

Arts and Culture

Minjilang Endangered Language Project (MELP)

Overview:

The Minjilang Endangered Language Project was established in 2004 and seeks to record, document, transcribe, translate and archive the Iwaidja language, producing publications such as bilingual books, posters, music CDs, films and other resources for use in the community, schools and the general public. The project involves the engagement of anthropologists and local Indigenous translators to work with community elders to translate and document stories of the local Iwaidja people. MELP continues to develop and produce a number of publications and printed materials.

The project aims to strengthen, promote and revive the cultural identity of the Iwaidja people through the teaching of Iwaidja and Iwaidja stories to local Indigenous children, provide opportunities for employment of local Indigenous people in translating Iwaidja for government agencies and community stakeholders.

Progress:

- The completion of 'Amurdak Inyman' – Six stories in Amurdak told by Bill Neidjie and Nelson Mulurinj.
- Research conducted into the different turtle and bird species found around Croker Island.
- Transcribing material and data from senior Iwaidja speakers in Minjilang.
- Members of the Iwaidja language team participated in the Mountford Symposium held at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra presenting to a wider indigenous and non-indigenous audience the work of the MELP project with regard to the creation / production of digital resources which will be used as tools for cultural maintenance, e.g. the image database of North Western Arnhem Land bark paintings, and the genealogical database of Croker Island residents.
- The team also produced and presented a documentary film entitled 'The American Clever Man', in which Iwaidja speakers remember the 1948 American-Australian Expedition to Arnhem Land. The film, containing Iwaidja narratives and discussions, played to an audience of 200 in the Great Hall of the National Museum.

Bridging cultures in Iwaidja and English

These guidebooks with CDs are for non-Indigenous people visiting or working in communities in northwestern Arnhem Land. Get to know Iwaidja, a highly endangered local language, and learn how to bridge the cultural gap. Guide 1 is a key to the kinship system. Guide 2 is for health professionals. All profits go to the Iwaidja language team for recording and publishing their cultural knowledge.

Produced and published by Iwaidja Inyman

Price \$24.00 each including CD

Available online at skinnyfishmusic.com.au
Phone +61 8 8941 8066
Fax +61 8 8941 9066

How to say 'barramundi' in Iwaidja

This poster identifies saltwater and freshwater fish commonly found on Croker Island and the Cobourg Peninsula in northwestern Arnhem Land. It is published in Iwaidja, a highly endangered language of the region, with English translations. All profits go to the Iwaidja language team for recording and publishing their cultural knowledge.

Produced and published by Iwaidja Inyman

Price \$25.00

Available online at skinnyfishmusic.com.au
Phone +61 8 8941 8066
Fax +61 8 8941 9066

Traditional ways to treat ills in Iwaidja

These posters display commonly used plant medicines of Croker Island in northwestern Arnhem Land. Published in Iwaidja, a highly endangered language of the region, they detail the preparation and application of each plant, with English translations. All profits go to the Iwaidja language team for recording and publishing their cultural knowledge.

Produced and published by Iwaidja Inyman

Price \$25.00 each

Available online at skinnyfishmusic.com.au
Phone +61 8 8941 8066
Fax +61 8 8941 9066

First-ever recorded love songs in Iwaidja

WINNER NT TRADITIONAL MUSIC AWARD & BEST CD/DVD ARTWORK AND DESIGN NT MUSIC FESTIVAL 2009

This CD contains 40 recordings of Jurbink (love songs) in Iwaidja, a highly endangered language of northwestern Arnhem Land. The 48-page booklet provides cultural insights and details of composers, performers, lyrics and melodies. All profits go to the Iwaidja language team for recording and publishing their cultural knowledge. Published by Batchelor Press.

Produced and published by Iwaidja Inyman

Price \$30.00

Available online at skinnyfishmusic.com.au
Phone +61 8 8941 8066
Fax +61 8 8941 9066

Opportunities:

- Transcribing texts for Pocket Calendar and a Fruits & Yams poster
- Producing material for the 250 Lexus Multimedia Dictionary entries.

www.iwaidja.org/