WARNING

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this document contains images or names of people who have since passed away.
GRADUATION CELEBRATIONS

Third year graduating students, from left: Kim, Gata, Dalassa, Cynthia, Tracy, Trish.

An official morning tea was held in November, 1987 to celebrate the graduation of several primary and early childhood students who had entered the Diploma of Teaching through AITEP.

It was a particularly proud day for Dalassa Pau who is from Darnley Island in the Torres Straits as she is the first Islander female to graduate from a teaching course at James Cook University. The early childhood graduates are the first group to do so from James Cook.

Cutting the graduation cakes, from left: Samantha Kane (Primary) and Dalassa Pau (Early Childhood).
GE1 Students and Early Childhood Staff
Back Row: Jenny Mobbs, Dorisina Quakawoot.
2nd Row: Alison Searle, Dalassa Pau, Dot Stanley, Ann Quetzsch.
Front Row: Helen McDonald, Tracey Hill, Trish Geise, Dave Walker, Joan Kale, Cynthia Edwards, Gata Alfred.

G8 Students and Tutors.
Back Row: Zelda Quakawoot, Brian Wallace.
2nd Row: Rebecca Hooper, Lyn Henderson, Michelle Munn.
Front Row: Kim Kosanovich, Barbara Watson, Lesley Marler.
ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER CULTURAL STUDIES

Students enrolled in the Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood Education) undertake the subject Aboriginal and Islander Cultural Studies. As part of the assessment for this subject, Lela Ara, Veronica Coutts and Gata Alfred, performed a selection of Islander dances at Kindergarten Headstart. Tracey Hill, as part of her assessment, photographed the occasion and subsequently developed the photos.

Helen McDonald

Lela, Veronica and Gata performing at Kindergarten Headstart.
CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN ABORIGINAL STUDIES

Four James Cook University third year (early childhood) students, Lela Ara, Lanora Johnson, Dorisina Quakawoo and Tracey Hill, along with Aboriginal Education lecturer, Helen McDonald and AITEP tutor, Ann Queitzsch, attended the "Contemporary Issues in Aboriginal Studies" Conference at Nepean College, Sydney, from 7-9 October, 1987.

The Students' paper, "Aboriginal and Islander Tertiary Students as Creators of Culture" was presented in one of a number of sessions which covered such topics as:

- Aborigines and the Media;
- Aborigines, Social Work, Youth and Community Services, Social Security and Corrective Services Issues;
- Medicine and Health;
- Women's Issues;
- Education;
- Anthropology and Cultural Studies;
- Politics, Democracy and Law;
- Aborigines in a Fourth World Perspective.

The students especially enjoyed the screenings of new films, such as "Nice Coloured Girls", and follow up discussions with film-maker Tracey Moffat. They became actively involved in many such discussions ranging from Aboriginal Dreaming, Black Deaths in Police Custody, to all aspects of education.

Lela, Lanora, Dorisina and Tracey's own paper, however, was "one of the highlights of the Nepean Conference", according to Dr Susan Nandudu who wrote about the students' contribution to the Conference as an "exciting dimension".

Many people, from all backgrounds, were touched by the expressions of poetry, short stories, artwork and music which the students presented. They were 'sought out' by many people afterwards, and through the discussions, comments and interviews which followed it was most evident that the students' work was greatly valued.

It was appropriate too, that of the four James Cook University students who attended the Conference, two were Islanders, so that their culture was ensured strong representation.

In reflecting on issues raised over the three days, Dorisina wrote, "It was good to see that a lot of Kooris were really getting into the swing of things such as Deaths in Custody, Education and other controversial issues. To me, Queensland Murries seem to be very laid back in their attitude towards such matters. They don't seem as radical".

Of course, participating at Conferences not only offers the opportunity to discuss contemporary issues, but it introduces students to other students from different universities and colleges.

Lela, Dorisina, Tracey and Lanora exchanged ideas about Early Childhood Course content, workloads and ways of coping with life at university. They were interested to discover too, that not all tertiary institutions have such a widespread campus as their own! Of course the city of Sydney, Redfern, China Town and the Cross proved irresistible and exciting as well.

The 1987 Nepean Conference was both professionally and personally, a rewarding experience. Above all else, the North Queensland students realised that, although their own life experiences were different from everyone else's at the conference, they were struck by the common bond they shared through their Aboriginal and Islander heritage.
GE1 students presenting their paper at the Nepean Conference. Lela Ara (right) and Lanora Johnson teach traditional Torres Strait songs to Conference delegates.
My first day at University was exciting but at the same time frightening. Just signed three and a half years of my life to full time study. How frightening it was for a person who has had nothing to do with school for so long. Well what the heck, at least I am going to give it a try anyway. A lot of hard work is what I need to do to reach my goal.

I think the idea of both the ATEP and ACWEP students getting together should carry on in the future at other orientations, so students get the idea of being one in unity. As for the University I found it a very friendly atmosphere and the students are very warm, friendly, kind, not to mention the tutors.

I was absolutely nervous on the first day of orientation but I soon felt relaxed and happy about the whole deal especially when I met most of the other new students who were just as nervous. The tutors were all quite friendly and helpful when necessary. By the second day I felt I could cope with whatever may eventuate in the future. Though, I do have sore legs from walking!

Meeting people from the various places was interesting, some names and faces were already familiar.

I feel that there should be a greater change in communication between the Aboriginal and the mainstream students during Orientation.

I feel we needed more Aborigines to talk on Aboriginal identity and the educated Aboriginal and his/her impact on society as a whole.

I was very proud of the morning session and the morning tea and I especially enjoyed the cakes and sandwiches at the morning session.

At the present moment I feel very relieved, settled and keen to get on with the course.
CONFERENCE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

James Cook University was the venue for a QATSICC conference on Higher Education held from 6-10 July, 1987. The conference aimed to address the issues of:

- Distance Education
- Post Graduate Staffing
- Impact of Higher Education to Local Communities
- Centre of Excellence.

Many prominent speakers addressed the conference including the following AIrEP graduates: Ray Warner, Barry Riddiford, Norman Johnson, Debbie Bennett, Hope Neill, Henry Neill and Bob Munn. A third year Diploma of Teaching student, Jeff Warner, also addressed the conference.

The following perceptions are those of Henry Neill who raises them as the main issues discussed at the conference.

Access: This issue has been talked about for eons. We as a conference discussed methods in which our people can get a more correct method to gain access. At this time, the greatest number of our students gain access by “Special Entry”. We would like to see increased numbers of our students gaining regular entry status. Secondary Education and its appropriateness plays a major part in the “grand plan”.

Participation: We are worried that so many students are being accepted and enroll in Teacher Training without considering other disciplines. Certainly we need our teachers but our representation in other professions is minute. I believe that we should “train” our secondary students to become involved in other disciplines.

Retention: The conference planned strategies in which we could keep our students in academic institutions. This leads to all sorts of considerations, eg.: allowances, family support mechanisms, staffing, etc.

Staffing: We believe that a concerted effort needs to be made to attract suitably qualified Aboriginal/Islander people to firstly apply for positions. The second issue is tenure of staff within support programs.

Funds: The central issue in funds is that we believe that institutions should not completely rely on CTEC or Department of Employment, Education and Training for support programs to survive.

Proposed changes to Ab Sec/Ab Study:

These changes are very serious as ultimately they will effect all our students to the point that very few of them may qualify to be students.

We are proud of our involvement within Aboriginal/Islander affairs especially the area of Education.

This conference was one in which many people met to discuss our future. A very important aspect of this is self-determination. We don’t want the world; we only want equality — equality of opportunity — equality in education.

Staff in the Division of Aboriginal and Islander Education.
2nd Row: Helen McDonald, David Walker, Dot Stanley.
Front Row: Sharyn Pearce, Barbara Watson, Rebecca Hooper, Joan Kale, Fran O'Neill, Jenny Mobbs, Debbie Backer, Glenn Dawes.
Absent: Greg Miller, Debbie Travis.
ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Actor and playwright, Bob Maza, spent a week as Artist-in-Residence at the University during semester two, 1987. Bob is originally from North Queensland. He was born on Palm Island and was educated in Cairns. He now lives in Sydney. Many of you would have seen Bob in films and on television in a variety of roles.

While at James Cook, Bob worked with several groups of Aboriginal and Islander students. The first and second year Early Childhood Education groups worked with Bob on radio productions. The latest intake of students particularly enjoyed the drama workshop that Bob conducted. He also lectured to groups of third year and graduate students, and talked with the students enrolled in the Associate Diploma of Performing Arts.

Having Bob with us for a week was a delightful and rewarding experience for both students and staff and we certainly hope that he is a frequent visitor to James Cook University in the future.

Helen McDonald

Bob Maza with GE2 students, from left: Wilma Toga, Karen Muckan, Selena Johnson, Andrea Shepherd, Carolyn Savage, and Kassandra Sorrenson.
CULTURAL DIVERSITY

This year, second year students will be given the opportunity to participate in a new course offered in the Department of Social and Cultural Studies in Education called "Cultural Diversity and the Teacher". The new course takes over from the Race and Culture course and the Focus on Race Relations course.

In combining these two courses, it is anticipated that second year students will be given the opportunity to study issues which are of relevance to the multicultural nature of classrooms. A major component of the course will be regular two hour sessions where guest speakers will be invited from various cultural groups to speak of their first-hand experiences in living in a predominantly Anglo culture. Students will have the opportunity to ask the speakers questions and to analyse the major issues which have arisen.

In 1987 student reaction was very positive about the value of the guest speakers. The majority of students indicated that they enjoyed the lecture by Larry Campbell who spoke of life under the Queensland Prison system. Other interesting speakers included Leah Rettie (Homeless Adolescents), Josephine Salam (Race Relations and the School), Tony Tsoutsa (Ethnicity and the Teacher), and Barbara Watson (Learned Helplessness).

The final hour of the weekly program in 1988 will be a workshop period where students will explore a wide range of topical issues such as teaching free of prejudice (sexism, racism, etc.) and other contentious issues in the classroom. The major teaching strategies which can be used in the classroom pertaining to those areas will be explored.

The staff associated with this course look forward to another challenging and invigorating semester in a subject which is very close to the real-life experiences confronting all classroom teachers today.

Glenn Dawes

BLACK VOICES

Black Voices is a journal published by the Department of Social and Cultural Studies in Education at James Cook University of North Queensland. The aim of the journal is to provide an outlet for writings by Black Australians. To date, the journal has published articles on a wide range of issues including history, education, land rights, child abuse, language, positive discrimination as well as poetry and short stories.

If you want to contribute writings for publication in Black Voices or want information about becoming a subscriber to Black Voices, write to:

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AITEP NEWS

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