

## Chapter 2 • Dissemination of information



## **Goal 2**

### **To maximise the role of Australian Indigenous peoples in the activities and services of the Institute**

#### **Publications — overview**

Aboriginal Studies Press (ASP) continued to involve Australian Indigenous peoples in its undertakings during 2003–2004. ASP published the same number of books as in 2002–2003, including one title with an Indigenous author and three with writing teams which included Indigenous authors. While fewer Indigenous authors were published compared to the previous year, all five manuscripts approved, out of thirty-one submitted in the year, were authored or included, Indigenous authors. Looking forward, of the titles currently scheduled for publication in 2004–2005, four Indigenous authors and three collected or co-written works which include Indigenous authors are scheduled for publication.

All five external members of the Publishing Advisory Committee (PAC) are Indigenous and this is their second year on the committee. Between them they bring strong academic credentials and Indigenous community and language knowledge, as well as writing and editing expertise. This ably complements the strong publishing-industry knowledge of ASP's managers.

Two independent peer assessors' reports were provided to the PAC for each manuscript supplied for consideration. Of these, approximately 50 per cent of the reports were from Indigenous assessors.

Wherever possible, ASP has used freelance Indigenous authors and scholars to support Indigenous authors in rewriting or restructuring their manuscripts. Although most of the design work is carried out by ASP staff, opportunities are also sought to use Indigenous designers, illustrators or photographers.

ASP employed six staff in 2003–2004, including the appointment of a new position of Deputy-Director. Indigenous staff comprise 25 per cent of the total full-time ASP staff.

## **Goal 4**

### **To create, develop and disseminate a diverse range of publications and services about Australian Indigenous cultures**

#### **Publishing list**

ASP continued to develop a varied publishing list which includes scholarly works and others intended for a broader readership. Of the seven titles published, three are intended for a general audience, while four address an academic or student audience.

The books were published at regular periods, to better manage ASP's production processes and quality-management systems. This also allowed for marketing plans to be spread across the year.

During the year, 31 unsolicited manuscripts were received, compared to 41 in 2002–2003. ASP staff have provided guidelines to authors to improve the quality of unsolicited manuscripts being submitted.

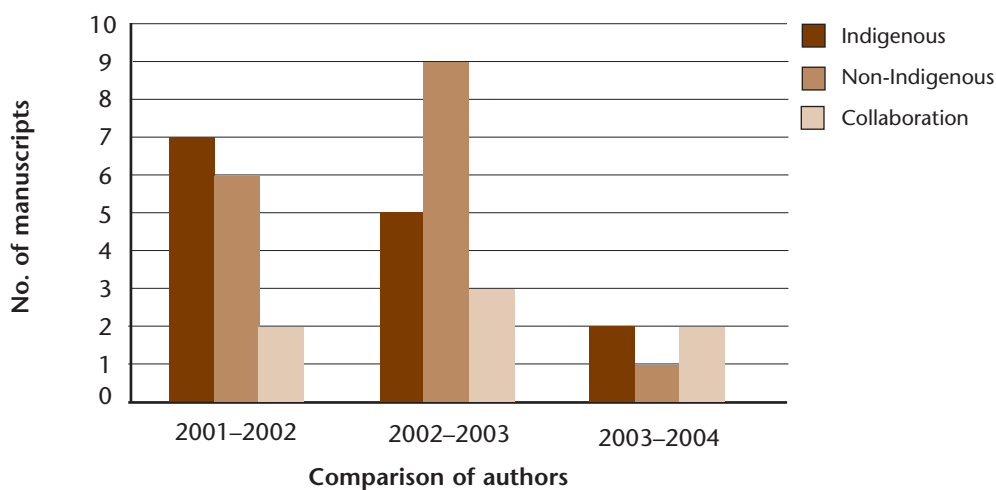
The ASP titles published in 2003–2004 were:

- *Paddy’s Road* — August
- *Treaty: let’s get it right!* — September
- *Something Special: Katherine West Health Board* — October
- *Very Big Journey: My Life as I Remember It* — January
- *Paddy Cahill of Oenpelli* — March
- *Reading Doctors’ Writing* — April
- *Woven Histories, Dancing Lives* — May

Of the titles published, one derived from a research grant previously provided by AIATSIS, one from a strategic collaboration created by the Research program area, four from the authors’ own research and one from an earlier AIATSIS conference. For further detail on ASP’s contribution to the facilitation and promotion of research in Australian Indigenous studies see Chapter 1.

ASP also published the following:

- two editions of the AIATSIS journal, *Australian Aboriginal Studies*
- one *Annual Report 2002–2003*
- one *Institute News* (a newsletter for Institute members)
- three *Insight* newsletters (an internal AIATSIS publication for staff)
- numerous corporate and promotional products including stationery, invitations, brochures and posters.



**Note:** This figure represents manuscripts approved in the relevant years, not books published. Not all approved manuscripts achieve publication.

## **Publishing Advisory Committee**

The Principal continues to draw on the advice of ASP staff and the Publishing Advisory Committee (PAC) in making decisions about the titles it publishes. At 30 June 2004, members of the PAC were:

- Principal and Chair, Mr Steve Larkin
- Deputy Principal, Dr Luke Taylor

The external members were:

- Ms Jackie Huggins AM
- Professor Martin Nakata
- Ms Kerry Reed-Gilbert
- Mr Philip Morrissey
- Ms Jennifer Martiniello.

Ms Rhonda Black stood aside from her position on the PAC in order to take up the part-time position of Acting Director of ASP.

The PAC's work was supported by the ASP staff who have worked to improve the flow of information from authors and independent peer assessors. ASP staff continue to work with the PAC members to ensure equitable and transparent assessments of the manuscripts, across genres. Increasingly, attention will be paid to matching these to ASP's budgets and resources.

## **New production strategies**

While the number of books published in the year remained the same as in 2002–2003, ASP staff helped prepare and make ready for production more manuscripts than in the previous year. This will increase by approximately 50 per cent the number of books to be published in 2004–2005, if budgets allow. A backlog of manuscripts awaiting publication has built up over several years and will require two years to clear. Some of the authors of these manuscripts have required advice and support from the ASP staff and independent manuscript assessors, after which further authorial work has been or is being undertaken.

Increasing the number of titles published in 2004–2005 will require careful monitoring of budgets. The aim will be to publish more titles, whilst decreasing production costs and maintaining or increasing production values. Decisions on production issues will accord with the style of publication, its audience and the marketplace. To assist, improved production processes, and selective choices about printing and finishing are being implemented.

Over time, the stockholding of ASP's titles in the warehouse has increased. This is due to overly ambitious print runs and/or unsuccessful or limited marketing in the past. Several strategies have been undertaken to improve the situation. Initially, and in the short term, print runs were lowered to avoid overstocking new titles. Digital printing will be used to restock in small quantities. A marketing consultant was employed on a short-term contract to help provide expertise, in line with best

industry practice, and planning is now underway for stock rationalisation; a marketing strategy for ASP's lists; selective choices about marketing collaborations; possible overseas trade distributors; sales and marketing templates; and tailored plans and mailing lists for selected individual titles.

Overall, ASP's aim is to increase the total sales and its presence in the industry marketplace, as well as with Indigenous communities of interest. Turnover in 2003–2004 increased by 26 per cent from the 2002–2003 figure. A particular aim is to maximise the proportion of sales direct from AIATSIS via the bookshop, direct mail, email, fax and phone sales.

To assist this ASP undertook the following initiatives in 2003–2004:

- Book and information stalls were held at various venues, including the Native Title Conference.
- Launches of the seven published titles were held at the 2004 International Health Conference in Melbourne, Parliament House in Canberra, the Melbourne Writers' Festival, the Sydney Writers' Festival, and in Katherine and Darwin.

The AIATSIS Media and Communications Manager began working with ASP on the launches and marketing of individual titles. ASP aims to improve the information being provided to Indigenous media and communities of interest to promote its titles more effectively to these audiences.

Feedback received from the tailored mailing lists is being monitored and used to prepare a sales database.

ASP created new material for its website, part of the AIATSIS website. A 'What's New' section was added and will be updated monthly. Forms and information have also been added to the site for intending authors to download.

The flow of information to the trade distributors (both lead time and quality) was improved.

Plans have been put in place for joint initiatives with other cultural publishers. It is hoped that discussions with other Indigenous presses may result in joint sales or marketing initiatives in the coming year.

ASP worked closely with Corporate Services on two other initiatives to improve its operations. Early in 2004, Booknet, a sales accounting system, was introduced. This system is more reliable, easier to use and provides more useful data than the previous system. More accurate stock control and meaningful data upon which to judge the print runs for new titles is now available, allowing ASP to provide accurate sales reports and financial information to Corporate Services, which will also improve the delivery of royalty payments to authors.

To complement the new accounting system, a new warehouse was leased which provides a cleaner and cheaper space for storing ASP's publications. ASP took advice on the laying out of the warehouse to speed up the processing of orders. Some finessing of the AIATSIS bookshop is planned to improve customers' access to the publications.

## Very Big Journey

A publishing milestone for AIATSIS

The launching of *Very Big Journey: My life as I remember it*, on Australia Day, 26 January 2004, was a milestone for Hilda Jarman Muir, the author. It was also her 84th birthday.

Aunty Hilda, as she's fondly known, chose to celebrate her book on a day others call invasion day. 'I know for some people it's a sorry day, but it's my story. It's my life and my story and I want to celebrate,' she said.

Her book was ten years in the making. It's a journey that others, including her family, made with her. Many people helped. As an Indigenous publisher dedicated to promoting an understanding of Indigenous Australian cultures and peoples, Aboriginal Studies Press (ASP) was uniquely positioned. It provided funding, writing, rewriting and editorial support, travel and accommodation — and emotional support.

Having survived incarceration in the Kahlin half-caste home, and with little formal education, Hilda Muir has gone on to live a full life. Her growing engagement with the world led to her desire to speak out. In 1995 Hilda Muir was one of those chosen to present a writ to the High Court on behalf of her fellow stolen generation, asserting that the removals were illegal as well as immoral. In 1997 the writ was rejected by the High Court, but that hasn't dampened her spirits. Forgiveness and warmth emanate from this wonderful Aboriginal Australian.

In 2000, Hilda finally travelled back to her Yanyuwa land and was recognised as an owner and custodian of that country.

Although this is Hilda's own story, in other ways it's emblematic of a generation of Aboriginal women who have worked hard all their lives — against difficult odds — to raise large and thriving families. Truly a reminder that governments cannot always shape human lives in ways they might wish.

Sir William Deane was moved to write: 'I wish that it could be read by every Australian.' As do we.



Hilda Muir and son, after being presented with a portrait at the Darwin launch of *Very Big Journey* in January 2004.

## Publication of research material

Fellows and staff of the Research Program prepare and deliver a wide range of books, chapters, papers, conference presentations, seminars and general talks to an extremely wide range of audiences. Some 120 books, chapters, papers and technical reports were produced by the Research Program staff during the year. These are listed at Appendix 5.

Over 200 public presentations were made by Research staff to Indigenous visitors, communities, agencies, national and international conferences/workshops as well as numerous media and education outlets.

The Research Discussion Paper series was re-launched this year with a new design for web and hardcopy distribution. Three discussion papers were published this year.

Seminar series held at AIATSIS each semester attract a regular audience of between 20 to 70 people. To ensure the accessibility of the material presented to the limited local audience, seminar speakers are asked to provide papers for inclusion on the AIATSIS website. Seminars are also taped and transcribed. Where written papers are not available, transcriptions can be included on the website.

The topic for the Semester Two, 2003 Seminar Series was *Health and Society: An Australian Indigenous Context*. The series commenced on 15 July 2003 and concluded on 27 October 2003, and involved 11 presentations and two Indigenous Health forums. A variety of researchers, community leaders and representatives from Indigenous health organisations and agencies participated. The series was convened by Research Fellows, Drs Heather McDonald and Graham Henderson. A list of papers presented during the seminar is included at Appendix 6.

The topic for the Semester One, 2004 Seminar Series was *Regionalism, Indigenous Governance and Decision Making*. The series commenced on 22 March 2004 and concluded on 31 May 2004, with a total of 10 presentations offered by a variety of researchers, community leaders and representatives from Indigenous organisations. The series was convened by Research Fellow, Dr Stuart Bradfield. A list of papers presented is included at Appendix 6.

The Native Title Research Unit produced regular Newsletters, Issues Papers and contributed to the Research Discussion paper series.

The *Native Title Newsletter*, compiled by NTRU staff, contains current news and developments in native title issues, information on the progress of native title applications, significant events, contributions from people working in the field, highlights of relevant reports, reviews and case notes on native title. The Newsletter is published every two months and is available in both hardcopy and online.

The NTRU Issues Papers, *Land Rights Laws: Issues in Native Title*, are available free of charge and distributed widely. The occasional series offers clear professional and independent commentary on topical native title issues. Five Issues Papers were published in 2003–2004.

Mr Rod Stroud wrote a chapter on Indigenous family history research for the 13th edition of *Family History for Beginners and Beyond*, published by the Heraldry and Genealogy Society of Canberra. This is the first time Indigenous family history research has been included in a mainstream genealogy textbook.

Other Audiovisual Archives staff publications include articles published in the following journals: the *Australian Society of Archivists*, *Indigenous Issues Special Interest Group Newsletter*, *Online Currents*, *Australia's journal for users of online services CD-Roms and the Internet*; and the *Australian Library Journal*.

## Digitisation services

Digitisation is the mechanism by which AIATSIS returns materials to communities in the form of digital surrogates (usually in CD-Rom format). It's also used to create online exhibitions highlighting a selection of materials from the collection which focus on topical issues of research interest.

The AIATSIS Digitisation Program was extended to the end of the financial year and funding has been secured for a further 12 months. Unfortunately, uncertainty of tenure led to some staff taking up other employment opportunities at the end of 2003.

The following titles from the Library Collection were digitised and returned to communities:

- Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological expedition to Torres Strait, TSRA, Torres Strait Island Regional Authority, Thursday Island, Qld
- Maningrida Mirage, Maningrida, NT
- Kuring language slips and field notebooks from the Gerhardt Laves manuscript, Noongar Community, WA.

All the Library's CD-Roms are now readily available to clients either networked or through dedicated PCs. A thorough guide has been prepared listing the wide range of material available.

The Audiovisual Archive also provides high quality digitisation services to a number of external organisations and researchers on a cost recovery basis. Since establishing this service, AIATSIS provided the digitisation capability for the National Museum of Australia's *Outlawed* exhibition and is assisting with its forthcoming *Deserts* exhibition. This service returned \$20,000 to AIATSIS in 2003.

The service digitised 161 hours of Professor Francesca Merlan's audio collection of Jawoyn language elicitations, oral histories and stories, for her work on an Endangered Languages Project.

Ngiyampaa language tapes are being digitised for inclusion on the access database being developed by the NSW Aboriginal Languages Research and Resource Centre.

The Ian Dunlop Photographic Collection comprising more than 2300 transparencies, detailing the Yirrkala community in the early 1970s and documenting his film series is being digitised.



The Clair Bovern Digital Audio Collection is the first 'born digital' collection of more than 40 hours, archived wholly in the digital realm. During the reporting period the Audiovisual Archives decided to archive audio materials in digital format only and to cease using magnetic tape. Until this time there would always have been an analogue and digital copy of the materials, including so-called 'born digital' materials. In future such materials will only exist in digital form.

Client viewing and listening copies totalling nearly 25,000 items have been created during the digitisation process. These lower resolution, more convenient and smaller-sized files, are easily forwarded electronically by email or CD, or can be rapidly combined together to form composite proof sheets that can be mailed or faxed to clients for image selection and/or confirmation. A side benefit is the ability to be able to make open access image or audio files available via the Mura® web interface to AIATSIS catalogue.

Digital Preservation copies of the first 1250 recorded audio tapes AIATSIS collection have been created, creating 2363 listening files. This has allowed more extensive cataloguing and auditioning of the material contained on the tapes plus the opportunity to create digital audio 'listening copies' or MP3s that can be easily emailed to clients or downloaded across the Internet.

In conjunction with the Preservation of Endangered Languages Project, compilations of language CDs for the following languages have been constructed: Badjala/Butchulla; Bundjalung; Dhanggadi; Dhurga; Dharawal; Guugu Yimidhirr; Gumbaynggirr; Gamilaraay Goinbal; Ngiyampaa Muruwari; Paakantyi; Wargamay; Waka Waka; Warrgamay; Wangkumara; Yidiny; and Yugambah. Digitisation of the source materials improves productivity and allows access clients the opportunity to precisely tailor the contents of the compilations to better suit their needs. These compilation recordings are being used for language reclamation purposes in the relevant communities. It is anticipated that AIATSIS will produce compilations for every Aboriginal and Torres Strait language.

## **Internet resources**

One of the Institute's most valuable research resources is Mura®, the online collections catalogue available at the AIATSIS website. It provides bibliographic access to all materials held in the Audiovisual Archives and the Library. Together they hold the world's premier collections relating to Australian Indigenous studies.

Mura® was accessed 27,002 times during year, making a cumulative total of 121,886 'hits' since 15 February 1999. In March 2004, a new client interface was launched. New features include links to websites through the research resources document and links to relevant pages within the AIATSIS website. The Digital Library option provides easy access to over 1480 full text documents.

Numerous access points are available to the researcher. Apart from the usual author/depositor and title, there are:

- AIATSIS-specific topical subject headings

- language names and language group names (including variant spellings)
- geographic names (including map references)
- key words (including annotations).

Language resources available online include 40 language bibliographies of Library materials, information on the Library's languages collection, as well as valuable links to language resources on other websites. See [www.aiatsis.gov.au/lbry/fct\\_shfts/biblio\\_lang.htm](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/lbry/fct_shfts/biblio_lang.htm). Online resources for other subject areas are covered in Research Resources. Subjects include native title, health, treaty and education. See [www.aiatsis.gov.au/lbry/resources.html](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/lbry/resources.html).

Three new online exhibitions have been added to the Library Internet pages. These are *Ethnomathematics in Australia*, *Dawn* and *New Dawn* magazines, and *NAIDOC posters*. A complete list of online Exhibitions, website addresses and access figures during the year is available at Appendix 4.

The Family History Unit is the main provider of web-based information for Australian Indigenous family history research resources in Australia. The website receives more than 8000 accesses per month, which represents a 22 per cent increase on the previous year.

Aboriginal Studies Press has prepared for the 4 July 2004 launch of a unique online publishing forum during NAIDOC week. This new venture, *Our Tracks*, consists of additional web pages on the AIATSIS website. They provide an online space to read excerpts of previously unpublished stories by Indigenous authors. The web pages also encourage interactivity by allowing readers to email comments about the authors and stories they have read. If successful, ASP will explore adding further functionality such as a moderated bulletin board, audio-on-demand or the production of a CD-Rom based on the website.

All NTRU publications are placed on the AIATSIS website and archived. The website also hosts the Native Title Conference website which contains abstracts and papers from past conferences (see [www.aiatsis.gov.au/rsrch/ntru/conf2004/splash.html](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/rsrch/ntru/conf2004/splash.html)).

On completion, the Native Title Resource Guide will be an online resource for information and resources on native title. The compilation of material for the *Guide* was completed by project officer, Ms Lara Wiseman and feedback from NTRBs has been sought. The *Guide* will be launched as part of the new NTRU website in the new financial year. The *Guide* provides direct access to a broad range of native title-related resources and also repackages information currently hosted by other organisations such as the National Native Title Tribunal, the Indigenous Land Corporation, the Agreements, Treaties and Negotiated Settlements Database and the Federal Court. The NTRU has received support from all of these project partners for use of their data in the *Resource Guide*.

The Indigenous Facilitation and Mediation Project launched a major website in June 2004 that provides an extensive array of information and resources relating to Indigenous conflict management and decision making information on the website

is regularly updated to ensure it remains relevant and useful to Indigenous people, communities and organisations. See [www.aiatsis.gov.au/rsrch/ntru/ifamp/index.html](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/rsrch/ntru/ifamp/index.html).

## Public exhibitions

The photographic exhibition *Chicka Dixon: The Struggle in Black and White* was loaned to the Australian Museum in Sydney from January to March 2004. It was highly successful and generated a great deal of interest from other institutions keen to display it.

The exhibition was developed from Mr Charles (Chicka) Dixon's collection which he had deposited with the Audiovisual Archives the previous year and launched at AIATSIS on Mr Dixon's 75th birthday. The collection comprises over 400 images documenting Mr Dixon's life, interwoven with audio and video of his experiences with major political events and the lives of other Aboriginal activists.

The exhibition also included a video produced from the primary and secondary collection materials entitled *Life is for Learning*.



Charles 'Chicka' Dixon (left) working with David Jeffery, Curator of the exhibition: *Chicka Dixon: The Struggle in Black and White*

*Likan'mirri* — *Connections, the AIATSIS Collection of Art* exhibited the most significant artworks held by the Institute and sponsored by the ANU Institute for Indigenous Australia (ANUIIA) in conjunction with the ANU Drill Hall Gallery in Canberra.

*Likan'mirri* is a Yolngu term with a variety of meanings which range from the literal meaning 'elbow' or fork in a tree, through to connections between the sacred and secular worlds. Over a hundred items were exhibited from the Institute's artwork and artefact collections, featuring renowned Indigenous artists, rare and delicate works and items on display for the first time. Among works on display were four paintings by Nym Banduk from Wadeye (Port Keats, NT), collected by Professor WEH Stanner in 1959; one of the series of Gordon Bennett's *Notes to Basquiat — Subject Matters 2000*; prints by Kevin Gilbert; pencil and watercolours by Mickey of Ulladulla c1880s; paintings by Rover Thomas; and 1964 pencil and watercolour drawings by Butcher Joe Nangan. One gallery was devoted to objects which have been held in Canberra from the three Rom ceremonies by the Anbarra people of the Blythe River East Arnhem Land and featuring the *Goyulan* and *Jambich* poles and other objects. The unique exhibition also included bark paintings, photographs and sculptures.

Valuable cross-institutional assistance, received from the NMA, the National Gallery of Australia and the National Library of Australia, contributing conservation, documentation, photographs, information and the loan of frames, ensured the success of the *Likan'mirri* exhibition.

### **Language compilation CDs**

AIATSIS-sponsored research and resource production work with Mr Brad Steadman, a Ngiyampaa man from NSW and Ms Tamsin Donaldson a linguist and expert in the Ngiyampaa language. The work was funded by the Audiovisual Archives program to undertake research on the language and the collection, make some recordings and produce a Ngiyampaa resource CD.

### **Australian Indigenous Cultural Network**

The Australian Indigenous Cultural Network collections overview is now available for use by communities and researchers. The sample of materials comprising the overview derives from nineteen museums and galleries throughout all Australian states and territories. Collections are accessible by institution. The links to each are followed by bibliographies for Australian museums and art galleries, each arranged by institution. See [www.aiatsis.gov.au/rsrch/rsrch\\_pp/aicn/index.html](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/rsrch/rsrch_pp/aicn/index.html).

### **Stanner Award**

The Research Fellows reviewed numerous books eligible for consideration for the Stanner Award, which in some disciplinary categories comprised more than five books. Three assessment/moderation meetings were held resulting in a shortlist recommended to Council for external review and assessment by a reader.

## Goal 5

### To develop and maintain strategic alliances that add value to our activities

#### Alliances in sales and marketing

Aboriginal Studies Press undertook several initiatives to further develop its strategic alliances, mainly in the sales and marketing area, including:

- Planning for collaborations with other Canberra-based cultural institutions for a joint marketing initiative to eastern state booksellers early in 2005.
- Meetings with the two other Indigenous presses, IAD and Magabala Books. A continuation of earlier discussions, the meetings dealt with joint marketing initiatives, industry information-sharing and cost-sharing at book fairs.

ASP worked with the CRCAH in Darwin on the promotion of *Reading Doctors' Writing*. As ASP published four health-related titles during the year, building this alliance will be valuable for marketing and for future publications.

Six book launches were held during the year, two at major Australian writers' festivals. On each occasion, ASP sold its books via trade bookshops. This ensures good relations with the booksellers and the media, a relationship which supports the sale of ASP publications across the list. This supplemented the work of ASP running its own bookstall at relevant conferences and festivals.

ASP maintained its important relationship with the Literature Board of the Australia Council during the year. The Literature Board's supplementary funding for ASP's production budget is crucial to the viability of the list given the special demands placed on ASP as an Indigenous publisher, respectful of cultural protocols and sensitivities.

The ABC requested access to a large number of images from the Audiovisual Archives during the reporting period, including a photograph of 'Dhakiyarr' from the Eric Wilson collection, for an ABC series *Dynasties*, colour transparencies for the film *Dhakiyarr verses the King* and images for a documentary on Ken Colbung for the Indigenous program *Message Stick*.

Four images of Wave Hill and Vincent Lingiari from the Audiovisual Archives were used in the Indigenous Leadership Monument at Reconciliation Place near Parliament House, Canberra.

The NSW Art Gallery were supplied with a large number of images for reproduction in the exhibition catalogue *Crossing Country: the alchemy of western Arnhem Land Art* published in association with Maningrida Arts and Culture.