

HSNT ANNUAL FIELD TRIP 22-24 JULY 2016:

OENPELLI (GUNBALANYA) AND MANINGRIDA, ARNHEM LAND

BY BEV PHELTS

MAP SHOWING DARWIN TO MANINGRIDA



Friday 22 July – Show Day

The Historical Society had the good fortune of Helen Bond-Sharp as our guide for the weekend. Helen lived in Maningrida for 20 years and was able to introduce us to some of the locals and take us places the ordinary tourist wouldn't discover.

We mustered at Cahills Crossing, East Alligator River, 3 hours after low tide. Surprisingly, the water over the crossing was just a bit more than a trickle. It was an easy crossing with no crocodiles to be seen.



Cahills Crossing



Wild horses - photograph courtesy Craig Bellamy



Red Lilly lagoon between Cahills Crossing and Oenpelli. photograph courtesy Craig Bellamy

Morning tea was at the Gunbalanya/Oenpelli Aboriginal Art centre. Behind the centre is the most magnificent picturesque lagoon.



Oenpelli Art shop



Eddie Weaver & Janet Leather



Jane Farr & Judy Boland



Jane & Ted Whiteaker & Penny Baird

Next stop was at the Narbarlek mine turnoff. Bev talked about the history of the mine to its closure and rehabilitation. Photographs from its golden era and rehabilitation were passed around during the talk. Forward Ho - we had to cross over several river inlets such as the Liverpool and Tomkinson, but due to a lousy 2015/16 wet season, the water levels were very low. The crossings were much easier than expected and uneventful. Also the road was very good, and not chewed up as expected. Another bonus from a lousy wet season.

We made good time and arrived at Jinka/Djinkarr Outstation (18kms south of Maningrida) by 4pm. Djinkarr is situated in a beautiful bush setting overlooking the stunning Tomkinson flood plains with glimpses of the Liverpool River and stunning sunsets. We were guests of the land owners, Lelia and Wayne and the Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation.

Camp was set up along the old airstrip road



Our camp site



Photograph courtesy Craig Bellamy

On dusk two curious dingoes circled our camp. Obviously they were interested to know what scrapes these intruders might provided. During the wee hours, Helen, who was curled in her swag on the ground, could hear something close by. She unzipped her swag only to have a dingo face peering in at her. The dingo was shoed away but not before it took off with her toiletry bag. Helen's bag was never to be seen again! [We were later told by a former Maningrida resident, that dingoes are attracted to the scent of soap and consequently, soap from bush camps in the Maningrida area tended to disappear]

Saturday 23 July Day in Maningrida

This morning we visited the Djomi museum, the art and culture centre and the Babbarra womens culture centre. All three organisations opened especially for us. We really appreciated the staff taking time out to provide wonderful commentaries. Lena Djabibba, who is a traditional owner, talked about the prints and the work that the local ladies do at the womens culture centre. The centre sells unique lino and screen print fabrics, tablecloths, homewares, fashion accessories and art.



Helen Bond-Sharp & Lena Djabibba showing one of the many prints made by the local ladies



Inside the womens culture centre



Brian Reid, Janet Leather & Eddie Leather



Jane Munday & Alison Reedy

The next stop was the Djomi Museum which has a wonderful photograph collection and Aboriginal and Maccassan artefacts.



Alan Mitchell & Janie Mason inside the Djomi Museum



A dug out canoe & wooden birds

Lunch was at the Maningrida Art Centre



Inside the Art centre.
Photographs courtesy Craig Bellamy



A painted "coffin" used to bury a deceased person



From left: Fiona Scott, Julie Mastin, Ruth Kerr, Penny Baird, Steve O'Halloran, Lyn & Brian Reid

After lunch we headed off to the site of the leprosarium (however no remnants/footings remain). Then down to the landing where the barge from Darwin brings in supplies and equipment to Maningrida.



At the leprosarium site



Helen talking to the group about the barge



Maningrida beach at the barge landing



Maningrida no alcohol sign

Eddie Webber gave a fabulous talk and showed photos of the old sawmill which commenced operation in 1971 but has since closed.



Eddie Webber at the old sawmill



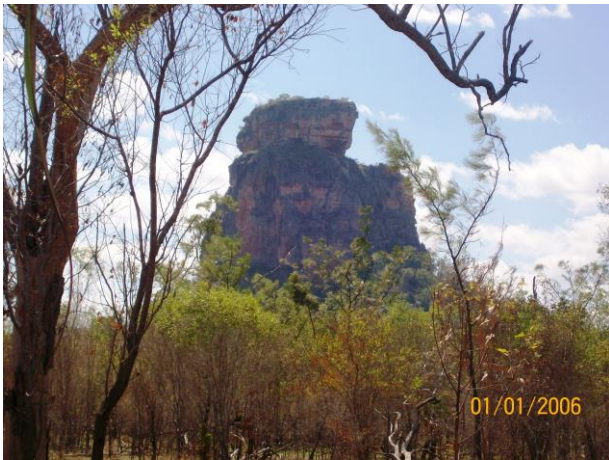
Maningrida traditional owners invited us to attend a “practice run ceremony” of a young boy who was to be initiated. It had been a very long day and we decided to decline this kind offer. Back at camp that night, our “friendly” dingoes turned up again. They came close but remained aloof. Nothing was stolen during the night.

Sunday 24 July

Time to head off back to Darwin. When we packed up camp, perishable food was left out for the dingoes. It would have been a feast! Cahills Crossing low tide was at 8am and we were 4hours away. Most of us headed off by dawn to beat the tide. My group were the last to leave at 8am. Just to make sure that everyone made it to the crossing incident free. Another great trip with no mechanical problems, flat tyres or accidents. The only incident was the thieving of Helen’s toiletry bag.

The following are scenery shots on the way home.





Participants

Helen Bond-Sharp was our wonderful, knowledgeable & brilliant guide. Thanks to her, we had an amazing trip.

Bev Phelts, Steve O'Halloran, Earl & Wendy James, Judy Boland Michael Aylward-Smith, Jane Farr, Janie Mason, Ruth Kerr, Alan Mitchell, Bill Hayes, Eddie Webber, Janet Leather, Brian & Lyn Reid, Fiona Scott, Penny Baird, Julie Mastin, Ted & Jane Whiteaker, Jane Munday, Alison Reedy & Craig Bellamy

Brief History & Events of Maningrida

Information and photographs sourced from Helen Bond-Sharp's book, *Maningrida: A History of the Aboriginal Township in Arnhem Land*

Before a settlement was established, Maccassans, explorers and seafarers visited the region.

1949

A Trading Post was founded by Syd Kyle-Little and Jack Doolan

1957

David and Ingrid Drysdale, Native Welfare Branch arrived to establish a settlement. Yaws and leprosy were already present in the community.

1958

A leprosarium, school and a bakery opened.

1960s

There was no public road to Maningrida. Exit was by barge or plane. The mail plane arrived once a week. There was no electricity and telephones; and water was pumped from wells.

1962

The Ingrid Drysdale Hospital (later named the Health Clinic) was under construction. Crops were established. Patrol Officer, Ted Egan and an Aboriginal guide drove from Oenpelli to Maningrida. They were the first to drive overland into town. A new school was constructed. The school was elevated and complete with louvers and ceiling fans.

1963

David Attenborough visited Maningrida. Chaplin Gowan Armstrong established a Methodist/Uniting church parish and the first Methodist wedding took place.

1965-1967

The fishing industry and a fish processing factory was founded. By the end of the 1960s, Maningrida was the 5th largest Territory town

1971

The forestry industry and a new sawmill commenced operation

1972

The first Aboriginal mining company was established. It was a joint venture between Goulburn Island and Maningrida and listed on the stock exchange.

1974

Prime Minister Gough Whitlam and Mrs Whitlam visited.
Rolf Harris held a concert.

1974 & 1975

Dr HC (Nugget) Coombs, special advisor to the Federal Government on Aboriginal self determination visited.

1975

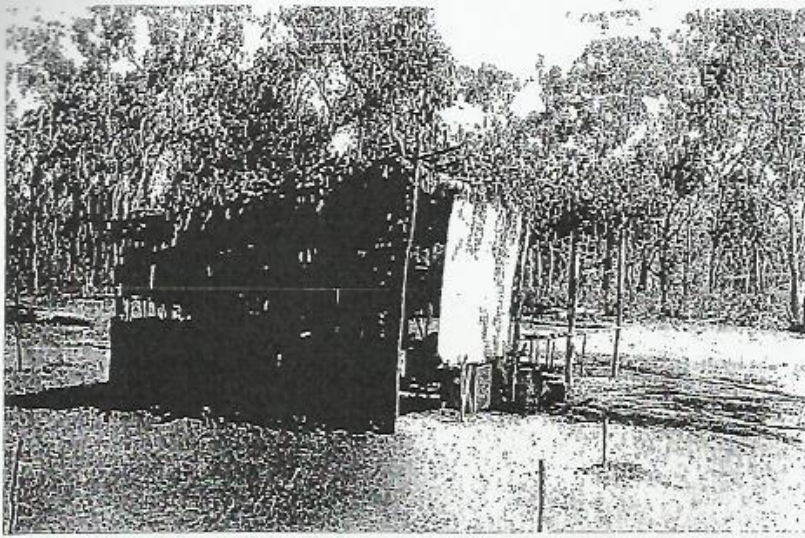
The Maningrida Council was formed. The first Town Clerk was Peter O'Connor

1977

The Maningrida Progress Association was formed

1978

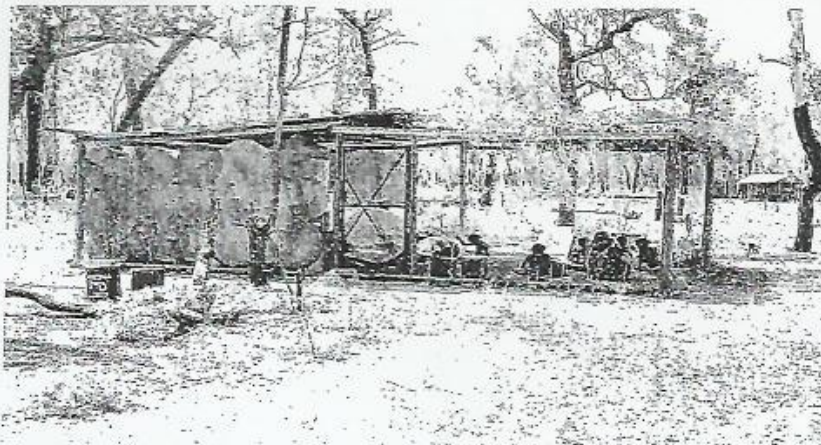
The Maningrida Council was dissolved and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs controlled Maningrida



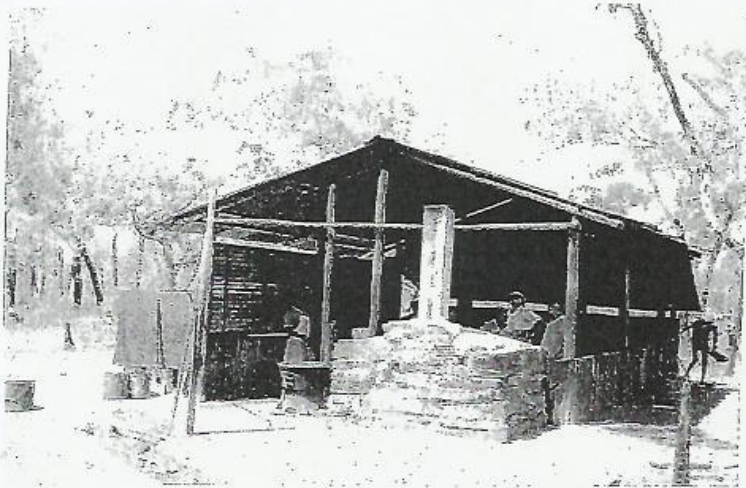
Ted Egan and Trevor Milliken's living quarters, July 1957. Photo courtesy Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation.



*Kyle-Little and Doolan's bark house at Maningrida, 1949.
Photo courtesy of Syd Kyle-Little's family and Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation*



*The Schoolhouse, 1958.
Photo from National Archives of Australia.¹⁰⁷*



The Bakehouse, 1958. Photo from National Archives of Australia.⁸⁹



Inside the bakehouse, 1958. Photo from National Archives of Australia.⁹⁰



Northern Land Council
Aboriginal Land Act 1978
Northern Territory of Australia

**PERMIT TO ENTER & REMAIN ON ABORIGINAL LAND OR
SEA ADJOINING ABORIGINAL LAND (Recreation)**

Permission is granted for Steve OHalloran to enter and remain on Aboriginal Land for the following purpose:

Visit arranged by the Historical Society of NT.

Permission is strictly restricted to the following locations and dates:

| Location | Entry Date | Exit Date |
|------------|------------|-----------|
| GUNBALANYA | 22/7/2016 | 22/7/2016 |
| MANINGRIDA | 22/7/2016 | 24/7/2016 |
| Djinkarr | 22/7/2016 | 24/7/2016 |

Transport Details:

Travelling By Private Motor Vehicle, of make Triton, registration CB76BP

The following persons are authorised to travel with the principal applicant and are bound by the same conditions as the principal applicant:

Bev Phelts _____ (Signature)

Helen Bond Sharp _____ (Signature)

Special Conditions Relating to This Permit:

THIS PERMIT IS FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY.
THIS PERMIT DOES NOT ENTITLE YOU TO ANY OTHER AREAS OF ABORIGINAL
LAND EXCEPT FOR WHAT IS STIPULATED ABOVE:
IF THE PERMIT HOLDER WISHES TO UNDERTAKE ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF THE
STIPULATED AREA THEY MUST APPLY FOR AN ADDITIONAL RECREATIONAL
PERMIT FROM THE NORTHERN LAND COUNCIL
NO STOPPING WHILST IN TRANSIT UNLESS IN AN EMERGENCY.
FIREARMS

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|---|--|
| CASUARINA (Head Office) | PO Box 42921 | 9 Rowling Street Casuarina NT 0811 | PH: (08) 8920 5178 Fax: (08) 8945 2633 |
| PALMERSTON (Darwin Daly) | PO BOX 1249 | 1/17 Georgina Cres Palmerston NT 0831 | PH: (08) 8931 1910 Fax: (08) 8931 1875 |
| JABIRU (West Arnhem) | PO BOX 18 | Unit 3 Government Building Jabiru NT 0886 | PH: (08) 8979 2410 Fax: (08) 8979 2650 |
| KATHERINE (South Region) | PO BOX 396 | 5 Katherine Terrace NT 0851 | PH: (08) 8972 2799 Fax: (08) 8972 2190 |
| NHULUNBUY (East Arnhem) | PO BOX 820 | Endeavour Square Nhulunbuy NT 0861 | PH: (08) 8987 2602 Fax: (08) 8987 1334 |

The issue of this permit is subject to the following conditions:

1. This permit does not authorise entry to any buildings dwellings or living areas or camps without the consent of the owner or occupier.
2. This permit may be revoked at any time in accordance with section 5 or 6 of the Aboriginal Land Act.
3. The issue of this permit does not serve as notice of your visit to traditional owners and residents of areas to be visited. The permit holder is responsible for ensuring that all relevant communities are informed of his/her intention to visit.
4. This permit is valid only for the purposes stated herein.
5. This permit must be carried at all times by the holder whilst on Aboriginal land or seas adjoining Aboriginal land and produced on demand by a member of the NT Police; a Land Council Officer including a local Ranger; or traditional Aboriginal owner.
6. The carrying and consumption of alcohol is prohibited on Aboriginal land subject to some exemptions under Part VII the Liquor Act. The permit holder is responsible for ascertaining whether an exemption applies for areas visited and acquire a permit from the agency responsible for the exempt area.
7. This permit does not entitle the holder to enter or remain on any Aboriginal sacred site or site of significance. Art and/or archaeological sites must not be disturbed or interfered with.
8. Motor vehicles and boats must be in a satisfactory condition and reasonable spare parts food fuel and water must be carried.
9. Permit holders must travel directly to their destination and not divert. No new tracks are to be created.
10. The permit holder shall not carry any firearms/weapons and neither shoot nor discharge firearms/weapons.
11. Photography cinematography or video recording for commercial purposes is prohibited.
12. Mustering or feral animal control operations may be in progress over area travelled through or visited. Permit holders must observe all warning signs and must comply with reasonable directions of Land Council or DPP officer in respect of entry into those areas.
13. Gates are to be left opened or closed as found.
14. The permit holder must comply with all laws in force in the Northern Territory of Australia at all times.
15. The permit holder enters Aboriginal land at his or her own risk and agrees to undertake and bear all risk. The permit holder agrees that the Northern Land Council and the relevant Aboriginal Land Trust shall not be under any liability of any kind to the permit holder whether in negligence under statute or otherwise in respect of death injury loss or damage of any kind whatsoever and howsoever arising and which occurs during or as a result of entry upon the said land.
16. All rubbish and litter is to be disposed of in places provided expressly for that purpose (if any) or removed from Aboriginal Land.
17. This permit does not authorise the taking of (wild or domestic) animals onto Aboriginal Land.
18. This permit does not authorise fishing hunting or swimming.
19. Motorbikes including trail bikes quad bikes bicycles and the like are prohibited on Aboriginal Land.

I, Steve OHalloran of 8/3 Annear Court Stuart Park 0820, have read the conditions attached to this permit and agree to abide by all terms and conditions.

Signed _____ Date _____

Authorised By T. J. Fairme Date 6.7.16

Permit ID: 64513

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