

# our place

NUMBER 44



**READY, SET, SUMMERS GO!**

NOTHING ABOUT US, WITHOUT US | PATJI: CREATING A NEW OUTSTATION FOR THE ULURU FAMILY  
PATHWAYS TO CONSTRUCTION | TRAINING FOR REMOTE ENERGY | THE LIFE AND OPINIONS OF PETER TAYLOR  
BUSHLIGHT SOLAR SYSTEM AT PENNEFATHER RANGER BASE





Participants of Bushlight's renewable energy system maintenance training at Ntaria, Northern Territory

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**COVER CREDIT:** Indigenous Marathon Project runners, including Korey Summers (third from right), with Robert de Castella (third from left), in Times Square for the New York Marathon in November 2012.



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Opinions expressed in Our Place are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the CAT Board or staff.

**WARNING:**  
This magazine contains images of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Caution should be exercised while reading this magazine, as some of these images may be of deceased persons.

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### CAT presents at the seventh National Housing Conference

The Queensland Department of Housing and Public Works and the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI), invited CAT to present a paper at the seventh National Housing Conference held in Brisbane, QLD, Australia.

The conference theme, People-Place-Productivity, provided a platform for discussions on issues of housing and homelessness. The conference attracted over 750 delegates from around Australia and overseas.

CAT's presentation was part of a concurrent session that aimed to explore alternative, culturally appropriate housing solutions for Indigenous Australians. CAT's presentation was based on the study 'Self-build: alternative housing procurement in small remote Indigenous communities' undertaken by Sonja Peter and Javier Ayora. The presentation showcased successful self-build projects in Central Australia, the Kimberley in Western Australia and Cape York in Queensland and included recorded interviews with many of the self-builders.

The presentation was well received and highlighted the motivations and accomplishments of Indigenous self-builders, who not only created homes that they are proud of but also overcame the many challenges of building their own houses.

The paper can be downloaded from: [www.icat.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/CAT-indigenous-self-build-study-2011.pdf](http://www.icat.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/CAT-indigenous-self-build-study-2011.pdf).

The presentation is available from: [www.nhc.edu.au/downloads/2012/NHC\\_program\\_downloads.pdf](http://www.nhc.edu.au/downloads/2012/NHC_program_downloads.pdf)



Children of the Sun video clip.

### Media explosion in Alpururulam with local youth

Run by Barkly Shire and funded through the NT Government Binge Drinking Program, youth diversionary programs are in full swing in the Northern Territory Indigenous community of Alpururulam. Over two years, Alpururulam's young people have had a series of youth workers delivering a variety of activities including: music making and recording; sport; film-making; skateboarding; animation; craft and art activities. A community centre has been turned into a community media centre. In the centre, young people learn how to use computers to create songs, movies, manipulate photos, create graphic-designed photo montages, surf the web and connect to their family and friends. The centre is opened after school and during school holidays for the young people to attend and learn how to create multi-media.

Over the past two years many film clips, media based posters and songs have been created through the media centre and the binge drinking program. This is currently being collated into CD/DVD/Booklet compilation called 'Binge Thinking not Drinking,' produced by Desert Pea Media. This will be distributed to family, friends, schools, clinics and councils throughout the Northern Territory. The films and songs have many positive messages that other young people in the area and beyond can learn from. They talk about living healthy, being strong and active and living a positive drug and alcohol free life. A local girl, Renee was featured in one of these song and film clips, 'Children Of the Sun,' created with the Alpururulam youth. The song is now being played on high rotation on Triple J and has received nearly 3000 views on You Tube. This song can be viewed here at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNjXGdyG614&list=UUFwV2xjNBjc2xxpGfcvVa5Q&index=1&feature=plcp](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNjXGdyG614&list=UUFwV2xjNBjc2xxpGfcvVa5Q&index=1&feature=plcp)





## READY, SET, SUMMERS GO!

As a 22-year-old, Korey has one main goal in life: to represent Australia in the 2016 Olympics as a long-distance runner. We learn about what drives Korey to stay focused, and how he is shaping up to be a role model for other Indigenous youth in Australia.



Korey Summers in New York.

By HUUJJAT NADARAJAH

In 2011, just before New Year's eve, Korey submitted his application for the Indigenous Marathon Project (IMP). Shortly after, the organisers contacted him for a formal interview and to run a 5km timed trial. Korey was stoked. 'A few months later, I received a call that I had made the team! This was a huge opportunity for me as I'd be able to be trained by Olympic marathon runner, Robert de Castella and coached by accomplished athlete Tim Rowe', he says. Being part of the Indigenous Marathon team has been an unforgettable experience for Korey.

The IMP organised for the team to participate in the New York Marathon in November 2012. 'When I found out I got into IMP I was very happy and excited as it was a huge accomplishment for me and my running career. It took a couple of weeks for it to sink in that I made the team and would be running a marathon in New York', says Korey. Korey's work colleagues at CAT were also very supportive. 'Everyone was very happy and excited for me and they have continued to show their support for what I'm doing throughout the year,' shares Korey.

This would be first time Korey would visit the United States. Just before they departed from Sydney to New York, news reached them that Hurricane Sandy had hit the city and wreaked havoc. Everyone on the team was upset; they'd trained and prepared for so long, and now they wouldn't be able to run. 'When we found out that the marathon had been cancelled due to the damage inflicted by Hurricane Sandy, we were all devastated,' he says. But for Korey, his thinking was different; how could he turn this negative into a positive? So instead, 'our team decided to put up our hands to go volunteer to help clean up and get

much needed supplies to affected areas. We went to Brooklyn and helped people load up cars to take water and supplies out to areas without power,' he shared. For Korey, 'even though we didn't get to run the marathon, the trip was still an amazing once in a life-time experience'.



Running is a huge part my life and everything revolves around it; running has taught me valuable life skills such as learning to work hard for what you want and never giving up when times get tough.

### Early Days

Born in Adelaide, Korey Summers is a 22-year old Ngarabana man, who has lived most of his life in Alice Springs NT. 'My Great-Grandmother Valda Summers was one of the Ngarabana (Arabana) people. I have been told they used to travel to the spring routes from Lake Eyre through to Alice Springs where they developed close ties with the Arrernte people of Santa Teresa' he says.

Korey grew up on a 3000sq mile cattle station, called Murnpeowie, in Far North South Australia. It was owned by his Grandfather, George Summers. 'I was taught by the School of the Air which was really fun. My Mother used to help Dad in the Stock Camp and she would take me and my brother out with her while the mustering was on. It was a really good environment to

grow up in. When the station was sold we moved to the Clare Valley for nine months. It was here that I first started running with the Clare Little Athletics Club,' he says.

'Running is a huge part my life and everything revolves around it; running has taught me valuable life skills such as learning to work hard for what you want and never giving up when times get tough', he reflects.

After moving to Alice Springs, Korey attended Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College (OLSH), graduating in 2008. He did really well in subjects like Maths and PE, receiving Year 12 awards in Nutrition and being elected Year 12 sports captain. 'After school, I got a traineeship as a Health Researcher at Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (CAAC), where I completed a Certificate IV in research and capacity building. During my time as a trainee researcher I helped put together a research paper,' he shares. It was here that he had his first experience in public speaking, speaking at the 2009 National Men's Health conference in Newcastle. Korey says, 'When my traineeship was completed I didn't really know what I wanted to do? I ended up trying many jobs and was looking at starting a career in ICT or trying an electrical apprenticeship. So when Mum said there was an ICT traineeship going at the Centre for Appropriate Technology (CAT), I applied and got an interview. A couple of weeks later I got the job.'

As an ICT Trainee at CAT, Korey spends his time maintaining on-site and remote servers and making sure files are backed up. He assists the ICT team, completing a range of IT requests from CAT staff. 'I'm learning as much as I can from the ICT manager and my team,' he says. He's also studying for a Diploma



of Network Engineering though Charles Darwin University. 'The best part of working at CAT is there is always something new to learn and it has given me a chance to study at uni as well. I like working on computer network issues,' says Korey.

### Chasing the Olympic dream

When the Sydney Olympics took place in 2000, Korey was lucky to be chosen to be a medal-bearer when the Olympic torch passed through Alice Springs. 'When I watched Cathy Freeman win gold in the 400m race, I decided that I wanted to be a runner and win gold at the Olympics. So I joined the local athletics club and started to learn the different events and races that were in track and field athletics,' he says. From here, Korey's running career flourished and one of his first wins was a gold medal in the 2001 club championships for the 1500m race. Later, in the NT Championships, he took out a Bronze medal for the

half marathon race. He was also the first IMP athlete to win two gold medals in the NT state and national championships in 2012.

Having mentors like his Mum, and coaches is key to Korey's success. 'Mum is my role model because she's hard working and always puts in 110% to anything she sets her mind too,' he says. 'When I turned 16, I met a local coach, Eli Melky, who I heard had an elite squad. One day after school, my Mum and I were driving past the oval and saw them training. We stopped and asked him if I could join his running group and he said yes. So for the past seven years, I've learned a lot about running and this has seen me win two bronze medals at the Arafura Games in 2009 and 2011 in the 800m which were huge highlights of my running career', he says.

These experiences have helped pave the way for Korey to establish goals and future plans. 'My future goals include winning an Australian National gold medal in a 5000m race

and making it to the 2016 Olympics,' he says. The chance to represent Australia, as an Indigenous athlete has always been his biggest goal in life. 'This is what drives me to work hard in my running and at each training session,' he admits. He's also keen on finishing his Diploma, and eventually becoming a Network Architect.

Besides pursuing his own life and career goals, Korey is also helping others achieve their fitness goals by developing fitness and running plans. The young kids at the local athletics club know his name, and cheer for him in race events across the NT. And he has maintained strong friendships with his fellow Indigenous runners from the New York Marathon. Korey's motto in life is, 'work hard for what you want and never give up. Set goals and believe in yourself. Focus on the positives not the negatives!' You can see from the confidence in his stride, the calm look on his face, and his strong resolve, that he believes in every word he says. □



## Nothing about us, without us

### Comprehensive Community Planning with First Nations of Canada

Comprehensive Community Planning (CCP) is a participatory integrated planning process for building a consensus community vision and strategy that allows communities to manage their own issues and affairs. Championed by First Nation Communities and organisations, in British Columbia, Canada, this process is being rapidly developed and adopted as a key tool for community development.

By ANDRE GRANT

In 2012, the Centre for Appropriate Technology's (CAT) Senior Technical and Project Officer, Andre Grant, travelled to Canada to explore an approach to community planning developed by First Nation Canadian communities.

Comprehensive Community Planning as an 'appropriate technology' created and used by and for First Nations (Indigenous Canadians) as a means for transformation and change.

The study tour was funded by

the Ian Potter International Travel Scholarship which enables leaders in the Community Wellbeing sector to undertake focussed and comprehensive scoping tours of International Centres of Excellence and bring transformative knowledge back to their sector in Australia.

Founded on the legacy of Sir Ian Potter, the Foundation aims to 'give something back' to the Australian community in the areas of the arts, the environment, science, communities and medical research.

#### What is Comprehensive Community Planning

Despite a somewhat mechanical sounding name, Comprehensive Community Planning (CCP) is emerging as a 'movement' amongst First Nations communities in Canada who have pioneered its development and implementation.

CCP is a participatory planning process for building a consensus community vision and strategy for how First Nations people manage their own issues and affairs. It aims >







Members of the Okanagan Nation Alliance undertaking traditional Enowkinwixw Process under the facilitation of the Enowkin Centre.

Enowkinwixw process is a traditional harmony building process that is being used by some Nations in developing CCP's.

to pull the community together to plan for the future and plan for sustainability.

CCP is a result of a participatory community driven process that articulates a vision and a clear way forward. CCP integrates all aspects of a community: culture; economy; governance; leadership; infrastructure; health; education; natural resources and land use.

CCP emerged approximately a decade ago when Chiefs across Canada's First Nations people, and particularly in British Columbia, identified a need to bring their people together and plan for the future. Tired of multiple mandated plans and policy regimes set by external agencies, Community Chiefs envisioned taking back control of the agenda by re-empowering community ownership of the future vision and direction for their communities. They recognised that when done well CCP also provides avenues for more effective investments of government funding.

The linkage between government plans and priorities and First Nations plans and priorities, if well linked, provided a greater chance of effective use of public funds and investments.

However, CCP is not about simply bringing in consultants to talk to community members and write

inspiring vision statements. After years of different approaches across the country, each with varying levels of success, a model for best practice emerged in the mid-2000s as a result of a pilot project by five First Nation communities in British Columbia (BC). In 2006, supported by various agencies (including strong Federal Government support), their work led to the creation of the CCP Handbook. From there an exponential expansion of communities undertaking CCP in the province has occurred. As of Jan 2013 more than Half of the 200 First Nations in BC have initiated a CCP process.

The handbook is a compilation of advice on how to do effective community based planning.

As articulated by Mike Mearns, BC Chapter President, 'Planning is critical to all this, we have to think about the generations that will benefit from what we have achieved. It's like building a solid foundation to your house — you can build as many rooms and as big a house as you want — as long as you have the right foundation.'

### The study tour

Andre Grant from CAT visited over ten First Nations Communities and many agencies and organisations that are utilising or developing

their plans based on CCP. These ranged from remote communities like Fort Albany and its winter pack ice on the edges of James Bay in Northern Ontario to Westbank First Nation with an urban sprawl growing across their reserves in the Okanagan Valley in British Columbia.

**These nations have all undergone or are in the process of embarking on a journey in building a community held vision for a sustainable future for the land, people and culture.**

As stated in the T'Souke Nation CCP, 'In our every deliberation we must consider our impacts on our next seven generations.'

Many communities are taking years to develop their plans, in recognition that the process itself is an outcome — not just the document produced at the end. In the evaluations, undertaken by the CCP practitioners themselves, the processes and the time taken enabled the community to engage deeply and were critical to the

success of the planning process.

As explained by Linda Bristow, T'Souke First Nation Elder, 'you have to bring everyone along — if they don't come to you — you have to go to them. Once your community votes for people [for chief and council] based on skills rather than family interests or a personality or because they are afraid of not voting for someone — then your community starts working.'

The use of community members employed and trained to coordinate the planning is also critical. These 'CCP coordinators' are a dedicated and highly motivated group of First Nations people who on the whole saw CCP as one of the most significant initiatives in the recent history of their communities.

'CCP has provided us with the tools to go forward and the potential to transform communities at the core' says Chris Dericksen, Westbank First Nation, CCP coordinator.

In terms of the role of culture, many saw the act of planning as a traditional right and a traditional practice 'CCP is what we used to do before white man came — colonisation took that away from us,' says Michel Sutherland First Albany First Nation.

In the Okanagan Nation, the Enowkin Centre is re-empowering

their ancient knowledge as an Indigenous methodology for planning. Known as the 'Enowkinwixw (en-ow-kin-wee-ch) process', Nations in their region are being trained in facilitation and adoption of this methodology. 'Enowkinwixw is more a harmony-building process as opposed to a consensus-building process', says Lauren Terbasket from the Enowkin Centre.

### The CCP road ahead

Though participatory planning is not new to Australian Indigenous people, practice here seems quite different. In Canadian First Nations communities, the sense of ownership of the concept and the transformational potential the process has had for many communities, as well as the sheer commitment and dedication to the power of the idea held by those communities, is at the forefront of the program. When done well, the CCP really is 'community driven', woven into the very fabric of the community.

Elaine Alec from the Penticton Indian Band describes her experience of the CCP process. 'Four years ago, I remember sitting in meetings and our team telling me a million things that would need to

be in this plan. I remember sitting there, overwhelmed and thinking, 'I can't do this — they need to hire a professional who knows what they're doing. I have spent nights crying, thousands of hours reading and researching, praying and listening and now four years later here I sit, so close to being done and I am so proud of every single person in my community.'

The funding provided to CAT from the Ian Potter foundation has given an opportunity to share knowledge and develop relationships. While it is clear there are as many differences as there are similarities between the situations Australian and Canadian Indigenous people find themselves in, there is no doubt that what is occurring in the CCP space in Canada is making an impact for First Nation communities in building capacity to engage with services and bring about sustainable and positive change. □

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**PATJI:**

# creating a new outstation for the Uluru family

Patji is a newly-created remote homeland, located south of Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park boundary. For traditional owner of this country, Reggie Uluru and his family, Patji is an important place.

By JOHN SYME

### Context

Patji is a rockhole located near the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park boundary, just south of Uluru.

When they were growing up, Reggie and Cassidy Uluru travelled to Patji with their father who was removed from the lands when he was a young boy.

Later on in life, Reggie and Cassidy worked for Anangu Tours as guides, and began thinking about returning to their father's homeland at Patji. They had a vision to create safe and quiet home away from home for themselves and their children and family — to stay strong and pass on knowledge.

They also envisioned Patji as a place for small scale tourism, making use of their years of experience as tour guides.

This vision was shared with the Central Land Council (CLC), and they received support to develop the homeland through royalty funding.

The purpose of this project was two-fold. The first was to create a “home away from home” for Reggie and Cassidy Uluru and their family, a space where they could go visit, camp, and get away from the challenges of living in a larger community near Uluru. The other was to develop a small-scale tourism

operation and to provide facilities for a hot-air balloon tourism venture, to be co-located in the area.

CAT was engaged to assist in providing the basic infrastructure requirements to allow the family to have overnight and extended visits to country.

### The investment

Developing and building a remote Indigenous outstation requires planning and funding in order to get the ball rolling. Each year, the Central Land Council (CLC) manages the funds received from the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, known as ‘gate money’, which can

“Given the pristine setting and the tourism prospects, it was important to retain an unblemished skyline and conceal infrastructure as much as possible.”

help fund infrastructure projects. With these funds, Traditional Owners meet with the CLC to identify and finance a number of projects for remote communities and homelands in this region.

CAT had previously completed two infrastructure upgrades in Piyaltjara and Tjunanta. Based on the successful completion of these two projects, CAT was asked to do a project proposal for Patji, in consultation with Reggie and Cassidy Uluru and family. The works at Patji were:

1. A new solar bore pump, tank and water supply to a single camel proof tap.
2. A simple shade structure and lockable storage space.
3. Two pit toilets, one for family and one for tourists.
4. Solar power for lights.

### CAT's Design Response

CAT's project proposal also included a shade structure, pit toilet, renewable energy system (a Baby Bushlight) that would power a fridge, a new bore pump, a bore water tank, a rainwater tank, a portable toilet facility for tourists, lockable storage and a simple hand-washing facility. The project was scoped to be built and installed over a six month period.

During the design and assessment process it became clear that it was important to provide an alternative drinking water supply given the limited supply of bore water. Keeping within the modest budget, the shelter was increased

in size to provide a sufficient roof catchment area to feed into a 9,000 litre rainwater tank. Once filled the tank has the capacity to provide 100 litres of fresh water a week for nearly two years via a single camel proof tap located within the shade shelter.

Because the existing ground bore has such a low production rate it was necessary to select a solar bore pump capable of pumping at a low flow rate but with sufficient pressure to pump up to a new tank. This was positioned near the top of the sand dune which separates the bore and the camp amongst the desert oaks — where people traditionally camped when in the area. The tank is connected to a camel proof tap located between the pit toilet and shelter, providing water for hand washing and cooking purposes.

The shelter is nestled into the landscape, within a group of desert oaks on the western side, providing added shade in the summer months. Given the pristine setting and the tourism prospects, it was important to retain an unblemished skyline and conceal infrastructure as much as possible. Connected to the shelter is a small lockable container, housing the Baby Bushlight solar system and chest fridge as well as providing a secure storage area between visits for camping and cooking gear.

The pit toilet was designed with minimal internal structural elements reducing cobwebs and allowing good airflow to lessen the build-up of litter

and insects. A portable toilet was also provided to allow flexibility and minimal site impact for the evolving tourism venture.

### The Implementation and Delivery Process

Four Indigenous people were involved in the site build and construction for Patji outstation. The first stage involved them installing the water supply and header tank. Later, they helped to design and construct a pre-fabricated pit-toilet.

### Project Completion and Outcomes

- The following outcomes can be attributed to this project:
- » The full project site, with storage, cooling, power and sanitation facilities was completed to the satisfaction of the clients.
  - » Plans for the tourist venture are being further developed.
  - » Developing and installing a range of CAT products continues, including a newly designed pit toilet.
  - » The project created stronger engagement and increased applied learning skills and outcomes for the Indigenous employees.
  - » The portable toilet for tourists allows this facility to be located where and when required for future tourism ventures.
  - » The family of Reggie and Cassidy Uluru are already visiting the outstation regularly, spending time on their homeland and planning their tourism venture. □





Ainsley Thompson using an eagle template to draw on the wood.

# Pathways to Construction

The 'Garden of the Reflection' at the Desert Peoples Centre is surrounded by beautiful aged Corkwoods. Inspired by this, a group of Indigenous learners are learning artisan hand-made techniques to add their own creative influence to further beautify this space.

By BETHANY READ

Walking through the 'Garden of Reflection,' located within the Desert Peoples Centre's campus, you are taken by a piece of land that is not only untouched as far as buildings go but is beaming with wildlife, plants and insects. At the far end, past where previous CAT students have left their mark with a stone water fountain and a rustic table and chair setting, you come to a distinctive tree. It is an old Corkwood, with

three mighty trunks racing up to form a well-rounded bush. It's special and this is why Phil Gates, a trainer from CAT, decided to develop a project with his students, focussed on the tree. Phil took me into the workshops to show me what he and his students have been busy with. I can imagine his class of nine unleashing their creativity and getting enthusiastic and excited about the project they are taking on. On the floor there is a curved structure made from beautiful timber. This is when I find out

that the project will be a set of three benches, with eagles carved out of the arms which will curve around the three trunks of the old corkwood. You can see how much time and precision has gone into making sure the cut and angles are perfect. Around it lie cardboard cut-outs which to anyone else wouldn't look like much but to Phil and his learners it's the preparation for their masterpiece. The benches will be curved to 120-degree angles and are modular so if desired can be changed into different shapes such as a snake. They will be practical

“

A unique element of the course is that the learners are working with very natural materials.



Students cutting the tree trunks.

and enhance the natural beauty of this part of such a special Garden. We take a short drive to the opposite side of the campus to the 'Garden of Reflection' itself, developed and run by the Central Australian Stolen Generations and Families Aboriginal Corporation. It feels like a fitting tribute to their legacy, and a space for thought and meditation. Around each branch, string is tied, from where the students and their trainer have already planned and calculated a suitable place for the backrests of the benches to end. Phil shows me with enthusiasm the templates created; he explains how the students had to use

geometry to calculate the exact centre point of the trunks. It's clear to me how much planning and preparation is involved in a project like this and how well his students are picking up important skills which will help them in the future. Back at the workshop, Phil shows me tools that his students are using which have been hand-made by the group to be used specifically for this project. During these sessions, they are learning how to create the instruments they need, to plan and prepare, to be able to visualise their outcome and how to create and implement it.

The 'Pathways to Construction' has been designed to include units which will teach the skills needed and used in the construction industry. The guidelines are as follows: carpentry, eight weeks; masonry, four weeks; metal-work, two weeks. The project they are working on has been planned in such a way that will enhance the training the learners receive from the units they are studying. A unique element of the course is that the learners are working with natural materials such as: wood, stone, brick and earth, with just a hint of metal!

It is clear that these students have ambition, and when ambition is involved there isn't too much to overcome. The learners have worked together as a team and have built on and learned from each other's strengths and weaknesses. Phil tells me that one of his students has shown a real creative edge and will make a fantastic wood-cutter one day. He explained how his students will get the chance to decide what is engraved into the bench and how he hopes that his students will be able to engrave their own names as well to show that they were involved. □



Students calculating the exact centre point of the trunks.



# Delivering non-accredited training for remote energy service providers

For the majority of Australians, who live in grid-connected urban centres, the energy that supports our everyday lives is something we rarely have to think too much about. We use electricity without giving it a second thought.

By SALLY WARD

For people living 'off-grid' in remote locations, including in remote Indigenous homelands and outstations there is often a greater level of interaction with their energy supplies, presenting both challenges, and opportunities. People have the opportunity to engage with and understand where the energy that powers their lives comes from and how to maximise the energy that is available to them. Building people's capacity in this area is critical to ensure that remote energy services are well maintained and reliable.

Since 2002 Bushlight has been working with Indigenous communities to access reliable energy services and manage them sustainably. Bushlight has installed renewable energy (RE) systems in over 130 communities across Central and Northern Australia. The infrastructure however, is only part of the story. An integral part of Bushlight's success in delivering this program is the ongoing engagement, training and support that are provided, not only to community residents but also the service providers that support them. This is represented in our

Community Energy Planning model which ensures that community residents are front and centre of each stage of the process, from planning, design, installation and ongoing maintenance of the solar powered RE system.

Maintaining an RE system in a small remote Aboriginal community, often hundreds of kilometres from the nearest regional centre, is no easy feat. To overcome the challenges, Bushlight has adopted a three tiered model of support. Residents themselves provide the first line of response in troubleshooting



LEFT: Traditional Owners, Tjuwanpa Rangers, and VET in Schools participants all pitched in with the weeding around the solar array during training in outstations near Ntaria, Central Australia.

Northern Territory, in the Ntaria (Hermannsburg) and Tennant Creek regions of Central Australia as well as several areas of North East Arnhem Land and Borroloola. Each course is delivered over two days 'on country' and is focused on hands-on learning accompanied by image-based maintenance guides. The training is aimed specifically at those maintenance tasks that do not require an electrical license, for example, cleaning the solar panels, preventing insect infestation, trimming branches or trees that might cause shading on the panels, and preventing rust from spreading on old array frames.

The outcomes of the training include:

- » An understanding of the safety issues when working with electricity;
- » A greater level of confidence in responding to problems with the system if they arise;
- » Avoiding the expense of sending out electrical contractors for minor faults;
- » Regular non-electrical system maintenance is provided in between electrical contractor's scheduled servicing, meaning that community energy services are more reliable and will stay working better for longer.

Bushlight's multi-tiered approach to training ensures there is appropriate training provided to people living with solar systems in remote locations. A big part of this work involves demystifying the technology, and making people comfortable to work on the parts of the system that are safe to do so. Non-accredited training allows Bushlight to tailor the course to each set of participants and ultimately means building local capacity and self-reliance. □

“Non-accredited training allows Bushlight to tailor the course to each set of participants and ultimately means building local capacity and self-reliance.”

problems with the system and carrying out basic maintenance tasks. The second line of support comes through the community's service provider (resource agency or shire council). And the third is provided by a pool of electrical contractors that are deployed as part of Bushlight's Maintenance Program. These contractors not only ensure that each system receives an annual service, but also provide unscheduled support in the case of a power outage or technical issue which renders the RE system unsafe. On occasion, the contractors themselves rely on the knowledge of residents in relation to their RE system. By delivering comprehensive training to each of these three groups of people, Bushlight is able to ensure that systems are well maintained and that any problems that do arise are able to be addressed in a timely and cost effective manner.

In 2012 Bushlight focused on delivering non-accredited training in system maintenance and troubleshooting to regional service providers. These organisations are responsible for maintaining a range of essential infrastructure in Indigenous communities. The

training is tailored to the audience which may include service provider staff, residents of surrounding communities, CDEP workers, land management rangers, essential service officers, or electricians with no solar experience. The course provides basic technical information about how RE systems work, how to make sure you're safe when working on a system, how to carry out troubleshooting and practical experience in conducting the regular maintenance tasks that keep the systems working well.

In 2012 service provider training was delivered right across the

## Task

**1** Check that all the electrical conduits are securely attached to the frames. Record any loose or broken conduits.



**3** Clear away insect nests from the array frames.



**5** Ensure all conduit entries and frame screws in the roof are sealed correctly. If some entries are not sealed then apply silicone roof sealant to the holes.



**2** For ground mounted array clear away any weeds in the array enclosure.



**4** Inspect the frames for any rust or corrosion. Paint any rust with Galvanised spray paint.



**6** Write down any problems in the maintenance log book.



An excerpt from the user friendly Bushlight RE System Maintenance Field Guide.



## Bushlight Solar System Greening the Way at Pennefather Ranger Base

Since 2009 Bushlight has been engaging with the Traditional Owners and rangers at Pennefather, and Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council about suitable energy services for the Ranger Base.



Community energy planning with Pennefather.

By MADELEINE JENKINS

At the start of September 2012, Bushlight commissioned a solar system at Pennefather Ranger Base in the Napranum Council area in Queensland. Local rangers there co-ordinate a range of natural resource management activities at the Ranger Base including turtle monitoring and rehabilitation, weed and feral animal control and visitor management. They host many visitors including scientists, volunteers and school groups. Dale Furley, Ranger Coordinator, was pleased to see the ranger base converting to renewable energy

as he believes going solar will not only reduce operational costs but also improve the quality of accommodation, work practice, work output met OH&S requirements. It also fits with the ranger's clean and green image for minimal environmental impacts.

During the past decade of operations, Bushlight has developed a participative approach to energy planning called the Community Energy Planning Model. This process assists householders to make informed decisions about their specific energy needs, including generation and consumption, which ultimately influences the most

appropriate energy service options. After system installation, Bushlight provides tailored training to the rangers including system operation, troubleshooting and maintenance. Bushlight is available on the phone to provide additional support and the Community Energy Planning Model ensures Bushlight visits the ranger base regularly in the first twelve months of operation.

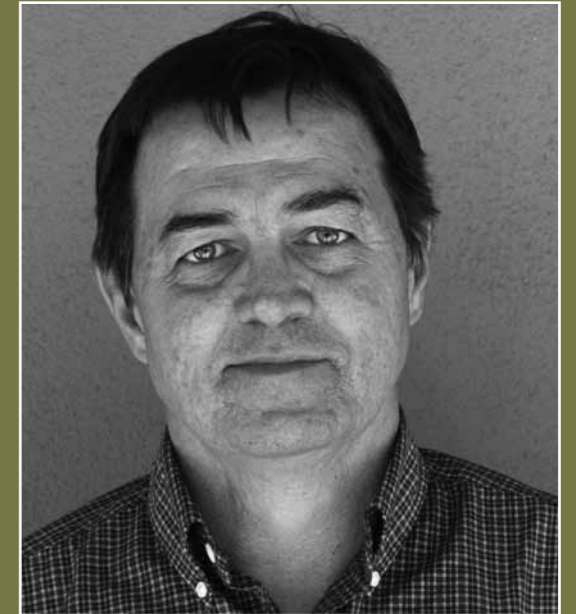
Prior to the Bushlight System being installed a 5kVa generator provided power and was operated for up to 12 hours per day. The Bushlight solar system means a significant reduction in their reliance on diesel, freeing up time and money for Ranger Base operations.

The system is located at the back of the ranger's house and designed to provide a daily 'energy budget' of 8 kWh/day. This is enough for refrigeration, lights, fans, computers, and other low energy use appliances.

The photovoltaic array is mounted on a free standing frame facing true north to optimise the energy from the sun, which is stored in the battery bank. Additional works to the ranger's house will occur over the coming months including replacement of the roof and electrical wiring. These improvements will make the ranger base more liveable and accessible for the important work of turtle conservation. □

## The Life and Opinions of Peter Taylor

3 April 1959 – 5 May 2013



Life is not what  
it's supposed to be.  
It's what it is.  
The way you cope  
with it is what makes  
the difference.

Franz Kafka

By BRUCE WALKER

In early May Australia lost one of its most progressive policy thinkers in Aboriginal Affairs. A man who, during his ten years in the Housing and Infrastructure Branch of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), revolutionized policy and programs and positioned the development aspirations and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at centre stage.

Peter Taylor led ground breaking program development and was without peer as a strategic and lateral thinker. He shaped a housing and infrastructure policy in Indigenous affairs underpinned by health impact assessments thus

ensuring that decision making and project prioritisation was driven by robust understandings of what worked and what improved people's lives. He commissioned research, surveys and reviews and gathered the data to support his vision long before 'evidence based policy' had ever become a buzz word. He spearheaded an holistic way of looking at housing, power, water and sewerage in remote Indigenous communities that drove effectiveness and efficiencies in the programs he funded and fostered greater accountabilities for outcomes on the ground.

Peter understood that governments needed to be held accountable and improve their efforts in making a difference to the well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. To this end he pursued Bilateral Agreements between the State and Commonwealth governments, introduced triennial funding, outsourced program management of large infrastructure projects and funded a national technology resource capacity at the Centre for Appropriate Technology (CAT)

in Alice Springs. He was a man of high principle, sharp intelligence and fierce integrity with an unwavering commitment to making a sustainable, positive difference. And he was a humble man, a man who shunned the limelight and was at his best working behind the scenes. A man whose working class upbringing in north Queensland throughout the Bjelke Peterson era shaped his belief in the importance of cultural difference, his hunger for knowledge and understanding and his prodigious talents.

Peter Charles John Taylor was born in Townsville North Queensland on the 3rd April 1959. He went to school at Townsville's West End State Primary School where he found himself among poor Aboriginal kids. He was smart from the start. He went to school at the age of 4 and effectively left home at 16 to go to University (1975). He excelled at a number of sports. He was part of the undefeated North Queensland representative soccer team in 1974. In swimming he collected medals for breast stroke. On the community front he was a member of the Sea Scouts between >





He leaves us a legacy that will be recorded in part in the history books of Australia and in the Aboriginal history of this nation.

the age of 10 and 13 and developed a work ethic at a young age doing odd jobs including at 15, wrapping the Townsville Bulletin between the hours of 2am and 4am. This forged a template for a lifelong pattern of broken and minimal sleep that was a characteristic of his private and public life.

On the cultural front Peter trained in piano and violin. He studied ballet to the age of 13, dancing with visiting ballet companies in Townsville. He developed a profound interest in literature, film and alternative music throughout his adolescent years. As an adult, he pursued his strong interest and many enthusiasms in 20th century culture. He read contemporary poetry and fiction and spent a lot of time scouring music stores and watching obscure films. He felt a deep affinity with the many faces of Surrealism, and loved the films of Luis Bunuel, Jean-Luc Godard and Andrei Tarkovsky most of all. He had a taste for country music, prog rock, Bob Dylan and deep soul music, as well as an extensive collection of comics, many in plastic jackets, not to mention vinyl records.

Peter entered ANU in 1975 and was a student until 1990. He was extraordinarily energetic and engaged in campus life. In 1984 he was elected President of the ANU Student Association. He started out studying English but along

the way became very interested in anthropology and the history of science. In 1985 Peter finished the requirements for his Arts degree at ANU and in 1986 moved to Griffith University where he graduated in Arts with first class honours.

He moved back to Canberra in 1990 as a Graduate Trainee in the Australian Public Service. After hours he dabbled seriously in analogue electronica and video as a core member of the collective which supported the emergence of the groundbreaking female electronica duo B(if)tek, which released a number of albums including 2020 (Sony 2000).

Peter started in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) in 1991 in the CDEP Branch. In 1994 he applied for a vacancy in the Housing and Infrastructure Branch and time proved how incredibly fortunate ATSIC had been to attract one of the brightest policy minds in the public service. It was the start of some brilliant work on housing and infrastructure where, together with his manager Colin Plowman, Peter developed the program funding model for high value housing and environmental health projects under the National Aboriginal Health Strategy.

Beside his intellectual depth and breadth of knowledge on Indigenous issues, Peter's vision was also fashioned by his early years. Peter

knew well the history and stories around the closure of old Mapoon in far north Queensland. When the opportunity arose to rebuild the Mapoon community around a more appropriate settlement layout, few people realized that Peter and Merv Wales, the Mapoon Community Chairman during those years, had been in the same class and soccer team at school in Townsville. When asked why he wholeheartedly supported the Mapoon project, Peter said it was 'natural justice'.

Peter's findings and recommendations in the CDEP review (1993) had stamped him as a future leader. He moved to Melbourne in 1996 as a policy manager for ATSIC. In 1999 the Housing and Infrastructure Branch also moved to Melbourne, and Peter became the Assistant General Manager (1999 – 2004).

But 2004-05 saw the demise of ATSIC and ATSIIS. Indigenous policy and program responsibility was mainstreamed. Housing went to FaHCSIA where it was quickly decided that the Housing and Infrastructure Branch should move back to Canberra.

The demise of ATSIC was a profound disappointment to committed policy thinkers and Aboriginal Australia at large, and it affected Peter Taylor deeply. Against this backdrop, life for Peter was renewing on the personal front. He first met his partner Ruth Apelt

in 1990 in Brisbane. They began a relationship in Melbourne in 2001 and their son Tristram was born in 2004 – shortly before legislation to abolish ATSIC was introduced into the Federal parliament. ATSIC was finally abolished on 24 March 2005 and Peter soon realized he was not interested in following what he felt was 'a trail of destruction' back to Canberra. He quit the public service and looked for a fresh start.

Peter had rare qualities as a public servant. He was always going to be the next CEO of CAT because the Aboriginal CAT Board understood the depth of insight he had into the issues that concerned them. Peter worked with CAT to make the case for the Bushlight Renewable Energy program that brought light and life to the bush at the time of the introduction of the GST. The benefits of this program to Alice Springs are still being counted. It created the capacity for Alice Springs Solar Cities, DKA Solar Centre and CAT Projects by bringing expertise to town.

Following his departure from FaHCSIA, Peter came to Alice Springs because he was absolutely committed to the work done in ATSIC and what was achieved in the environmental health field and he had so many more ideas to put in place. In contrast to the constraints of government, an NGO like CAT offered new freedom and creative possibilities. Peter spent a

brief period as a consultant to CAT then as Chief Operating Officer for three years. He was, in his own words, a reluctant leader. In the short time he had as CEO at CAT he repositioned the organisation.

He oversaw CAT's arrival at the Desert Knowledge Precinct and the new CAT facility at Heath Road and infused new life into CAT's key partnerships with the Desert Peoples Centre and Desert Knowledge Australia, the CRC for Remote Economic Participation and the Central Land Council. He conceived and led the development and production of the National Indigenous Infrastructure Guide. He drove CAT's leadership in the social enterprise and social innovation space, was a passionate advocate for the Broadband for the Bush Alliance and the opportunities digital connectedness could provide for Aboriginal people and was on the cusp of operationalising a new community development focus.

He navigated complex policy and program environments in the post intervention changes and increasing regulatory requirements and growing cost constraints. And he worked tirelessly for the Desert Peoples Centre whilst Batchelor Institute went through its own tough times and emerged having deepened the relationship between the two organizations.

His leadership made it possible to take the learning's of an

Aboriginal organization to the world through CAT Projects Pty Ltd and on the way collect the most prestigious engineering award in the nation.

His loss to CAT will be felt for some time to come.

Peter was also an artist and poet. His art, poetry and music reflected the convergence of his reading, his life experience and his deep pursuit of truth and justice. Many have experienced and cherish at least one of the compartments of Peter's life. It is rare that someone was able to look through every window.

Peter leaves lasting memories; Memories that will provide warmth, hope and encouragement to Ruth and Tristram as they face the future. He also leaves a legacy that will be recorded in part in the history books of Australia and in the Aboriginal history of this nation.

Unfortunately, with his passing, the history of the most progressive period of Aboriginal policy may not be written in the same way that he thought he could.

Rest in peace Peter Charles John Taylor – and may your memory and legacy rest in our hearts and minds.

Peter Taylor was CEO of the Centre for Appropriate Technology from 2010 until his sudden and tragic death from illness on May 5 2013.

A collection of Peter Taylor's poetry and music is planned for future release. □



# GS

Small deeds done are better  
than great deeds planned.

Franz Kafka



Peter Taylor with CAT Board members

LEFT TO RIGHT: Peter Taylor, Steve Hirvonen,  
Dale Jones, Peter Renehan (Chairman),  
Jenny Kroker, Frank Curtis and Noel Hayes.