KEEPING THE DESERT STORY ALIVE

Community Report

Kiwirrkurra April 2017

AIATSIS
AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDIES

CENTRAL DESERT
LAND AND COMMUNITY

DESERT
support services
ABOUT THIS COMMUNITY REPORT

This community report is about the 'Keeping the Desert Story Alive' project carried out by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and Central Desert Native Title Services (CDNTS) in the Kiwirrkurra community.

This is a pilot project about finding ways to return Kiwirrkurra material to the community, record new stories and develop strong rules about keeping community stories safe.

This report provides an update of the project following the first workshop held at Kiwirrkurra from Tuesday 4 April – Thursday 6 April, 2017.

'Keeping the Desert Story Alive' is part of an AIATSIS research project, 'Preserve, Strengthen, Renew in Communities', which aims to involve communities in the development of culturally informed processes and practices for returning materials, and creating and archiving new materials.

This is an ongoing project and this report is a review of the first stage.
PROJECT AIMS

The aims of this project stage are to:

- Return Kiwirrkurra material held in the AIATSIS archive and develop suitable processes for returning such materials
- Record new material with Kiwirrkurra community members and
- Help to establish Kiwirrkurra protocols for keeping cultural material safe while it is held at an archive.

We would also like to write up a report about the process to share what worked and what didn’t work with other communities.
PROJECT APPROVAL

We asked for permission from Tjamu Tjamu in September 2016 and March 2017.

We would also like to sign a project agreement that states that:

- Any audio and visual recordings will be owned by the people in the recordings
- We will share the project report
WHO IS AIATSIS?

Nganarna yara tjurta kanyilpayi

AIATSIS is an archive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander material. This material is preserved and stored safely for use in the future.

Part of the job of AIATSIS is to gather materials to keep safe in archives and to make material available for other people to see and learn from in the future.

AIATSIS also has to follow rules about who they share material with so that important cultural material is only shared with the right people.

AIATSIS looks after stories by:

- Keeping them safe (storing photos and films)
- Making sure only the right people can see or hear the stories
- Helping communities to make new stories and look after them
- Helping communities to tell their stories through research.
Day 1

Tran and Nell from AIATSIS, with Kate from CDNTS, drove to Kiwirrkurra on Monday 3 April and Doug, Tom and Amy from AIATSIS flew in on Tuesday morning.

We held an introductory meeting at the Women’s Centre, with a brief discussion about AIATSIS and what we hoped to do over the next three days.

After the meeting, people began looking at old photos in the photo books and ordered copies for themselves and their families.

Sometimes it was hard for people to look at these images as many people had passed on, however people still felt that it was good to see these photos and have the photos returned to the community.

“It’s good you mob brought those photos, we can see our family” – Sally Butler, Kiwirrkurra.
Day 1 Recording

In the afternoon, we split into men’s and women’s groups for the first recording session.

The women drove to Marapinti to record restricted women’s stories and songs.

At the same time three senior men from Kiwirrkurra travelled to Ngami to discuss the significance of that place and also make recordings of a public song-cycle.

The men discussed who could listen to these songs and what protocols should be followed to obtain copies of the recordings.

A process to return important men’s material was also discussed.
Day 2

On Wednesday we talked about developing culturally appropriate processes for the safe keeping of and future access to the material recorded on day 1.

The material recorded by the women at Marapinti can be viewed by women only, whereas the material recorded by the men at Ngami, can be viewed by all people. These rules will be listed on the material when it is archived at AIATSIS.
Day 2 Recording

After lunch, the women went to Ngami to record some stories.

After recording, the discussion about cultural protocols and processes continued. The women also discussed the best pathways for seeking permission to look at and to use the material once it is stored at AIATSIS.

The men travelled east of Kiwirrkurra to Walykalykarra to record stories about the flora, fauna, families and history associated with these places. They also discussed places where people camp, and where water and food is found.
The meeting was recorded to accurately capture peoples’ opinions and ideas.

Day 3

On the last day, we talked about what worked well at the workshop, what AIATSIS can improve on and what people might like to do if AIATSIS came to Kiwirrkurra again, later in the year.

Some suggestions included:

- Continuing to record stories around Kiwirrkurra. Short camping trips and day trips to sites was suggested.
- Yalti expressed interest in recording footage of her dancing for her children to see in the future.
- People were also keen to continue discussions about cultural processes for keeping stories safe.
Day 3 Recording

Following the meeting, the women took two vehicles to Karruwarra. The women talked about the Kuniya Dreaming site. They then went looking for rumiya [sand goannas]. The women also had a conversation about cultural processes for material recorded at Karruwarra.

A process to return significant men’s material was finalised with senior Kiwirrkurra men and copies of this material were successfully given to them. The senior men agreed that AIATSIS’ existing protocols for storing this material were appropriate and the processes that AIATSIS already have in place for returning copies of this material was both effective and respectful.
DEVELOPING STRONG AND CULTURALLY SAFE RULES FOR THE FUTURE

What will happen to materials recorded during the trip?

When people deposit material for safe keeping, AIATSIS asks the depositors to make some rules about who can and cannot view this material. During the workshop at Kiwirrkurra, these rules and protocols were discussed for each recording session.

The material recorded at Marapinti by the women:

- Family in the future (female) can access and take copies of this material. This will be listed as a rule when the material is archived at AIATSIS.
- Anyone else who wants to access this material must seek permission from the right women at Kiwirrkurra.

The photos taken around Kiwirrkurra, at meetings and other fun photos:

- Everyone can look at these photos. The Kiwirrkurra community, families and the school can use these photos. If family or community want to use this material for commercial production, they need to develop an agreement with the people in the material.
- Anyone else will need to ask permission to use these photos, this is AIATSIS policy.

The material recorded at Ngami by the women:

- Can be viewed and listened to by anyone.
- Permission must be sought for this material to be used; on television, in the news, in a book, for study etc.
- Tjamu Tjamu are the best point of contact for seeking permission. They will not make the decision but can ask, or put AIATSIS in contact with the storytellers who will say yes or no.
- If Tjamu Tjamu cannot be reached, AIATSIS can contact Kiwirrkurra Aboriginal Corporation or the Kiwirrkurra Community Office to help find the right people to ask for permission.

The material recorded by the men at Ngami and at Walykalykarra:

- Can be viewed and listened to by anyone.
- Copies may be provided to the speakers’ family and members of the Kiwirrkurra community without further permission.
- Permission from senior Kiwirrkurra men is required for any other use of the material (including making copies or publication).
- AIATSIS will contact Tjamu Tjamu to help ask these men for permission.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place, date and recording group</th>
<th>Who can look/listen?</th>
<th>Who can use/take copy?</th>
<th>Process for permission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04/04/2017 Marapinti Women</td>
<td>Kiwirrkurra Women only</td>
<td>Female family members</td>
<td>Must obtain permission to look/listen/use if not a female descendent. AIATSIS to contact Tjamu Tjamu for assistance seeking permission from the right people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/04/2017 Ngami Men</td>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>Family members / Kiwirrkurra community members</td>
<td>AIATSIS to contact Tjamu Tjamu to help get permission from the senior Kiwirrkurra men to make copies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05/04/2017 Ngami Women</td>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>Permission must be sought for this material to be used.</td>
<td>AIATSIS to contact Tjamu Tjamu for assistance seeking permission from the right people. If Tjamu Tjamu cannot be reached, AIATSIS can contact Kiwirrkurra Aboriginal Corporation or the Kiwirrkurra Community office for assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05/04/2017 Walykalykarra Men</td>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>Family members / Kiwirrkurra community members</td>
<td>AIATSIS to contact Tjamu Tjamu to help get permission from the senior Kiwirrkurra men to make copies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/06/2017 Karruwarra Women</td>
<td>All Kiwirrkurra families</td>
<td>Permission must be sought for this material to be used.</td>
<td>AIATSIS to contact Tjamu Tjamu for assistance seeking permission from the right people. If Tjamu Tjamu cannot be reached, AIATSIS can contact Kiwirrkurra Aboriginal Corporation or the Kiwirrkurra Community office for assistance.</td>
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WHAT NEXT?

Tran and Nell will begin writing a report about what worked and where improvements could be made for future workshops.

Amy is processing the requests for copies of photographs which will be sent back to each person who ordered them as soon as possible.

The material recorded during the workshop will be put on USBs and sent to each person involved in the recordings.
CONTACT ABOUT THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Tran Tran
Researcher
Australian Institute of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies
51 Lawson Crescent Acton ACT 2601
(02) 6246 1181
tran.tran@aiatsis.gov.au

Nell Reidy
Researcher
Australian Institute of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies
51 Lawson Crescent Acton ACT 2601
(02) 6246 1102
nell.reidy@aiatsis.gov.au

Kate Crossing
Researcher
Desert Support Services
76 Wittenoom Street East Perth WA 6004
(08) 9425 2000
katecrossing@dss.org.au