

25

RESIDENT *TERRIFIC TERRITORIANS*

Terrific Territorians

The Northern Territory has produced many talented and well-known individuals in sports, arts and business. Amongst them are Cadel Evans, Geoff Huegill, Yothu Yindi, Nova Peris, David Gulpilil, Cyril, Maurice, Daniel and now Willie Rioli and our all-round sweetheart, Jessica Mauboy. But there are many more terrific unsung heroes across the Territory and Resident is proud to present 25 of them along with their tales of caring, sharing, growth, loves and what makes their northern home so special.

WORDS BY **NANNETTE HOLLIDAY**

PHOTOGRAPHED BY
**MARK AND TIM
OLIVER ECLIPSE
CHARLIE BLISS
DANIEL CORDERO**



DARYL CHIN

CHUNG WAH SOCIETY LION DANCING BLESSING THE NT

The drums beat loud and rhythmically in the next room as the Darwin Chinese youth practise their Lion Dancing at Chung Wah Hall in Woods Street. It's difficult to hear Vice President Daryl Chin clearly as he explains the Society's history while walking around the NT Chinese Museum. 'Our Museum only came into being after the Bombing of Darwin 50th Anniversary in 1992 and also the Sweet and Sour exhibition for the Museum and Art Gallery of NT. That's when we realised how little of our history we'd actually documented,' explains Daryl. 'We established social gatherings for our elders to get them talking. It worked well, but in hindsight we should've done it 10 years earlier.' Today the Museum is a combination of both exhibitions: photographic and written histories, highlighting the contribution of the Chinese in the Territory and the major Darwin Chinese families. It's open to the public every Tuesday to Sunday, as is the Chinese Temple next door. 'My grandfather Chin Loong Pak was a founding committee member of the

Chung Wah Society in 1946, my father was a committee member and I'm now Vice President, my daughter is also on the committee and my boys lion dance.' The Society has activities for all generations from Seniors fortnightly morning teas, that continued after our initial fact-finding gatherings, to the Dragon and Lion Dance Troupe and now the girls Jade Dragon Troupe performing traditional contemporary Chinese dance. It's a community based volunteer organisation linked to the Chinese Temple. The 400 plus members have Chinese heritage, whether recent arrivals or born and bred here. 'The Chinese once outnumbered Europeans in the Top End, but today we have assimilated well into a multi-culturally accepting Territory, so much so that I often use the analogy of being a banana—yellow on the outside and white on the inside.' Daryl believes that the regular appearance of a vibrant dancing Chinese lion in the community has contributed to this acceptance. 'It's wonderful being involved with and nurturing the development of

our Lion and Dragon Dance Troupe,' he enthuses. 'It's a fantastic activity for our youth, not only fun, but provides them with the opportunity to maintain their Chinese culture and build positive community values.' Darwin Chinese have been instrumental in many areas of Territory life — business, politics, sport and recreation — sharing culture, knowledge and traditions like the Lion Dance, which dates back to Imperial China. 'In the early days the Lion Dance was only performed for Chinese owned businesses, but today we cover everyone. This year we performed almost 400 dances during Chinese New Year including Darwin International Airport and the new Qantas Lounge for the first time.' The performance scares away evil spirits and brings good luck. 'Outside of Chinese New Year we perform at religious festivals, ceremonies and special occasions. Our troupe also officiates at the opening of the NT Parliament every year, that shows how much the Chinese culture is part of the Territory today.'



ZACH ROLFE

POLICE CONSTABLE ALICE SPRINGS

FLOODING SUCCESS

Although born and raised in Canberra, 25 year old Constable Zach Rolfe made a huge splash in Alice Springs on Tuesday 27 December 2016. Just three weeks after graduating as dux in his Northern Territory police class he courageously rescued two Asian tourists from the flood-swollen Hugh River. 'We were 30 kilometres west of Alice Springs when we saw a man clinging to a small tree not far from his sunken four wheel drive. We had no mobile or radio signal, and other flooded rivers were also hampering emergency services. If we didn't act quickly the tourists would have died. My superior, Acting Sergeant Kirstina Jamieson, a civilian Michael Priestly and myself quickly stripped down to our underwear and carrying a rope we swam across the 200 metre wide river to a land bank near the man. He was cold and the water was lapping at his feet. We threw him the rope to tie around himself and another part of the tree and told him to take his clothes and shoes off. He didn't speak English but managed to do what we asked. Michael swam back across the river

and tied the rope to a tree there.' Safely back on the riverbank the Taiwanese man was weak, but very distressed about his wife who had been in the car with him. Zach immediately jumped back into the raging river, travelling almost five kilometres alone downstream searching for her. 'Calling her name I walked along the banks where I could, but had to swim when faced with sheer rock walls or thick scratchy vegetation. I used the current to push me along and rested at trees along the way. I just wasn't sure if there were crocodiles or not as I'd only been here three weeks. Now I know I only have to worry about snakes.' Eventually he heard a faint reply and saw the woman lying on an island where the river forked in two. 'She was panicking that her husband had drowned. Once I'd reassured her that he was okay, the hardest part was going against the current to bring her back. It was slow but we eventually made it. I've always been super fit so that helped, but never thought myself a great swimmer, especially

against my childhood friend and now Commonwealth swimmer Ben Treffers.' Zach is the youngest son of well known Canberra philanthropists and Audi dealer Richard and Debbie Rolfe and a former Australian Army soldier who has served in Afghanistan. 'I know they're proud of me but they still think I'm crazy, particularly my 82 year old grandfather. I've never been anything like my older twin brothers. I'm an overachiever who likes action and adventure that's why I joined the army straight after school. I loved the army and would've stayed longer than my five years if we'd been able to do more deployments. But I love being in the Northern Territory police force and especially Alice Springs, it's exciting and extremely awesomely beautiful. I'm happy to be here for a while yet. I've also got to set the record straight — my Tradie undies were black with pink trim, not pink as originally reported in the media. And yes they thoughtfully sent me some and suggested I become an ambassador for them, but my policing comes first.'



RESIDENT TERRIFIC TERRITORIANS

THOMAS MAXWELL

FORMULA 1 DRIVER

THE NEED FOR SPEED

This year Thomas Maxwell will drive Formula Renault cars in 10 races in nine countries, including the Monaco Formula 1 Grand Prix. If he is successful, he'll do it all again next year, with the chance of becoming a Formula 1 driver. Not bad for an 18 year old from Darwin who grew up racing around the local track.

'My dad is a motorsports enthusiast so I was surrounded by it,' Thomas said. 'By the age of four or five I was in a go-kart. It became a passion.'

His parents Danny and Jane invested in that passion and took him to compete on the southern circuit. It paid off and in 2015 he made the jump to the Australian Formula Ford Championship with great success throughout the year.

It was what Thomas needed to be spotted and he received an invitation from Sean Walkinshaw Racing to race in the BRDC British Formula 3 Championship in the UK.

'It seemed too good to be true. The cars are so much bigger and faster,' Thomas said.

It also meant leaving home for the first time and moving to England at the age of 17.

'I'd never been to the UK, but we went over for a couple of test days to check things out. If I did okay, I'd stay. If not, it would have been a good learning curve.'

He did more than okay and got offered a contract to compete for the team in the 2016 season. He signed for a year to race in the British Formula 3 Championship, competing on a couple of leading Formula 1 tracks, Silverstone and Spa-Francorchamps.

'Dad stayed for two weeks, then he was gone,' Thomas remembers. 'I had mixed feelings. I was excited about the adventure of it all, living the racing dream 24/7. But it would be hard living alone.'

There wasn't time to mope. Thomas landed a spot on Andy Priaulx Sports Management's Elite Driver Support Programme.

'It provides simulators and coaching, dietitians, trainers, psychologists and engineers to help round out the driver... there's nothing close to it in Australia,' he said.

'It's an incredible facility and by the end of the year I took third on the podium at Donington (a famous British track), finished the British Formula 3 Championship 7th overall and was the top rookie.'

Home for Christmas, Thomas returned to the UK in February to race with French outfit Tech One Racing. Only a handful of Australians have reached such a level.

'This year I'm competing in the Formula Renault Eurocup Championship, so a higher level of competition with more exposure,' the young gun said. 'It gives me a shot at Formula 1.' Australia lacks such a pathway and Thomas is thankful for the support of his family and sponsors that has allowed him to follow his dream overseas.

'Dad's put massive hours in to support me,' he said. 'And local businesses have got behind me. You don't earn anything until you reach Formula 1 level, so it's tough.'

But that doesn't diminish the thrill of reaching speeds up to 250km on the most famous race tracks in the world.

'Having two races at Monaco this year is definitely a highlight. I remember watching the race as a kid and now to have the chance to race on that track is so special,' Thomas said.

RESIDENT TERRIFIC TERRITORIANS

BRIDIE DUGGAN

LIVIN AMBASSADOR YOUNG TERRITORIAN OF THE YEAR 2017

LIVIN LIFE

Mental illness doesn't discriminate, affecting one in four Australians of any age. Shocked by the suicide of a close Katherine friend, 24 year old Bridie Duggan became committed to increasing awareness, reshaping attitudes and raising much-needed funds to change those figures. In a month she raised \$27,000 for LIVIN.

'The Northern Territory has this motto, "Territory Tough" so people try hiding their feelings and don't speak out because it's seen as weak,' she explains. 'But talking about mental illness and depression, or to seek help is not weak.'

Bridie was named 2017 Young NT Territorian of the Year for her passionate work on mental illness, fundraising and work with autistic children.

A qualified life coach and personal trainer with a degree in exercise and sports science, Bridie inspires people to strive for a healthy mind, body and spirit, helping people to lose weight and gain self-esteem. 'I'm passionate about health and fitness, even doing volunteer work as a strapper for football clubs of all codes, personal training and instructing fitness classes for children with autism. I learnt from some really inspirational teachers at Marist College Emerald who advised that whatever you want to do in life you can definitely achieve it if you put in the hard work.'

Now in her final year of a Masters in Physiotherapy at University of Sydney she's gaining a reputation for her inspirational talks on depression, anxiety and support at various facilities and with health leaders. 'In June I'll be working with infants at Cambodian hospitals. Studying abroad is extremely valuable and something you can't get from books.'

When she first arrived in Sydney many students didn't know where Katherine or even the Northern Territory was. 'They'd say yeah I've seen photos of the reef,' she laughs.

'Now they actually understand about my home there's a whole stream of them wanting to come back with me.' But she openly admits, 'I miss home dreadfully and can't wait to be back in the Territory and be able to give back to the community that has always been there for me. I hope I can influence and assist young Territorians. We have so much raw talent in the Territory I truly want to make a difference.'



JACINTA PRICE

MUSICIAN, TV PRODUCER, INDIGENOUS CAMPAIGNER, ALICE SPRINGS

FORGING THE FUTURE

From wowing audiences with her soulful songs of reconciliation to delivering explosive speeches about Aboriginal physical and sexual violence at the National Press Club, Jacinta Nampijinpa Price is not afraid to say it how it is. 'My mother is a Warlpiri of Yuendumu and Dad a Celtic Irish Catholic — I certainly wasn't encouraged to be a shrinking violet.'

At 15 she established a hip-hop group with her friends to present a positive image of Aboriginal youth in Alice Springs. 'I then taught myself the guitar and began a solo career.' Jacinta won a variety of awards from 2011 to 2013 with her songs of love, heartbreak, courage and inspiration. 'I still mentor young indigenous musicians to create a positive life and am actively involved in a variety of sports including women's AFL activities for our youth.'

Letting nothing get in the way of her objectives, even when heavily pregnant Jacinta was determined to finish school and won the Year 12 NT Top Achiever Award. Today, as the mother of four boys, she's still a singer / songwriter and TV producer creating early childhood performances and shows that incorporate health and cultural messages in local languages that have been aired throughout the USA. She's also a no-holds barred Indigenous campaigner on issues of domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse in Aboriginal communities against women and children. 'Our future is where we should be focused, so that the most marginalised Aboriginal people whose first language is usually not English, who do not have access to media, whose lives are affected at alarming rates by family violence can have the same opportunities as everyone else,' she champions. 'It's not acceptable that anyone is violated, or have their human rights utterly disregarded in the name of culture.'

On the bright side, her actions are yielding results with more Aboriginal women now breaking their silence and more Aboriginal men opposing the cycle of violence and abuse. 'It's been better than I thought. Changes are being made and I'm pleased that I'm a major player, but we have a long way to go and I won't stop until my goals have been reached.'





RESIDENT TERRIFIC TERRITORIANS

DALLIS WILSCHEFSKI

RODEO BULLS

ALL BUCKIN' BULL

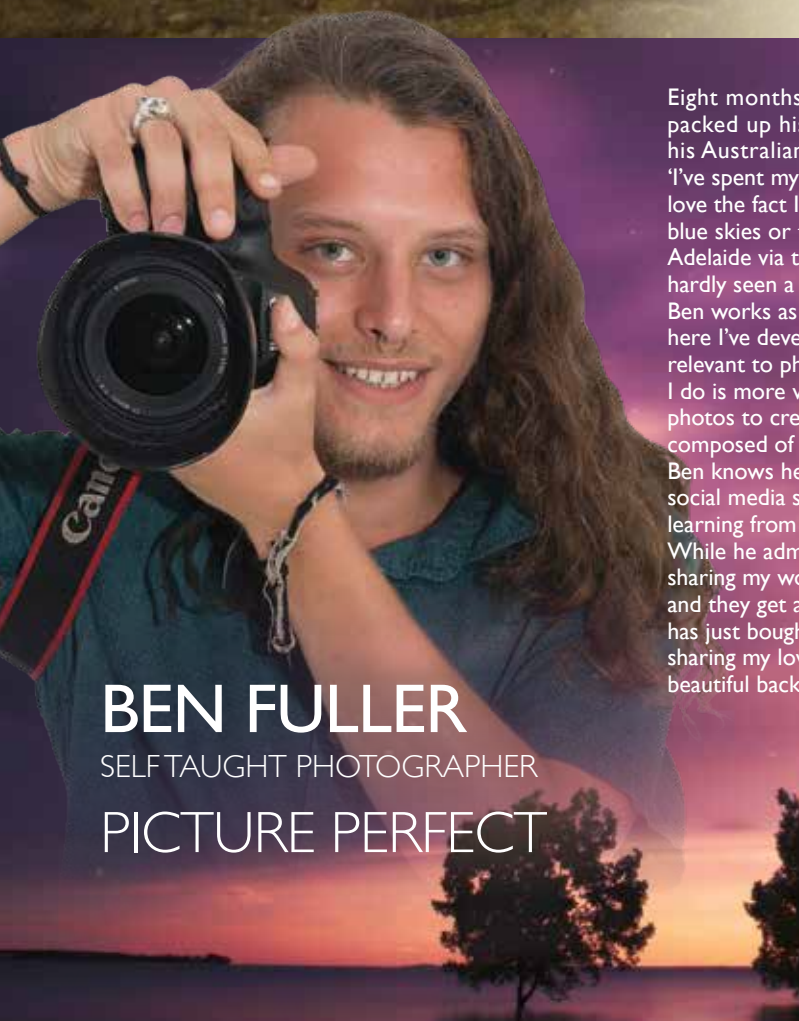
When his own bull riding career was cut short after a car accident in 1983, Dallis Wilschefska remained involved in the sport, just in his wheelchair. 'I own and operate Dallas Livestock, providing top quality Open bulls for the rodeo circuit,' he explains. 'And six years ago we went into partnership with the Noonamah Tavern staging several rodeos a year there.'

Every dry season these rodeos are jam packed with dare devil, thrilling entertainment from bulls, broncs, barrels, freestyle motocross, burnout comps and live bands. 'Cowboys from all around Australia converge on the Top End to test their skills. It's not your typical rodeo and has proved to be a winning formula with crowds reaching 3,000 plus.'

A highlight of the original rodeos was Dallis in his wheelchair in the middle of the arena and his grey Brahman feature bull Rocksalt eating from his hand after throwing another rider to the dirt. 'We retired him to my Bees Creek home back in 2014. After leaving the chutes 56 times he was only ridden four times. But to me he was a pussy cat, as long as I had food!'

His prime undefeated feature bull is now Guns n Roses approaching 800 kilos. 'I have 20 prime Open bulls. When choosing them I look for those that can buck well and look good for the crowd. Guns n Roses wows the audience with his impressive record and athletic bucking ability.'

A qualified stock and meat inspector, Dallis has also worked on and owned sheep stations, bulldozers, a fishing charter boat and been involved in the feral buffalo industry. 'But it's bulls and rodeos I love.' Dallis and his partner Janice run the operational side of the Noonamah Tavern Rodeos and Tony Inness provides the venue. 'It's all working really good. We have sponsors coming to us and the crowds enjoy it,' adds Dallis. 'I want to make the rodeos in the Territory the best. By getting the right equipment and good bulls we've been able to attract some really good riders to our events and are able to showcase how great the Territory also is.'



Eight months ago 20 year old Ben Fuller bought a Canon 6D that he had no idea how to use, packed up his car and with girlfriend in tow began travelling and making a pictorial study of his Australian journey.

'I've spent my life in Darwin being surrounded by magnificent scenery that inspires and calms me. I love the fact I can drive 30 minutes and be in the middle of nowhere surrounded by natural beauty, blue skies or thousands of stars,' he relates. 'We thought it would take three months to get to Adelaide via the east coast. It's taken eight. There's just so much beauty around Australia and we've hardly seen a thing.'

Ben works as a sound technician and engineer for KIK Digital in Darwin. 'During the last two years here I've developed an interest and learnt about filming, colour editing, histograms and other things relevant to photography,' he continues. 'I'm now doing it for my own enjoyment. I consider what I do is more visual art, than photography. They're not just single shots. I spend hours working my photos to create scenes that provoke imagination and inspiration. Sometimes the final image can be composed of several shots.'

Ben knows he has heaps more to learn. 'I discuss my photos with other private photographers on social media sites. Most live overseas. They've been wonderful and extremely encouraging. We are all learning from each other. It's good. My inspiration and development comes solely from them.'

While he admits it's too early to tell what the future will hold, 'In the meantime I'm happy just sharing my works on Instagram and hope that they inspire many other people both young and old, and they get as much pleasure from them as I do when creating them. My youngest brother Thomas has just bought a camera so when I'm home I also help him. I'm happy taking small steps for now, sharing my love and the natural beauty of the Territory and Australia. I'm so lucky to have such a beautiful backyard in which to play and learn.'

BEN FULLER

SELFTAUGHT PHOTOGRAPHER

PICTURE PERFECT

RESIDENT TERRIFIC TERRITORIANS

TOMMY LEWIS

ACTOR, MUSICIAN – KATHERINE/ROPER

SPIRITUAL TUNING

Literally 'discovered' by film director Fred Schepisi at Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport, Tommy Lewis, or Tom E Lewis as he's also known, had never planned to become an actor. 'I was studying mechanics at Melbourne's Swinburne College but I already knew all they were teaching us, so I was going home,' he tells. Playing the lead in internationally acclaimed film *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* won him the 1978 Australian Film and TV Best New Talent Award. 'The comparison between me and Jimmie Blacksmith was frightening.' His mother is from Ngukurr, 300 kilometres from Katherine. 'But because my father was white Mum fled to a mission for my birth and I spent seven years there. She'd put me in a canoe and paddle upstream to escape the welfare people so I never became part of the Stolen Generation. She was a tough one.'

His role of Jimmie opened many doors to acting and playing music. 'Like the years touring the world's jazz festivals [his woodwind duo Lewis & Young], we travelled and learned from other cultures, the Russians, the gypsies, a whole world of tonalities and spiritual beings, they taught me you can't do anything without your spirits. You have to tune yourself into your spirits to do your stories.'

Most of us tolerated having to learn Shakespeare, but Tommy loves it and has co-written and performed *The Shadow King*, an Aboriginal version of Shakespeare's *King Lear*. The mad king is an Aboriginal elder whose family is torn apart by warring children, drunk on power bestowed by mining royalties. 'When I do a show, it can't be half, it's gotta be full of my cultural world,' he says. The all-Aboriginal cast, including a live band, came from many different nations and were also involved in how best to represent such a diversity of cultures — resulting in a contemporary Aboriginal tale with the heavy beats of Shakespeare told through traditional Aboriginal song, dance and language. In *Katherine* it received two standing ovations. 'All my people, both white and black families turned up and had a great night. The weaving of multiple Aboriginal languages and English reminds me of how immigrant children speak with their parents.'

Tommy has written many songs, plays, films and documentaries. In 2005 *Yellow Fella*, about his own mixed race heritage, won the Bob Maza Fellowship and became the first Australian Indigenous documentary ever chosen for Official Selection at the Cannes Film Festival. He's also worked on *Dust Echoes*, *Dreamtime* stories on an Indigenous animated website produced by the ABC. 'It's important to preserve our culture by using the whitefella technology to embrace our stories. You see the "propaganda" is bigger than our stories in the dust and so we are now raising those stories from the dust and sharing it, so people can understand our culture.'

From his home south of Katherine, Tommy now also runs the Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation that hosts the annual *Walking with Spirits* festival. 'My creations are medicine and good stories for people, like a Corroboree ground but in the modern world. I'm glad this educates all generations both black and white.'





Angela Foley, left and Abbey Holmes with their premiership gold medals.

RESIDENT TERRIFIC TERRITORIANS

ANGELA FOLEY

WOMEN'S AFL

ALWAYS FIRST

Success seems to follow Angela Foley wherever she goes and her premiership medals are building. She'll be forever remembered as a winner in the inaugural AFL Women's League after the Adelaide Crows beat the undefeated Brisbane Lions in the AFLW Finals in March.

It was easy to see the wet season humidity didn't bother her as she sat on the balcony watching the afternoon storm roll in. More obvious were the physical bruises. 'Everyone of them is absolutely worth it,' she laughs. 'To be the outright winners of the AFLW is more than a dream come true, it's definitely one for the history books.'

Ange is the Adelaide Crows Co-Vice Captain and was the first NT player to be selected for the new women's league team last year. 'There are nine NT players in our team, and while only for three months of matches, we also didn't have to leave the Territory except for interstate games,' she explains. 'A program was devised so we could train here at the same time, do the same things as the other team members in Adelaide. It's obviously worked well. We are the champions now. We finally defeated the undefeated Brisbane Lions when it most counted.' Originally from Shepparton in Victoria, the tall dark-haired 28 year old comes from a sporting family where both her father and brother played and coached AFL. 'Girls didn't play football when I grew up, so I played basketball and a variety of other sports. At University in Bendigo we created a women's footy team for fun and it just grew from there.'

Since she stepped foot in Darwin at age eight, Angela Foley knew this would be her future home. 'My family was travelling around Australia. We had two weeks here and I loved every minute — the people, warm weather and crocodiles. I love crocodiles,' she exclaims.

After graduating with a Bachelor of Physical and Outdoor Education, Ange worked as Sports Coordinator at Numurkah School, before leaving at the end of 2012 and heading for Darwin. 'I'd planned on doing relief teaching, but got a call from The Essington School after being here only a week and started the following Monday.'

She's now the Director of Sport at The Essington School. 'I love working across all age groups. All the kids are so encouraging. Their comments lift my spirits and keep me grounded.'

She's the only woman to win two League Best and Fairest awards, two Best On Ground awards and all three Grand Finals during her three years of playing for Waratah's Women's NTFL and now the inaugural AFLW grand final. 'I actually haven't had any grand final losses yet, whether football, netball or basketball,' she proudly announces. 'Who knows if my career would have blossomed as much if I had stayed in Bendigo, but I know I've been extremely blessed since arriving in Darwin and love everything I'm able to do here. The Territory's great.'

ABBEY HOLMES

WOMEN'S AFL

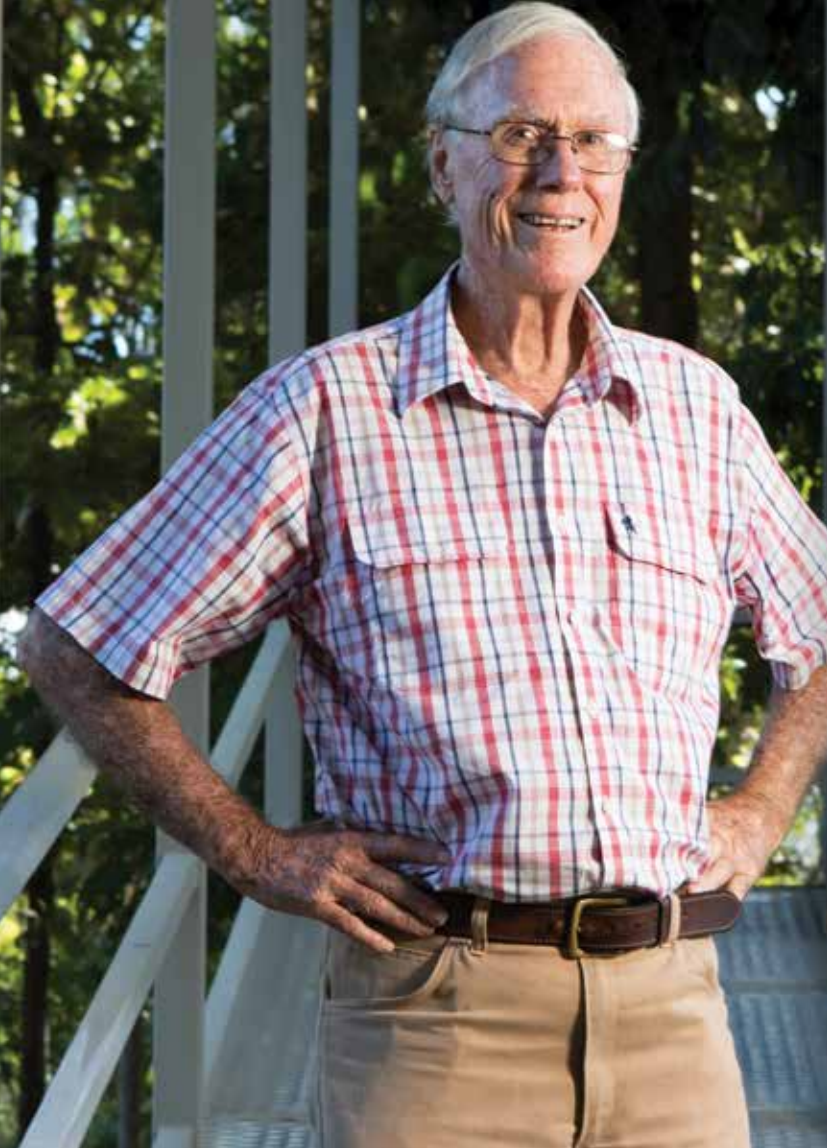
KICKING GOALS

When future historians look back at the inaugural season of the AFL Women's League, Abbey Holmes' name will be there in the winning Adelaide Crows team and making the Territory proud. It's difficult to believe that the 170cm model-like blonde is one of the new breed of AFL women's footballers, and also the first woman in Australia and the Northern Territory to kick over 100 goals — actually 105 from 14 games for Tahs in her first NTFL season during 2014. 'I even received congratulatory text messages from Warwick Capper and my childhood sporting hero Andrew McLeod,' recalls 26 year old Abbey.

As well as being a businesswoman and television reporter, her sporting background is in netball. 'I've represented Australia at junior level, as well as South Australia and NT at underage nationals and in the Australian Netball League. It wasn't until I arrived in the Top End from Adelaide that I became interested in playing women's football,' she explains. 'The girls I played netball with were playing NTFL in the off-season. With no boys in the family to follow in Dad's football footsteps, he's now one of my biggest supporters.'

Originally working in finance, Abbey stepped straight into real estate sales and motivational speaking in Darwin. Her heart and soul are now firmly entrenched in the Territory and football. 'Playing in the national women's league for the Adelaide Crows has fulfilled a lifelong ambition,' she smiles. 'I was born in 1991, the Crows AFL inaugural year, so I've really been supporting them my entire life. I'm an ex-South Australian whose home is now the Northern Territory. It's a good fit and a dream come true pulling on a Crows jersey. And now to have won the inaugural AFLW final, beating the undefeated Brisbane Lions — I'm over the moon.'

Abbey's not only a multi-talented sports star who has participated in many charity matches raising funds for prostate cancer research and children's oncology treatment, but is a role model, a perfect ambassador for living an active and healthy lifestyle, and also the co-founder of up and coming active wear brand — Esnetica. 'Shannon, Charlene and myself have been building Esnetica since our first range launched in December 2014 — we are now weeks away from launching range three.' After tearing rib cartilage during the NTFL 2016 Women's Grand Final, Abbey spent the winter AFL season in Melbourne as a Channel 7 VFL boundary rider. 'I enjoyed the media stint and even got to present Goal of the Year to Eddie Betts at the Brownlow.' Her eyes lit up. 'It's no secret that I'd love to pursue a career in football broadcasting in the future, but my main focus is playing many more AFLW games first. No one expected us to be in the finals, so winning was even sweeter and especially creating history for the Territory!'



RESIDENT TERRIFIC TERRITORIANS

DR JIM SCATTINI AM

RETIRED DOCTOR – KATHERINE

DOCTOR DO IT ALL

Upon his retirement at a civic reception in January 2016, Dr James Scattini received the only Key to Katherine ever presented to date. 'I'm humbled,' he admits. 'It's been an exciting and challenging 50 years.'

Jim and his wife Marie first drove through Katherine in 1966 on their way to his three-year placement in Darwin intending to stay the night. 'But St Patrick's Day celebrations at Kirby's Bar were in full swing and there wasn't any accommodation available. We found a bed in Pine Creek, but it was just as rowdy. Welcome to the Territory!'

After eight months in Darwin Dr Scattini was sent to Katherine Hospital for the remainder of his placement. 'Being a small town meant we had to be self-sufficient and do anything and everything,' he remembers. 'With no dentist or vet in town then I dealt with many dental problems and thankfully saved, rather than killing many an animal too.'

He reckons the most rewarding part of the job was obstetrics, and he's delivered thousands of babies, including babies of the babies. 'One of the advantages of working in a small town was treating generations. It's satisfying to see people through various stages of their life. You become a part of the community.'

Jim has worked in just about every area of medicine from outpatients, surgical, obstetrics, anaesthetics and even forensic autopsies during his 50 years as a Medical Officer.

In 1971 he opened his own private practice. 'It was hectic. I still did everything, but was my own boss. I had one week off in two years.'

He had two long-term partners at Kintore Clinic. 'For 20 years, Peter Short, who came with me to Katherine Hospital and David Brummitt since 1991. Over the years we've trained many a medical student and doctors training to enter general practice.'

Selling the clinic prior to retirement Jim admits computers finally beat him. 'The Clinic is now part of the national Family Medicine Program. This is good for the people.'

But Jim and Marie have no plans of leaving Katherine. 'We've already purchased our plots at the local cemetery,' they both laugh. 'Katherine will always be our home.'

TOM NICHOLS

CROC CATCHER – PARKS AND WILDLIFE

CROCODILES ROCK

Darwin is right in the middle of prime crocodile habitat, where these predators almost outnumber residents. Managing the last line of defence between humans and crocodiles is Tom Nichols, veteran Senior Wildlife Ranger at NT Parks and Wildlife Commission's Crocodile Management Unit, with his specialist team of five.

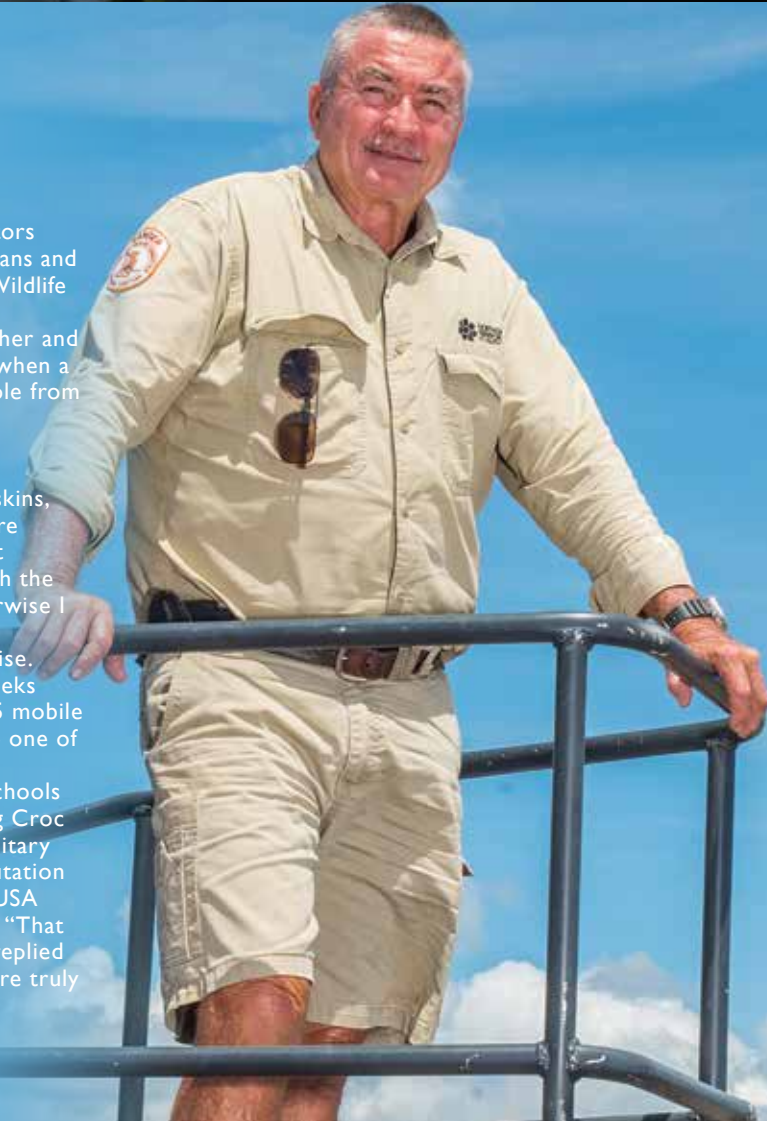
Darwin born and bred, Tom had always relished the outdoors. 'Both my father and grandfather insisted I get a trade, so I became a Diesel Fitter. But in 1981 when a Wildlife Ranger position was advertised I couldn't resist. Three other people from down south were offered the job before I eventually got it.'

Crocodiles weren't the issue back then with only around 5,000 because of previous hunting practices. Now there's over 100,000 in Territory waters.

'Established 20 years ago, the Crocodile Management Unit was Neville Haskins, me, a three metre tinny and a handful of traps — sometimes the crocs were bigger than our boat,' he laughs. Even losing two fingers and part of his left hand 14 years ago hasn't reduced his love of the job. 'The croc jumped with the snout rope attached, grabbing hold of my hand. Fortunately he let go otherwise I could've lost my arm.'

Today the specialist team encourages and educates everyone to Be Crocwise. They respond to 24 hour call outs, patrolling the Darwin coastline and creeks checking the 26 permanent traps, six permanent mobile traps and 40 to 45 mobile traps, during the Wet. 'Capturing around 300 crocs a year, we take them to one of the five Territory crocodile farms.'

The Unit is also part of a wider educational program for locals, tourists, schools and television worldwide. Several documentaries have been made including Croc Catchers, Outback Hunters and Wildlife Rescue. 'Our most important dignitary was Prince Harry in 2015. It's a true reflection of my team's excellent reputation that we were trusted to give him such a hands-on experience. Unlike the USA production team on Swamp People when the Producer commented to me, "That was good but you guys were boring, you made no mistakes." I smiled and replied to him, "I'll take that as a compliment." We may live in the outback but we're truly professional at what we do.'



RESIDENT TERRIFIC TERRITORIANS

MONICA JANIK

PAWS FOSTER CARER

FURRY FOSTERS

On arrival in Darwin with her partner Braedyn, Monica Janik found her home a little empty without a pet around. 'My family had four dogs back in Sydney, but rather than get our own dog I decided to foster. It's been an amazing journey doing this for PAWS.'

PAWS Darwin is a charitable organisation that focuses on the bond between people and animals by providing a re-homing program for abandoned or unclaimed animals.

'Having an animal at home is very therapeutic mentally, physically and socially,' she explains. 'I get attached while I have the dogs, but it's more rewarding to see them put on weight and become loving, relaxed companions again. Potential adoptive families come to our home to view the animals first. New owners then take them directly from our place, so it's a smooth, happy transition for the animal too.'

PAWS also provide advice to pet owners, particularly with behavioural management. 'Classes are designed to teach owners how to manage their pets quickly and effectively. PAWS run two regular dog classes and also private classes. Owners don't have to have animals from PAWS to participate.'

All adopted animals are micro chipped, desexed, wormed, tick and flea treated, and vaccinated.

'Part of my contribution is providing all the food for the animal I'm fostering. It's not a huge amount to outlay for the love and satisfaction that I get in return. I also prepare all the wet food, it's so much cheaper and better for the dogs.'

As well as foster families for either a cat or a dog, there's a vast array of volunteering jobs available. 'The team at PAWS are bound through a love of animals and a desire to achieve good things,' says Monica. 'They've certainly helped me settle in to Darwin and the Territory. Becoming a foster carer is one of the best things I've ever done, but I know we always need more people, so please check the PAWS website or their Facebook page and help spread the love.'

With more than 1,200 abused, abandoned or neglected animals coming into the shelter needing care, we rely heavily on volunteers who are the backbone and life blood of the society. Without volunteers, we would simply cease to operate. Their dedication, their time, their energy and their skills are what make us who we are, and what will make us who we become. With each new volunteer that joins us, our positive impact on the lives of animals grows stronger. Volunteering just might change your life – it's changed ours. And it will certainly change the lives of many animals in our care.

CHRISSY BUTLER

RSPCA VOLUNTEER

DOGGONE LUCK

Life hasn't always been perfect for 61 year old RSPCA volunteer Chrissy Butler. Losing her mother and family home during Cyclone Tracy and diagnosed with depression in 2003, Chrissy wouldn't swap hers for anyone and still gets on with living life.

The youngest daughter of Richard and Louisa Butler's 11 children, her father is Jawoyn and one of the stolen generation. 'Dad was removed from his family in Katherine and brought to Darwin in the 1910s, but he never held it against anyone. In fact he reckons it's why he excelled. After joining the Army during World War II Dad became the gardener at Government House meeting the Queen and many other dignitaries. That's where my interest in plants came from,' she smiles. 'Dad also instilled a sense of worth and a can-do attitude in all of us.'

Between running her own cleaning and gardening businesses, working part-time at the Casuarina Club and operating the Homework Centre for Aboriginal and Islander students at Sanderson High School providing meals, support and guidance to those with family issues, Chrissy raised her own four children alone after her husband left.

Today she's the proud grandmother of seven grandchildren.

'I like keeping busy and love animals. The RSPCA needs lots of help, so I volunteer daily. The activities are so therapeutic, especially for my so-called disability,' she continues. 'When Dr Olsen told me I had depression I asked him how would I have got it. "Well you don't get it from a packet of Weet-Bix." I've always remembered that, but I've also never let it stop me doing things.'

Chrissy helps RSPCA staff and other volunteers with cleaning, hosing out the adoption area, playing with the puppies, walking dogs and more. She also donates bones, chews and toys for the animals on a regular basis.

'I love Darwin, not just because I was born here or my extensive family network, I love the small town feel, great lifestyle, no pollution, natural wonders right on our doorstep and no barriers. The multicultural acceptance is what's missing in other Australian cities, especially when I lived in Sydney for some schooling. I'll never leave Darwin again.'





RESIDENT TERRIFIC TERRITORIANS

JOAN ANDROPOV

CHILDREN'S BOOK ILLUSTRATOR

COLOURING THE TERRITORY

After a lifetime in nursing and raising a family, the last thing Joan Andropov ever thought she'd be doing in retirement was illustrating children's books. 'I'm not a trained artist but enjoy my work, so that's really what's encouraged me the most,' she admits.

Her characterisation of a variety of Territory wildlife in a series of 10 children's books written by The Essington School students is captivating. The "Children As Authors" series was launched in August 2016.

'The series is the result of a creative writing program led by Essington School's Writer in Residence and well known Territorian Joanne van Os, during Semester One with some Year 4, 5 and 6 students,' Joan explains. 'I was asked to bring their words to life. It was exciting and scary. I was initially afraid of failing the school and the students, but it ended up being a sheer delight and gave me great satisfaction. Each book is a story about everyday animals around Darwin and the Territory. The children did a wonderful job.' Originally from Melbourne Joan came to Darwin in February 1974 with her husband Simon and two small sons from Lae in Papua New Guinea when Simon was recruited to set up and teach the new Darwin Community College Surveying and Civil Engineering Courses. 'We loved Darwin immediately and bought a C19 house in

Rapid Creek,' she recalls. 'We'd planned to renovate it over time, but Cyclone Tracy sped things up.'

Joan and Simon still live in that renovated home and also run Lily Pad Bed and Breakfast there. In 2011 their garden was showcased as part of the Australian Open Garden Scheme and The Essington School students sang and played music around the garden. 'Essington School has a special place in our hearts as our boys attended Rapid Creek Primary where Essington is now operating.'

Joan worked at both the old Myilly Point Hospital and later the new Darwin Hospital at Casuarina in Intensive Care, Coronary Care and Renal Dialysis. 'In retirement, gardening and painting are now my fulltime hobbies, pleasantly interrupted by the wants of our six gorgeous grandchildren.'

One son, Dimitri, has three Medical Clinics around Darwin and her paintings adorn the clinics walls. Their beauty creates a calming atmosphere throughout the rooms. 'After 43 years in Darwin, the city may have grown enormously, but it's still small enough for every person to contribute,' Joan said. 'We have to open our arms to change but at the same time not let go of our values. We're more than happy in the Territory. Life is good, especially in retirement and if my new found hobby helps other that's even better.'



RESIDENT TERRIFIC TERRITORIANS

THE TANGEY FAMILY

ALICE SPRINGS

A BEAUTIFUL WORLD

When he landed in Alice Springs from Melbourne back in 1988, Chris Tangey was looking for a sand change not a sea one. 'My car actually gave up the ghost with a cracked head. It cost a lot to replace so I had to get a job,' he recalls. 'I'd been escaping Drive Time radio presenting in Melbourne, and ended up as the brekkie announcer and production manager at 8HA instead until I moved to Imparja TV as an announcer.' It was here Chris began playing around with camera equipment. 'I didn't have enough to fill my days, so I fiddled around teaching myself to do television ads, documentaries and news stories. It was great, so I established Alice Springs Film and TV where we do just about everything today including music videos and scouting locations for film companies even providing crews and equipment.' There's a variety of National Geographic documentaries, BBC UK stories and major movie work on the ASFTV website, including Red Storm, Fire Tornado and Baz Luhrmann's movie Australia. 'By far my greatest achievement was marrying Annie in 1994 who is a nurse and midwife working in Aboriginal Health Services, and then adopting our three wonderful Ethiopian children who have fulfilled our life.' Through church friends they discovered there were many

orphaned children in Ethiopia. 'Australia had agreements in place but it still took almost six years for us to be able to bring brother and sister, Henok and Lidiya home,' explains Chris. 'The day we were to leave Ethiopia another girl turned up to say goodbye. She was their older sister Tsigereda, who we knew nothing of. It took another two years and a mountain of legal paperwork for her to also be able to join us as she was considered too old for adoption.'

The children couldn't read, write or speak English before coming to Australia. Now seven years on all have embraced their new home and culture with everything they have. Tsigereda is currently studying Engineering at Adelaide University while also tutoring and welcoming other students at St Anne's College. 'She has three more years to go,' continues Chris. 'Lidiya is in her final year at St Phillip's here and wants to go straight to university next year. Both she and Henok have also excelled in a variety of sports. Having all of them in our life has been so rewarding. They're so grounded and not materialistic at all. They don't even take any notice of the celebrities I work with like Jessica Mauboy, or John Williamson who's simply Uncle John to them. The Alice is a great home for all of us.'



Jess Mauboy pops in and insists on a selfie with Henok!



Tsigereda gets in the school formal mood with friend.



The kids when they were young.



RESIDENT TERRIFIC TERRITORIANS

ELEANOR DIXON

'RAYELLA' MUSICIAN – ELLIOTT

MENTORING WITH MUSIC

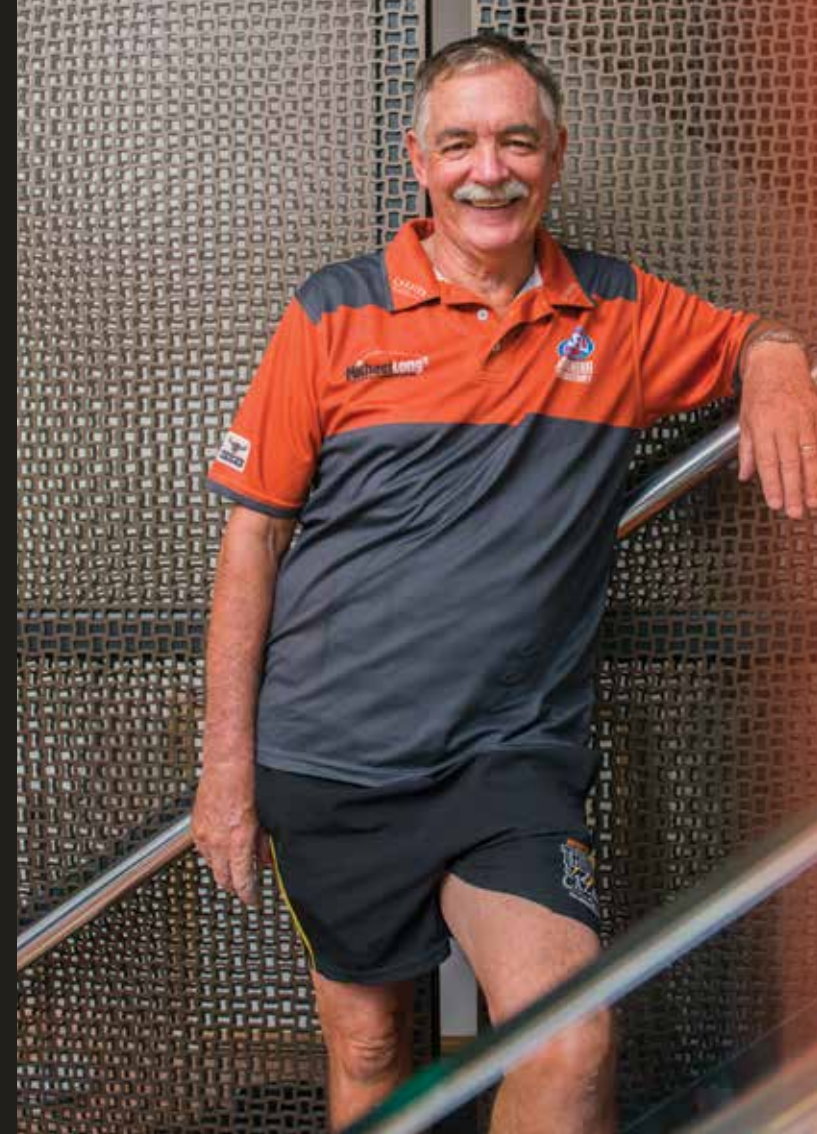
On a high with the recent release of a collaborative EP with Opera Australia Chamber Orchestra, Rayella's Eleanor Dixon is excited. 'It's been amazing. Opera Australia adds a new dimension to our traditional desert rock and everyone is loving it.' Released on 10th March the EP sales have been outstanding. The two groups first met in 2015 at the annual Desert Harmony Festival in Tennant Creek, then performed together at Territory Day celebrations in 2016. 'While here for rehearsals we recorded six songs together that Iain Grandage had orchestrated from our original songs. It's so different and beautiful.'

'Rayella' is father and daughter Indigenous duo Ray and Eleanor Dixon and home is Marlinja Community 730 kilometres south of Darwin, population 30. 'It seems like I've been away for ages. Late last year Rayella had shows in Melbourne with Opera Australia, this year touring festivals in WA and Melbourne with my all female group Kardjarla Kirri-darra (meaning sand hill women) and now with The Violent Femmes in Darwin and Brisbane. I first met Femmes' Brian Ritchie at the Bush Band Bash a couple of years ago and he immediately had us perform in Hobart,' explains Eleanor. 'I'm looking forward to escaping and going out bush camping when I get home before our next shows begin at the end of April.'

Eleanor grew up with music. 'I always loved Sundays, I sang and Dad played guitar at the church. I also wrote poetry that grew into songwriting – or as I like to say – storytelling. When Dad previously played in the Kulimindini band in the 70s he also had a regular job. Now his job is fulltime musician since we formed Rayella in 2014. It's been a remarkable journey so far and even though my own kids are only young we do take them when possible or Mum looks after them at home.'

Eleanor's ultimate aim is to inspire and encourage the younger ones. 'Writing and performing songs in our language is very important. Our children need something to hold on to. What better way to keep it than through a song and telling the stories that are important to our children.'

Eleanor also speaks Mudburra, her father's tongue and Garawa, her mother's from the Gulf. Many of her own compositions tell stories about being a young girl growing up to womanhood. 'I want to explain to our younger generation how to look after yourself. It's not easy being a young woman. When growing up you need someone to look up to. Mentoring through my songs and Music NT Programs is important. My latest solo of my own song on Desert Divas Volume Two compilation has just been released and is going really well,' she adds. 'There's so many talented NT Indigenous divas singing on it. It's so inspirational. We're certainly lucky here in the Territory. I hope we can continue this for many years to come.'



RESIDENT TERRIFIC TERRITORIANS

MICHAEL BARFOOT

HISTORIAN AFLNT

RESTORING HISTORY

This NTFL season marks 100 years of Territory football and a Hall of Fame has opened to the public at TIO Stadium Marrara. 'It includes an ongoing, in-depth pictorial and written story of Australian football in the Northern Territory, plus a painting of the Team of the Century by artist and Fitzroy footballer Jamie Cooper,' explains Michael Barfoot. 'Dr Matthew Stephens has also been an enormous help in compiling a lot of the records, photographs, stories and material.'

Originally from Melbourne, since 1981 Michael has been the AFLNT Football and Facilities Manager. 'When I started I asked about the League's history and was simply handed a single sheet of paper with a few statistics and a list of Nichols Medal and Grand Final Winners since 1946 everything else had been lost in Cyclone Tracy.'

In his youth Michael enjoyed collecting everything possible about his parent's team South Melbourne and each year compiled a history book of the memorabilia. So in his own time he spent many long hours in the library researching files and papers for details on the history of the NTFL.

'I have a copy of every football article from 1916 to 1991,' he continues. 'The NT Times reported that on Saturday 27 January 1917 "The first NTFL match on Darwin Oval was between Waratahs and Wanderers." The original teams were Wanderers, Waratahs and Warriors and Premiers were Wanderers. A three-team competition was quite an achievement considering Darwin's population was only 1300 and half were Chinese. Play has only been suspended twice – five seasons during World War II and then when Cyclone Tracy destroyed most of Darwin.'

By 1995 Michael had written and compiled the history from 1916 to 1995. Titled History of the NTFL totalling 168 pages. 'Along with the assistance of then President Tony Shaw, 2000 books were printed and 1500 were sold. Since then I've learned so much more with the help of Dr Stephens and now have over 800 pages of information. Once funds are sourced we'll incorporate in a reprint.'

Michael admits it's still great after almost four decades to be able to work within an industry he loves. 'I continue because of the wonderful volunteers, administrators, work colleagues and others associated with our great game.'

EMMA KRAFT

MOUNTAIN RUNNING

RUNNER HEAVEN

A female always needs shoes and Emma Kraft's full wall shoe rack would be any woman's dream, except it's full of runners. 'There's a few pairs of stilettos hidden in there somewhere,' laughs the lanky 34 year old blonde. 'Working for Nike aided in building my collection. I still have my first pair of competition runners, they're not usable, but are for good luck.'

Emma's no ordinary runner, but an Australian Mountain Running Champion Team Representative. 'We have a mountain in Alice, Mt Gillen at West Gap MacDonnell Ranges. It's closed to the public but I get an authorised key to do my training there.' Gymnastics and netball previously filled Emma's life. 'I went for a run during a break from netball training and loved it. I then made the NT School Games athletics team. In 2013 I settled on mountain running and have made the Australian World Championship team twice so far: 2013 in Poland and 2014 in Italy. 2015 I was Team Manager due to injury, but my fiancé Brad White was in the team, and I've just been named in the Australian team for the 2017 Championship in Italy.'

While it's hard at times, her Adelaide coach Adam Didyk, who also coaches Jessica Trengove, a Commonwealth and Olympic marathon runner, has formulated comprehensive training plans. 'Along with my personal trainer Nick Moody all have assisted in keeping me injury free, much stronger and very confident. The community have been amazing in their sponsorship and support.'

With a Masters in Public Health and Nutrition, Emma has always called The Alice home. 'As a Trachoma Health Promotions Officer with NT Department of Health I also get to work in some Remote Indigenous Communities. Then I spend five hours a week as Alice Springs Athletics Coordinator with Athletics NT, plus working with a variety of schools, clubs and volunteers via Athlete and Role Models, Reddust and Athletics for the Outback with Athletics Australia along with other role models to encourage and create interest in all sports and keeping active.'

Also a Level Two athletics coach, 'My next objective, along with helping everyone reach their goals, is reaching my own goal of putting Alice Springs and the NT on the running map.'



HEATHER NELSON

VOLUNTEER – FRILLY'S AND NIGHTCLIFF UNITING CHURCH OP SHOP

OPTING FOR VOLUNTEERING

For over 40 years the Op Shop at Nightcliff Uniting Church has been helping many a Territory family. 'Raising four young children alone 20 years ago I certainly shopped there. I also made some wonderful friends,' recalls Heather Nelson. 'That's why 12 years later when the kids were self-sufficient I returned there to volunteer.'

It is not your normal Op Shop. 'There's also Frilly's, a community coffee shop, The Mulch Pit, a community garden space, weekday playgroups, cooking demonstrations Friday night, music sessions on Saturday and then everything gets packed up Saturday night for church services on Sunday,' she laughs.

The shop is open 4 to 6pm Friday and Saturday mornings and offers Darwin's best bargains in clothing, books, toys and household items.

Like most Territory people, Heather came from Melbourne 30 years ago and never left. 'I was a cook at The Beachfront Hotel Nightcliff. For the last 15 years I've worked with young people in schools and teaching students to read as well as volunteering. I believe in giving back to the community that has assisted me.'

Heather is on the committee at the op shop, sorts items on Tuesday evenings, sells, bakes cakes for the coffee shop, assists with promotions, advertising and fundraising activities. 'Sorting is a Pandora's box. We have numerous new items complete with price tags – perhaps one of the perils of online shopping and not buying local or trying first – but our customers certainly gain from this and we are grateful. Then there's the 'mystery items' – the one none of us know what it actually is or its use. We display it for people to guess. Usually they get solved and it goes to a new home and we all become a little wiser.'

More volunteers are always required. 'We couldn't operate without them. Recently when one grandmother volunteer passed on, both her daughter and granddaughter joined us instead. If anyone wants to volunteer they just need to check out Frilly's and Nightcliff Uniting Church Facebook site or drop in and see us. The Territory has many wonderful people and they've helped me considerably throughout my life. I hope I can do the same.'

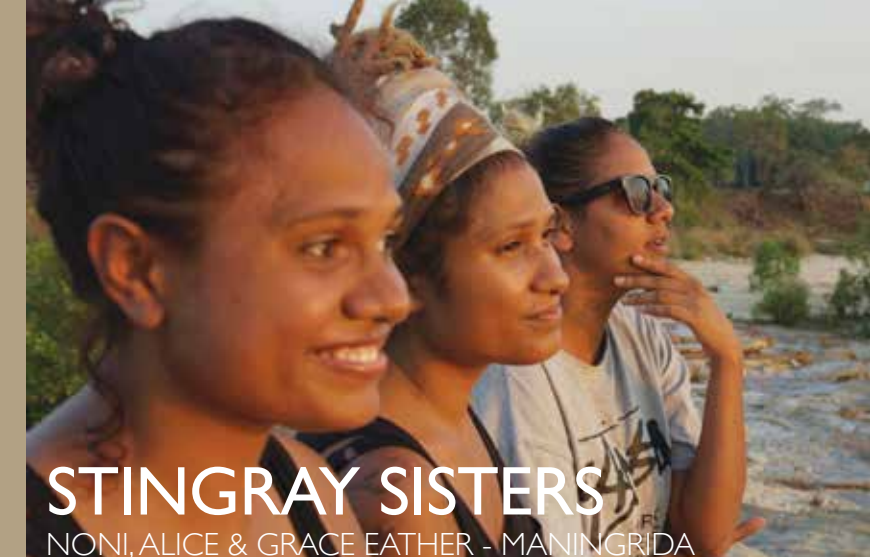


Growing up in Brisbane with their white artist father and his family, Noni, Alice and Grace Eather regularly returned to their mother's saltwater home of Maningrida. 'Education is important, as is our traditional language, culture, community and connecting, so Babba (Dad) made sure we came home regularly,' tells Noni. 'Moving between two cultures is like living in two different worlds. I'm so grateful we never lost our native Ndjebbana language. Today we are proud Kunibidji women, assisting my Kikka (mum), Helen Djimbarrawala Williams, a Maningrida community clan owner and we give back to our community through education.'

The youngest, Grace, is currently in Brisbane with her new baby. Noni is the rock and an amazing mother that works in Family Support in Maningrida. Alice, a teacher at the local school is the committed activist and go-to woman. She discovered the petroleum company's small newspaper ad to explore for oil and gas across Arnhem Land. 'The threat of mining is one of our biggest challenges. Exploration will destroy important sacred areas and devastate fishing grounds that our community rely on. Alice was instrumental in gathering the surrounding communities to ensure we were all on the same page in fighting this. Katrina Channells, our school friend and film producer then created the three part documentary series The Stingray Sisters. It was first released online, then premiered at Darwin's 2016 Film Festival opening people's eyes to fracking and its effect.'

The series gives unparalleled access to a remote Australian Aboriginal community and what life is really like for a modern Aboriginal family through the sisters' lives. They're constantly managing challenges that most of us will never know. The title stems from the night of Noni's birth, when her father caught six beautiful stingrays.

Noni has just returned from the Vancouver International Women's Film Festival. 'The Stingray Sisters was shown on closing night to a standing ovation. It was wonderful. The other highlight for me was connecting with Canada's First Nation People. We can learn so much from each other. I'm so lucky to be able to transit these two worlds and be able to bring the best back to assist our community.'



STINGRAY SISTERS

NONI, ALICE & GRACE EATHER - MANINGRIDA

BEST OF TWO WORLDS



LARRY PHILLIPS

CROSSFIT MASTER

FORGING FITNESS

Prior to August 2016 Larry Phillips had never attempted CrossFit, now seven months later he's ranked 97th in the Men's Masters over 60 for the world and will compete in the Pacific Regionals in Melbourne and is aiming to represent NT and Australia at the World CrossFit Games in USA in August.

'I'd always been reasonably fit and wanted something more challenging, but not competitive,' he stated. 'My coach and others at CrossFit Top End finally convinced me to compete in the first Open in February. I topped Australia and came 34th in the world in the first of the five workouts. I was hooked.' Around for 10 years, competitive CrossFit is hard, fast, full of constantly varying functional movements, a combination of major lifts, a mastering of basic gymnastics and also running, swimming, rowing, bike riding and more. It improves fitness and health.

Larry trains for 90 minutes six days a week. 'I eat right, cleaner and feel so much better for it too. A large part of my success is the programming prepared by Cobic Head from CrossFit Top End. The workouts are short, highly intense and constantly varying.'

All CrossFit workouts are driven by data and based on functional core movements. Intensity is essential for results. 'The more work you do in less time, or the higher the power output the more intense the effort. The program prepares trainees for any physical contingency. Many people doing CrossFit are Olympians. Tia Clair Tommey, Olympic weightlifter from Queensland flew direct to Rio last year after coming outright 2nd in the World Open CrossFit Games. It was only her third international competition and her Olympic debut.'

There are now more than 400,000 people competing worldwide in the CrossFit Open that Larry is a part of. 'The natural camaraderie, competition and fun of sport yields an intensity that cannot be matched by any other. I'm so lucky that one of the best CrossFit groups in Australia is right here in Darwin. They've been so supportive and encouraging, it's been a wonderful journey so far and I'm hoping to make them all proud.'



MIKE FOLEY OAM

ARTS

TUNED INTO THE TERRITORY

Since 1977 New Zealand import Mike Foley has called himself a fair dinkum Aussie and the Territory home.

While his father wanted him to have a trade, Mike's heart was entrenched in music from the day he received a ukulele when eight. 'At school I was so short I was the last to get a musical instrument and ended up with the double bass. Standing on a stool to play it, the sound reverberated through my soul and I fell in love. It's resonated through my life ever since. Dad's best advice when I left home at 16 was, "Don't ever waste your life doing something you hate" and I haven't. I've done so much I call it a jack-of-all-trades approach.'

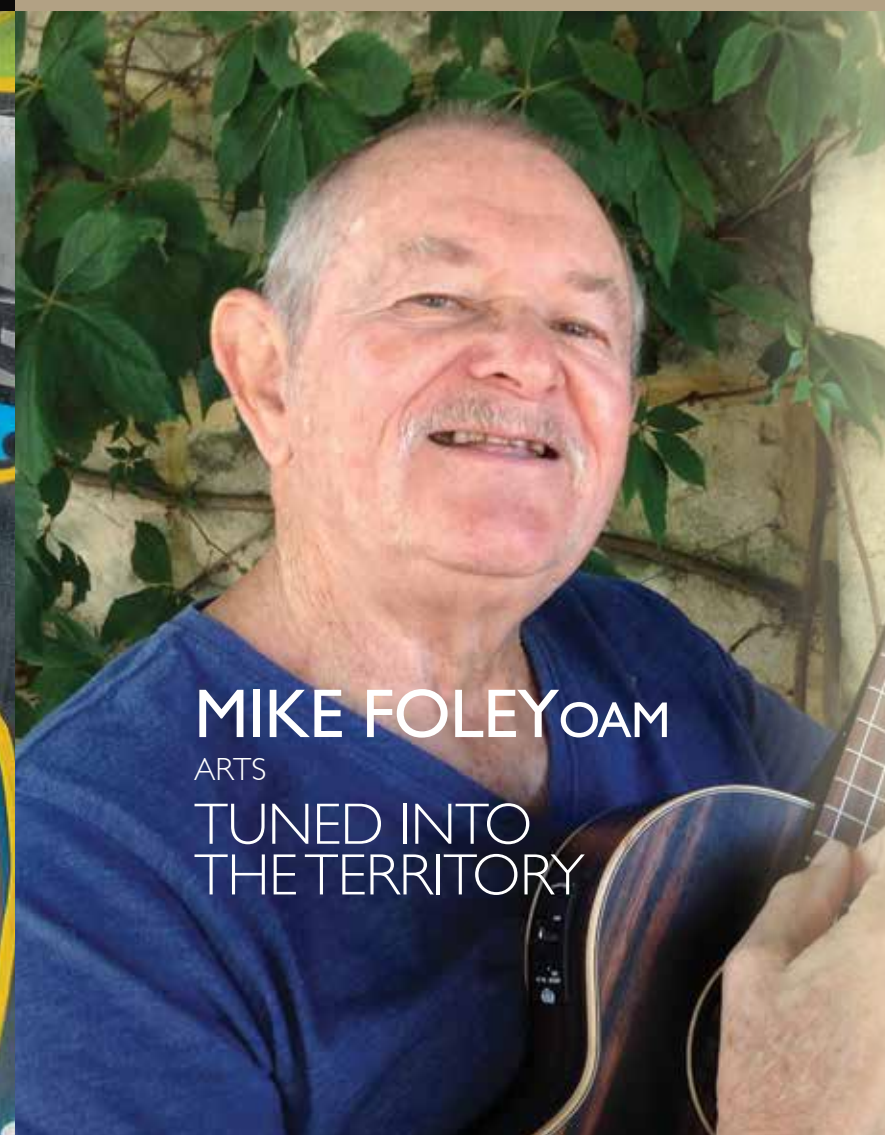
Mike has been instrumental in establishing the NT Jazz Action Society Sunset Jazz program, the World Water Ski Racing Championships and Darwin's only Telethon. His charity concerts have raised thousands of dollars for Earthquake and Tsunami appeals, Alzheimer's Association and Cancer Council NT.

'I've also been fortunate to have toured with many big entertainment names, including Winifred Atwell, Judith Durham, Frank Ifield and Louis Armstrong.'

Mike was Executive Director of the Australia Day Council, Board Member of Browns Mart Community Arts, National Heart Foundation NT, Variety NT and taught at CDU School of Youth Music. On Australia Day this year he was awarded an OAM for his services to the community.

'My most significant achievement has been the founding of the Seniors of Excellence NT Inc program in 2014. It celebrates the wonderful work Seniors aged over 65 perform voluntarily. In three years we've acknowledged 50 magnificent seniors from all over the NT. Their contributions are amazing, always assisting those in need. Due to its success other states are now interested in its model.'

At 76, Mike and his wife Kay are setting off on their annual holiday, and his trusty ukulele is in the suitcase. 'There'll be plenty of singing onboard the cruise, then a few pub engagements in Ireland and the UK,' he smiles cheekily. 'Wherever I go around the world, I'm proud to sing my own and other great Aussie songs and promote my wonderful home, the NT.'



RESIDENT TERRIFIC TERRITORIANS

Speaking with barely an accent, it's unimaginable that Spanish born Dr Lucas de Toca couldn't speak English before coming to Australia in 2005. 'I'd visit for three months at a time,' he recalls. 'Then I fell in love with Australia and its people and applied for residency in 2010.' Now he's Chief Health Officer for Miwatj Health, the Regional Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Service that provides universal Comprehensive Primary Health in remote East Arnhem Land Australia, and also speaks Yolngu Matha.

A medical graduate of Autonomous University of Madrid, with a Master of Public Health from Harvard University, Lucas completed his placement in Sydney.


'I've always been interested in public health, particularly health systems strengthening and the expansion of effective universal health coverage,' he explains. 'I originally came to Nhulunbuy for a 10 day volunteer stint. It extended to six weeks, then 12 and four years later I'm still here with no plans to leave.'

Miwatj Health is the largest remote Aboriginal Health Service in Australia looking after 6,500 people across five regional communities and two islands. 'With over 50% we're also the largest employer of locals. Last year we were awarded NT GP Training Post of the Year — a great example of Aboriginal community controlled health organisations delivering quality training and excellence in primary health and health professional education.'

Services are delivered as close as possible to where people live. 'In the past two years we've made a deliberate effort to increase resources for longer-term prevention and to access people who do not normally attend a fixed clinic. Our Tackling Indigenous Smoking employs local Yolngu as Tobacco Workers who engage in a range of activities and use role models to deliver direct messages about healthy living.'

Lucas never imagined making this remote ancient land his home. 'But it is and I'm incredibly privileged to be able to be part of this journey and that the Elders and Miwatj Board allow me to live on their land seeing firsthand what the application of a human rights based approach looks like. I intend to be here as long as they allow me to stay.'

RESIDENT TERRIFIC TERRITORIANS

A portrait of Dr Lucas de Toca, a man with dark hair and a beard, smiling. He is wearing a blue button-down shirt. The background is dark with a light installation of white star shapes on a dark surface.

DR LUCAS DE
TOCA MD MPH
MIWATJ HEALTH EAST ARNHAM LAND


SPEAKING THEIR
LANGUAGE

Photographed at Casuarina Square with light installation based on Jamie Wanambi's design for a memorial pole depicting the Milky Way story.

PAUL AH CHEE NGALA

ALICE SPRINGS DESERT PARK

THE RIGHT TRACK

A portrait of Paul Ah Chee Ngala, an older man with grey hair, smiling. He is wearing a blue and white checkered shirt. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage.

Beginning his working life as a road design draftsman, Paul Ah Chee Ngala's leadership skills and entrepreneurial nature has seen many successful routes carved nationally and internationally for Central Australian businesses and Aboriginal people. 'My goal has always been to see Territory communities functioning well and providing opportunities and pathways for becoming economically self-sufficient.'

From Aboriginal and Chinese decent, Paul's been described as a musician, businessman and cultural entrepreneur. He's held appointments on Desert Knowledge Australia, National Collection Council Australia, Australian Tourism Commission and many more. Winner of several awards himself, Paul's efforts have seen numerous businesses also awarded for excellence.

'Ensuring business sustainability and improving job security for Indigenous people is a major priority. As Manager of the Aboriginal Australia Art and Culture Centre in 1997 we trained over 40 Aboriginal staff from ages 18 to 60. I still provide advice and mentoring today.'

Since 2012 he's been the Director of the world-renowned Alice Springs Desert Park. 'We're re-establishing it as a major tourist attraction. For the past five years we've had 100% growth in revenue and in 2016 visitors totalled 64,000. We've many successful breeding programs for our rare and endangered species and it's now the Park's 20th year. When visiting in 1997 David Attenborough stated, "There is no museum or wildlife park in the world that can match it." It's certainly been an amazing journey.'

Paul's also an extremely creative person who enjoys playing guitar, supporting community arts, cultural festivals and sporting events. He's a founding member of the local Alice Springs band Amunda. 'For eight years we played major festivals such as The Big Day Out and Survival Day concerts at La Perouse, and travelled to every main Territory community performing and conducting workshops with aspiring musicians. It was a fun period. We produced many successes including three recordings and support tours, the most memorable with The Cruel Sea.'

His wife of 25 years Donna and three adult children are also firmly active around the Alice. 'We just hope that our work whether musical, social or business related continues to inspire and assist the community and its people.'