

**ROBE RIVER
KURUMA**
ABORIGINAL
CORPORATION RNTBC
ICN 7612



RRKAC Newsletter

April 2023

A word from our CEO

Another month has flown by, and we are into the last quarter of the financial year. As you can see, there are many great initiatives taking place across the Corporation as the team works hard to deliver the Strategic Plan. We have a great team on board, and everyone is committed to the community and supporting it. I hope members can see for themselves the great things that are happening.

I am not proud of the fact that I still have to become involved when members do the wrong thing. There are too many examples of poor behaviour directed to our team. The team is fair and reasonable and will consider all requests, however, I have told them that we will not support people who are disrespectful in any way. This extends to consultants and partners.

If you are unsatisfied with a matter, please reach out to the relevant Manager or contact me on 0477 345 582.

Next time you deal with someone from the team, see if you can find some positive feedback. You might make their day!

Anthony Galante
Chief Executive Officer

The RRKAC Board of Directors, Management and Staff would like to acknowledge the recent losses within the community. Our deepest sympathy and respects are with the families and entire RRK community at this difficult time.

If you, or anyone you know, is struggling our Member Services Program can assist. Contact Sally or Kayte in the office on 9185 5005.

You can also receive immediate and confidential support through 13YARN. If you are feeling overwhelmed 13YARN offers a confidential one-on-one yarning opportunity with an Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Crisis Supporter who can provide free crisis support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Phone **13 92 76** free from any phone in Australia.

13YARN is an Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander crisis support line funded by the Australian Government with the support of Lifeline. It is run by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Cultural Awareness Training

On the 4th of May, RRKAC staff will participate in a full day cultural awareness experience travelling down to Pannawonica, and then going out on Country to Bungaroo and Parlapuuni. This will be a great opportunity to go out for the day with two of our CAT facilitators and hear some important stories about Robe River Kuruma Country. It is important for all staff working with RRKAC to understand Robe River Kuruma culture. As our team grows, we will continue to ensure that the development of cultural competence is at the forefront for everyone working for the RRK community.

The following day 5th of May, there will be a similar trip conducted with Rio Tinto's Robe Valley Operational Managers out to the Bungaroo. We are using this opportunity to trial our newly developed On Country Cultural Immersion offering as part of our Cultural Awareness Training package.

As part of our Rio Tinto Agreement Modernisation process, we will be undertaking a similar cultural immersion experience in July with Rio Tinto Iron Ore CEO, Simon Trott, along with other senior leaders as an opportunity for truth-telling, and relationship building.

If you are interested in understanding more, further details are available from Heritage Officer, Darrielle Lockyer in the office, or Ashley Talbot, RRS Business Development Manager on 0468 715 981.

Robe River Services Update



Since January this year, there has been an important opportunity for Robe River Services to negotiate and secure a commercial property, which would have provided a perfect springboard for commercial activity. A purchase would have underpinned further business development activity that would have created employment and business opportunities for our members and the Corporation.

Unfortunately, we have decided to conclude the negotiations with the owners and their commercial

representatives, due to some unrealistic time pressures put on us by them. We have learnt some great positive lessons from this project, and we are confident that RRS, RRKAC and the KML Trust will be able to work together on the next opportunity. Robe River Services has also developed an excellent commercial stakeholder network that will help us in the future.

Heritage Surveys

RRKAC is aware that many Members would like opportunities to participate in heritage surveys, to care for country, and to learn from Elders. Participation in heritage surveys comes with great responsibilities. For this reason, RRKAC will conduct inductions in 2023, to help Members prepare for surveys. Elders who sit on the Heritage Advisory Committee and who have extensive survey experience will provide advice on how to prepare for surveys. RRKAC staff will explain what you need in terms of equipment and clothing, and how they can help you to prepare.

In addition, all Robe River Kuruma people wanting to participate in surveys must pass a Drug and Alcohol test every three months in line with RRKAC's Fitness for Work Policy. As of April 2023, we have asked 65 members to undertake Drug and Alcohol tests and 39 have completed and passed these tests.

If you would like to participate in a heritage survey induction course, please contact RRKAC Heritage Officer Darrielle Lockyer on 9185 5005.

Preparing for Heritage Surveys

1. **BEFORE YOU GO:** If you do not have PPE, come to the RRKAC office a day or two before the survey so our staff can help you get ready.
2. **ON THE DAY:** Make sure you have water, all your PPE and medications, and are fit for work.
3. Arrive at the RRKAC office on time.
4. Travel to camp with the survey team.
5. Attend site-induction with the mining company.

6. Attend pre-start meetings and post-work meetings every day.
7. Please do not take your phones when undertaking surveys. They are a distraction and will prevent you from doing your best work.
8. Be prepared for doing a lot of walking all day, every day. Survey work pays well because we are expected to work hard.
9. The archaeologist or anthropologist will be recording all sites using GPS, camera, and a field notebook.
10. It is important that all possible artefacts and sites are brought to the attention of the archaeologist / anthropologist.
11. Don't be shy, the more questions you ask, the more you learn. The Elders and consultants will be very pleased if you ask questions and show an interest.

Jajiwurra Rangers

RRKAC is only weeks away from advertising positions to join the Jajiwurra Rangers program. Ranger Coordinator Andrew Love is developing the job descriptions and overseeing uniform design and modification of the vehicles provided by Mineral Resources. The modifications will include secure canopies, long-range fuel tanks, and applying the Jajiwurra Rangers and RRKAC logos.

Andrew has also been inspecting premises in Pannawonica offered by Rio Tinto for use by Jajiwurra Rangers. There will be many training opportunities with the ranger program, including drone operation.

This month, Andrew and RRKAC Member Rodney Alexander spent three days with Winyama studying for their drone pilot's licence. The same opportunity will be available to all Jajiwurra Rangers.



The Keeping Culture Project

The Keeping Culture Project was developed in 2021 by RRKAC to achieve the outcomes as directed by community priorities in the Strategic Plan. It also meets the aspirations identified in the RRK Healthy Country Framework and Research Plan, guided by consultation with the RRK community.

The Keeping Culture Project provides the RRK community with opportunities to:

- Capture cultural knowledge in a culturally appropriate way on Country,
- Record personal, family oral histories and cultural sites / precincts dreamtime stories and
- Enable cultural continuity through the intergenerational transfer of cultural knowledge.

This happens through family on-Country visits by RRK members and staff for the purpose of recording their cultural knowledge. RRKAC staff and experienced anthropologists record and document RRK People on Country talking about their personal and family history, relaying stories

about their Country, describing the significance of sites, and sharing cultural knowledge for the benefit of current and future generations.

During our 2021 trips Ngaarda Media were engaged to assist RRKAC with this task, and during our 2023 trips we have engaged anthropologist Craig Allsop, who is working alongside RRKAC staff, Noel Dodd and Arnold Bobby, to plan and manage trip logistics alongside each family, and to record, document and appropriately store the cultural materials and resources produced. As cultural knowledge is shared and stored on the RRK cultural heritage database, there have been protocols developed to ensure cultural knowledge is shared and transferred within family groups and only to the broader RRK community as permitted and appropriate.

Cultural Mapping is an important part of the *Keeping Culture Project*, which focuses on mapping important cultural landscapes in Robe River Kuruma Country. This includes recording the *yintas* and other pools along Jajiwurra; *thalu* sites, law grounds and ritual and mythological sites and other important cultural sites (including places on stations, birth places and burials and so on). RRKAC will engage with organisations such as Winyama to produce mapping products that can be uploaded to RRK's cultural heritage database, the *Keeping Place* and utilised for intergenerational knowledge sharing, along with the development of protection strategies to ensure that important RRK places such as Jajiwurra, and the Bungaroo and Gunarika cultural precincts are not impacted by mining.

Information captured and recorded through the *Keeping Culture Project* will be stored in *The Keeping Place*. It is a cultural heritage database and a geospatial information management system for collecting, protecting, and safely storing RRK cultural knowledge.

In line with RRKAC policies and protocols, this information is only accessed with permission of the knowledge holders and their families. RRKAC is in the process of finalising the implementation of this platform and funds this database from its operational budget, along with grant funding sourced externally. RRKAC is working with Winyama, an Aboriginal owned geospatial company to provide more specific and detailed mapping to accompany some of the more complex information that is going into the database.

In the last week of April, the Bobby family undertook the first *Keeping Culture Project* family trip of the year. RRKAC will be undertaking monthly on Country trips with each family over the coming months to important areas identified through family consultations.



RTIO Agreement Modernisation Update

A lot of the focus of the Corporation's work over the last six months has been preparing for the Rio Tinto Agreement Modernisation negotiations. In September 2020, Rio Tinto committed to a process of updating its Participation Agreements with traditional owner groups in the Pilbara following the reputational damage that it experienced following the destruction of the Juukan Caves. Rio Tinto called this process "Agreement Modernisation".

The "Agreement Modernisation" process has been the catalyst for RRK to rethink both its relationship with Rio Tinto; what RRK wants to gain out of a new agreement; but more importantly, what RRK wants now and for future generations.

We have reframed this as a nation-building exercise by adopting a Country-wide approach that sets the standards and expectations for proponents who want to partner with us on RRK Country.

This is about flipping the engagement from "participating" in Rio Tinto's business to leading our own agenda for our Country and people by fulfilling our ambitions reflected in the RRK Strategic Plan.

In May we will be circulating notices for a June 2023 Community Meeting, where we will share the negotiating position we have developed for community endorsement, before we sit down with Rio Tinto for some serious negotiations.

It is important that we build a new relationship with Rio Tinto and renegotiate mining treaties to replace the previous agreements which were disadvantageous to the RRK people and our Country.

Throughout this process to date and moving into our negotiations we have been fearless in our Truth Telling – our perspective, experiences and issues need to be heard and seen to make sure we are clearly understood.

We will continue to provide information to the community leading up to our proposed June Community Meeting. If you have any queries regarding the Agreement Modernisation, please reach out to our CEO Anthony Galante, a.galante@rrkac.org.au or 0477 345 582.

Breakfast Club returns for Term 2



RRKAC BREAKFAST CLUB **Starting back 9th of May**

Location Millers Well Pavilion
Every Tuesday & Thursday
Bus pick up from home from 6.15am

Healthy breakfast
Freshly packed school lunch

Call 9185 5005 to register
or email f.chappell@rrkac.org.au

Get to know our staff

Dr Adele Millard



Manager, Country & Culture - I make sure that the Country & Culture team meets the goals set out in RRKAC's Strategic Plan and Healthy Country Framework – for example, helping RRK people to spend time on their country and care for it through heritage surveys, monitoring compliance by mining companies, cultural mapping, oral history recording, and the Jajiwurra Rangers program. I also work with other members of the RRKAC management team to develop mining agreements, cultural heritage management plans, and environmental protocols, and to identify employment and Cultural Awareness Training opportunities.

How long have you been at RRKAC? 1 year

What do you enjoy most about working here? The country. It's amazing.

Footy team? Geelong Cats

What's your favourite thing to do on the weekend? Gardening

If you had to eat one meal, every day for the rest of your life, what would it be? A smorgasbord!

What's one thing on your bucket list? Visiting my old friend, Rami, in Toronto. We met at a backpacker's hostel in New Zealand in 1988 and spent a week hitch-hiking around the North Island together. We have not seen each other since; but we have kept in close contact with each other.

Amanda Drummond



Housing Pathways Support Officer

How long have you been at RRKAC? I have been at RRKAC for 5 weeks.

What do you enjoy the most about working here? I enjoy the people and the culture.

Footy team? Basketball team you mean...the Breakers!!

What's your favourite thing to do on the weekend? I love to hang out with my family, have adventures and of course the mega meals together, and catch up with friends.

If you had to eat one meal, every day for the rest of your life, what would it be? Cheese & crackers

What's one thing on your bucket list? To go to a game at RAC arena Breakers vs Wildcats

