



AIATSIS

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

Manuscript Finding Aid

MS 2533

Mowanjum Collection: Barunga bequest

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Collection Summary

Collection no:	MS 2533
Title:	Mowanjum Collection: Barunga bequest
Creator:	Freeman, John Derek
Date range:	1916-1977 (bulk 1971-9175)
Extent:	1 linear metre (one type 1 archive box, two type 2 archive box, one custom box and one map folder)
Repository:	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
Registration ID:	Series 1-4 N/A, Series 5 AIAS848.210332

Cultural Sensitivity Statement

Use of the material

When using this finding aid, and the collection described within it, clients are encouraged to be mindful and sensitive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, particularly with regard to the use of this material.

Language

This finding aid and collection may contain words and descriptions which may be culturally inappropriate and insensitive. The language used in this collection may not normally be used in certain public or community contexts. Clients may encounter terms and descriptions, which reflect the author's attitude or that of the period in which the manuscript was written, that may be considered inappropriate today.

Deceased persons

Clients using this finding aid should be aware that in some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, hearing recordings, seeing images of the names deceased persons may cause sadness, or distress and in some cases, offend against strongly held cultural beliefs.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Content

People & Organisations

Includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, family or organisations that are associated with this collection (individuals or groups who have contributed to, performed in, or are mentioned within this collection). Please note that there may be additional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or groups that are not included in this Finding Aid, as they have not been identified. If you can provide further information to AIATSIS regarding this, please contact us at collectionenquiry@aiatsis.gov.au or telephone +61 2 6246 1182

Knowledge Holders:

Albert Barunga
Pudja Barunga
David Mowaljarlai
Elkin Umbagai
Sam Umbagai

Community & Language

Worrorra people K17
Ngarinyin people K18
Wunambal people K22

Country

Mowanjum (WA West Kimberley SE51-07)
Pantijan (WA West Kimberley SE51-07)
Kunmunya (WA West Kimberley SE51-07)
Kununurra (WA East Kimberley SD52-14)
Canberra (ACT SI55-16)

Collection Overview

Scope and Contents note

The collection contains papers relating to the Mowanjum Community. Barunga, a Worrorra Elder, was an active member of this Community. There is a wealth of data about Mowanjum residents in Freeman's foolscap notebook containing data on 'The Mowanjum Community: an enquiry'. Also included are notes by Freeman on the Mowanjum Community, papers relating to housing at the Community, including a Housing Project, minutes of meetings held at the Community, quarterly plans for the Community and lists of members of the Community and of the Mowanjum Mission School and Pre-School. The collection also includes photographs, newspaper clippings, notes and transcripts that provide to additional context to the collection and insight about Barunga's life, ideas and his friendship with Freeman.

Provenance

The collection was deposited with AIATSIS in two consignments in 1986 and 2024. The papers in series 1-4 were deposited with the AIATSIS Library, in memory of Albert Barunga, by Professor John Derek Freeman, in May 1986. Photographs and slides received with the collection are held in the AIATSIS photographic collection.

Series 5 was offered to AIATSIS by Freeman's daughter Hilary Freeman in January 2022 items were reviewed by AIATSIS staff and official donation occurred on 24 April 2024. The papers in Series 5 came into her possession as part of the deceased estate following her mother's death in 2012. The folder was compiled prior to Barunga's death (1977) The notes were probably penned by Freeman (John Derek). Some of the photographs taken in Canberra on Barunga's two visits in May 1972 and June 1973 were taken by Sylvia Neumann and Gordon Reid, for others the photographer is unknown. Photographs taken outside of Barunga's visits to Canberra in May 1972 and June 1973 may have been given to Freeman by Barunga or his family. It is unclear how Freeman acquired the ABC interview and the WA Museum transcripts.

Some photographs in the collection do not have dates but share features with others that indicate that they may have been taken by the same photographer, in the same location or on the same date. These photographs are marked with date and location preceded by the word 'likely'. The rationale behind each of these decisions is outlined in the archivists note.

Material separated from the collection

Material described here was deposited by Freeman with the initial consignment of material in MS 2533 in May 1986.

LOVE.J01.DF	Worora Death Rituals.
LOVE.J02.DF	Worora Rituals and Ceremonies.
LOVE.J03.DF	Worrorra rock art, stone monuments and sacred sites.
LOVE.J04.DF	Worrorra men making stone implements.
LOVE.J05.DF	Worrorra Rituals and women's activities.
LOVE.J06.DF	Worrorra men and ceremonies.
LOVE.J07.DF	Kunmunya Mission community activities.
LOVE.J08.DF	Kunmunya Mission activities.
FREEMAN.D05.BW	Aboriginal housing at Mowanjum.

Related material

FREEMAN.D01.BW	Albert Barunga: a photographic portrait
	The registration number of this collection (N03915) is close to the number (N 3915) written on the back of MS 2533/5/2/4.
PMS 423	A report on Mowanjum community with special reference to its housing needs, presented to the Aboriginal Housing Panel
	<i>A copy of this collection is held in MS 2533/2/1</i>

PMS 424 A report on Mowanjum community with special reference to its housing needs, presented to the Aboriginal Housing Panel

A copy of this collection is held in MS 2533/2/1

PMS 611 Settled at last

A copy of this collection is held in MS 2533/2/1

PMS 4542 The Worora, Albert Barunga and the Rev. J.R.B. Love / an edited version of a conversation between Derek Freeman and Mrs Margaret Love (the widow of the Rev. J.R.B. Love) recorded in Adelaide on 13 July, 1972

MS 2532 Papers

For a complete list of works by John Derek Freeman and Albert Barunga held by the library, and for other related material consult [Mura®](#), the AIATSIS catalogue.

Access to the Collection

Access conditions for this collection

Open access - reading. Copying permitted for private study.

Obtaining access, copying and quotation permission

Clients are advised that the collection materials listed in this finding aid may be subject to particular access and use conditions required by Indigenous communities and/or depositors. Materials are provided for private study and use, in accordance with the Copyright Act 1968, Section 51. Copying of, and quoting from, unpublished material may be subject to the conditions determined by Indigenous communities and/or depositors of the manuscripts.

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AIATSIS Manuscripts are not available for Inter-library loan, however they may be available via document supply, subject to access conditions.

Preferred citation

Items from this collection should be cited as: Title [or description] of Item, [manuscript title], Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, MS [number], Series [number], Folder or item [number].

Example:

'Mowanjum general notes' 1947-74 and 'Notes on Mowanjum', Aug-Sept 1974, by J.D. Freeman. Handwritten, Mowanjum Collection: Barunga bequest, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, MS 2533 Series 1, Item 1.

Biographical and Administrative history note

Albert Barunga was born in 1913 and died in 1977. He was a noted elder, and main spokesperson, for the Worrorra tribe.

A founding member of the Aboriginal Cultural Foundation, Barunga was involved in encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to contribute to the recording of their legends and life stories, which subsequently resulted in the publication of several books and the production of a number of tape-recorded reminiscences.

About this little devil and this little fella, story told by Albert Barunga; transcription by Stephen Muecke, and illustrations by Julie Dowling (Broome, W.A., 1999) was on the Western Australian Premier's Book Awards 1999 shortlist.

Barunga was the young 'tracker' who found Charles Kingsford Smith when his plane, the *Southern Cross*, was lost near the Kunmunya mission in the Kimberley on its way to Wyndham in 1929.

The Mowanjum Mission was established when the Presbyterian Board of Missions purchased a small property in 1955. The Mowanjum Community Inc. was incorporated on October 5, 1972, joining the Worrorra, Ngarinyin and Wunambal Peoples who lived at Mowanjum, six miles from Derby. In 1973 Freeman was authorised by the Ruling Body of the Community to act as their agent in Canberra and elsewhere, in accordance with instructions from the Ruling Body.

This Biographical note is adapted from the original finding aid updated by J. Churches in November 2002.

Archivists note

In 2024 an additional consignment of material collected and arranged by Freeman was donated by his daughter Hilary. This material was kept in a small black ring bound folder with 39 pages bound on the rings and additional material slid in the back of the folder. Majority of this loose material was held in a small plastic envelope excepting one photograph (MS 2253/5/2/7) which was slid behind the envelope at the back of the folder. Given that this material has shared provenance and related subject matter donation was added to MS 2533 as Series 5. The donation was further divided into two subseries, subseries 1 includes material bound in the folder and subseries 2 includes the loose material. Subseries 1 is organised into items based on similar date and subject matter. However, items have been kept in original order. For example. There are handwritten notes discussing Barunga's values in items 8 and 10, despite similar subject matter they were not combined because in the original folder there was other material between them. Similarly, the item numbers in subseries 2 reflect the original order the items were organised inside the plastic envelope. Subseries 1 was removed from the original folder due to risk of rust damage. The items in this series were rehoused in manilla folders inside a four-flap folder. Subseries 2 was rehoused in archive safe plastic and polypropylene sleeves. These are organised in manilla folders with the lower number item facing the left side of the folder and placed inside a four-flap folder. The folder and envelope were retained and are held in box 4 with Series 5.

Items MS 2533/5/2/3-4 are identified as likely taken by Gordon Reid on the 27 May 1972. This is because they appear to be copies of the photograph in item MS 2533/5/1/14 marked with this date and photographer. Item MS 2533/5/2/5 is identified as likely taken on 30 May 1972. This is because, in this photograph, Barunga can be seen in the same clothes, outside the same building as in the photograph in item MS 2533/5/1/11. It is also noted that a photograph in item MS 2533/5/1/12 is taken on this date by Mrs Sylvia Neumann. Given that her husband is one of the subjects of the photograph in MS 2533/5/1/11, it is possible that she is also the photographer of MS 2533/5/1/12 and therefore MS 2533/5/2/5.

Series Description

Series 1, Mowanjum, 1947, 1963, 1971-1974

This series consists of papers relating to Mowanjum and its people, including family history data.

Folder/Item

MS 2533/1/1	'Mowanjum general notes' 1947-74 and 'Notes on Mowanjum', Aug-Sept 1974, by J.D. Freeman. Handwritten.
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- MS 2533/1/2 'Notes on Mowanjum Council', 1973-74, by J.D. Freeman. Handwritten.
- MS 2533/1/3 'The Mowanjum Community: an enquiry' conducted by Derek Freeman, Department of Anthropology, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, between 21 August and 27 September 1974. The survey covers such matters as historical data on population, family history, occupants, children at pre-school, primary and high schools and there are also the results of an opinion survey. Pencilled notes in foolscap book with cover title 'The Mowanjum'.
- MS 2533/1/4 Papers, 1963, 1972-74. Includes Minutes of Meetings, Constitution of Mowanjum Community Incorporated, 'An Act of Determination by the Aborigines of Mowanjum Community'. Also a crayon drawing by Timothy Jorda, born 25.9.63, of a jet plane landing at Derby Airport. Mainly photocopies or carbon copies.
- MS 2533/1/5 Mowanjum Community list, which includes family relationships and occupations and house occupants. Also lists of pupils in Derby High School classes and the Mowanjum Mission school and pre-school.

Series 2, HOUSING PROJECT, 1973-76

This series relates to the building of houses at the Mowanjum Community.

Folder/Item

- MS 2533/2/1 'A report on Mowanjum Community with special reference to its housing needs'. Also includes 'Settled at Last? a contribution to 'How to Live? the Problems of the Transition to Sedentary Settlement amongst Australian Aborigines, Section 25, 46th ANZAAS Congress, 1975, by J.D. Freeman.

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- MS 2533/2/2-3 Papers, 1973-74. Includes correspondence, diagrams, notes, including notes on meetings, photograph, sketch maps, plans, and reports. Also included is a 'Report on the provision of services and housing for the Mowanjum Housing Society, Derby, W.A.', by Clarke, Gazzard and Flower, an assessment of the report by Peter Myers and a response to the assessment by Donald Gazzard.
- MS 2533/2/4 Plans for the Mowanjum Houses, 1973-74. Includes floor plans, site plan and sketch plan elevations. Plans drawn by Clarke Gazzard Flower Architects.
- MS 2533/2/5-6 Mowanjum Community in Relation to the Derby Aerodrome, 1974. Includes plans, notes, correspondence and aerial photograph.
- MS 2533/2/7-8 Aboriginal Housing Panel, 1973-74. Includes site and other plans, correspondence, 'Bibliography: Aboriginal housing' (Oct. 1974) and an assessment of the architects proposals by Peter Myers.
- MS 2533/2/9 Plans and maps, 1974-75. House, site plan and schematic town plans for, and sketch map of, Mowanjum (Sept. 1974) and blurb for the Second International Conference on Jojoba and its uses (1975)
- MS 2533/2/10 'Mowanjum: comments on Peter Myers' assessment' and 'Notes on social space at Mowanjum', by Peter Lucich. Included are 1963 maps of family units, of the old people's area and of the Mission, Worrorra kinship categories and marriage (1974) and clan relationships of Alan Mungulu of Mowanjum (1974) and a covering letter to Freeman.
- MS 2533/2/11 Abstracts of papers for 'How to live? The problems of the Transition to Sedentary Settlement amongst Australian Aborigines', 1974, and covering letter regarding publication of Freeman's paper

Series 3, MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS 1971-74

- MS 2533/3/1 'Notes by J.B. Birdsell on Worora [Worrorra] Hordes. Informant Albert Barunga, 6.6.73.'

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- MS 2533/3/2 Notes written by Elkin Umbagai, of her own accord, and presented to Maisie McKenzie when she was writing *The road to Mowanjum*, 1973
- MS 2533/3/3 'A Proposal for beginning the reconstruction of the Wunan in the Kimberley'
- MS 2533/3/4 'Proposal for a cultural Djaruk for the Kimberley Area' submitted to the Aboriginal Arts Foundation by the Mowanjum elders, the Oombulgurri elders, Kununurra representatives [and] Port Keats representatives, prepared by David Mowaljarlai and Sam Umbagai with the assistance of the Institute of Cultural Affairs.
- MS 2533/3/5 'Sacred sites and their protection', by Albert Barunga. Reprinted from *The Preservation of Australia's Aboriginal heritage: report of National Seminar on Aboriginal Antiquities in Australia*; Canberra, 1972.
- MS 2533/3/6 'Mowanjum Dance Group', 1971. Photocopy from the Department of Native Welfare Newsletter, v.1, no. 10, May 1971.
- MS 2533/3/7 Mowanjum projects, 1974. Small file with letter and report on a possible pet food industry, a handcraft price guide and brief list of projects.

Series 4, ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE AT MOWANJUM, 1971-73

- MS 2533/4/1 Mowanjum Community Quarterly plans, 1971. Includes 1st and 2nd quarter evaluations, and 3rd and 4th quarter plans. Also a leaflet, 'Just what is the Ecumenical Institute?'
- MS 2533/4/2 Papers, including 'Fifth city and N.C.O.: two styles of community organization', a thesis by Robert Bos, McCormick Theological Seminary, 1971.

Series 5, Papers, clippings and photographs about Albert Barunga.

This series contains a scrapbook of personal notes and other material collected by Freeman about his friend Albert Barunga.

Subseries 1, Scrapbook.

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| MS 2533/5/1/1 | Title page (c 1977) and photograph of Barunga as a child at Kunmunya in 1916. |
| MS 2533/5/1/2 | Transcript: W.A Museum Perth, Wandjina Cave Display. First Floor Approximate text of words spoken by Albert Barunga. |
| MS 2533/5/1/3 | Transcript of ABC interview with Albert Barunga, Interviewer Elizabeth Thompson, 13 June 1973. |
| MS 2533/5/1/4 | Handwritten notes, Kununurra 16 and 17 August 1973. |
| MS 2533/5/1/5 | Clipping from the West Australian article 'A job for Albert Barunga', 15 August 1973. |
| MS 2533/5/1/6 | Partial clipping from ANU Reporter article 22 June 1973, photograph in article of Albert Barunga and John Derek Freeman taken in Canberra on 12 June 1973. |
| MS 2533/5/1/7 | Clipping from Canberra News article 'Aborigine helps ANU' by Neil Travers, 7 June 1973'. |
| MS 2533/5/1/8 | Handwritten note on Albert Barunga's values, 3 June 1973. |
| MS 2533/5/1/9 | Colour photograph of Albert Barunga taken in Canberra, 2 June 1973. |
| MS 2533/5/1/10 | Handwritten notes on Albert Barunga's values: intuition, land (+emotion) and Mother (relation to), 2 June 1973; selfishness, 1 June 1973. |

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- MS 2533/5/1/11 Colour photo of Albert Barunga with Dr Hans Neumann taken in Canberra, 30 May 1972.
- MS 2533/5/1/12 Race Relations: colour photograph of Albert Barunga holding the hands of a white man (possibly Dr Hans Neumann) taken by Sylvia Neumann and 3 pages of handwritten notes, 30 May 1972.
- MS 2533/5/1/13 Black and White photograph of John Derek Freeman and Albert Barunga taken by Gordon Reid, 27 May 1972.
- MS 2533/5/1/14 Black and white portrait of Albert Barunga taken by Gordon Reid in Canberra, 27 May 1972.

Subseries 2, Photographs and clippings.

- MS 2533/5/2/1 Clipping of Latrobe Valley Express Weekender article Tribal Valley Leader Seeks an ideal for his people by Jan Korolew, 13 June 1975.
- MS 2533/5/2/2 Clipping of the ANU Reporter article How two people who have 'nothing to do with the University' help its work. Vol. 4 No.9 22 June 1973.
- MS 2533/5/2/3 Black and white portrait of Albert Barunga with his name handwritten on back. Likely taken 27 May 1972 by Gordon Reid.
- MS 2533/5/2/4 Black and white portrait of Albert Barunga with A.I.A.S N 3915.15 handwritten on back. Likely taken 27 May 1972 by Gordon Reid.
- MS 2533/5/2/5 Colour photograph of Albert Barunga, likely taken in Canberra, 2 June 1973.
- MS 2533/5/2/6 Black and white photograph of Albert Barunga and an unidentified person.
- MS 2533/5/2/7 Photograph of Albert Barunga and Pudja Barunga at the Dress Rehearsal before Meeting the Queen.

Box List

Box	Series	Items
1	1	1-2
		4-5
	2	1-3
		6-7
		9-11
2	3	
	4	
3	1	3
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Plan Cabinet	2	4-5, 8

Finding aid compiled by Maeve Jack September 2024.

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