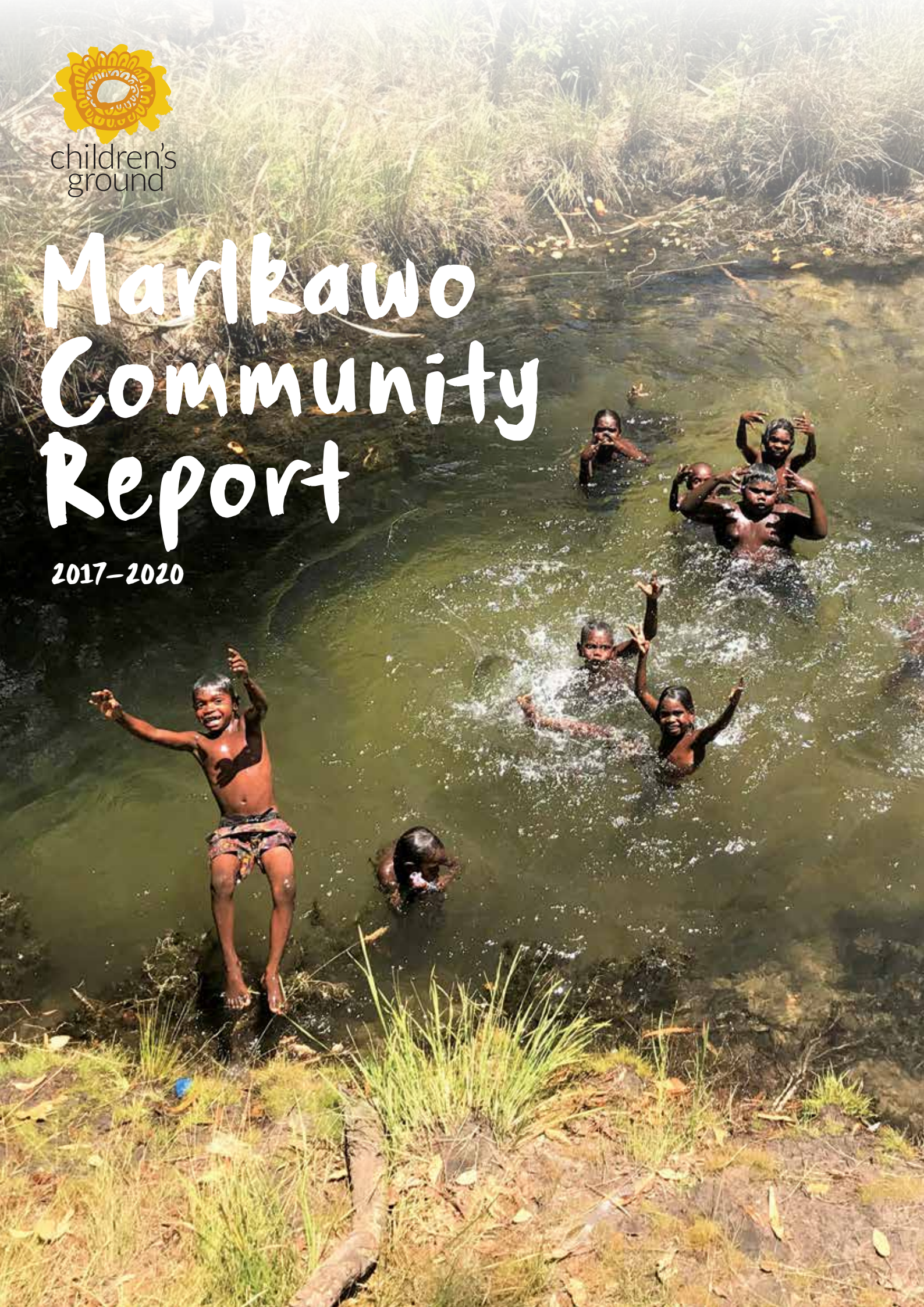




children's
ground

Marlkawo Community Report

2017–2020





Wurdurd prepare for a running race on the Bakalehlele airstrip at Marlkawo: Mahalia, Jenisha, Keith, Stewart, Paddy, Mena, Keziah, Hendrika.

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Glossary

Balanda	Non-Aboriginal person
Balabbala	Traditionally a raised platform for sleeping, built of wood and paperbark. At Marlkawo, balabbala refers to the canvas and steel shelters built on wooden decking, with help from Children's Ground.
Bim	Rock art
Bininj	Aboriginal person; man
Burarr	Water goanna
Daluk	Bininj woman
Djang	Sacred site, ancestral creation stories or ‘Dreamings’
Duhbumanj	Black bream fish
Djunkayi	A Caretaker of Kunred, with special responsibilities for land, different to Traditional Owners
Elders	Kobakohbanj
Kormorr	Pandanus nut
Kunak	Fire
Kunkodbarre	Bark shelter
Kunred	Country, home
Kunwinjku	Bininj Kunwok language
Kundedjnjenghmi	Bininj Kunwok language
Manbudurik	Natural soap made from black wattle seed pods
Mandjabero	Bush apple
Mandjurndum	A special root used to make yellow colour
Mankung	Sugarbag (honey)
Manme	Food, tucker
Marlbah	Special (sacred) stones
Morley	Didgeridoo (yadaki)
Pandanus	Palm-like, dioecious trees and shrubs native to the Old World tropics and subtropics
Wagi	Yabby
Wurdurd	Children
Wurdurd Garriygarrmerren	We are all standing together as one family, walking the path with our children
Yawurrinj	Young men
Yawkyawk	Young women

Introduction: why Marlkawo and why now?



“Bu ngad ngarrimey mahni wurdurd bedberre manu Children’s Ground, wanjh wam kore kunred ngalengarre Marlkawo, kumekke wanjh bu ngarrimarrinj birrikukbele dja ngad Bininj.

Bu birrimarnbom wanjh kumwam, wanjh birrikurmeng ngalengarre kore Kunred bu wurdurden bedberre.

Kabindikan school men kayime kunkukbeleken dja kunbelerriken wanjh manekke bu ngarriwokdanj yiman kayime bedda kobokobanj nawu kabenehdokme dja yiman kayime ngayeman, yiman kayime djungkayi ngarduk Roxanne. Bu yimeng ngalengman ngalengarre bu kurrmeng bendjawam wanjh bu kahdi, wanjh manekke bu birrimkang wanjh yiman ngarrimmokenhdurkmirranj moken.”

Shirley Djandjomerr, 2020

We are now making Children’s Ground here at Marlkawo. We have moved here and all the families are joined up together.

Coming together with non-Aboriginal people and we Aboriginal people, we have been running a program for children on our Country, a school program with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learning.

This is what was discussed and what the Elders decided. They wanted those who started off (in Jabiru) and I’ve joined in too, like my Djunkayi Roxanne. She asked them (Children’s Ground) to start a school program here, on her grandfather’s Country, and so we brought that program (Children’s Ground) here.

“Every time I go to sleep, I think about Children’s Ground. It’s on my mind. When I start working again everything is for the kids. I want everyone to come to Marlkawo and work for the kids. We can all help one another as families and friends.”

Cecily Djandjomerr, February 2017

“It is important to have grandparents to tell wurdurd stories. Important so wurdurd learn in proper way. Put his ears in open, and lock it in forever and ever.”

Raymond Guymala 2021

“It’s a bit different here because they love it, they are running around and playing. Children’s Ground is teaching them knowledge about bush stuff, while we are staying on outstation, about bush tucker. They love bush tucker. They are changing now, when they were living in town, they used to eat sweets and greasy take away. But now they are staying in outstation they are living on bush foods, buffalo meat and they are happy. They have made a big change... They love going swimming, they love going hunting. They love the school because they love reading and writing and drawing, and doing the numbers, and doing the books.”

Kimberley Namarnyilk, 2021

“Government tell us we are lazy people. We’re not lazy! We know what we’re doing but they don’t come and ask us mob what we really want so we can tell them what we want for the yawk yawk, yawurrinj and the wurdurd. We want to bring them back to Marlkawo. The place is empty and it’s crying a lot for families.”

Roxanne Naborlhborlh, October 2017

“This is the most important kind of learning.”

Shirley Djandjomerr, 2021

“It’s about my family, my people, on our land. That land, it owns us, it’s how we realise our identity.”

Roxanne Naborlhborlh, 2021

The beginning of Children’s Ground at Marlkawo



Cecily Djandjomerr, Mary Kolkwarra Nadjamerrek, Neville Namarnyilk, Robert Namarnyilk, Ivan Namarnyilk, Angela Bangarr, Roxanne Naborlhborlh, Shirley Djandjomerr, Kaylene Djandjomerr, June Nadjamerrek and Rhonda Nadjamerrek.

When Wurdurd Garriygarmmerren (Children’s Ground) finished in Jabiru, our families said that wurdurd (children) would “be hurting”.

Families were worried wurdurd would miss out on important learning including cultural, on Country learning, and walking and learning with their family. Wurdurd Garriygarmmerren curriculum is both bininj and balanda, so families do not have to choose between one or the other.

Wurdurd Garriygarmmerren leaders in Jabiru included Traditional Owners, Elders and families from Marlkawo and West Arnhem. We all met and talked. We had worries and concerns for our wurdurd learning. We also wanted to look after their Country. We decided to take Wurdurd Garriygarmmerren back to our homelands, Marlkawo.

Late in 2017, we camped at Marlkawo so we could share our vision and plans for what Wurdurd Garriygarmmerren could look like. We talked about what we wanted to see for families at Marlkawo.

“I love being at Marlkawo.”

Mahalia Kitman 2018



Every time we get new spirits to our Kunred, we do our traditional welcoming. (Above) Christianna Djandjomerr welcomes Jane Vadeloo to Country with Shirley Djandjomerr and Lee Nabarlambarl looking on.



Families talking about what Children’s Ground at Marlkawo means to them.



We drew a map of Bakalehleh (home camp) and planned where to put the new classroom and other balabbalas.

Children's Ground at Marlkawo: 2018–2020

2018

Our Country has a big story. We had a lot of sadness here. We wanted to come back to our Country, to live here, to bring our wurdurd back and to look after Kunred.

In the beginning it was hard. The houses were all broken because we hadn't been living here for so long. Philanthropists gave us money to get us started. We worked hard with Sue to make plans so we could live here again. We worked with Demed Aboriginal Corporation to get the power working. We had to get the phones working and to connect water from the river. It was a lot of work and the yawindinj, bininj and balanda worked together. We got the air strip working in case we needed people to visit or anyone got sick. It was hard. We made plans to get our houses fixed and to make more space for our families because of the overcrowding. We built a kunkodbarre for our learning centre. We needed new toilets. It was exciting to see the new toilets from Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation (BAC)! We were on our way! Thank you to our philanthropists who made this happen. We don't know what we would have done without you.

At the start of the dry season, we started teaching our wurdurd at Marlkawo with Western learning in the mornings and cultural learning in the afternoons and weekends. We continued having governance meetings that focused on what families wanted Children's Ground to look like at Marlkawo: what wurdurd would be learning and how and what health support families needed, including social and emotional wellbeing support. We also continued our walk and talk with surrounding outstations and talked about wet season delivery. We were worried because our families have a lot of health problems and we are a long way from a clinic. But we made strong plans for our health.

Learning & Wellbeing: 31 children (aged 0-11 years) engaged in early learning and primary school learning on their country and alongside their family – 50 family members (18+ years) engaged in learning. This included health promotion in all early learning sessions.

Health & Wellbeing: 102 people, engaged in family health promotion and wellbeing support including:

- 37 children and young people aged 0-17 years
- 65 adults aged 18+ years

Social & Emotional Wellbeing: 72 people of all ages engaged in social/emotional wellbeing promotion and support, including counselling.

Governance: 18 community leaders and family members engaged in decision-making about Children's Ground for Marlkawo.

Economic Development & Wellbeing: 34 bininj people were employed across Children's Ground operations.



Students from St Ignatius College in Sydney with Bininj at Marlkawo.



The yawurrinj hard at work building a new kunkodbarre.



Wurdurd having an early years learning session in the finished kunkodbarre.



Cecily Djandjomerr, Mary Kolkwarra Nadjamerrek, Shirley Djandjmoerr, Kaylene Djandjomerr, Christianna Djandjomerr, Mahalia Kitman, Mena Djandjomerr.



Early years and primary learning session in the new balabbala. This balabbala is permanent, and means we can run sessions all year and into the future at Marlkawo.

June

The roads opened after the wet season and we made our way back home - the beginning...

Family invited yawurrinj from St Ignatius College, Riverview to learn about our Kunred. Our visitors from St Ignatius and other yawurrinj helped build a kunkodbarre for our wurdurd to use for learning.

July – October

Building, digging, planning and doing and connecting to Kunred. We fixed the air strip, water and power and made emergency plans for safety. Food security, health and wellbeing, remote First Aid training and connecting with clinics and health services. Kids were excited and learning on Kunred every day.

November

Our new classroom balabbala was completed – a big milestone for us! We also built a balabbala for Cecily and other family to make it easier for her in her wheelchair. We also built one for the balanda staff.

Children's Ground at Marlkawo: 2018–2020

2019



Talking with Nabarlambarl families from Kamarrkawarn.



A learning session in the balabbala.

Learning & Wellbeing: 24 children (0-11 years) engaged in Learning and Wellbeing supported by 39 family members (18+ years) – including health promotion integrated into all early learning sessions.

Health & Wellbeing: 92 people, engaged in family health promotion and wellbeing support including:

- 38 children and young people aged 0-17 years
- 54 adults aged 18+ years
- Support for families in Darwin

Social & Emotional Wellbeing: 76 people of all ages engaged in social/emotional wellbeing promotion and support, including counselling.

Governance: 25 community leaders and family members engaged in decision-making about Children's Ground for Marlkawo.

Economic Development & Wellbeing:

- 32 bininj people were employed across Children's Ground operations
- 43 people engaged in employment support, including employment paperwork and financial literacy support

Social Enterprise: Black Rock Band had a wonderful year traveling the country and performing and they released their film clip Struggle.



Wurdurd from Mamadewerre enjoying an early years learning visit from Children's Ground staff.



Ethan Nabulwad, Djunkayi for Mamadewerre takes Caitlin and Janine to his community for an Early years visit.



Jack Namaryilk welcoming the St Ignatius visitors to Kunred at the Marlkawo crossing.



Angela Bangarr showing Igniting Change visitors Djurong Djurong.



Uriah Djandjomerr learning to mix cement with a volunteer Fair Tradie.



Mahalia Kitman helps a Fair Tradie with renovations.

January

We visited families living on homelands surrounding Marlkawo to talk about how Children's Ground can support them.

April

Three of us went to Alice Springs to the first meeting of the First Nations Education Network (Utyerre Apanpe), with First Nations people from other nations across Australia.

June

After the wet season, we had lots of funerals - too many. Eight family members. We were very sad. After the funerals, we were happy to get kids back learning. Yawurrinj from St Ignatius College visited to help us.

August

We welcomed visitors from Igniting Change to Marlkawo. The Northern Territory Government Environmental Health Team visited to assist us with planning.

October

Thanks to philanthropy and donations we could start fixing our houses at Bakalehleh, Marlkawo. The Fair Tradies came to work with us. By the end, both houses had doors, floors, running water, hot water and electricity. They were safe. We also had new balabbalas for families and staff.

Children's Ground at Marlkawo: 2018–2020

2020

With Covid 19 restrictions in place across Aboriginal Lands and a family funeral at Marlkawo, we had a later start to Children's Ground at Marlkawo.

Learning & Wellbeing: 20 children (0-11 years) engaged in Learning and Wellbeing supported by 13 family members (18+ years), including health promotion integrated into all early learning sessions.

Health & Wellbeing: 79 people, engaged in family health promotion and wellbeing support including:

- 35 children and young people aged 0-17 years
- 60 adults aged 18+ years

Social & Emotional Wellbeing: 82 people of all ages engaged in social/emotional wellbeing promotion and support, including counselling.

Governance: 30 community leaders and family members engaged in decision-making about Children's Ground for Marlkawo.

Economic Development & Wellbeing:

- 24 bininj people were employed across Children's Ground operations
- 40 people engaged in employment support, including employment paperwork and financial literacy support



Raymond Guymala, Dillon Guymala, Shirley Djandjomerr and Antonia Djandjomerr talk about our health and social and emotional wellbeing needs.



Judy Dakgalawuy shows Hendrika and Mahalia how to collect pandanus for weaving.



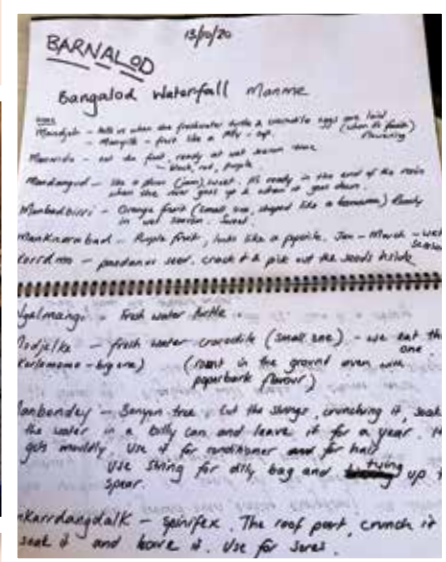
Gregory enjoys reading in the balabbala with his mother Christine and educator Caitlyn.



Raymond Guymala shares the story of his recent painting with the First Nations Education Forum while Shirley Djandjomerr, Duane Dakalaway and Dillon Guymala watch on.



Flint Djandjomerr Snr, his sons Azeriah and Flint Jnr, and Vienna Djandjomerr at Barnalod.



We recorded our knowledge of the manne, bush medicine and other useful plants around Barnalod for the wurdurd.

June

We were at Marlkawo waiting for the Covid-19 threat to pass. We stayed on our Country where we were safe. We kept teaching our kids here, bininj way.

September

It was a really sad time for us. We held a big funeral for our special family member and Traditional Owner, here on her Country. Western learning started again for wurdurd We did lots of health promotion for Covid-19.

October

This year, due to Covid-19, we participated in the First Nations Education Forum digitally from Marlkawo. We shared the way we are teaching our kids out here on Country.

December

We had a special healing camp. We took wurdurd to parts of Country they had never been before. We talked about our physical health, our mental health and our cultural health. This is a special place for healing.

Learning and Wellbeing

“Kore kumekke Kunred wurdurd wanjh bindiyirurndi. Bu wanjh Kunred kabirribolkburrknaburrknan kore Kunred yiman kabirribolknan yiman kayime Ngermi, Bukem yiman kayime Badjanworrrh, Djohmi dja manbuyika manu kanjdji ngalengman kahre Barnalod, Miyuku ngalengarre kabeneraworren.

Kumekke mak wurdurd ngarrbenkang bu birribolknanganang dja bedman bedberre bu kunnjilngwurdurndi, birriborrrkyirranj dja yiman ngarrbenbukkan bu kabirrikurduyime. Bu bedberre yiman bu kabirridjordmen wanjh wurdurd bedberre bedmanwali kumekke, ngarrbenyibawon wanjh bu kabindibukkan bu yerre yiman bu yerrekah.

Ba bu mane kabirridjalkarrme bedman bedberre manu kunwele. Ngadman kadberre kore Bininj kabirriborlbme bedberre dja yiman kayime kunwok bedberre kabirrikurmehkurrme. Bu kabindibidyikarrme yiman kayime birrikukbele warriidj.

Mane bu ngahyolyolme bu wanjh wurdurd yerre nawu kadjordmen, dja bu kare kakimukmen, karrabbolkmen wanjh kamang nuye daluk o yiman kayime kamang Bininj ngalengarre.

Wanjh yiman kabindibebbekarrme wanjh wurdyaw bu bedberre bu nawu kakodjngalengalme wanjh, kumekke en bedda bedberre kabirrikurduyime. Kore kabirribukkan nawern yiman kayime mayh manme dja Bininj dja Kunred kumekke.”

Shirley Djandjomerr, 2020



“They have to know everything in our culture way, because it is very important to learn in our culture way, so they can know in the next future so they can teach their next family the way to do things in our culture way.”

Kimberley Djandjomerr, 2021

Our families returned here (to Marlkawo) with the children, so they can go and see all the important places of their traditional homelands.

They can go and see places such as the sacred sites: Ngermi, Bukem, Barnalod, Miyuku.

They can also be connected to and visit places in other homelands, such as the Badjanworrrh, of the clan groups Bullomo, and the other place is Djohmi, of the Karnbirr clan group.

So we took the children there so they could see all those places and they could feel good about being there and playing, and we can teach them how to do different things as they grow.

And it's their turn now, the children (to learn about those places), we will pass on to them (that knowledge) and then in turn they will teach (the next generation) so they can keep holding on to their own (culture and traditions) our Aboriginal way of life.

They will learn all this and express it in their language they can help them and also non-Aboriginal people. So, I'm talking about how children (will learn things) as they grow.

As a child becomes an adult, a child grows to maturity and gets a wife or husband and then each of them will have children of their own, and there is so much to teach them such as all about edible foods and animals and about bininj society and country.

A Typical Day...



Wurdurd wake up bright and early and walk to the school balabbala.



Starting the day with yoga and mindfulness exercises.



Durron, Anthony and Uriah ready to begin learning with a fresh mind.



Anthony and Mahalia practicing reading and writing in English.



Mena learning Kunwinjku with Sonya Nanygo.



Wurdurd learning maths two ways.

"It's important to us to show our culture, keep our culture strong, give wurdurd our knowledge so they have it always. I teach culture and education. Aboriginal way and balanda way. Reading, maths, English is also important. I teach our wurdurd on at Marlkawo with families, this is good for all."

Annie Cameron



Maths lesson.

"Education our way is very important. Our way, what we don't like and what we want for better future, to get better education in both ways, with bininj themselves are the educators."

Shirley Djandjomerr, 2020



Mahalia learning about computing.



Finishing the morning's learning session with family story time.



Mahalia, Kayless, Mena and Kessia learning with Jasmine.



Lemaine riding the BMX track made by the volunteers from St Ignatius College.



Family fishing at Djohmi.



Stewart holding his catch.



"The balanda need to understand the cultural way. Wurdurd want to live in cultural way, but to have Western way also. To speak English, to be smart with balanda. To have that strong voice, for the family, for the community, for the Kunred. But when we do the healthy way - go out fishing, hunting, or to see other families, we will feel lighter. We will sit with them, laugh with them, share the cooking, the food, sit around the fire. There are many ways to be healthy."

Raymond Guymala, 2021



Stewart learning to make rope at Bakaleleh.



Annie Cameron, Sharna Dakalawey and Christine Alangale showing Gregory, Tyler, Anthony and Anosh how to find mankung (sugarbag) at Bakaleleh.



Lemaine experimenting with Munbudurlk, natural soap made of crushed seed pods of the black wattle tree, at the Marikawo crossing.



Joewina and Azeriah learning about marlbah (special stone).



Shirley telling the wurdurd the story of Djurong Djurong.



Shirley showing Azeriah how to catch kormorr (pandanus nuts) at Djurong Djurong.



Flint Jnr and Azeriah listen to stories from their father, Flint Snr at Barnalod.



Flint Snr sharing the stories of the bim (rock art) with son Azeriah at Barnalod.

Family Health, Community Development and Wellbeing

“Mani wanjh ngayolyolme manu, kadjalwern manu family health and wellbeing bu kadberre wurdurd dorrengh. Manekke yiman kayime karrilyolyolme bedberre yiman kayime kabirrikuknahnarren. Bu bedberre kunmak kunmak.

Dja njale warridj yiman kayime kabirriwohre, yiman kayime kabirrire bu kurrenge. Balaykoko djarre, dja yiman bu kabirriyawan yiman kayime njale yiman kayime bu ngalengarre manu ngadman kadberre Bininjen manu.

Manu karridowingalme yiman kayime wurdurd bedberre yiman kayime kedjined nawu komud, yiman kayime kunmok, dja yiman kayime bu kanjilngwarremen. Kunnjilng manu manbiyika yiman kayime bu kakodjngurdme. Wanjh makka yiman karrimarren karriyerrkan karrini, dja karrilyolyolme yiman bu njale kabennjilngwarrewon.

Wanjh makka yiman kabenmarneyolyolme kore baleh bu bey yungki kore minj ngarribengkan. Yiman kayime karriwern djarre wurdyaw nawu bolkki wanjh kadjordmerren wanjh kamanamang.

manekke kakarrme. Kunrayekni ba bu nunganwali yiman kayime nuye.

Wanjh kabenbukkan yiman kayime wurdurd nuye dja yiman kayime kobohkobanj kandikuknahnarren, menekke. Mahni manu ngurrrin bu kadjurleerri manu balabbala. Balabbala wanjh manekke yiman. Yiman wanjh start ngarriyime bu wurd bedberre, bu ngalengarre kume Kunred.

Wanjh birrihmadbom nawu birrikukbele bu ngarriwokdanginj kunkimuk bu manu ngalengarre bu mane manekke. Ngalengarre bu Children's Ground wanjh bu manekke mani danginj manu yiman kayime.

Birridjalohmarnbom bu wurdurd wakewakeng bedberr. Dja manbiyika yiman manu birrimarnbom manu balabbala. Manu kunkukbeleken bedberre kore school. Dja yiman kayime bedda bedberre kore kahdi balabbala bokenh, dja yiman birrikurrmeng bedberre generator dja yiman birrikurrmeng bedberre internet bu kore ngarriyidurrrkmirri manu bu ngarriyikarrmerren kume ngalengarre Kunred.

Manekke yiman ngayolyolme manu community development and wellbeing manekke. Nawu ngalengarre kume family Marlkawo. Yiman kayime wurd yawurrinj, dja yiman kayime wurdurd yawkyawk manu, ngandibidyikarrme ngadberre bu wurdurd ngarrbendjarrknahnani kore. Njalenjale kore ngarrikurduyime. Dja wanjh manekke bonj ngamyolyolmeng dja kayim(e) bu anbiyika wali ma.”

Shirley Djandjomerr

So that's what I'm talking about, so many things to do with family health and wellbeing for our children too. So, all these things we must talk about, that we are looking after each other's health and their wellbeing and many other things. As children go from place to place, such as when they are walking around to far away (places), or when they off searching for something related to our (Aboriginal) affairs.

Sometimes we become sick. Children might get respiratory illness (flu/colds) or skin infections or sores, or feelings of sadness and depression, or those other feelings that make them become silent and withdrawn. At times like that we can come together, sit together, and talk about what is causing them to feel depressed and sad and they can talk to others about those things, maybe things we don't understand.

We all want our children both now and in the future to keep gaining knowledge as they grow and to keep that knowledge strong so that every parent can teach his or her children what we have been taught by our Elders and Ancestors. That's what I'm saying. You can see the shade house, we started to build the bark shelter for the children. This is a place where we spoke to non-Aboriginal staff. This was a big issue. Then Children's Ground became established, we made these (shelters) for all the kids around the place. They made another bark shelter, the non-Aboriginal people and volunteers at the school.

Those two shade houses there are the Children's Ground learning places. They have installed a generator and internet. There we can work and help each other. So that's what I've been talking about, community development and wellbeing there for all the family at Marlkawo.

For the boys and also for the girls, they (Children's Ground) are helping us so we can all look after the children there at the bark huts, in whatever we are doing there.



Anthony and Ryan learning about healthy eating and food security by growing vegetable seedlings.



Wurdurd learn about green ants and other bush medicine at Marlkawo.



Mahalia enjoying mandjabero.



Annie Cameron shows the wurdurd how to catch and prepare burarr.



Preparing bush tucker: wagi, burarr and duhbumanj.

All of our families have health worries. Some are on medication, some have serious heart problems. Our kids have health worries too. We are a long way away from clinics. Now we can get our medications and we can talk with clinics and arrange appointments because of our health team. We were really worried about being so far away when we came back here. But we have been able to do it.



Selone shows Stewart mangung.



Health promotion

Clean-ups around camp. Looking after community, making it clean for wurdurd and family.



Kayless and others looking at head lice under a microscope with Jamie.
This experiment let children learn more about these insects as well as how to use the microscope. Children learned about the effects of head lice, and the importance of washing their hair, staying clean and healthy, and to say "go away lice, leave my hair alone!"



Caitlin teaches Anthony about the human body.



Susan and Corriane learning about science on Country.



Anthony with Bessina washing his hands.



Durrone practices good oral hygiene. Wurdurd brush their teeth every day.

"Having Children's Ground at Marlakawo is important for safety. For the safety of children, of young people and adults. Our families are more healthy when they are on Country. For young kids and for teenagers, it is better [to be on Country]."
Roxanne Naborlhborlh



The house before the Fair Tradies helped us with renovations.



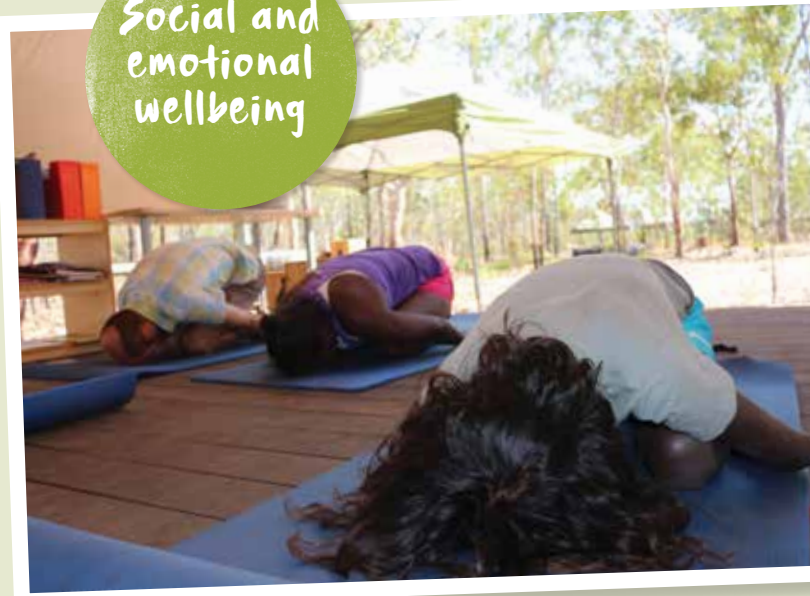
Mahalia assisting a volunteer from the Fair Tradies to finalise the floor of the house.



Mahalia helping to glue down the new floor in the house with volunteers from the Fair Tradies.

We have a lot of worries and we have all had a lot of sadness in our lives. We have had a counsellor supporting us. Some of our young people have been really depressed and we want this to be a safe place for them. We want Marlakawo to be a safe place for our wurdurd, our young people and our families - a place where our spirits can get strong again.
The kids are learning meditation and relaxation. They come from town where there is lots of stress. They come here and their spirits settle.
We go to special places on Country to heal.
"Wellbeing on Country - it is about bush tucker, hunting, being with family out bush, laughing smiling, loving, sharing, caring, refreshing our minds. It is just beautiful to be on Country listening to the sounds of the bush."
Roxanne Naborlhborlh

Social and emotional wellbeing



Mindfulness practice - yoga in the balabbala.

Cultural and Creative Development and Wellbeing

"Kuhni wanjh ngayolyolme manu creative and culture development and wellbeing.

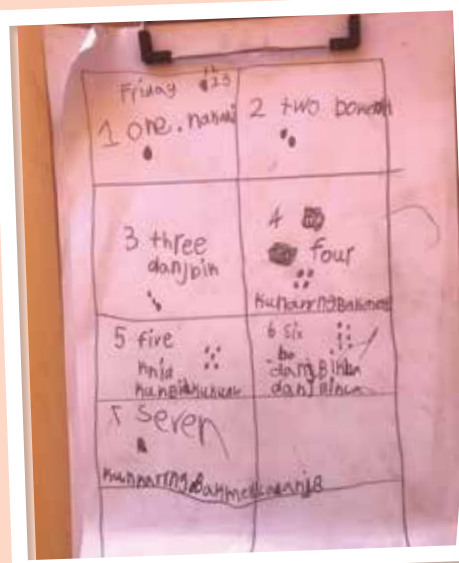
Bu wurdurd ngarrbenbukkan dolobbo ngarrilowkmang
arrikukwirrkme arrikinje, morley arridadjdje,
arrimdurndeng arrikukwirrkme. And arrbenbukkan
miximap kabirriyime, yiman kayime delek manarr like
yellow one red one and white one.

Kabirrre kabirrirawon and kundjahkorl barribimbun kore morle. And manbuyika arrbenbukkan Bininj kunborrk kabirriborrkke, wurdurd. Wanjh manekke bonj."

Raymond Guymala, December 2020

I will talk about creative and culture development and wellbeing, such as when we teach children how to peel stringybark off a tree. We scrape it down and then apply heat, or (when we) make a morley, we come back after getting the bark and we scrape it down.

We teach a mix of different things, like white clay, red ochre and yellow one, red one and white one. They can also teach other things such as how to make fire or how to decorate a morley. We also show them traditional dances, that children can dance.



The drum project helps children learn about counting in English and in Kunwok visually and hands on, through games. Each drum has an image to represent the number, along with the English and Kunwok word.



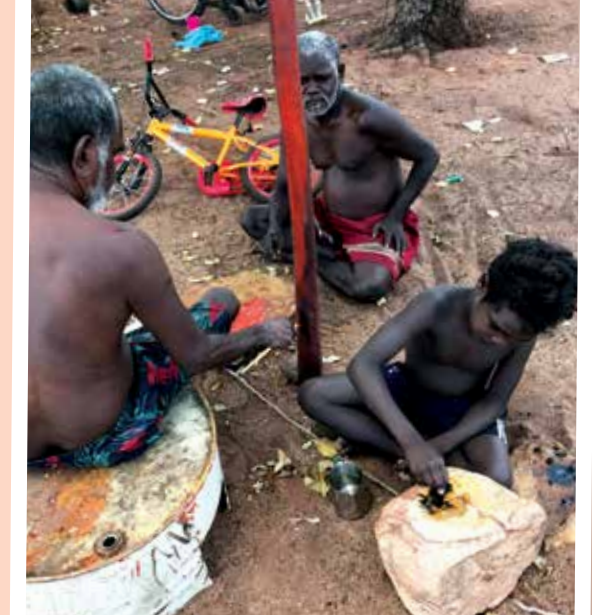
Abel showing wurdurd how to paint using natural pigments.



Maria Lipponi showing wurdurd how to paint nuts to make a necklace.



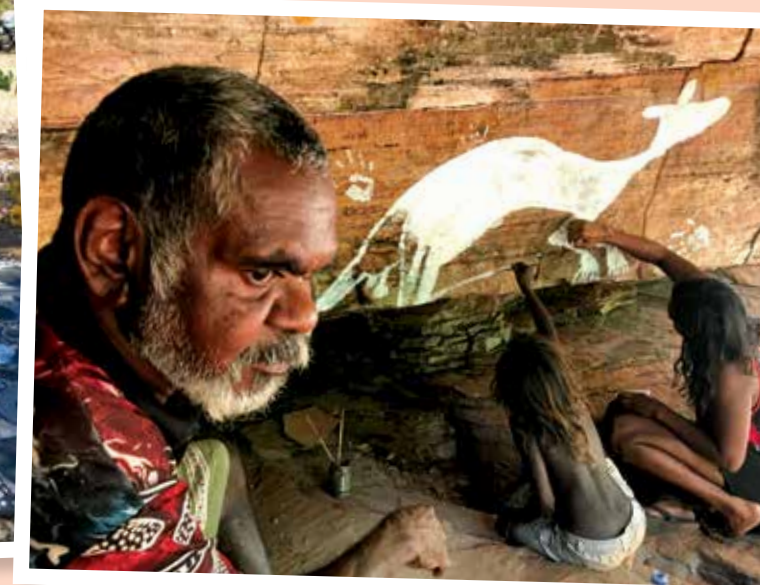
Lee shows Sandy and Susan how to peel the skin of morley.



Lee and Abel teaching Azariah how to paint a morley.



Cecily painting alongside Corriane and Javen, teaching them how it's done.



Rock art continuing tradition – Abel teaching his granddaughters Susan and Hazel to paint rock art.



Judy and Vienna collecting mandjurndum for yellow colour for pandanus weaving.



Wurdurd - learning how to use fire to manage Kunred.



Economic development and wellbeing

“Mahni ngayolyolme manu economic development bu ngad dabborrabbolk.

Ngandimey bu ngarridurrkmirri mane manekke Children’s Ground.

Yiman kayime wanjh ngad dabborrabbolk nawern training ngalengare bu Marlkawo birrimwam.

And, wurdurd bedberre bu yiman kabindikan yawurrinj dabborrabbolk dja babadjan yiman kayime nakornkohkumo.

Wanjh kabindibukkabukkan yiman kayime ngalengarre bim nawu ngalengarre dja ngalengarre yiman wurdurd, yiman kabindibukkabukkan kabirribolkngeyhngeybun bedberre dja.

Djang warridj kure kabindibukkan. Menekke. Wurdurd bedberre bu, kabirrire bedberre school. Bu ngarrbenbidyikarrme wanjh wurdurd ngarribidyikarrmerren. Menekke.”

Shirely Djandjomerr, December 2020

I will talk about economic development in terms of the Elders (or adults) who came to take us to work with Children’s Ground. There were a lot of adults/ Elders who did training when they came to Marlkawo.

Then, the young men together with the Elders, their mothers and fathers went with the children. They taught them many things, such as the paintings on bark or rock.

They took them and showed them places and taught them the names of those places, they taught them about the sacred sites, the Djang.

Like that, the children were going to school and we are helping the children. We are all helping each other. Like that.



Shirley, Raymond, Dillon and Duane at the First Nations Education Forum.

Due to Covid-19, the forum took place online. People participated from many locations, sharing knowledge, culture and ideas. Here, Raymond shares the story of the painting with the forum.

We are the teachers, the health workers and the cultural experts. We are also thinking and planning new ways we can make a living on our Country. Through art, through culture and bringing visitors here. We are making plans so we can live here on our Country and earn a living here.



Supported to work as educators, bininj and balanda working together.

Wurdurd Garriygarrmerren – Children's Ground

"We are proud of what we are, who we are and where we are now!... For wurdurd, it's (two way learning) the most important thing for their future."

Shirley Djandjomerr, 2021

"The children are safe here, they have fresh mind in the morning straight away... with good sleep fresh mind, to go to school."

Raymond Guymala, 2021

"We want healthy wurdurd, we are keeping them safe and staying strong, teaching our wurdurd on our culture and balanda culture, in two ways. We like it this way."

Christianna Djandjomerr, 2021

After three years of Children's Ground at Marlkawo, we have achieved:

- ✓ Returning to Kunred permanently: a dream come true
- ✓ Health and learning programs
- ✓ A new, permanent balabbala for our classroom
- ✓ Wurdurd access to quality on Country learning, in their own language with their families
- ✓ Access to important cultural learning, led by families on Country
- ✓ Access to high quality Western learning, adapted for bininj way, using stories and hands on experiences
- ✓ Wurdurd safe and "feel happy" on Kunred, in their homelands, away from dangers of town
- ✓ Families walking alongside their wurdurd
- ✓ A team of balanda staff, ready to learn bininj ways
- ✓ Our homes fixed
- ✓ A camp for balanda

What's next for Marlkawo?

"We want to see all the kids going to school with Children's Ground here on their homelands, learning balanda way and bininj way. All the kids learn in our culture and balanda culture, in two ways. We like it this way."

Cecily Djandjomerr, 2021

"To make wurdurd happy, make them special, to see what makes them happy, to have these moments to play, and for learning with families. It has to be with families, because they are happy with families, with mums, grandmas... they will sit together listening and learning."

Raymond Guymala, 2021

"In Western way, they need to learn for when they grow up, so they can get a job. Maybe to speak with government, or ask to the government. They can be everywhere in any organisation, in any role. So they can say to the government, I am bininj."

Shirley Djandjomerr, 2021

"We want the families to come here, to be healed, to fresh their minds. I want the kids to be happy, the parents to be happy, something to teach with their families... The kids tell me many things, they just want to come to homelands, it is risky and frightening for them there (in town)."

Shirley Djandjomerr, 2021

"Yes we want to see families together, walking together, hand to hand with kids, walk together with healthy lifestyle."

Raymond Guymala, 2021

"We want bininj and balanda teacher together, qualified on both sides. We want to see that (bininj) qualified as Western teacher and culture teacher."

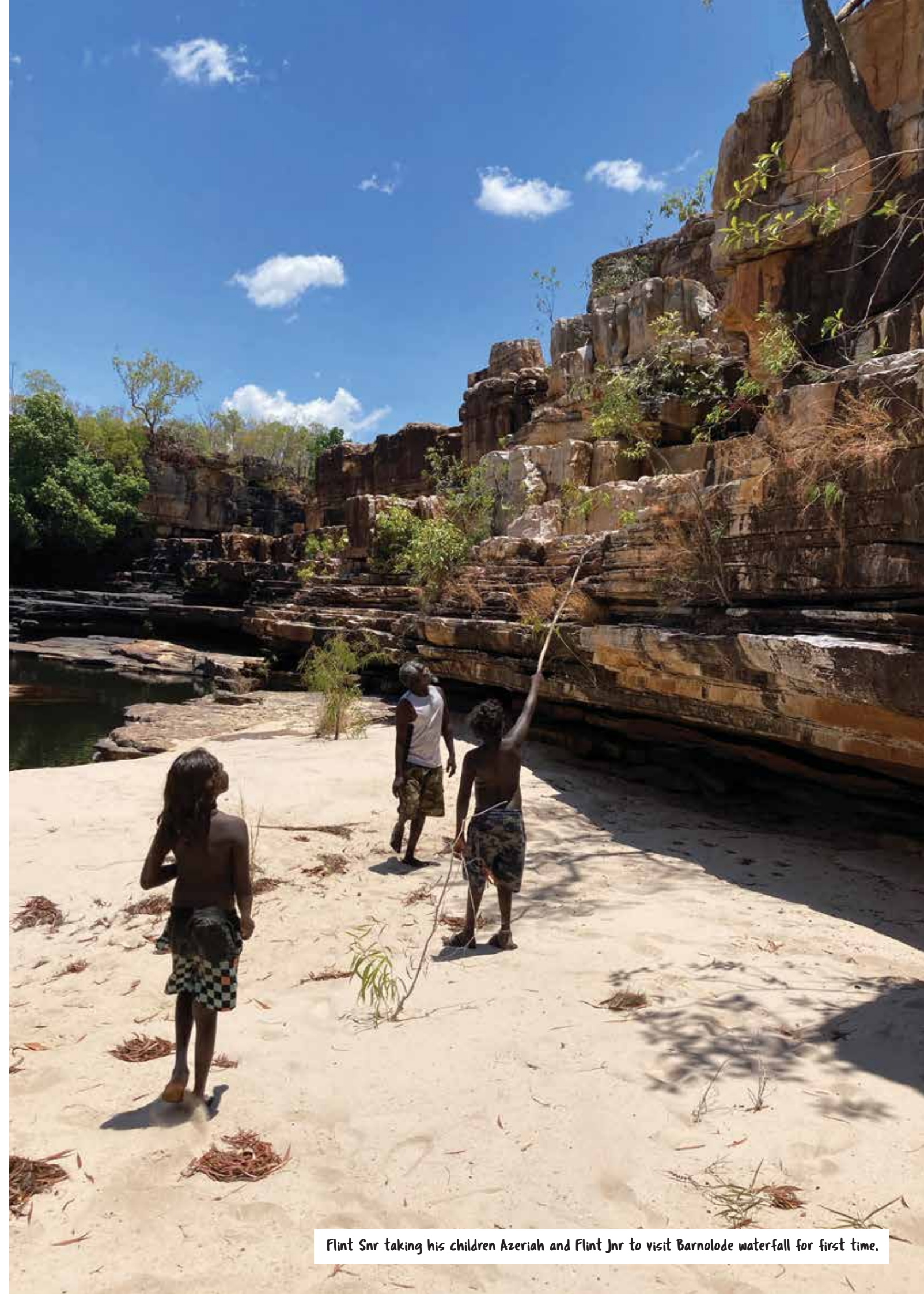
Raymond Guymala, 2021

"What's next for Children's Ground at Marlkawo? To me, we want to see more things happening. We are not pushing, we are not pulling, we are waiting. For health and wellbeing to keep going."

Roxanne Naborlhborlh, 2021



Shirley Djandjomerr and Raymond Guymala at Barnalod.



Flint Snr taking his children Azeriah and Flint Jnr to visit Barnolode waterfall for first time.

Our Wurdurd



Anosh Whitehurst



Anthony Whitehurst



Azeriah Djandjomerr



Curtis Corrigan



Lemaine Cooper



Leston Guymala



Mahalia Kitman



Masarai Naborlhborlh



Durrion Guymala



Flint Jnr Djandjomerr



George (Sandy) Djandjomerr



Gregory and Tylar Alangale



Melda Guymala



Mena Djandjomerr



Paddy Brown



Priston Nabbobob



Hendrika Carlow



Javen Djandjul



Jayden Cooper



Jinisha Brown



Rayah Djogiba



Roseanna Nabbobab



Rosemary Cameron



Rossanna Guymala



Joewina Djandjomerr



Judy Djandjomerr



Kayless Nawilil



Keina Djandjomerra



Ruby Djandjomerr



Russel Namundja



Ryan Nabolwad



Shari Maralngurra



Keith Naborlhbolh



Keldine Dakgalawuy



Keziah Djandjomerr



Kiara Namarnyilk



Simian Nawilil



Stewart Djandjomerr



Susan Redford



Zacanias Wurrkidj

Our Staff



Abel Naborlhborlh



Alex Young



Alio Djangjomerr



Andrew Corrigan



Flint Djangjomerr



Greg Lippo



Ian Djangjomerr



Jack Namarnyilk



Angela Bangarr



Annie Cameron



Antonia Djangjomerr



Bessina Cameron



Jamie Mapleson



Janine Moreton



Jasmine Nabobbob



Jaykuk Djangjomerr



BK



Caitlyn Bakes



Caitlin Taunton



Cecily Djangjomerr



Jo Ferguson



Josabella Cameron



Judy Dakgalawuy



Kamahl Djangjomerr



Christianna Djangjomerr



Christine Alangale



Corrianne Cameron



Damien Kamholtz



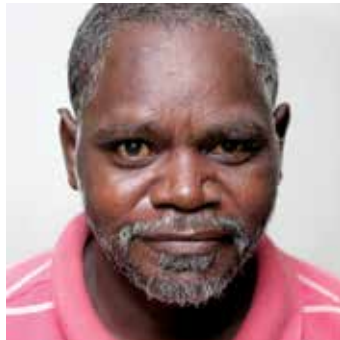
Kaylene Djangjomerr



Kimberley Namarnyilk



Kylie Gordon



Lee Nabarlambarl



Dillon Brennan



Duane Djangjomerr



Ethan Nabulwad



Felicity Douglas



Lindsay Whitehurst



May Nango



Maylene Narbarlambarl

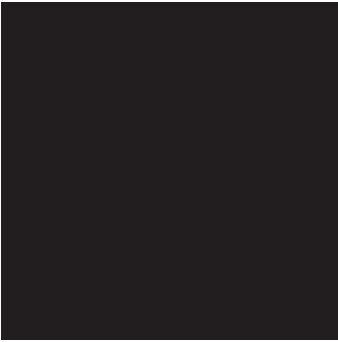


Raymond Guymala

Our Staff



Richie Nabarlambarl



R. Jambulanga



Roxanne Naborlhborlh



Russell Haines



Selone Djandjomerr



Sharna Dakgalawuy



Shirley Djandjomerr



Sonya Nango



Sue Haines



Vienna Wood

Our Volunteers

- Luka Douglas
- Fair Tradies
 - Lucus Rowe
 - Leon Lucivero
 - Sebastian Meredith
 - Todd Evans
 - Luke Ray





Our women

Our men

Our welcoming

Our stories

Our culture

Our connection

Our land

Our elders

Our yoga

Our pride

Our colours

Our sports

Our languages

Our knowledge

Our
Children's
Ground

Wurdurd
Garriyigarrmerren

Our mob

Our tucker

Our pride

Our identity

Our celebrations

Our music

Our humour

Our struggles

Our children

Our health

Thank you to our funders and supporters!

“Gamak! (Thank you)! They help us for Children’s Ground, for our wurdurd (children), and our balabbala (school room). Thank you very much, gamak.”

– Cecily Djandjomerr

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Mattiske Family
Moose Toys Foundation
Nicholas R Taylor Fund (a sub-fund of the Australian Communities Foundation)
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Third Link
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Wendy & Paul Bonnici and Family



Art made by the children of Marlkawo.