



5th Western Australian State

COASTAL CONFERENCE 2009

*Whose Coast Is It?
adapting for the future*

Gabbie Kylie—Indigenous Engagement and Sustainable Coasts

15B:
Indigenous
Engagement:
3.55–4.30pm
Friday 9th
October 2009
Orion Room

PRESENTER:

Mr Alan Briggs

The National Trust of Australia (WA)

CONTACT DETAILS:

Phone: +61 (8) 9321 6088

Email: alan.briggs@ntwa.com.au

Postal Address: PO Box 1162, West Perth, WA 6872

Abstract

The Gabbie Kylie Foundation was established under the auspices of the National Trust to assist the Indigenous community of the South Coast, primarily in the Esperance region, develop for themselves a sustainable basis for engaging with the land. The Gabbie Kylie Foundation has been established to conserve and interpret the Indigenous heritage values of the south coast region of Western Australia.

Gabbie Kylie's mission is to facilitate community awareness, engagement and development in sustainable land and heritage management in the south coast region of Western Australia. The Foundation enables Traditional Owners to re-establish connections with country that was once their ancestors' homelands and to oversee and manage a wide-ranging research program into the culture, heritage and natural values of this significant area. Training and development in land management practices is being provided within a whole-of-community approach, enabling effective management of land through the Foundation, with associated social outcomes.

Gabbie Kylie's objectives are to:

- Conserve and interpret culture and land through integrated education and management programmes.
- Engage the community through conservation and assessment projects.
- Develop an income stream to support ongoing programmes.
- Deliver education, training and awareness programmes.

Building strong partnerships underlies the successful and positive approaches being made by Gabbie Kylie.

The National Trust has worked with Traditional Owners and experienced research organisations including Applied Archaeology Australia and Flinders University to attract funds and implement research projects across the south coast of Western Australia.

A successful project at Mt Ridley on the South Coast brought Traditional Owners and researchers together to conserve and protect cultural sites. Two subsequent field schools have encouraged collaboration between agencies and tertiary institutes to present programs attractive to international, interstate and local students, academics and researchers.

A series of research papers and reports are being developed as a result of the programs.

Traditional Owners in the Esperance region have been empowered to participate and protect their heritage.

Introduction

'The land talks to us, through its language and cycles of seasons, plants, animals, gatherings, movement, trade, sharing and respect. By protecting and respecting the spiritual foundations and restoring the land, we are reconnecting to, and healing, our tribal kinship systems, our families and our Law.

Implementing this traditional system in a holistic, educational and management programme, embedded within this Foundation, is the only way to ensure a sustainable future for our children and our land.'

'Doc' Reynolds, Traditional Owner.

The Foundation

The Gabbie Kylie Foundation has been established to conserve and interpret the Indigenous heritage values of the south coast region of Western Australia.

The Foundation will allow Traditional Owners to re-establish connections with country that was once their ancestors' homelands and will allow them to oversee and manage a wide-ranging research program into the culture, heritage and natural values of this significant area.

Training and development in land management practices will be provided within a whole-of-community approach, enabling effective management of land through the Foundation, with associated social outcomes.

Mission

To facilitate community awareness, engagement and development in sustainable land and heritage management in the south coast region of Western Australia.

Objectives

- Conserve and interpret culture and land through integrated education and management programmes.
- Engage the community through conservation and assessment projects.
- Develop an income stream to support ongoing programmes.
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Programs

The Foundation implements a community model delivered in collaboration with all stakeholders and specialists representing diverse fields, within each of the seven Foundation Components:

1. Employment and Training.
2. Cultural and Natural Heritage Conservation and Management Projects.
3. Field Schools in Applied Heritage Management.
4. Commercial Sustainable Development.
5. Health and Society Bush Camp.
6. Heritage, Cultural and Eco-Tourism.
7. Anthropological and Archaeological Research.

Each of these components complements and enhances the other, within a holistic approach that mirrors Traditional practice and the customs of Caring for Country, in an evolving land and heritage management regime.

This is the process for maintaining cultural identity and vibrancy by reconnecting to the land to renourish our scoured souls by restoring the land and community ideals.

Component 1: Employment and Training

The Foundation will work with agencies, education providers and heritage organisations to provide opportunities for community members to obtain training and employment in land and heritage management. Projects will enable a wide sector of the community to participate and obtain critical, industry-

relevant skills and experiences, within a practical training environment. The Foundation will also coordinate a long-term traineeship programme that will provide Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) and TAFEWA certification.

Component 2: Cultural and Natural Heritage Conservation and Management Projects

The Foundation will coordinate and facilitate ongoing community-driven land care work across the Region, undertaking large-scale coastal erosion control programmes, revegetation, waterway/wetland restoration, weed control, dieback education and control, and cultural heritage place protection and management. This component builds upon a series of successful projects delivered by the Traditional Owner Group over many years, integrating natural and cultural heritage management.

Component 3: Applied Heritage Management Field School

In partnership with several institutions, a series of field schools provide a unique and sustainable educational programme as a platform for ongoing conservation and management of the Region's heritage places, cultural landscapes, and associated natural environment. This program designs and coordinates field schools for high school students, university courses, and professionals, in undertaking heritage protection and conservation work that involves instruction in archaeology, geography, restoration ecology, heritage conservation, and landscape management. Each training session is delivered by qualified heritage management professionals and provides certified training with specific university courses.

These field schools will provide additional labour force for the works and direct outcomes for communication and expansion of the Foundation model.

Component 4: Commercial Development and Sustainability

The Foundation team will develop and design two commercial operations that will provide support to the delivery of the projects but also serve as a sustainable, economic stream within land and heritage management.

1. Native Tree Nursery

In partnership with training providers and commercial nursery, a native tree operation (seed collection, propagation, planting) will serve as a commercial incubator for training in land care and business management. The nursery will not only supply the projects with seedlings for the variety of revegetation programmes, but also be used as a training facility and commercial operation in managing supplies and distribution of seeds across the land care network.

2. Aboriginal Heritage Surveys

The Foundation will also operate as a commercial consultancy, in working with specialists and the community to undertake heritage surveys, monitoring, site-clearances, providing high-quality reports and processes for clients operating under the obligations of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act (1972)*. This component will provide outcomes for community owner and operated heritage assessment and management, and ensure a sustainable income stream for the traditional owner community.

Component 5: Health and Society Bush Camps

The team will coordinate annual men's and women's health camps that involve customary practice of being on-country in a social setting to discuss important health and social issues. Government employees from various departments (health, justice, community development) will participate in providing networking and support at the local level.

Component 6: Heritage, Cultural and Eco-Tourism

The Foundation will expand upon the nationally accredited and award winning Kepa Kurl Eco-Discovery Tours operation, and incorporate heritage tourism, now identified as a key objective of the State Government and Tourism WA programmes. These operations will provide critical commercial and logistical support to the Foundation programmes, while delivering cultural awareness and land experiences.

Component 7: Anthropological and Archaeological Consultancy and Research

In partnership with WA Museum, University of Western Australia, Notre Dame University, Flinders University and WA Maritime Museum, the Foundation will facilitate a long-term, regional cultural mapping and research initiative that engages the local community and links with state, inter-state and international collaborations for high-level research outcomes.

The team will also coordinate commercial heritage surveys and assessments and, in partnership with national universities, carry out high-level, technical research for more effective management of the region's unique natural and cultural landscape.

The National Trust of Australia (WA)

The National Trust of Australia (WA) is recognised internationally as a leader in the conservation and interpretation of heritage. It works to conserve and interpret Western Australia's unique heritage, for the long-term social, spiritual, economic and environmental benefit of the community.

The National Trust is:

- A community-based, not for profit organization.
- Incorporated under the *National Trust of Australia (WA) Act (1964)*.
- Part of an international network, which includes 4500 members in Western Australia and 80,000 members nationally.

Natural Heritage

The Natural Heritage program represents an essential component of the National Trust's work. The National Trust operates a number of programs and special projects that aim to conserve and interpret Western Australia's valuable natural heritage. This mission is primarily achieved through education, advocacy and partnerships, which will all play key roles in the work of the Gabbie Kylie Foundation.

Governance and structure

The Foundation is a legal entity, which has been established under the auspices of the National Trust. The National Trust provides administrative support to the project; however, operational management will be the responsibility of an Executive Officer of the Foundation. A Board will be established to manage the funds and activities of the Foundation.

Funds

Foundation funds will be held in a defined-purpose account, administered by the National Trust. The National Trust provides this service allowing all contributions to be directed to the activities of the foundation.

Audit

The National Trust of Australia (WA) has strict accountability and audit requirements, being audited internally and externally by independent auditors, the State Auditor General and the Australian Taxation Office.

Insurance

The National Trust has general insurance to cover all Foundation activities.

Appeal

A tax-deductible appeal has been established to receive donations from corporate investors and individuals. The appeal is administered by the National Trust and all funds raised are used to support the work of the Gabbie Kylie Foundation.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Gabbie Kylie Foundation, in partnership with the National Trust, will monitor programme outcomes to evaluate their success in relation to the objectives of the Foundation. Regular programme reports will be provided to the Council of the National Trust, in accordance with governance requirements.

Why it works

The Foundation is based on a model that builds upon relationships with people and links agendas in heritage, sustainable development, conservation and land management. This model is effective because:

- It includes two-way exchange of knowledge, skills and practices, at multiple levels of engagement.
- It is about being on country with Elders and youth, reconnection and learning about country, transferring cultural knowledge.
- It is doing this through on ground activities such as cultural values assessments, research, rehabilitation, land management, and training.
- It is about building skills and providing employment in cultural site assessments, contemporary NRM practices while developing cultural values management plans.
- It is a model of active conservation that combines heritage and nature conservation that is sustainable because it 'produces' outcomes at a number of levels—education, health, management, wellbeing, respect, research, and restoration.
- It is based on a landscape approach, which is essential to be effective in protecting our cultural resources, in much the same way as environmental management.
- It recognises that cultural heritage is not static, it is not about 'sites'—it is about people actively looking after and managing the country (and the variety of heritage places and values associated with that country.)
- It engages people from a broad range of communities, students, and specialists.

All these elements are critical for any initiative that aims to protect and manage the environment and culture, while providing for sustainable economic development.

Planned Outcomes

The Foundation will:

Environmental

- Conserve and manage natural and cultural heritage sites.

Social

- Conserve and interpret Indigenous cultural heritage.
- Reconnect Traditional Owners with country.
- Provide education and training to the community.

Economic

- Create sustainable employment opportunities.
- Develop a viable business model for Indigenous enterprises.

Coordinators

Ron 'Doc' Reynolds is a community leader in the Esperance region of Western Australia. He has worked over many years with both older and younger people to preserve cultural memory and to create pride and a sense of belonging in his community. Doc is a recognised Traditional Owner from the Esperance region. Having lived in Esperance most of his life and learning about caring for country from his Elders, he has been actively involved with Natural Resource Management for over 20 years. He sits on numerous land committees and is the first Indigenous elected Councillor of the Esperance Shire. Doc is also Chairperson of the Aboriginal Lands Trust, and committee member of South Coast Natural Resource Management Inc. Doc is the Managing Director of Kepa Kurl Indigenous Eco Tours in Esperance, outright winner of the Western Australia Tourism Award in 2006 and 2007. The Traditional Owner Group, Land Council and regional NRM body have nominated Doc as the project director in all heritage and land management programmes in the Esperance region, acknowledging his highly unique skills and abilities valued across Australia.

David Guilfoyle is an archaeologist with many years of experience throughout Australia and the western United States (including Alaska). He obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Archaeology (University of Western Australia) in 1997 and Master of Arts in Archaeology and Heritage (University of Leicester, England) in 2004. He has presented at a number of national and international conferences, trained/tutored university students and field crews in both Australia and the USA, and coordinated numerous field projects, often in remote areas. David has published widely in the field, including guidelines for conducting regional heritage

assessments; a research paper modeling patterns of Ancestral Puebloan settlement in south eastern Utah; a research paper on social processes and stone artefact assemblages in northern Queensland; and a contributing author to a recent publication examining the historic archaeology of Colorado. David recently coordinated and delivered a successful Natural Resource Management project, implementing a community and regional model to protect and restore cultural heritage areas throughout the South West and South Coast of Australia. David is committed to programmes that implement community and strategic models for effective cultural heritage management.

Recognition is accorded to our Partners

- Department of Environment and Conservation.
- Department of Water.
- Department of Indigenous Affairs.
- Department of Agriculture and Food WA.
- WA Maritime Museum.
- WA Museum.
- Flinders University.
- Notre Dame University.
- University of WA.
- South Coast NRM.
- The National Trust of Australia (WA).
- Greening Australia.
- Australian Bush Heritage.
- Green Skills.
- WA Education Department.
- Esperance Senior High School.
- Wongutha Christian Aboriginal Schools.
- Esperance Shire.

Successes

Gabbie Kylie Foundation has now provided 2 field schools with outstanding success. The first involved interstate and international students as well as respected anthropologists and archaeologist from local and interstate. One finding early in the field trip was an array of Aboriginal artefacts dated between 4500 and 5000 years. The final week of the trip involved sailing on the SS Leeuwin to the Recherche Islands off the south coast of Western Australia. Several previously unknown sites were identified on the islands surveyed.

The second field trip involved a contingent of researchers from Flinders University, South Australia. This excursion established the foundation for an excellent partnership between the Gabbie Kylie Foundation and Flinders University.

Funds have been contributed to Gabbie Kylie Foundation projects by the Department of Indigenous Affairs and South Coast Natural Resources Management. The contributions enabled identification and conservation of cultural heritage at Mt Ridley.

There is much more in the pipeline, new partnerships to be forged and many projects developed, all with a view to developing a viable and sustainable Gabbie Kylie foundation lead and supported by local Aboriginal families along the South Coast.