

With this act, Queen Victoria officially acknowledged her government has no claim or title over the Tribal Sovereigns of Western Australia.

From the above information, it appears there needs to be further investigation and negotiations regarding the Gnangara Property.

*If others have more information regarding the Gnangara Property, please contact the Nyoongar Tent Embassy*

## GOAL OBJECTIVE 1:

**To organise a series of country  
and Perth speaking tours to  
Tribal Sovereign Peoples**



# CULLACABARDEE

Tribal Sovereign Elder Clem Riley of the Cullacabardee Aboriginal Community contacted the Nyoongar Tent Embassy to ask for information to help with issues the Cullacabardee community were facing, which included problems with housing. The Nyoongar Tent Embassy has contacted the Equal Opportunities Commission to request a roundtable discussion with the Department of Housing regarding maintenance issues and the substandard quality of housing at Cullacabardee.

Nyoongar Tent Embassy members also attended the launch of the Equal Opportunity Commission's report into the WA Department of Housing's Disruptive Behaviour Management Strategy (the 'three strikes' system) on July 24<sup>th</sup> 2013. Currently, three minor complaints against a tenant within a 12-month period will result in eviction proceedings. The report investigated complaints by tenants against the strategy and recommendations by Shelter WA.

The Equal Opportunities Commission reported that the current system is discriminatory on the grounds of race, age, sex and impairment and does not take into consideration cultural practices and obligations or unsubstantiated complaints filed by neighbours solely on the grounds of racism. The report recommended the introduction of a right to appeal complaints, and that any unsubstantiated complaints should not be recorded on a tenants file.

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy is looking at existing government policies and addressing the issues experienced at Cullacabardee.

Article 25(1) of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* provides that:

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

The Equal Opportunities Commission report also cited a study by the United Nations Housing Rights Programme, which found that Indigenous Peoples are more likely to suffer from inadequate housing conditions and often experience systemic discrimination in the housing market.



Location of Cullacabardee 21km north of Perth city  
source: OrderinChaos78: public domain

## GOAL OBJECTIVE 1:

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# **PETITION AGAINST THE NATIVE TITLE OFFER 2012**

## **– MARCH TO SAVE OUR CULTURE**

On October 18<sup>th</sup> 2012, Nyoongar Tent Embassy Tribal Sovereigns and supporters marched to WA Parliament House to present a petition of thousands of signatures against the SWALSC/Barnett Native Title deal and to demand recognition of Tribal Sovereignty.

Nyoongar Tribal Sovereign Elder Uncle Lyndsay Calyun and the Kwinana Yonga Boys danced to welcome the Spirits before the march. The Yonga Boys danced again on the steps of Parliament House, where the Hon. Lynn MacLaren MLC accepted the petition.



Nyoongar Tribal Sovereign Elder Auntie Ulli Helen Corbett gave a speech to mark the occasion, as did Nyoongar Tribal Sovereigns, Bella Bropho and Rex Bellotti Senior. Bella Brown sang for the gathered crowd and Preston Culbong emceed the proceedings.



Hon. Lynn MacLaren MLC accepts the petition at WA Parliament House



### **GOAL OBJECTIVE 1:**

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## YIRRKALA BARK PETITIONS

In 1963 The Yolngu Tribal Sovereign People from Yirrkala in eastern Arnhem Land sent petitions to the Australian Parliament demanding legal recognition of their land and sea rights and objecting the proposed Nabalco bauxite mine at Nhulunbuy (Gove) which would disturb, and restrict access to, sacred sites. The bark panels articulate the title to the country under law of the two Yolngu groups, one Dhuwa, and the other Yirritja. The bark petitions were tabled separately in the House of Representatives in 1963. As a result of the petitions, a bipartisan Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry was established, but despite the Committee's recommendation of compensation and the protection of sacred sites, the mining leases went ahead. In 1968, the Yolngu Tribal Sovereigns then took their case to the Northern Territory Supreme Court, which became known as the Gove Land Rights Case. Although the case was rejected in 1971, it was an important step for land rights in Australia. The following year, the Aboriginal Tent Embassy was inaugurated in Canberra. The case also prompted the 1973 Woodward Royal Commission into Land Rights and the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory Act) in 1976.

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy joins NAIDOC in celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the presentation of the Yirrkala Bark Petitions.



Petitions of the Tribal Sovereign Peoples of Yirrkala 14 August and 28 August 1963  
Courtesy of the Museum of Australian Democracy

### GOAL OBJECTIVE 1:

**To provide and exchange information on  
Sovereignty to local, regional & national  
Tribal Sovereign Peoples**

# **A DAY TO TASTE OUR TRIBAL SOVEREIGN FREEDOM**

## **25<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2013**

*A Day to Taste Our Tribal Sovereign Freedom* was held at Matagarup on January 25<sup>th</sup> 2013 in celebration of the rights held as Tribal Sovereign Peoples and as an occasion to educate people about Sovereignty

January 25<sup>th</sup> was chosen as the last day of freedom before Europeans claimed this land for a foreign king in a foreign country. More than sixty people attended the event to enjoy Tribal Sovereign Peoples' right to self-determination and celebrate the past, present and future of Nyoongar Tribal Sovereign families.

The day was opened by a Welcome to Country and speeches by Nyoongar Tribal Sovereign Elders and Nyoongar Tent Embassy representatives. In the morning session, Curtin University researchers presented the preliminary findings of a study into media representation of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy. The Coalition of Peoples held a photographic display on the Mogumber Mission.

Everyone present enjoyed a Corroboree led by the Kwinana Yonga Boys and were treated to traditional food at lunch while local bands performed. Separate women and men's circles were held in the afternoon and the women performed a smoking ceremony to cleanse the island.



Photo: Alex Bainbridge/Green Left Weekly

As a courtesy, the Nyoongar Tent Embassy contacted the new CEO of the City of Perth, Gary Stevenson, to advise him that they would be exercising their right to practice traditional lore and culture at Matagarup on that day. The City of Perth gave no objection, however, the NTE maintains its rights and principles to organise and undertake cultural practices without seeking permission or approval. The Tribal Sovereigns lit and tended to the Ceremonial Sacred Fire and, without a visit from the Fire Brigade, celebrated their Tribal Sovereign Freedom to do so.

### **GOAL OBJECTIVE 1:**

**To provide and exchange information on  
Sovereignty to local, regional & national  
Tribal Sovereign Peoples**



## OPENING OF PARLIAMENT 2013 SMOKING CEREMONY

On April 11<sup>th</sup> 2013, the date of the official opening of the Western Australian Parliament, Tribal Sovereigns of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy attended Parliament House to perform a traditional Smoking Ceremony. The Navy, Army and Air Force were standing at attention as the Nyoongar Tent Embassy members started the Smoking Ceremony and began to educate the gathered crowd about Sovereignty.

Members of the WA Police grabbed and attempted to arrest a pregnant Nyoongar Tent Embassy Tribal Sovereign as she walked through the Parliament House gardens. The Tent Embassy member asked the police what she was being arrested for; to which they answered it was because she had not moved on. The NTE member then informed the police that they had not issued her a 'move-on notice' so could not arrest her on that basis. The police subsequently issued the Tribal Sovereign a 'move-on notice'.

The police then followed members of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy as they packed up their cultural items and moved out of the area.



Nyoongar Tribal Sovereigns perform the Smoking Ceremony at Parliament House, before the Army, Navy, Air Force and WA Police

### GOAL OBJECTIVE 1:

**To provide and exchange information on Sovereignty to local, regional & national Tribal Sovereign Peoples**

# **CIRCULATING THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

Since its inception in 2012, the Nyoongar Tent Embassy has circulated the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2007. The Australian Parliament bilaterally endorsed this UN Declaration on April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2009, under Prime Minister Kevin Rudd.

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy holds that the Federal Government should take immediate efforts to force all of its tiers of government to obey the international rule of law according to the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in particular, Indigenous People's rights to self-determination. Failure to do this is a breach of UN Resolution 2625 (XXV) to which Australia is a signatory.

The Nyoongar people have a valid Native Title claim, as determined by Justice Wilcox, which includes the area of Matagarup. Richard Court's Government's 12 million dollar appeal to deny the rights contained therein, was not successful, leaving the Nyoongar claim still in place as recognised under the Native Title framework. The Native Title Act, in itself, has repeatedly been found by United Nations human rights monitoring bodies to violate the rights of Aboriginal People, nor does it accept the Sovereign Rights of Aboriginal People.

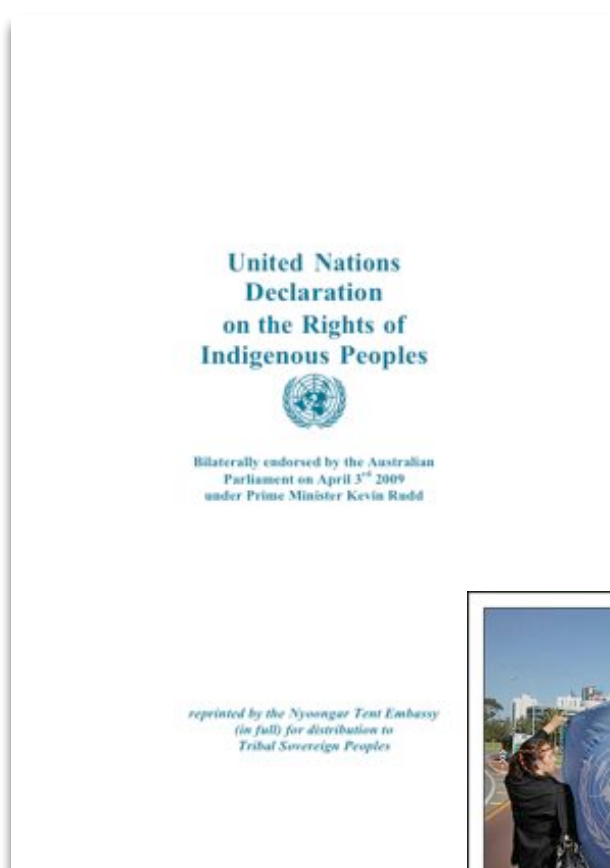


photo: Désiré Mallet

## **GOAL OBJECTIVE 2:**

**To share information on the enjoyment of the United Nations Human Rights Regime**



# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AUSTRALIA PERTH WORKSHOPS



Members of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy were involved in a three-day human rights workshop that was presented by Amnesty International Australia. The workshop gave insights into human rights and how they relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. Content was particularly geared toward promoting an understanding of the criminal justice system within Western Australia along with tools and skills in effective campaigning for social change. Fourteen Aboriginal People from Western Australia completed the workshop, with a number of Nyoongar Tent Embassy members among them.



In July and August 2013, the Nyoongar Tent Embassy will be holding free human rights workshops in Perth. All interested participants are invited to attend, with places for up to 100 participants.

Two full day workshops will be held on 17<sup>th</sup> July and 7<sup>th</sup> August, and a third workshop will be held over two evenings on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> July. The workshops are FREE and all materials and meals will be provided. There are 30 spaces available for the first to sign up to each workshop.



The workshops will be held at the Perth Activist Centre, Shop 15, 5 Aberdeen St, East Perth (next to McIver Station).

Registration forms for the workshops will be available at the NTE stand at the NAIDOC Opening Ceremony on 7<sup>th</sup> July and online via the NTE Facebook page. Please email: [matagarupcouncil@hotmail.com](mailto:matagarupcouncil@hotmail.com) or phone 0416 376 210 for more information.

## GOAL OBJECTIVE 2:

**To share information on the  
enjoyment of the United Nations  
Human Rights Regime**

## **SPIRIT OF THE WHALE SMOKING CEREMONY**



On Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2012 members of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy celebrated the Spirit of the Whale Smoking Ceremony at Kwinana Beach. Nyoongar Tribal Sovereign Elder Trevor Walley told the Dreamtime story of the Whale while the Yonga Boys danced on the beach.



photo: Dale Jones

## **STAND UP FOR THE BURRUP**



Nyoongar Tent Embassy Tribal Sovereigns stood up for the Burrup in October 2012.

### **GOAL OBJECTIVE 2:**

**To engage with national and international human rights organisations to promote and defend Tribal Sovereignty**



## HARMONY DAY SMOKING CEREMONY 2013

On Harmony Day, the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2013, women of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy worked in solidarity with the Black Action Group and Idle No More (Canada) to perform a Smoking Ceremony at Forrest Chase in the Perth city centre. The Smoking Ceremony was the first of three days of events organised to fall in line with the Equinoxes. The event celebrated the element of fire and Nyoongar Tribal Sovereign Peoples' right to perform cultural activities wherever they want and need to. The Nyoongar Tent Embassy also acknowledged the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which coincides with the celebration of Harmony Day in Australia, and has links to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.



NTE Tribal Sovereigns and onlookers take part in the Smoking Ceremony



### GOAL OBJECTIVE 2:

To engage with national and international human rights organisations to promote and defend Tribal Sovereignty

# RESEARCH PROJECTS BY CURTIN UNIVERSITY

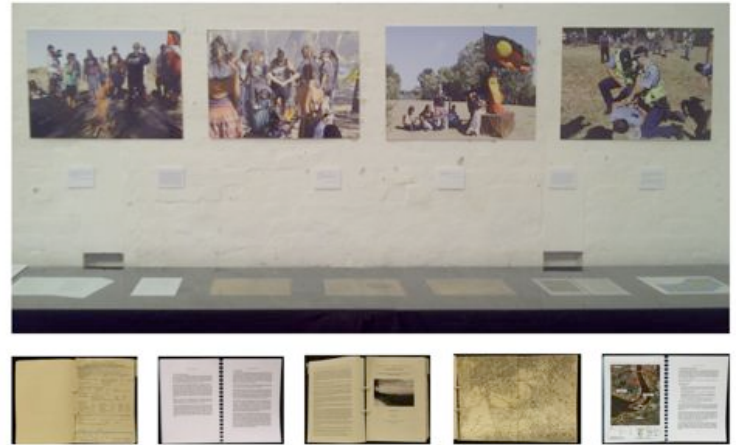
Since February 2012, researchers from Curtin University have been investigating media and public representation of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy at Matagarup. They have produced the following works:

## **Visual works: *I'm not going anywhere, I'm here all the time***

7<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> July 2013 at The Nook, State Library of Western Australia

By Robyn Creagh, Patricia Ryder, Shaphan Cox and Thor Kerr in cooperation with the Nyoongar Tent Embassy

Visitors are invited to record places of Aboriginal significance onto a map of central Perth. They are also invited to indicate places where move-on notices have been received. In another part of this space, a visual display brings together official documents and news media photographs negotiated by narratives to show how a silencing of Aboriginal sovereignty has led to police violence. The window installation “I’m here all the time,” visible from both the inside and outside of the library, responds with a counter story to the recent media portrayal of Aboriginal heritage in Perth. The works have strong visual presence, inviting discussion and interaction.



*I'm not going anywhere, I'm here all the time* visual work

## **Media representation of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy (to be launched in a few weeks)**

This report by Thor Kerr and Shaphan Cox analyses 100 news reports to show how a problem of Aboriginal ‘protestors’ was constructed by Perth’s media in early 2012. This media construction supported violent police raids directed against the Nyoongar Tent Embassy, peacefully affirming native title at the sacred site of Matagarup. This site is the ‘Meeting Place, Plant Resource, Camp, Hunting Place’ of Nyoongar people recognized in Western Australian law. Yet, this law was ignored by media workers and state officials, who claimed that embassy members were breaking city bylaws by camping on ‘public’ land. By ignoring native title and Aboriginal heritage law, news reports could blame embassy participants for confrontations that reporters, editors, politicians, police and senior bureaucrats produced for the consumption of media audiences.



Police raid Matagarup 2012

## **GOAL OBJECTIVE 2:**

**To enter into arrangements with research institutions regarding issues that impact the lives of Tribal Sovereigns**

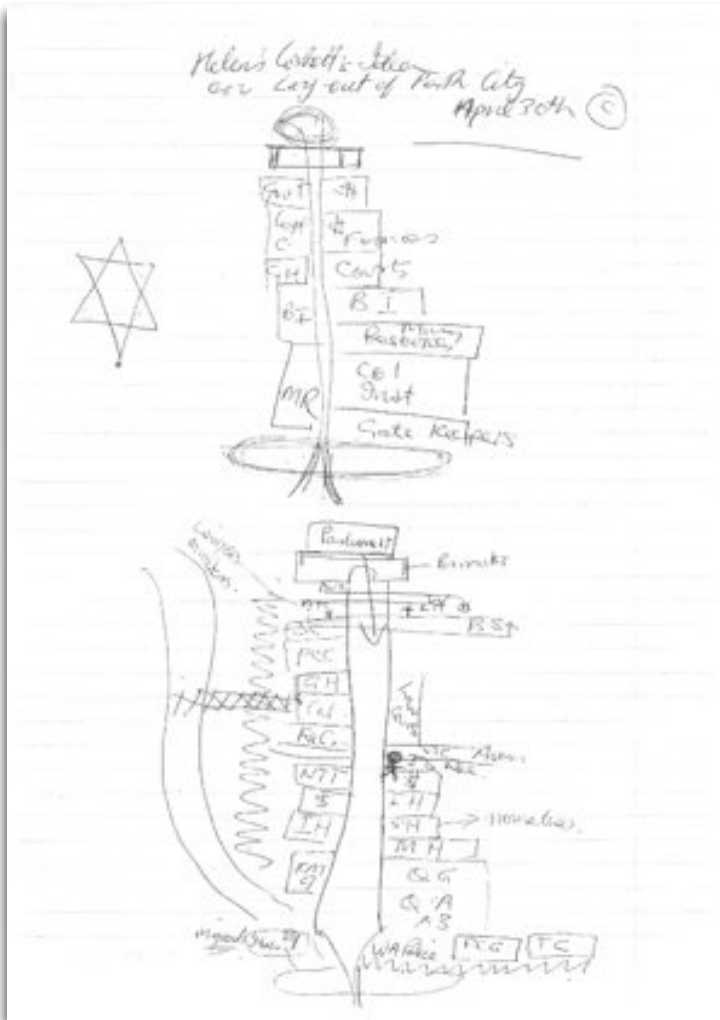


# CITY OF PERTH SPATIAL JUSTICE PROJECT

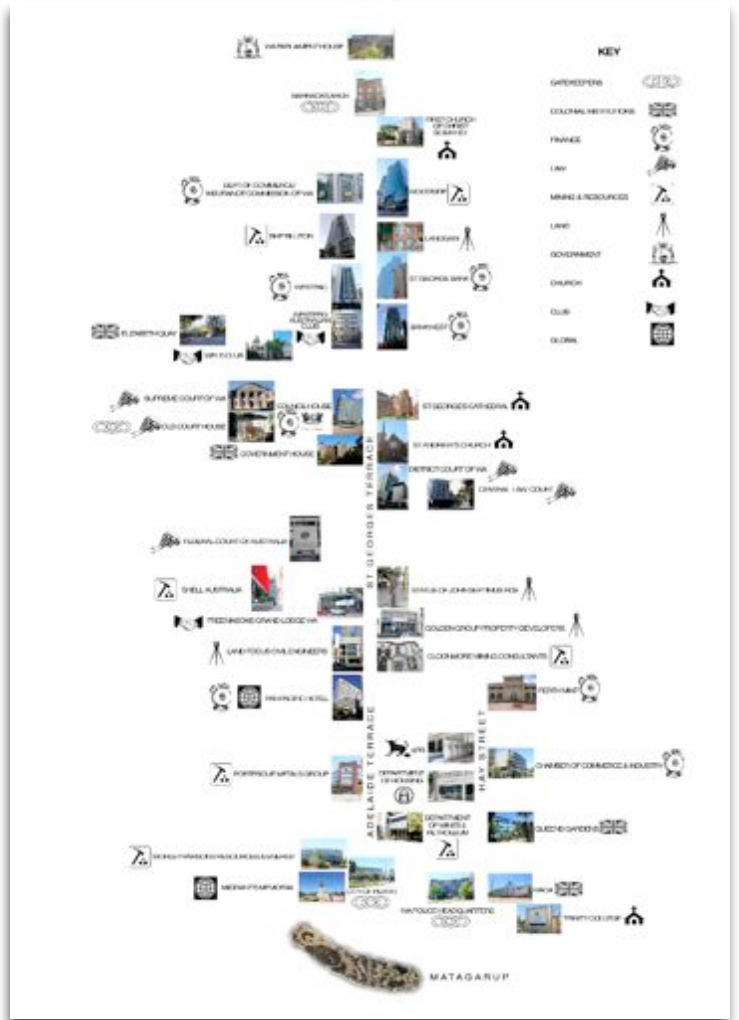
Members of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy are currently working with Tina Askam, a graduate research student at Edith Cowan University, on an investigation into spatial injustice in the layout of the city of Perth. This research is based on an original idea by Nyoongar Tribal Sovereign Elder Aunty Ulli (Helen) Corbett regarding the dominance of colonial, government, legal, mining and financial institutions and organisations in central Perth, from Matagarup right through to Parliament House. The City of Perth's spatial design could be said to resemble a star shaped fortress, following in the tradition of heavily fortified cities, which were first constructed in Europe in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

The purpose of the project is to investigate how the built environment of the city of Perth can impact the social justice and human rights enjoyed by Tribal Sovereign Peoples. The research is currently at the preliminary draft stage.

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy would like to invite people who have knowledge of the Aboriginal places in the city of Perth to participate in the research project so as to create a multimedia map that celebrates Tribal Sovereignty.



original sketch by Aunty Ulli (Helen) Corbett



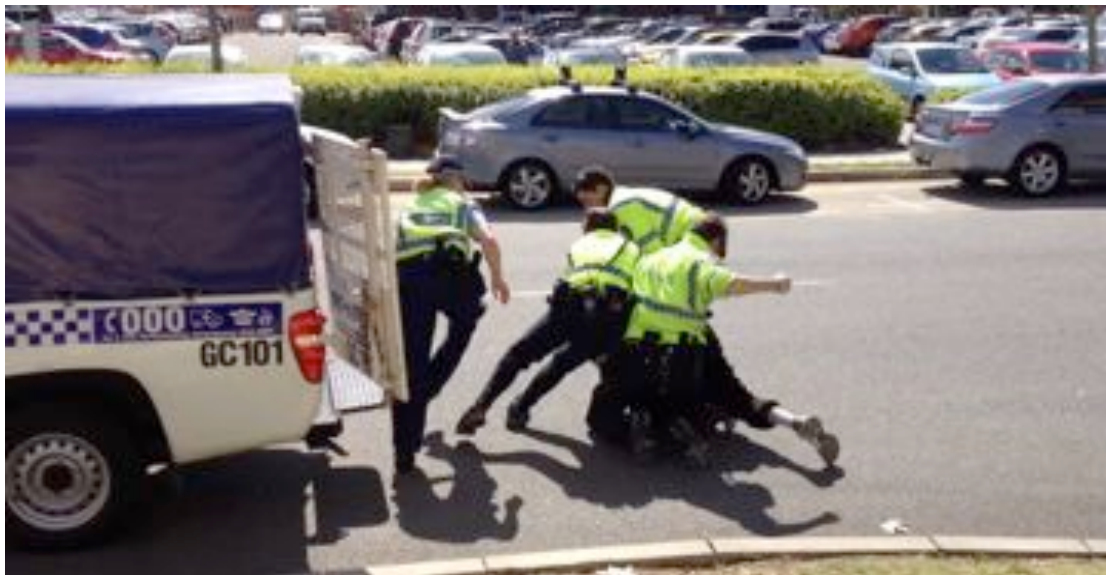
preliminary draft of a poster for the project

## GOAL OBJECTIVE 2:

**To enter into arrangements with research institutions regarding issues that impact the lives of Tribal Sovereigns**

## **WITNESS OF POLICE ASSAULTING A BOY OUTSIDE AADS & DERBARL YERRIGAN HEALTH SERVICE**

On August 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012, members of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy were attending an Elder's meeting in the building of the Aboriginal Alcohol and Drug Service (AADS) in East Perth when they heard a commotion outside, and subsequently witnessed and filmed a shocking and disturbing incident of police brutality against a 14-year-old Tribal Sovereign boy. Witnesses saw the WA Police ram the boy's head into a metal bin, smash his face into the ground and drag him 100 metres. The police officers punched the boy repeatedly, as can be seen in the images below. The Nyoongar Tent Embassy tried to stop the violent attack but the police threatened them with tasers. The NTE members immediately advised the Aboriginal Legal Service of WA, and the boy's family, so that he could be supported at the police station.



source: stills from video footage filmed at the scene

### **GOAL OBJECTIVE 2:**

**To engage with national and international  
human rights organisations to  
promote and defend Tribal Sovereignty**



# **ACTION AGAINST THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH - IN SUPPORT OF TRISTAN DIMER**

In the early hours of December 16<sup>th</sup> 2012, Tristan Dimer was grabbed by police and taken to Graylands Hospital after they had mistaken him for another Aboriginal man who had earlier walked off the grounds without being noticed. The man had been a low security patient who was placed in Graylands after he refused to take medication for his mental illness.

Once Tristan was taken to Graylands he was administered a dangerous drug for schizophrenia that can cause serious complications. The drugs were meant for the missing patient and Tristan was told that he had to take them. Not once did a staff member check his identity. The effect of the medication on Tristan was so severe that he only remembers waking up the emergency unit at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. It was only then that the medical staff discovered that the police had not only detained the wrong man, but that Graylands Hospital had administered the medication to the wrong man. Tristan was discharged from hospital with no assistance to return to his home. Several days later he was picked up by police again and taken to Graylands under a seven-day court-imposed hospital order. However Tristan was kept in a locked ward at Graylands until the 29<sup>th</sup> January this year.

On hearing of this shocking series of incidents, the Nyoongar Tent Embassy marched to the Minister for Mental Health's office on January 3<sup>rd</sup> and demanded that they be put in contact with the patient.

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy also emailed the Minister for Health, the Minister for Police and the Ombudsman. The requests were successful and Tristan was able to get in touch with the Nyoongar Tent Embassy to speak over the phone.

Jan Mayman, who was able to visit Tristan while he was in Graylands, recently wrote an article for the Sunday Times, which outlined the catalogue of errors and mistreatment. There has still been no decision on compensation for Tristan by the Mental Health Minister, Helen Morton, six months after the incident, and despite a public statement by the Minister for Police, Liza Harvey, that compensation would be forthcoming.



NTE members at the offices of the Minister for Health



SVNC & NTE Elder Herbert Bropho speaks with police

## **GOAL OBJECTIVE 2:**

**To engage with national and international human rights organisations to promote and defend Tribal Sovereignty**

## REX BELLOTTI JNR CAMPAIGN

In 2009, young Nyoongar Tribal Sovereign Rex Bellotti Junior, was run over by a police 4WD while simply crossing the road. Just 15 years old at the time, Rex Junior suffered life threatening injuries, with one leg snapped at the femur and the other leg hanging by an artery. The former leading goal kicker at the Clontarf Football Academy was flown from Albany to Perth by Royal Flying Doctor for emergency surgery, but was left with permanent disfigurement, years of gruelling rehabilitation and limited use of his leg. No compensation has been awarded and there has never been an adequate investigation, despite numerous appeals from the Bellotti family and supporters, and a 2009 Corruption and Crime Commission enquiry into the conduct of the investigating police. The Bellotti family and friends continue to fight for justice for Rex Bellotti Junior and against systemic and institutional racism. On 6<sup>th</sup> March 2013, the Bellotti Support Group

rallied on the steps of the WA Parliament House to mark their fourth year of calling for justice. Since its inauguration, the Nyoongar Tent Embassy have joined the Bellotti family and the Bellotti Support Group in the fight for compensation for Rex Junior and justice for all Nyoongar Tribal Sovereigns.

Bellotti Support Group webpage:  
[www.bellottisupportgroup.org/](http://www.bellottisupportgroup.org/)



Rex Bellotti Snr speaks at WA Parliament House



February 2012, Matagarup



Members of the Bellotti family with images showing Rex Junior's injuries

### GOAL OBJECTIVE 2:

**To engage with national and international human rights organisations to promote and defend Tribal Sovereignty**



## **SUPREME COURT ACTION ON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS – BOYS HELD AT HAKEA ADULT PRISON**

Following an incident that happened on the 20th of December 2012 roughly half of the boys being held at the Banksia Hill Detention Centre were transferred to Hakea Adult Prison. During the transfer they were mistreated, and the conditions at the prison were terrible. The boys reported continued mistreatment by the prison guards, long periods of lockdown, minimal access to family through visits and phone calls, hardly any recreation or education, and no access to programs. In addition the food was insufficient and they had to deal with abuse and threats from the adult prisoners.

In conjunction with Shine lawyers and SCALES community legal centre, and supported by family members of the boys, the Deaths in Custody Watch Committee (WA) and Youth Bail Service WA, the Nyoongar Tent Embassy took an action to the Supreme Court to try and address some of these conditions and get the boys transferred back to Banksia. This court case uncovered the systemic problems within the Department of Corrections including understaffing and the woeful lack of contingency planning regarding situations of emergency.

While the action was unsuccessful, as a result of the media coverage and the associated pressure, the conditions at Hakea immediately began to improve. Lockdown periods were reduced; the food improved and there was better access to education, recreation and programs. There was also assurance given that the boys would be transferred back to Banksia at the earliest opportunity; the Nyoongar Tent Embassy waits to see if the Department of Corrections lives up to this promise.

Amnesty International Australia officials were asked to visit Hakea Adult Prison as a Human Rights Watch Group to observe conditions first hand. The Department of Corrections refused access to the Amnesty group with Commissioner Johnson

stating his staff didn't have time to act as "tour guides". Amnesty International is involved in a major project investigating Aboriginal juvenile justice and the high rates of incarceration in Queensland and Western Australia.



Nyoongar Tent Embassy Tribal Sovereigns and supporters of the boys outside the Supreme Court of Western Australia



### **GOAL OBJECTIVE 2:**

**To engage with national and international human rights organisations to promote and defend Tribal Sovereignty**

## ACTION IN SUPPORT OF THE THORNE FAMILY

On hearing that young Nyoongar Tribal Sovereign brothers in Saudi Arabia, had been subject to breaches of the United Nations Convention Against Torture and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights\*, the Nyoongar Tent Embassy contacted the family to ask how they could support them.

Shayden Jamil Thorne was remanded in prison in Saudi Arabia 18 months ago after the authorities laid five charges against him. His lawyer has stated that he had been tortured and forced to confess to all five charges under duress. Shayden's brother, Janaid, was imprisoned for 3 months for protesting his brother's innocence. The Saudi police had detained Janaid's Australian passport, and frightened of being re-arrested, he had gone into hiding. The boys' family had made repeated requests for help from the Department of Foreign Affairs, but their pleas had been ignored.

On May 24<sup>th</sup> 2013, the Nyoongar Tent Embassy, family members and supporters marched up St. George's Terrace to the Department of Foreign Affairs, stopping traffic and canvassing support and donations along the way. The Thorne family were immediately given a meeting with the Department of Foreign Affairs.

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy helped the family to travel to the Eastern States in order for them to gain direct contact with federal government officials and support groups. Further lobbying by the Nyoongar Tent Embassy has resulted in the Thorne Family gaining pro bono legal representation.

*\*The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has abstained from signing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Both Saudi Arabia and Australia are signatories to the UN Convention Against Torture*



NTE Elder Aunty Maureen Culbong confronts DFAT building security



The Thorne and Riley families lead the rally



Marianne Headland MacKay performing a Smoking Ceremony



The boys' aunty Margaret Thorne, and grandmother Faye Krakouer



### GOAL OBJECTIVE 2:

To engage with national and international human rights organisations to promote and defend Tribal Sovereignty



# KINGS PARK TREATY

On 10<sup>th</sup> June 2012, a proclamation from the Nyoongar River Tribes came into effect when a Sacred Fire in Kings Park with hot coals from Matagarup was ignited by Noonie Raymond of the Swan Valley Region under supervision by Swan River People.



Matagarup Sacred Fire



Preparing the Sacred Fire at Kings Park

## GOAL OBJECTIVE 2:

To facilitate treaty agreements with Tribal Sovereigns

# PROTEST OF THEFT OF WOMENS' SACRED OBJECTS FROM MATAGARUP

**URGENT!!!MEDIA RELEASE!!! DESECRATION AND THEFT OF SACRED SITE AND SACRED WOMENS STONE  
-WA NOT MEETING INTERNATIONAL TREATY OBLIGATIONS WITH THE UNITED NATIONS**

Matagarup (Heirison Island) is an island of cultural significance for our people, which has led to the registration of the site with the Department of Indigenous Affairs in Perth, Western Australia. The site registration allows camping and a number of other activities with the consent of the custodians of the area. We represent the custodians and have the permission from the various Elders to engage in cultural activities when called upon. Many times our rights have been infringed by the City of Perth, who manage the island, and the Western Australian Police Force, leading to a large confiscation of our personal possessions without the jurisdiction or authority for them to do this to our people. For further information we can provide media reports as well as statements from Elders and people involved in the various raids on our island, as the WA Police force inflicted military terror on women and children and also men.

What has led to this email today is the desecration of our sacred sites on the island, in the form of a very culturally significant and important and old female stone with the totem of a female inscribed into the carved out rock. It was placed on a totem pole and placed in an area on the island to sit and wait for our women to come and participate in an event on the 25th January, and it was our role to guard the sacred stone until that time. This stone has been removed without our consent and if touched by a male they will become very ill. The stone is of huge importance and needs to be returned to our women.

So we call on your organisations to place pressure on our WA Police Force and the City of Perth by demanding a full investigation into the theft of our stolen sacred stone and demand it be returned to us within the next 24hrs. It belongs in the hands of our women and while it remains missing our cultural, religious and human rights are being infringed by being ignored. Such desecration of sites should not be allowed to continue and we call on you to support the women of the Derbarl Yerrigen and help us have the stone returned. Stop enabling the government to do this to our people and speak the truth for once on behalf of the true custodians of the land you walk on every day.

thank you

**Matagarup Council.**

After pressure from the Nyoongar Tent Embassy, the WA police launched an investigation into the theft of the sacred women's object and confirmed to the NTE that the City of Perth was in possession of it. The City of Perth continues to deny they have the stolen sacred object.

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy has advised the City of Perth, that due to the handling of the object by men, and in particular non-Tribal Sovereign men, a special ceremony will be performed when the sacred women's object is returned.



Women's meeting at Matagarup

## **GOAL OBJECTIVE 3:**

**To educate non-tribal sovereign peoples and  
call upon their adoption of a charter of human  
rights for Tribal Sovereign Peoples**



# WORLD CONFERENCE ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES 2014

The World Conference on Indigenous Peoples will be held in 2014 as a high-level plenary meeting of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. The main objective of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples is to share perspectives and best practices on the realisation of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and to pursue the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The World Conference will compel member states, including Australia, to ratify the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and to implement national domestic legislation as a result. The conference will also create a framework for the development of charters and treaties with and between Indigenous Peoples.

In order to facilitate Indigenous peoples' preparations for the World Conference, the Sami Parliament of Norway extended an invitation to Indigenous Peoples to attend a Global Preparatory Indigenous Peoples' Conference, which was held in Alta, Norway in June 2013.

The Alta Conference delivered a series of outcomes including the recommendation that States; immediately implement all rights consistent with the UN Charter, the Declaration and Treaties and agreements with Indigenous Peoples; affirm the protection of sacred places, sites and cultural landscapes, including lands taken without the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples; cease the removal of Indigenous Peoples from their ancestral lands and territories; uphold the right of self determination of Indigenous Peoples to refuse mining, resource extraction, and 'development'; and act against climate change and the continued use of fossil fuels. States are also recommended to adopt policies to guarantee food sovereignty and the right to water and clean air for Indigenous Peoples as well as the right to transmit Indigenous knowledge to Indigenous youth. The Conference also recommends the creation of a new UN body to protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples; revision of World Heritage conventions to include the rights of Indigenous Peoples; and establish direct participation in the UN through Indigenous People's own governments, traditional councils and authorities.

Indigenous Peoples make up more than 5 percent of the world's population; some 370 million people. The Nyoongar Tent Embassy's work to develop a framework, charter, and treaty will prepare the Nyoongar Sovereign Peoples to join this international movement and participate in the 2014 World Conference.



Delegates at the Alta Conference  
June 2013



image: UN Permanent Forum on  
Indigenous Issues



source: [www.grid.unep.ch](http://www.grid.unep.ch) United Nations Environment  
Programme DEWA/GRID Geneva



source: <http://wcip2014.org/>



## GOAL OBJECTIVE 3:

**To produce a charter for human rights for Tribal Sovereign Peoples based on the UN principle of the International Rule of Law**

## OTHER TRIBAL SOVEREIGN EMBASSIES

In 2012, Vanessa Culbong attended the inaugural assembly of the Sovereign Union interim National Unity Government as a representative of the Nyoongar Tent Embassy, with the objective to learn, listen and come back. All Aboriginal Nations were called to send delegates to the “Peoples’ movement motivated to take responsibility for our own destiny through a right of self-determination as is guaranteed under the United Nations Charter.” Information on the eleven Tribal Sovereign Embassies can be found at [nationalunitygovernment.org](http://nationalunitygovernment.org)



source: [nationalunitygovernment.org](http://nationalunitygovernment.org) Sovereign Union – First Nations Interim National Unity Government

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy has over 160 Sovereignty documents for those interested in the issues of Sovereignty, including a Notice of Rebuttal Sovereignty Statement, which outlines the argument for Indigenous Tribal Sovereignty.

### GOAL OBJECTIVE 4:

**To create a Tribal Sovereign representative body to promote sovereignty at local, national & international levels**



# SOVEREIGN TRIBAL PEOPLES GATHERING JUNE 2012

On the day that has been called Foundation Day in WA, the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2012, the Nyoongar Tent Embassy embarked on a three-day event, inviting all Sovereign Tribal Peoples to strengthen our Culture, unify our Peoples, practice our universal and indivisible right to freely self determine our future and form a Sovereign Tribal Council.

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy members were honoured to welcome representatives from the Brisbane Sovereign Embassy, Kylie Jerome and Peter Scuthorpe, as special guests to the event.

A Tribal Sovereign Representative Body will facilitate ongoing debates and communications with other Tribal Sovereign Peoples into the future.

Nyoongar Tent Embassy Tribal Sovereigns Vanessa Culbong and Marianne Headland Mackay will represent the Nyoongar Tent Embassy at the Students of Sustainability Conference in Tasmania in July 2013, where they will meet with other Embassy Tribal Sovereigns and gather ash from the Sovereign Embassy Sacred Fires to bring back for a ceremony at Matagarup.



Kylie Jerome from Brisbane Tent Embassy



Peter Scuthorpe from Brisbane Tent Embassy



## GOAL OBJECTIVE 4:

**To create a Tribal Sovereign representative body to promote sovereignty at local, national & international levels**

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy would like to acknowledge all members, supporters, friends and family for their tireless work and dedication to the promotion of the unity of all Tribal Sovereign Peoples to pursue our inherent, universal and indivisible right to self-determination for all present and future generations.

We would like to thank, in particular, the following organisations for their continued support:

Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia, Black Action Group,  
Deaths in Custody Watch Committee (WA), Forest Rescue, The Greens Western Australia,  
Socialist Alliance, Swan Valley Nyungah Community, Western Australian Nuclear Free Alliance, Yorgum.

The NTE would also like to thank the following people who contributed to making this information book:

Aunty Maureen Culbong

Aunty Ulli (Helen) Corbett

Marianne Headland Mackay

Vanessa Culbong

Ronda Harmon

Preston Culbong

Noonie Raymond

Patricia Ryder

Len Culbong Jr

Anna Copeland from SCALES Community Legal Centre

Dr Thor Kerr, Dr Shaphan Cox and Robyn Creagh from Curtin University

Liz Murray

Tina Askam

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Noonie Raymond, Marianne Headland Mackay, Michaela Pearce and Dale Jones

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**



## LINKS

Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia

<http://www.als.org.au/>

Amnesty International Australia

<http://www.amnesty.org.au/>

Bellotti Support Group

<http://www.bellottisupportgroup.org/>

Curtin University School of Media, Culture and Creative Arts

<http://humanities.curtin.edu.au/schools/MCCA/>

Deaths in Custody Watch Committee WA

<http://www.deathsincustody.org.au/>

Derbal Yerrigan Health Service

<http://www.derbarlyerrigan.com.au/>

Forest Rescue

<http://www.forestrescue.com.au/>

The Greens Australia

<http://greens.org.au/>

Idle No More

<http://idlenomore.ca/>

Jamil & Junaid Thorne – Help Bring Them Home

<http://www.facebook.com/JamilJunaidThorneHelpBringThemHome>

Socialist Alliance

<http://www.socialist-alliance.org/>

Southern Communities Advocacy Legal Education Service SCALES

<http://www.murdoch.edu.au/School-of-Law/Clinical-Legal-Education-SCALES/>

Stand Up For The Burrup

<http://www.standupfortheburrup.com/>

Swan Valley Nyungah Community

<http://www.nyungah.org.au/>

Western Australian Nuclear Free Alliance

<http://nuclearfree.wordpress.com/>

Yorgum

<http://www.yorgum.com.au/>

## LINKS & REFERENCES

## LINKS

Aboriginal Heritage Enquiry System

<http://www.daa.wa.gov.au/en/Site-Search/Aboriginal-Heritage-Inquiry-System/>

Foundation Documents including Pacific Islanders Protection Act 1872 & 1875 amendment

<http://ostf.weebly.com/references.html>

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf)

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

<http://wcip2014.org/>

Human Rights Watch

<http://www.facebook.com/HumanRightsWatch>

Aboriginal Tent Embassy

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Aboriginal-Tent-Embassy/>

First Nations Sovereign Embassies

<http://www.nationalunitygovernment.org/content/tent-embassy-map>

Brisbane Aboriginal Sovereign Embassy

<https://www.facebook.com/BrisbaneSovereignEmbassyMusgravePark>

National Unity Government

<http://nationalunitygovernment.org/>

Nyoongar Tent Embassy Facebook Page

<http://www.facebook.com/NyoongarTentEmbassy>

Nyoongar Tent Embassy Website

<http://tentembassywa.com/>

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Email: david.waller@latemail.com



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Email: david.waller@latemail.com



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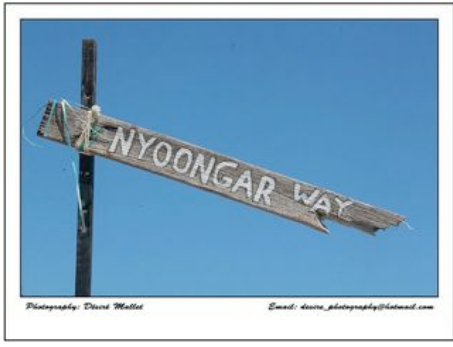
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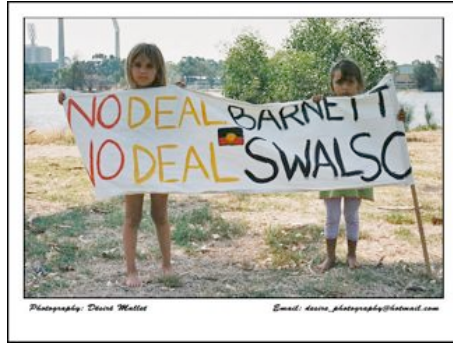
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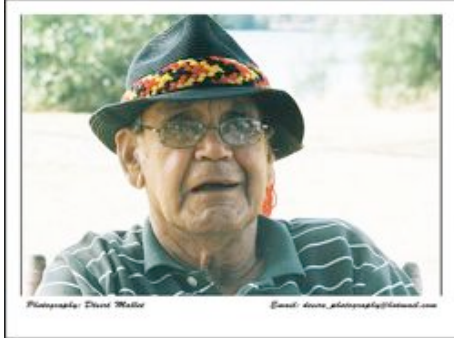
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## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

To donate to the Nyoongar Tent Embassy:  
Credit Union Australia  
BSB 814 282 Account 31199812





## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

The Nyoongar Tent Embassy meets every Thursday at 11am  
at the Activist Centre, 5/15 Aberdeen St, Perth  
(next to McIver Train Station)  
phone: 0416 376 210



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