

NEWS FROM THE NATIVE TITLE RESEARCH UNIT

New Visiting Research Fellow

Toni Bauman has joined the Native Title Research Unit as a Visiting Research Fellow.

Toni Bauman is an anthropologist with over twenty years experience in a wide range of Indigenous matters including land claims and native title, facilitating meetings, conducting social impact studies and feasibility studies for Indigenous cultural centres. She has worked for a range of Indigenous organisations such as Land Councils, ATSIC and the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority in Darwin. In 1979, she established Mimi Aboriginal Arts and Crafts in Katherine, Northern Territory.

Toni is an accredited LEADR mediator, an Aboriginal Adult Educator and has worked as the editor of the Indigenous Law Bulletin in the Faculty of Law at the University of New South Wales. She is also a Director of Dodson, Bauman and Associates, Legal and Anthropological Consultants.

Her most recent project has been an AIATSIS publication which is a guide to sites of importance to Aboriginal people in Darwin in the past and the present and a kind of alternative social history. The publication is the third in a series following similar publications about Sydney and Melbourne.

While at the NTRU, Toni's project will be directed at facilitating decision and agreement making and managing disputes in native title. The next edition of the Newsletter, will detail the aim, purpose and extent of this project.

The Native Title Conference 2003

The Native Title Conference 2003: Native Title on the Ground is being convened by AIATSIS and the Central Land Council. It will be held in Alice Springs from the 3-5 June. The Conference provides a national opportunity

for all native title parties to address the difficulties of the native title system and to focus on issues of importance to native title holders and native title representative bodies. An important part of the conference is to provide an opportunity for staff from NTRBs to exchange ideas and technical advice, debate, listen and respond to the views of claimants, government and other parties involved in the native title process.

Conference themes include:

- what does native title mean for native title holders;
- native title and agreement making;
- national approach to native title policy;
- alternative funding models for greater Indigenous autonomy;
- keeping native title out of court: implications of recent decisions;
- compensation/ extinguishment/ settlement;
- mediating community disputes and healing community trauma;
- native title decision making and good governance;
- the need for an integrated approach to indigenous aspirations, and;
- native title in practise.

Registrations for the conference are now being accepted. A registration form can be found at the end of this Newsletter, or alternatively, can be obtained from the AIATSIS website <www.aiatsis.gov.au> and follow the links.

Registrations close 23 May 2003.

New Issues Paper

The NTRU has published a new Issues Paper. The February Issues Paper, volume 2 number 21, '*Members of the Yorta Yorta Abo-*

riginal Community v Victoria [2002] HCA 58 (12 December 2002) - Comment' is by Dr Lisa Strelein, Research Fellow and Manager of the Native Title Research Unit. Strelein explains how the High Court, in relying on the act of state doctrine, has attempted to disavow any continuing authority within Indigenous societies capable of recognition by the courts once native title has come into existence. Strelein argues that the High Court's decision in *Yorta Yorta* confirms that the legal outcomes of native title are becoming more and more elusive.

Seminar Series Reminder

Just a reminder that the AIATSIS Seminar Series for first semester, "Intellectual Property and Indigenous Knowledge: Access and Ownership of Indigenous Cultural Material" has started. A collection of the papers will be placed on the AIATSIS website in the following weeks. The Seminar Series program is available on the AIATSIS website. <<http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/rsrch/seminars.htm>>. To join the Seminar Series contact list contact <nigel.bennet@aiatsis.gov.au>.

FEATURES

Noongars Unite for Single Native Title Claim

by Stuart Bradfield, NTRU

After a series of meetings organised by the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC) and facilitated by the NNTT, Aboriginal people in the region have agreed to join together to pursue a single native title claim.

Support for a single Noongar claim came after well-attended community meetings in Perth, Busselton, Quairading, Katanning, Port Kennedy and Mogumber held throughout February. The six existing individual native title claims will now be re-

Staff Movements

In the last two months there have been a few staff changes at the NTRU. Jessica Weir, Native Title Research Officer, has left us to begin a PhD at the ANU in land management issues. Sarah Arkley, Administration Officer, has also left NTRU to begin full time studies in the Law Faculty at the ANU.

We have been joined by Glen Fairfoot as the NTRU Administration Officer. Glen was previously employed at the NNTT in Cairns for nineteen months.

Wayne Deans is working as the Conference Co-ordinator. Wayne is also currently undertaking his PhD in Anthropology at the ANU.

Serica Mackay is working as a part-time Research Assistant on the Treaty publication. Serica is in her fifth year of an arts/law degree at ANU and is interested in doing further research in the area of Indigenous intellectual property.

placed by a single Noongar claim covering the entire region.

The move to a single claim indicates a desire amongst Indigenous leaders to limit the damaging effects of native title claims which are a major cause of conflict within and between communities. By contrast, this historic pursuit of a single claim may have important implications for increasing Indigenous regional autonomy. SWALSC chief executive Darryl Pearce suggested, "From the community perspective it is a very powerful situation. The Noongar community, for the first time, are coming together as a community and negotiating as one - they are identifying as a Noongar nation."

Mr Pearce said the aim of the single Noongar claim was to provide the State Govern-