

TIMELINE

Gurindji, Bilinarra, Njining, Mudburra, Malignin, Ngarinman and associated peoples have been traditional custodians of the Victoria River region for over 50,000 years.

1854

Augustus Charles Gregory leads first non-Indigenous exploration through the Victoria River region, followed by Alexander Forrest in 1879.

1883

The original Wave Hill Station is established at Wave Hill by Nathaniel Buchanan and the Gordon Brothers.

1901

Australia becomes a federation. Indigenous peoples are excluded from the constitution.

1911

The Northern Territory Aboriginals Ordinance (Cth) gives the Chief Protector power to assume custody of any Aboriginal or 'half-caste' if it is deemed 'necessary' or 'desirable'.

1913

The Kahlin Compound is established in Darwin segregating Aboriginal people from the rest of the population of the town and controlling their lives.



1 Further reading, <http://archivescollection.anu.edu.au/index.php/wave-hill-station>

2 Further reading, http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/first_australians/resistance/coniston_massacre#Footnote2

3 Further reading, Meakins, F, and Charola, E (eds), *Yijarni: true stories from Gurindji country* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2016)

1937

The first Commonwealth/State conference on 'native welfare' adopts assimilation as the national policy.

1928

Coniston Massacre

On 7 August 1928, Fred Books, a white dingo trapper, was found murdered on Coniston Station in central Australia. He was killed for 'breaching Aboriginal marriage law', according to Aboriginal accounts of the time. Over a period of months at different sites, at least 60 Aboriginal people were shot and killed in reprisals conducted by non-Indigenous people, which collectively became known as the Coniston Massacre, the last known officially sanctioned massacre of Indigenous Australians. No charges were laid against the reprisal party. A Board of Enquiry set up to investigate the killings ruled the party had 'acted in self-defence'.² Gurindji oral histories document massacres occurring during the establishment of Wave Hill and Limbunya Stations.³



1924

The original Wave Hill Station at Malyalyimalyalyi and Lipanangu was washed away in a flood. The new station was established at Jinparrak, occupied until after the 1966 walk-off.

Michael Terry, *Stockyards at the original site of Wave Hill Station just after the devastating 1924 flood, Northern Territory*, 1925. PIC/8847/6/47. Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia.

1914

British pastoral company Vesteys buy Wave Hill Station from Buchanan Family. In 1954 Vesteys took out the first pastoral development lease for its Wave Hill property.¹

1914

The Bungalow, established in 1914, became an official institution in 1915. Often referred to as the Alice Springs Half-caste Institution or Half-caste Home, the Bungalow closed in 1942.

Credit: Proof number 11-12 Annotated "Bessie Croft Chinese/ native H/C" Cecil John Hackett, AA 122/15/1/15, March 1934 – September 1934, Notebooks and Mounted Photographic Prints, AA 122/15/1/15, South Australian Museum.

Brenda L Croft *shut/mouth/scream* 2016, (from the 'blood/type' series) pigment print from diptych, 91.0 x 89.5 cm. Courtesy of the artist, Stills Gallery, Sydney and Niagara Galleries, Melbourne.

1939

The Communist Party of Australia, formed in 1920, was the first Australian political party to develop policy regarding Aboriginal Australians. The Party provided vital support for the 1946 Pilbara strike and the Gurindji Walk-Off from Wave Hill.⁴

1939

Kahlin Compound closes after all residents were moved to the new Bagot Aboriginal Reserve in 1938.

1944–46

Social anthropologists Ronald and Catherine Berndt investigated labour conditions on Vestey-owned cattle stations in the Northern Territory. The report exposes the conditions faced by Aboriginal workers. Despite legislation, Aboriginal children under 12 are working illegally, accommodation and rations are inadequate, there is sexual abuse of Aboriginal women, and prostitution for rations and clothing takes place. No sanitation or rubbish removal facilities are provided, nor is there safe drinking water.

1946

Retta Dixon Home is established at Bagot Road Aboriginal Reserve in 1946 by the Aborigines Inland Mission (AIM). RDH moved to new cottage style accommodation on the reserve in 1962, where it operated until 1982.⁵

1950s

Aboriginal Scholarships, known as **Abschol**, begins as a committee of the National Union of Australian University Students.

1953

Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory are made wards of the state.



Norman Tindale, AA346-4-22-1 *Inverway Station Data Cards Images, R1317 Old Limbunya Jack Pingkiyarri Jurlama*, 1954. Courtesy the South Australian Museum.



1966

On 22–23 August Gurindji/ Malignin elder, Vincent Lingiari, leads 200 plus stockmen and their families off Wave Hill Station. The Wave Hill Walk-Off segued from a strike for equal wages to a nine-year fight for their traditional homelands, sparking the national land rights movement.⁷

Brian Manning, *Gurindji men and sign painted for them by Frank Hardy at Wattie Creek*, 1967. Standing (L-R) Bruce Peter, Sammy Pangkalis, Captain Major Lupngiari, Mick Pelasco, Vincent Lingiari, Mick Rangliari. Sitting (L-R) Starlight Wijina Kipiyarri Japarta, Roger Japarta, Joe Randall, Jerry Rinyngayarra, Rodney Pajiyarri Loman, Old Major, Charlie Pincher Nyurmiari, Horace Walmun, Timmy Vincent. Courtesy the Estate of Brian Manning.

1965

The North Australian Workers Union, under pressure from the Northern Territory Council for Aboriginal Rights, applies to the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission to delete references in the Northern Territory's pastoral award that discriminate against Aboriginal workers. Pastoralists meet this proposal with stiff opposition and argue that any increase in wages should be gradual as this would help Aboriginal people to 'adjust'.

1961

The Northern Territory Council for Aboriginal Rights (NTCAR) is formed by George and Moira Gibbs, and Brian Manning in Darwin in late 1961. The Darwin waterside workers had maintained their strong support for Aboriginal people's rights that began in the 1920s. Aboriginal members included Jacob and Philip Roberts, Dexter Daniels and Robert Tudawali with NTCAR played a central organising role in supporting the Gurindji walk-off in 1966.⁸

1956

The Wards Employment Regulations set out a scale of wages, rations and conditions applicable to wards employed in various industries. The ward rates are up to 50 per cent lower than those of non-Aboriginal people employed in similar occupations and some companies even refuse to pay their Aboriginal labourers anything. Vestey Brothers refuse to pay their Aboriginal workers wages.

4 Further reading, <http://indigenousrights.net.au/organisations>

5 Further reading, <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/guide/nt/YE00023>

6 Further reading, http://indigenousrights.net.au/organisations/pagination/northern_territory_council_for_aboriginal_rights

7 Further reading on events subsequent to the 1975 handback, Ward, C., *A handful of sand: the Gurindji struggle, after the walk-off* (NewSouth Books, Monash University Press, 2016)

1967

A national referendum is held to amend the Constitution. The 90.77% YES vote confers power on the Commonwealth to make laws for Aboriginal people.

1968

Author and CPA member Frank Hardy's book *The unlucky Australians* is published in 1968.⁸

1969

By 1969, all states have repealed the legislation allowing for the removal of Aboriginal children under the policy of 'protection'. In the following years, Aboriginal and Islander Child Care agencies are set up to contest removal applications and provide alternatives to the removal of Indigenous children from their families.

1970

Frank Hardy speaks at the NSW Teachers Federation, where the Save the Gurindji campaign is launched. The campaigners lead a protest march from Redfern to Martin Place, with Paul Coe, Dexter Daniels, Sol Belleair and Brian Aarons, among others.

1972

The Aboriginal Tent Embassy is established opposite Parliament House in Canberra by four young Indigenous activists, Michael Anderson, Billy Craigie, Bertie Williams and Tony Koorey⁹, representing Indigenous peoples being treated as 'aliens in their own land'. The Tent Embassy quickly gained thousands of Indigenous and non-Indigenous supporters and had violent clashes against the police.¹⁰

1972

The Labor Party comes to power. Prime Minister Gough Whitlam announces in his election policy speech that his government will 'establish once and for all Aborigines' rights to land'. This changes the political landscape.

1973 (March)

The original Wave Hill lease is surrendered and two new leases are issued: one to the traditional owners through their Murrumulla Gurindji Company and another to Vestey Brothers.

8 Further reading, Hardy, Frank, *The unlucky Australians* (Melbourne: Nelson, c1968).

9 Also spelt as Coorey, Coorie.

10 Further reading, <http://www.kooriweb.org/foley/images/history/1970s/emb72/embassyindex.html>

Minoru Hokari, *On the way to the Gurindji country*, 1997. Courtesy the Estate of Minoru Hokari.

1997

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) releases 'Bringing Them Home' its report on the findings of the 'National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families to the Commonwealth Government'. The report made 54 recommendations, including a formal government apology, monetary compensation and other reparations to members of the Stolen Generations. The parliaments and governments of all states and the ACT issue apologies to the Stolen Generations.

1988

On 26 January, Australia's bicentennial, 60,000 plus people – Indigenous and non-Indigenous – march through Sydney from Redfern to Hyde Park with banners proclaiming, 'Our land, our life' and 'White Australia has a Black History', among other statements of social justice and land rights.

1983

The Aboriginal Child Placement Principal is introduced in the Northern Territory, aiming to ensure that Indigenous children are placed with Indigenous families when adoption or fostering is necessary.

1976

The Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act is passed, the first legislation allowing for a claim of land title if the Indigenous claimants can provide evidence of their traditional relationship to the land.

1975

Prime Minister Gough Whitlam goes to Daguragu and ceremonially pours a portion of Gurindji land into Vincent Lingiari's hand with the words, "Vincent Lingiari, I solemnly hand to you these deeds as proof, in Australian law, that these lands belong to the Gurindji people".



Mervyn Bishop, *Prime Minister Gough Whitlam pours soil into the hands of traditional land owner Vincent Lingiari, Northern Territory* 1975, 1975. Courtesy of the artist and Joseph Lebovic Gallery, Sydney. © Mervyn Bishop/Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.



1997

PhD student Minoru Hokari conducts research with Gurindji people, later published in a book *Gurindji journey: A Japanese historian in the outback*.

1997

Alec Kruger and others v. The Commonwealth of Australia. Eight inhabitants of the Northern Territory (Australia) who had been taken from their families between 1925 and 1944 under the Aboriginals Ordinance of 1918 (which allowed the forced removal of children of mixed Aboriginal descent), and a mother, Rose Napangardi McClary, whose child had been taken from her under the same law, sought a declaration that the Ordinance was unconstitutional. They instituted legal proceedings in 1995. In July 1997, the High Court rejected all their arguments and held that the Ordinance was not unconstitutional.¹¹ Later cases were also unsuccessful until 2017.



Children at The Bungalow, 1940
Courtesy of Brenda L Croft.

2000

Over 250,000 people participate in the Corroboree 2000 Sorry Walk across Sydney Harbour Bridge on 28 May. Similar walks are held in the other State and Territory capitals.

11 The eight claimants were Alec Kruger, Hilda Muir, Connie Cole, Peter Hansen, Kim Hill, George Ernest Bray, Janet Zita Wallace and Marjorie Foster. Further reading, <http://www.internationalcrimesdatabase.org/Case/1041/Kruger-v-The-Commonwealth-of-Australia/>

12 Further reading http://www.inquiriesaact.nt.gov.au/pdf/bipacsa_final_report.pdf

13 Further reading, <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/places/national/wave-hill>

2017

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse: Case Study No. 17. On 30 March the Commonwealth, a convicted paedophile, and Australian Indigenous Ministries agreed to compensate 71 former residents of the home. It's the first time the Federal Government will pay compensation after public hearings at the child sex abuse Royal Commission.

2016

In December, the late Brian Manning's Bedford Truck is donated to the National Museum of Australia. The truck, which transported supplies to Gurindji community on many occasions during the nine-year Walk-Off, had been placed on the NT Heritage Register in 2011.

2016

On 23 August the 50th anniversary of the Gurindji Walk-Off is held.

2016

On 28 July the Royal Commission into the Child Protection and Youth Detention Systems of the Northern Territory is established, following the intense public outcry at the abuse of Indigenous children in the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre at Berrimah, Darwin, broadcast on Four Corners: 'Australia's Shame' ABC-TV on 25 July.

2008

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, on behalf of the Australian Parliament, makes a historic national apology to the Stolen Generations. The Senate rejects the Stolen Generation Compensation Bill, which calls for ex gratia payments to be made to the Stolen Generations of Aboriginal children.

2007

The Wave Hill Walk-Off Route placed on national heritage register.¹³

2007

Liberal government initiates and Labor government implements the Northern Territory Intervention (NTER), allegedly to 'protect Aboriginal children' from sexual abuse. Without consultation Aboriginal peoples' lives were heavily regulated. Despite the allegations of rampant child sexual abuse no prosecutions have been brought down in the subsequent decade. Despite widespread protests the intervention was extended until 2022.¹²

STILL IN MY MIND

Gurindji location, experience and visuality

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Gurindji location, experience and visuality

Inspired by the words of revered Gurindji/Malngin leader Vincent Lingiari, ‘that land... I still got it on my mind’, this exhibition reflects upon events preceding and subsequent to the Gurindji Walk-Off, a seminal event in Australian history that continues to resonate half a century later.

This nine-year act of self-determination began in 1966 when Lingiari led over 200 compatriots – men, women and children – walking off Wave Hill Station (Jinparrak) in the Northern Territory, thus igniting the national land rights movement.

A retelling of this story from diverse yet culturally interlinked Gurindji and non-Indigenous perspectives forms the basis of this collaborative project. Curator and participating artist Brenda L Croft has undertaken comprehensive practice-led research over many years, working with members of her patrilineal community in the Wave Hill/Victoria River region, with the support of Karungkarni Art and Culture Aboriginal Corporation. During this time she has also engaged closely with family and

community whose connections echo her own, sharing ties as descendants of Gurindji Stolen Generations.

Still in my mind provides an innovative account of events of historical and cultural significance to all Australians and, specifically, Gurindji and associated peoples – those still living on customary lands and those who are displaced – through the interconnected yet distinct works of each of the artists.

The exhibition encompasses photo-media, video and performative installation, history paintings, works on paper, and found and created objects. It is supported by extensive personal and public audio/visual archives that metaphorically and literally reveal ways in which Gurindji community members maintain cultural practices and kinship connections to ensure that these histories endure.

Developed in partnership with Karungkarni Art and Culture Aboriginal Corporation, National Institute for Experimental Arts, ARC Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language and UQ Art Museum.

Curated by Brenda L Croft

ARTISTS

- Mervyn Bishop
- Brenda L Croft
- Michael George ‘Nutwood’ Tulngayarri Japalyi
- Jimmy Wavehill Ngawanyja Japalyi
- Dylan Miller Paulson Japangardi
- Leah Leaman Namija
- Rachael Morris Namitja
- Pauline Ryan Kilngarri Namija
- Ena Oscar Majapula Nanaku
- Sarah Oscar Yanyjingali Nanaku
- Violet Wadrill Nanaku
- Connie Mosquito Ngarmeiye Nangala
- Biddy Wavehill Yamawurr Nangala
- Serena Donald Narrpingali Nimarra
- Axel Poignant

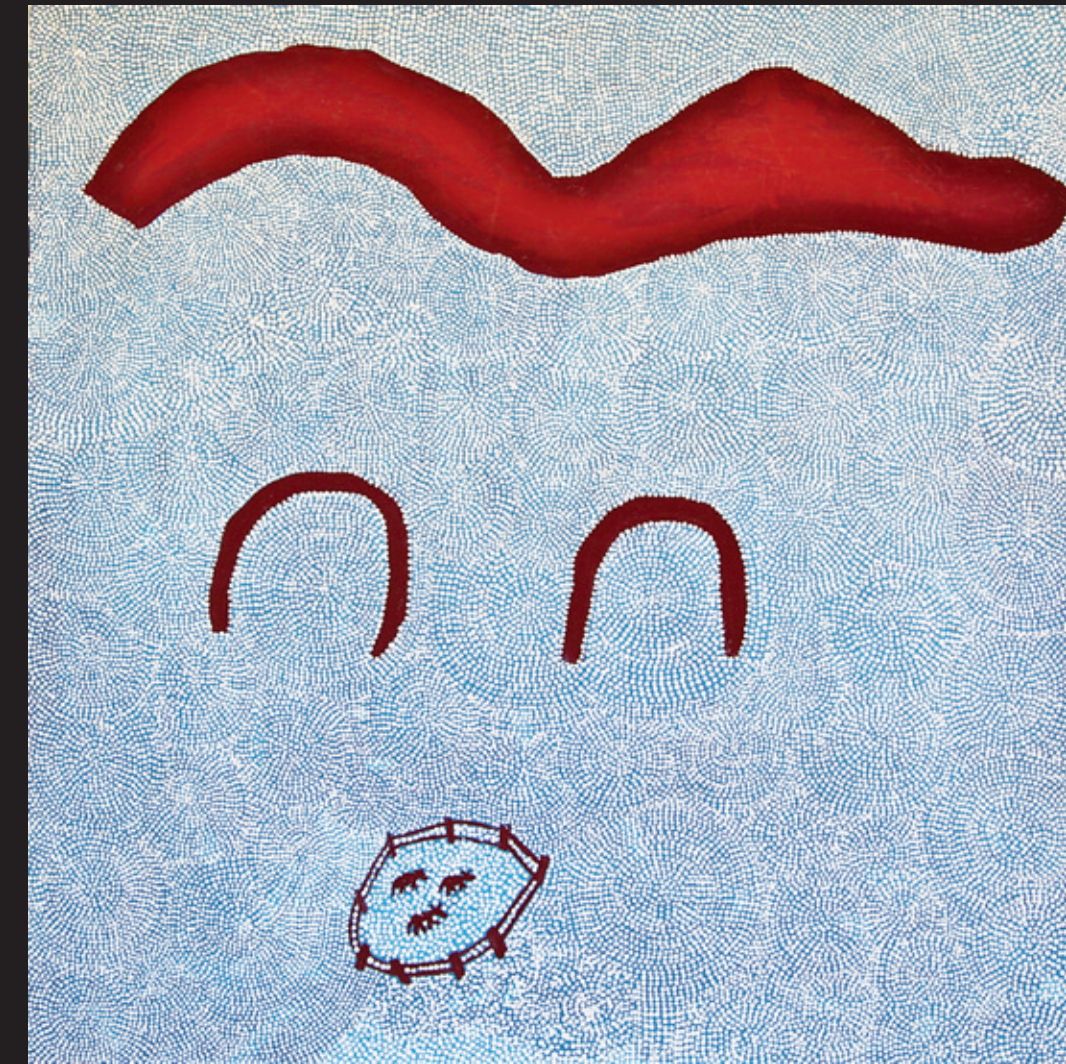


Brenda L Croft, with Rob Nugent, still from *Retrac(k)ing country and (s)kin*, 2017, 2-channel video installation. Courtesy the artist, Stills Gallery, Sydney and Niagara Galleries, Melbourne.

ARCHIVES

- Ted Egan
- Minoru Hokari
- Yuki Hokari Sim
- Brian Manning Estate [or family]
- Hannah Middleton
- Lyn Riddett
- Michael Terry
- Norman Barnett Tindale
- Rob Wesley Smith
- Penny Smith

- Art Gallery of New South Wales
- Australian Broadcasting Corporation
- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
- Berndt Museum
- Croft family archives
- Karungkarni Art and Culture Aboriginal Corporation
- National Film and Sound Archive
- National Library of Australia
- South Australian Museum
- Northern Territory Archives Service
- Northern Territory Library
- State Library of New South Wales



Acknowledgements

Still in my mind: Gurindji location, experience and visuality is generously assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, and the Indigenous Languages and Arts Program. We thank these organisations for their support and foresight. The project has been developed in a partnership between UNSW Galleries, UQ Art Museum, and Karungkarni Art and Culture Aboriginal Corporation, with support from an ARC Discovery Indigenous Award, the National Institute for Experimental Arts, and the ARC Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language.

Above: Pauline Ryan Kilngarri Namija, *Milker Yard*, 2015, acrylic on Belgian linen, 99 x 99cm. Courtesy the artist and Roxana Sherry.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Still in my mind – collaboration: from whose perspective and on whose terms?

Friday 5 May, 11.30am

What is collaboration? This forum centres on inter- and intra-cultural collaboration, which is a representational keystone of *Still in my mind*. Representatives engaged in *Still in my mind* discuss their distinct and interlinked roles in the creative-led aspects of this project.

Chaired by **Brenda L Croft**
Gurindji community member, artist, curator and researcher

Leah Leaman Namija
Gurindji community member, artist knowledge holder and translator

Felicity Meakins
Senior Research Fellow, School of Languages and Cultures, University of Queensland

Michael Paddy
Senior Cultural Officer, Kalkaringi Education Council, Gurindji community member and knowledge holder

Penny Smith
Manager, Karungkarni Art and Culture Aboriginal Corporation

Maurie Ryan Japarta
Indigenous rights activist, Gurindji community member, Chair of NT Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation

Violet Wadrill
Gurindji community member, senior knowledge holder, artist, director of Karungkarni Aboriginal Art and Culture Corporation

Biddy Wavehill
Gurindji community member, senior knowledge holder and artist, founding director of Karungkarni Art and Culture Aboriginal Corporation

Jimmy Wavehill
Community member, Mudburra artist, founding director of Karungkarni Art and Culture Aboriginal Corporation

After the Walk-Off: reflections, dreams and actualities

Thursday 29 June, 5.30pm

This panel presents Indigenous and non-Indigenous speakers’ reflections on the Gurindji Walk-Off from Wave Hill station – from the impact this profound act of Indigenous self-determination had on Australian society fifty years ago, to assessing its relevance for contemporary Indigenous rights activism.

Chaired by **Hetti Perkins**
Arrernte/Kalkadoon peoples
Independent curator and consultant

Brian Aarons
Save the *Gurindji* campaign, Freedom Ride (1965) activist and Communist Party of Australia member

Professor Larissa Behrendt
Professor of Indigenous Research, Jumbunna Institute, University of Technology Sydney

Lynda-June Coe, Wiradjuri people
Fighting in Solidarity Towards Treaty representative

Dr Hannah Middleton
Peace and Indigenous rights activist, author, *But now we want the land back: A History of the Australian Aboriginal People*, New Age Publishers, Sydney, 1977



Violet Wadrill Nanaku, *Humpy House, Jinparrak*, 2013, screenprint on BFK Rives paper, 76 x 56cm. Courtesy the artists and Karungkarni Art and Culture Aboriginal Corporation.

STILL IN MY MIND: GURINDJI LOCATION, EXPERIENCE AND VISUALITY

A touring exhibition curated by Brenda L Croft

UNSW Galleries, Sydney Australia, 5 May – 29 July 2017

UQ Art Museum, Brisbane Australia, 12 August – 29 October 2017

Visit the project website

stillinmymind.org

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Cover: Brenda L Croft, *Self-portrait on country, Wave Hill*, 2014, detail from ‘Self-portraits on country, 2014’ installation, pigment print on archival paper, 42 x 59.5cm. Courtesy the artist, Stills Gallery, Sydney and Niagara Galleries, Melbourne.