Stories of Aboriginal Heritage
Through a
Multi Media Exploration of Gumleaf Music

RMIT UNIVERSITY September 2007
Title:        Stories of Aboriginal Heritage Through a Multi-Media
             Exploration of Gumleaf Music

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Date submitted:  28 November 2007

Declaration by the candidate

I certify that:
This thesis is entirely my own work, and due acknowledgement have been made where appropriate
The work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award
The content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program
Mike Jordan (drums), Steve Sedergreen (piano), Ben Robertson (bass), Andy Baylor (guitar) and Ron Murray (didgeridoo) played on the audio tracks
Anthony (Tok) Norris was the recording engineer for the CD
Stephen Skok filmed and edited the Recording Project
Stephen Skok’s photographs have been incorporated into the work
Terry Melvin was the technical producer of the Digital Story and the photographer of the Gumleaves.

Candidate’s signature:
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Acknowledgments

I would like to express my deep gratitude and appreciation to:

My wife Lorraine (Bunta) Patten for the support, motivation and love that she has given me in my Masters project and throughout my life

Joel Wright for his tremendous political knowledge

Jarrod Atkinson for his generous technical assistance at the computer

Dr Laura Brearley for the wonderful Koorie Cohort of Researchers program which has given me confidence and has helped me recognise my ability to reach my goals

My fellow students in the Koorie Cohort for sharing the journey with me

Dr Kipps Horn for the one-on-one tutorial support within my project

Tony (Tok) Norris for his outstanding skills as a Recording Engineer

Steven Skok for the high quality photography and film making within the Recording Project

Steve Sedergreen, Mike Jordan, Andy Baylor, Ben Robertson and Ron Murray for the generosity and excellent musical skills that they have brought to my Gumleaf Project

Emma Barrow for her depth of understanding of my work, and her invaluable assistance with layout and design

Dr Robin Ryan, Dr John Whiteoak and Dr Aline Scott-Maxwell for their guidance, encouragement and support throughout my research project

Sharon West for always being there to support my artwork

Prof Elizabeth Grierson for her deep understanding of Indigenous issues and for opening up the door to the world of the academy to me
Abstract

Within this research project, I use an arts-based, multi-vocal approach, incorporating songs, artworks and stories to explore some of the cultural, political and spiritual dimensions of Gumleaf Music. The research builds on previous work I have undertaken in partnership with academics at Monash University and Macquarie University (Ryan, 1999; Whiteoak, 2000; Hayward, 2004) in which I focused on traditional and contemporary songs from the Indigenous community.

At the core of this research is a series of Gumleaf songs from this heritage, each of which reveal a different dimension of Indigenous culture. I have undertaken research about each of the songs, documenting their historical and cultural contexts.

My research question is:
In what ways can a multi-media exploration of Gumleaf music reveal narrative dimensions of Aboriginal heritage?

Central to my Master of Arts is a Recording Project in which I have recorded ten tracks of Gumleaf music including the song series as well as some additional songs undertaken in collaboration with other musicians. A DVD of the film of the Recording Project accompanies this CD of songs.

The end product of my research is a performance of songs and stories about Gumleaf music.
Artefacts

My Master of Arts includes the following artefacts:

- An *Exegesis* in which I tell the story of my research, Gumleaf playing and Gumleaf poems
- A *CD* of 10 Audio Tracks
- A *DVD* of the filming of the Recording Project
- Two *paintings* selected from artworks I have undertaken during the course of my Masters
- One *Digital Story*
1. Overview of Research

1.1 Introduction
In a paper presented at the Stockholm Music Acoustics Conference in August 2003, Neville Fletcher presented a paper entitled ‘Australian Aboriginal Musical Instruments: The didgeridoo, The Bullroarer and The Gumleaf’. In this paper, Fletcher contends that the sound of the Gumleaf ‘has no obvious musical value’ (Fletcher 2003).

My Masters of Arts project contests this view.

In my musical performances, artwork and teachings, I explore Aboriginal heritage through different artistic media. Within this research project, I use an arts-based multi-vocal approach, incorporating song, art-works and stories, to explore some of the cultural, political and spiritual dimensions of our contemporary indigenous culture.

Central to my research project is a CD of Gumleaf Songs with an accompanying DVD of the Recording Project. The CD contains recordings of my Gumleaf playing in different genres and with different combinations of other instruments.

This multi-media exploration of my Gumleaf music will be a means through which I explore my Aboriginal heritage.

1.2 Research Question
My research question is:
In what ways can a multi-media exploration of Gumleaf music reveal narrative dimensions of Aboriginal heritage?

1.3 Overview of Song Cycle
This exegesis will include my reflections about the process of researching and a documentation of the following songs:
1.4 Methodology
The research methodology I have used in this study combines the story-telling approach of Narrative Inquiry (Atkinson 2007; Pinnegar & Daynes 2007; Chase 2005; Clandinin 2007; Clandinin & Connelly 1999; Cavarero 2000) interpreted through artistic expression (Pink 2007, 2004; Finley 2005; Sullivan 2005; Richardson 2001, 2000; Ellis & Flaherty 1992; Ellis 1997; Barone & Eisner 1997).

My incorporation of Indigenous ways of knowing into this research has been informed by the decolonised research methodologies of Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Smith 2001, 2005) and Russell Bishop (Bishop 2005). Both Smith and Bishop place the Indigenous voice as central and this has underpinned my entire approach. The research has also drawn on the Indigenous research methodology of deep and respectful listening ‘Dadirri’ (Ungunmerr 1999; Atkinson, 2001). Historical resources about the East Gippsland region where I come from have also shaped my research (Gardner 1993; Howitt 2001).

I have arranged and recorded the song series, with other musicians accompanying me. This process has been filmed. As part of the contextualisation process, I have also developed a series of original artworks, which have revealed the issues raised in the songs through another medium. I have drawn on my skills as a story-teller to deepen the ways in which the songs can be experienced through the medium of narrative.

In my research, my use of many media to explore my research question relates to the decolonisation of research practice and reveals the significance of oral wisdom associated with Indigenous ways of knowing.
1.5 Ethical Issues

The conduct of my research has involved being sensitive to ethical issues related to Indigenous culture. In this respect I am an Indigenous Elder and as such I am fully aware of protocols and ethical issues related to my field of study.

The project is underpinned by the AIATSIS principles of ethical research stipulated in the AIATSIS Guidelines for Ethical Research in Indigenous Studies, 2002, which is listed on the AIATSIS website, http://www.aiatsis.gov.au.

These AIATSIS principles encompass consultation, negotiation and mutual understanding, respect, recognition and involvement, as well as a shared understanding and agreement about the benefits and outcomes of the research. The following ethical principles of AIATSIS specifically underpin the approach to the sourcing of participants and the methods of recruitment:

A1. Consultation, negotiation and free and informed consent are the foundations for research with or about Indigenous peoples

A2. The responsibility for consultation and negotiation is on-going

B.4. Indigenous knowledge systems and processes must be respected

B 6. The intellectual and cultural property rights of Indigenous people must be respected and preserved.

Fig3
2. My History as an Indigenous Musician and Performer

2.1 Early Days
I was born in Orbost in 1943 but lived in Newmerella, a fringe dwelling place, four miles east along the Princes Highway on the way to Melbourne. In the Newmerella Koorie Community, there were about 15 families. Most were related through my mother’s side. My father was a saw-mill hand. He moved around a lot and worked on different saw mills in Gippsland. The last place my father worked was at Orbost where he was killed in an accident. He died when I was 11 years old.

2.2 First Contact with the Gumleaf
I first heard the Gumleaf played in Newmerella, a small fringe settlement where I lived 4 miles east of Orbost. It was in 1948 when I was five years old that I first heard my great Uncle Lindsay (Hobbs) Thomas play a few tunes on the Gumleaf. It was an experience I will never forget.

I remember the moment very well when I picked a Gumleaf off a tree next to me and made my first sound. By the time I was nine years old I was playing a variety of songs from that era. Even came second in amateur contest held in the Mechanics Hall in Orbost in 1949, accompanied by my Aunty on the piano.

I used to practice a lot in an old gravel quarry in the bush called the ‘Newmerella Pit’. I can still remember it very clearly today. I heard this noise like a bird call and I saw him pick a Gumleaf from a tree. At that time I did the same as he did and that is when I first made a sound on the leaf. It blew me out. I showed my Mum and she was blown out too.

2.3 Musical Education
I remember the first day I started school at the Newmerella Primary School. The teacher was Mr George Collis who later on was involved in the Newmerella Football Club. He also was very helpful to the Koories in Newmerella who didn’t get a proper education. He was well liked by all the Koorie Elders. I didn’t have any singing classes until I went to the Orbost High School in 1954. In that school I was put up of the front of the class because of my strong voice. Nothing ever came of
the singing I did at that school. We left Orbost in 1958 with my mother then we moved to Narooma and settled down.

This photo was taken in Bruthen in 1948 by the Weekly Times for the ‘Back to Bruthen Week’. My grand uncle Lindsay (Hobbs) Thomas is the third person from the right.

![Image of people playing instruments](Plate12)

Plate 12: Alex Innes with his Gumleaf Band at the “Back to Bruthen” Celebrations, *The Weekly Times*, Wednesday 7 April 1948: 21. The branch of leaves is either Blue Box (*Eucalyptus baueriana*) or Red Box (*E. polyanthemos*). Herbert Patten’s great-uncle Lindsay Thomas is pictured third from the right.

Fig4

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3. The Gumleaf as a Musical Instrument

Fig. 5 Photograph of unknown Indigenous person playing the Gumleaf
Gumleaf music 1930
Smith, Julian, 1873-1947

3.1 Historical and Cultural Context of Gumleaf Music

Many people speculate that the Gumleaf was a traditional Aboriginal musical instrument like the didgeridoo but there are no written records that prove this. In her doctoral thesis, ‘A Lonely Place, A Spiritual Place’ (1999), Dr Robin Ryan undertook an extensive investigation of the history of Gumleaf music and its connection to Australian Indigenous culture. She could not find any evidence of a traditional connection.

From her research, she contends that Gumleaf playing in Australia was first documented in a written form around 1900. There is however oral evidence that Gumleaf music was played by early missionaries about 1815 in South Australia Ryan (1999).

I have heard people talking about the possibility of the Gumleaf being used in cultural ways. In traditional Aboriginal culture, the women’s role would mostly be gathering fruits and berries and looking after the children. There is a possibility, as

2Smith, J 1930, Gumleaf music, National Library of Victoria, photograph.
they were surrounded by leaves of all sorts of eucalypts, that they used leaves as a way of calling kids back if they wandered too far away from them.

Men, on the other hand, could have played them to mimic birds and animals in their corroborees and dances. They could have also been used as a communication signal when they hunting. I don’t have direct evidence of this but in my heart I think this would have happened. That is how I feel.

The case for universal or at least widespread participation in the origins of leaf blowing is strong, but Gumleaf sounds “belong” to Australia. The Gumleaf carries deep symbolism as an environmental, aromatic, and sonic icon from which artists have squeezed a quintessentially “Australian” essence. Its musical capabilities represented an evocative manifestation, or projection, of this icon amidst the intense hype of nationalist discourse surrounding the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. At the same time, the musical standardization demanded of participants in Gumleaf contests exposes the small number of Aboriginal contestants to a subtle loss of distinction that all but disenfranchises them from their long cultural, economic, spiritual, and environmental attachment to Gumleaves as sound producers. To counteract these contemporary uses and abuses of the Gumleaf, the Aboriginal exponents have recently begun to elevate the Gumleaf as a site for the reclamation of indigenous cultural space. (Ryan 2006)

In a paper called Australian Aboriginal Musical Instruments: the didgeridoo, the bullroarer and the gumleaf4 Neville H. Fletcher spoke of the gumleaf having little musical capability, like a back yard novelty whistle. I contest this view.

The Australian Aboriginal people developed three musical instruments - the didgeridoo, the bullroarer, and the Gumleaf. The Gumleaf, as the name suggests, is a tree leaf, held against the lips and blown to act as a vibrating valve with "blown-open" configuration. Originally intended to imitate bird-calls. (Fletcher 2003)

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4 Neville H. Fletcher, Research School of Physical Sciences, Australian National University, Canberra 0200, School of Physics, University of New South Wales, Sydney 2052
Presented at the Stockholm Music Acoustics Conference SMAC03 in August 2003
3.2 Gumleaf Species

The Gumleaf is a basic musical instrument. It consists simply of a leaf from one of the various species of Eucalypt trees growing throughout Australia. These are some of the species of leaves I use.

| Black Box or River Box         | (E.largiflorens) |
| Blackbutt                      | (E.piluaris)     |
| Blue Box or Round-leaved Box   | (E.bauerana)     |
| Brittle Gum                    | (E.manniferra)   |
| Flooded Gum                    | (Moitch.E.microtheca) |
| Forest red Gum                 | (E.tereticornis) |
| Gippsland (southern) Mahogany  | (E.botryoides)   |
| Ghost Gum                      | (E.papuana)      |
| Grey Box                       | (E.microcarpa)   |
| Red Box                        | (E.polyanthemos) |
| River Red Gum                  | (E.camaldulensis) |
| Turpentine                      | (Syncarpia. glomulifera) |

My favourite leaves are the Turpentine and the River Red Gum. The Turpentine grows evergreen all the year round. It is resistant to disease. It’s a resilient leaf and I can trust that it is going to reach all the notes that I need. The River Red Gum has a similar quality of reliability and I can trust it when I play.

For beginners, it is helpful to use juvenile or very soft leaves. The leaves should feel malleable.
3.3 Technical Aspects of Playing the Gumleaf

In 1999, I published a book entitled ‘How to Play the Gumleaf.’ In this book I described the technical aspects of playing the leaf as a musical instrument. I can summarise these tips in the following way:

- Position the leaf so that the top half of the leaf protrudes out at a 45 degree angle under the top lip
- Tuck the leaf as far back as you can go under the top lip
- Look in the mirror and see how you are placing the leaf
- Try not to bend or curl the leaf too flat
- Keep the thumbs in position to stop any air leaks in the corners of the lips
- Tighten the lips and facial expression
- The top lip should generally be stiff
- Avoid stretching or tearing the leaf
- Keep the leaf moist
- Push the air up from the diaphragm
- Make a hum sound like a bee (you will feel a tickling sensation on the lips)
- Try whistling over the top of the tongue
- Moisten your lips before blowing
- Blow softly each time you start
- Concentrate the air to where the tickle came from
- Allow the air to escape where the tickle came from
- When your lips get sore or you run out of breath have a rest and try again later
It takes a good deal of trial and error for a beginner to even produce a sound from a Gumleaf. Some Gumleaf players use the bottom lip rather than the top lip. It’s worth giving it a try.

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4. Overview of Song Cycle within the Research

Here is an overview of the song cycle within this research project

4.1 Jacky Jacky

4.1.1 Background
Jacky-Jacky is a very important song in the repertoire of Indigenous music. The lyrics refer to Indigenous experiences of unemployment, politics, dispossession, loss of land/culture and identity. Furthermore, performances of the song are to do with communicating the plight of aboriginal people and their struggle to get their message across. For me the song means many things. It was a home song, a comedy tribal song, a universal song, a protest song, a coon song, a private Koorie national anthem, a bush ballad and a folk song.

Jacky-Jacky brought communities together through an untranslatable chorus that enabled individuals to ridicule the invaders of their land without recrimination. There was always a dance that went with the chorus like a corroboree. Each community had their own dance steps with the chorus. The lingo in the chorus is tied up traditionally with indigenous history and culture as can be seen in an example of some of the song lyrics below. First of all I shall comment on the chorus lyrics (see below)

I have changed some of the words. In the first verse I changed “but his woman ran away you see” to “but his woman got stolen you see.” In the second verse, I’ve changed “fella” to “Koorie.” In the third verse I have changed “took” to ‘invaded”. The last verse I have changed the words “Johny Howard’s not moving or shaking” to “Howard’s governments not sorry or talking” and the last line from “still laughs and has to say” to “stands up and fights all day.” I have changed these words to up-date the song and to give it a more modern meaning as this song has had verses changed over many years to adapt to present day occurrences. The CD Born an Aussie Son has been altered from the original when I recorded it in 2002
4.1.1 Jacky Jacky Lyrics

Jacky Jacky was a smart young fella  
Full of fun and energy  
He was thinking of getting married  
But his women got stolen you see

CHORUS  
Krikita bubela wildy mam-hah  
Billy nudjah gingerry wah

Now Jacky Jacky used to chase those emus  
With his spears and waddies too  
He’s the only Koorie who can tell you  
What the emu told the kangaroo.

Chorus  
Now all you settlers who invaded his country  
You spread your fences across his land  
Now Jacky Jacky gotta pay his taxes and his hunting days are gone.

Chorus  
Now when this country ran into recession  
Jacky sat down and laughed all day  
The mess that the gov’ments made of his country  
No fear Jacky didn’t want it that way.

Chorus  
Now there’s talk of reconciliation  
Justice for Jacky still not on the way  
Howard’s governments not sorry or talking  
So Jacky stands up and fights all day

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6 Jimmy Clements, One of the first Aboriginal protestors, who protested against the construction of the Old Parliament House. The Aboriginal Tent Embassy was established 26th January 1972 to urge the federal government to recognise Aboriginal claims of legal right to land.
4.2 Newmerella Pines

4.2.1 Background
I wrote this song in 1977 with the help of the late bandleader Harry Williams. At that time I was a member of Harry Williams’ band ‘The Country Outcasts’. I performed it at ‘The Fourth National Country Music Festival’ at the Melbourne Showground’s in 1977. I came second.

The song gives a cameo description of my childhood and the place where I grew up, in Newmerella. The song honors my whole family, and in particular, my father and my mother.

According to family history, a pine-tree was planted next to his house at Newmerella by my great-grandfather George Thomas. I remember playing under that tree with my cousins many times. In the third verse of the song, the old bark hut where we lived is mentioned. It wasn’t very flash house and was built very quickly using building materials that were handy. It was constructed of hessian
bags on the inside and bits of timber and bark on the outside, and a corrugated iron tin roof. The fireplace inside was coated with anthill dust. When it dried it set like cement also it was fireproof. We had a couple of camp ovens for cooking. The inside of the walls were coated with newspaper dipped in flour and water. It was used to stop the draughts in the cracks of the walls and painted with kalsomine.

We had a forty-four gallon water drum to catch the water when it rained. My mother used a copper to boil and wash the clothes. We even bathed in it. The clothes line was the fence that ran along side of our hut. When we needed water, we would go and get water from the many water holes around the areas that were plentiful. There were about fifteen families living around the area. Most were related to me on my mother’s side. Just up the road, there was a shop and the Newmerella primary school. A mix of kids, black and white, that went to that school were from the dairy farms, the local saw mill, shop, and the local baker. We lived on the edge of a gravel pit which we called the pit. As kids, we played there many times. At the highway turn-off there was a sign to the Grandview look-out which overlooks the Snowy river flats. The road went right through our community were there where many pioneer buses going to the Grandview look-out. This was a scenic route on their bus tour.

Those were good times as the tourist would pull up on their way back and a heap of us kids would be lined up waiting for them. The tourists would take many photos of us and would give us pennies and halfpennies and threepences. We played pigeon toss amongst us kids and went to the shop and bought lots of lollies. These buses came through about once or twice a week. Gee it would be good to get some of the photos they took of us. I would have been about five or six years old then. The Snowy River was in flood many times, as I remember, we could hear the roar of the water from our hut. At times the railway line would get washed away and no-one could get in or out of Orbost for a few days. When the flood eased a bit we kids would guide cars through the water for a couple of bob.

My father moved around a lot to other saw-mills. The other places we lived at Club-Terrace, Tostery, Erinunda-Platue, Nowa-Nowa. We always came back to live in same spot where our hut was in Newmerella.
4.2.2 Newmerella Pines Lyrics

I was born an Aussie son to a mum I loved so dear
In a land I believed was mine
Oh the troubles and the strife
That followed dad throughout his life
When we played amongst the Newmerella pines

Oh he worked the timber mills
Just to pay for all the bills
To keep his family of nine
The snowy floods in wintertime
Washed away the railway line
When we played amongst those Newmerella pines

Now that old bark hut is gone
But my memories linger on
For my home near that Grandview lookout sign
Now I hear that old school bell
Near that pit where I once fell
When we played amongst those Newmerella pines

Now one old tree they cut it down
It was known by all around
It grew tall and it stood the test of time
Now there’s no-one there at all
And I don’t know where they’ve gone
When we played amongst those Newmerella pines

Repeat the last line with a slow finish
4.3 Streets of Old Fitzroy

4.3.1 Background

This song was written by Harry Williams in c1979. I first heard it in the Grandview Hotel in Fairfield, Melbourne. There used to be a regular Friday night country music gig where different Koorie musicians would get up and sing. Walker (2000) refers to this song as the tribute to Melbourne’s Aboriginal ghetto. Roger Knox made a later adaptation of the song which he called ‘Streets of Tamworth.’ Dunbar-Hall and Gibson observed:

Cover versions are common in Aboriginal country music and are incorporated into Aboriginal life in ways that reflect community ownership of cultural production. Tracing one song through various re-workings illustrates how covers performed this function. Harry Williams “Streets of Fitzroy” is an Aboriginal country classic in which standard country motifs of a nostalgic wish to return home, the comfort of the past and a city-country dichotomy are inverted as part of an Aboriginal expression of desire for reclamation of the dreaming, a symbol of pre-colonial society. This song represents the adaptation of a number of country music themes to one that remains specifically Aboriginal in intent (Dunbar-Hall & Gibson, 2004).

4.3.2 Content

The song is about memories. A lot of people have walked through the streets of Fitzroy and have contributed to the Aboriginal history of the place. It is a song about the transitional processes experienced by tribal peoples as they become urbanized. There is a sense of change and loss in the song.

I toured with Harry Williams’ band the Country Outcasts in the 1970s. Sadly Harry died in 1991. I have performed the ‘Streets of Old Fitzroy’ over many years in Melbourne, NSW, WA, Tasmania and Regional Victoria.

As a tribute to Harry I recorded the song in 1999 on my CD “Born an Aussie Son”.
I also played the Gumleaf, guitar, didgeridoo, clapsticks, body percussion, and leaf percussion on this recording. When I perform the song, I have a Gumleaf chorus after the second verse. I create a haunting melody with the Gumleaf to evoke the sense of loss felt by Koories who have lost their land.

### 4.3.3 Streets of Old Fitzroy Lyrics

Oh those city lights are drivin’ me crazy  
As I walk the lonely streets of old Fitzroy  
How I wish that I was back there in the dreamtime  
In the country where there’s always peace and quiet

**Chorus**  
Oh I wish that I was back in the dreamtime  
Hear the didgeridoo a-dronin’ in the night  
Where the corroborees are seen by firelight  
Far away from the glow of city lights

Now Gertrude Street it makes me feel so lonely  
For the gumtrees and the taste of porky pine  
I see my brothers and my sisters here in Fitzroy  
Torn apart by government ways and city life

**Chorus**  
Yes, city lights are drivin’ me crazy  
As I walk the lonely streets of old Fitzroy  
I know that someday that I’II be  
Called back to the dreamtime  
Where the white man’s ways  
Won’t bother me no more

Fig 11 Uncle Herb Patten, 1993
4.4 The Old Rugged Cross

4.4.1 Background
This song was composed by the American George Barnard (1873-1958). It is one of the most frequently played songs at Aboriginal funerals. I first heard this hymn when I was five years old when I attended a funeral with my parents at Lake Tyers Mission in the 1950s. The song comes originally from the American Gospel Tradition but has been embraced by the Country Gospel genre in Australia and fostered by the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship.

When I first heard the song I felt that the words were asking people at the funeral to look beyond over the hill for something else. It creates a sense of hope out of death connecting to sacred Aboriginal ways.

4.4.2 Adaptation to Gumleaf Music
Through the medium of my Gumleaf I have encapsulated the hymn’s soulful expression at countless funerals throughout Victoria and New South Wales. When I play it at funerals I feel a great sense of relief for the family of the deceased I am playing for. The natural sound of the Gumleaf playing a sacred song becomes a momentous occasion. It is very rewarding to play especially when I receive thanks from the people who have experienced their loss and who take comfort from hearing it.
4.4.3 The Old Rugged Cross Lyrics

**Verse 1**
On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suffering and shame;
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best
For a world of lost sinners was slain.

Chorus:
So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,
Till my trophies at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rugged cross,
And exchange it some day for a crown.

**Verse 2**
that old rugged cross, so despised by the world,
Has a wondrous attraction for me;
For the dear Lamb of God left His glory above
To pardon and sanctify me.

**Verse 3**
In the old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine,
A wondrous beauty I see;
For 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died
To pardon and sanctify me.

**Verse 4**
To the old rugged cross I will ever be true;
Its shame and reproach gladly bear.
Then He'll call me someday to my home far away.
Where His glory forever I'll share.
4.5 **A Medley of War Songs on the Gumleaf**

4.5.1 **Background**

This medley is taken from the repertoire of songs played in the world wars. I heard these songs from my early childhood and have continued to perform them throughout my life.

When I was nine years old, I entered a local amateur music contest in the Mechanics Hall in Orbost and came second. I played a medley of the three War Songs ‘Roll out the Barrel’, ‘Pack up Your Troubles in your Old Kit Bag, and, ‘It’s a long way to Tipperary’. I never played the whole song right through just the chorus as my CD implies I beat my first cousin Phyllis. Kenny, who sang Al Jolson’s Mammy, she came third. My Aunty Violet played the piano to accompany my Gumleaf playing on that occasion. She was a beautiful Aunty. My mother had three sisters. Aunty Violet, Aunty Delia and Aunty Winnie, I had a very strong extended family through my aunties and uncle there was always a home away from home for me.

My aunties loved these songs. We sang these songs during my childhood on many occasions during my early school days at Newmerella. I had a lot of musical experience as a boy. As a kid I saw my mum and Aunty Violet play these songs on the piano. We had a piano in the family, which my grandmother bought in Fitzroy in the 1930s for one of my uncles [her son]. His name was Jacky Murray, and at the time was preparing for a professional career in playing the piano, unfortunately he died at the age of about 19 years of age before I was born. He choked on a cherry seed from the very same tree I used to raid in Newmerella as a boy.

By the time I was five I could sing these songs and play them on the Gumleaf. I didn’t play the Gumleaf much in my early school days until I got to go out to lots of dances and festivals. I had my first band in 1962, we called our band The Rising Sons, it was in Ulladulla N.S.W. The song the house of the ‘Rising Son’ was special to me as it was the opening number at all the places we played at. We stayed together for six years and played at most of the clubs on the south coast, there was four of us in the band I played the bongo’s and was the lead singer, John Babington played the lead guitar, Ian Hunter played the rhythm guitar and Robert Oram played the drums. We had a broad range of songs from rock and roll to slow
ballads. During those times, I won a couple of talent quests singing solo between the songs of the band.

4.5.2 Roll out the Barrel
Rollout the barrel, we'll have a barrel of fun
Roll out the barrel, we've got the blues on the run
Zing boom tararrel, ring out a song of good cheer
Now's the time to roll the barrel, for the gang's all here

4.5.3 Pack up Your Troubles in your Old Kit Bag
Chorus
Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag,
And smile, smile, smile!
While you've a Lucifer to light your fag,
Smile, Boys, that's the style.
What's the use of worrying?
It never was worth while.
So, pack up your troubles in your old kit bag,
And smile, smile, smile

4.5.4 It's a long way to Tipperary
It's a long way to Tipperary,
It's a long way to go.
It's a long way to Tipperary
To the sweetest girl I know.
Goodbye Piccadilly,
Farewell Leicester Square,
It's a long, long way to Tipperary,
But my heart lies there.

In the 1930s there was a group of Gumleaf players called Lake Tyers Gumleaf Band. In the lead up to the Second World War, this group was used to recruit Aboriginal servicemen and women.

Gumleaf music was also used for fundraising during both World Wars.
Fig 14 Members of Lake Tyers Gumleaf Band, 1930

Fig 15 Lake Tyres Gumleaf Trio in 1930’s: Laurie Moffat, Ted (Cook) Mullett & Campbell Johnson, Alick Jackomas. Courtesy of AIATSIS Canberra8.


5. Gumleaf Poetry

![Herb Patten, Shields, Painting, acrylic and ochre, gesso base on hard wood.](image)

I have analysed my experience of playing the Gumleaf and have grouped these experiences into five categories:

1. Gumleaf and Country
2. Communicating With the Gumleaf
3. Gumleaf Playing Techniques
4. Gumleaf as a Healing Tool
5. Gumleaf and Spirit

5.1 Gumleaf and Country

5.1.1 Respecting the Bush

I love playing the Gumleaf Music in the bush
It heals my soul

It makes clear to me what I owe to the bush
I like playing a thankyou to the presence of the bush

Prayer is saying thank you
I say thank you with my Gumleaf

5.1.2 Symbolic Answers

Gumleaf Music is an Australian symbol
It's as old as traditional culture itself

It’s bigger than me
The answers are there
5.2 Communicating With the Gumleaf

5.2.1 Reaching Through the Barriers

A doctor once asked me to play
To adults and children with mental illnesses
To use the Gumleaf as a way of exploring their feelings
Through music, sound and vibration

I worked with a child who was blind, deaf and dumb
I put a balloon on his cheek

I played my Gumleaf through the balloon
He felt the vibration through the balloon and he smiled

The Gumleaf reached through all the barriers
And we communicated together

5.3 Gumleaf Playing Techniques

5.4 Playing Around

I have natural pitch
When I first start to play a tune
I find the middle C
And then move to the key needed for the song

With the Gumleaf sound I can bend notes
I can pitch them very high
I can play staccato and vibrato
I can play the gliding of notes of the glissando
5.3.2 Teaching Techniques

I met a woman who sang soprano
She thought that my Gumleaf music was my singing voice
I told her that it was the Gumleaf making the sound
And she was very surprised

I asked her to sing me her full vocal range
And then I played it on the Gumleaf
I asked her to reflect back to me with her voice
The sounds I had made

She responded by saying that the Gumleaf sounds
Helped her to control her breathing techniques
And refined her singing voice
I was very excited

5.4 Gumleaf as a Healing Tool

5.4.1 Coming to Stillness

Gumleaf music is stirring inside of me
I can feel it moving

The world is revealing itself
In many new ways

I feel it through my Gumleaf Music
In the countryside and in the bush

As I move through it along the way
Now and again I come to a stillness
5.4.2 Better than an Aspirin

Sometimes when I'm travelling on my own
I want to pull over by the side of the road
And play a few tunes
It helps me to feel better

I pull over
Have a cup of tea and play the Gumleaf
It helps to settle my senses
It's better than an aspirin any day

5.4.3 Unfolding the Mystery

I’m exploring the healing power of Gumleaf Music
As I am the vessel of the sound
The vibration moves through me
It overhears and unfolds the mystery of feelings

5.4.4 Shattering the Stone of Sorrow

At funerals I play the Gumleaf
As soon as I start playing the leaf
I can hear the cries
I can feel it when I play

I can sense it reaching into people’s hearts
People come up to me after the funerals
They tell me the Gumleaf has helped them to grieve
More openly and more deeply

The Gumleaf sound reaches inside
Deep inside
It shatters the stone of sorrow
It soothes the Spirit
Sometimes years later people have come back
And told me that they still feel liberated
In their grieving process
From my Gumleaf playing

One lady told me sometimes at funerals
She cannot cry
She goes home without a sense of release

But the Gumleaf helps her cry and she is thankful

Hearing an Aboriginal person
Playing the leaf
Helps them connect to the Spirit
Of the Aboriginal person who has died

5.5 Gumleaf and Spirit

5.5.1 Connecting to Spirit

After the Gumleaf has been played
I have a sense of being liberated
This feeling reaches to the core of my being

There is also a feeling of grandeur
I am connected to Spirit
And the strengthening of my belief in it

The Spirit is never asleep
It’s there
Wherever I am
5.5.2 Playing the Gumleaf helps me reach another level

It teaches me to understand music and the world
In a deeper and musical way
Also it helps to tune up the human voice
Tuning Up

My Spirit talks to me through my Gumleaf Music
It seems to cure some of my ills
It helps me feel that the journey is safe
For today and into the future

5.5.3 The Sense of Who I Am

I play special sacred songs on the Gumleaf
It opens up a deeply satisfying sense of who I am
Alongside what God expects of me

5.5.4 Common Ground

My mind has the door handle on the outside
My heart has the door handle on the inside
Sometimes my mind diverts my heart

But my heart always tells me where I am standing today
I believe this is the Common Ground
For all humanity
6. Conclusion

It is important to record the history of Gumleaf music because it represents a significant Australian interest. I would like to revive people’s interest in Gumleaf music, because it brings people together in the spirit of healing and reconciliation.

Throughout my life Gumleaf playing has brought to me a sense of connection with my Aboriginal heritage. When I play the Gumleaf in public I feel a deep sense of connection to our land. The playing connects us all to the source of the leaves, our Mother Earth.

I hope that this multi-media exploration of Gumleaf music in my Masters has revealed some of the history of the Gumleaf and given it new life into the future.

I find myself looking down from above
And seeing both Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives
Working together towards reconciliation

Respecting each other’s views
And sharing our stories past and present
Exploring what being an Australian means

Fig 17 Uncle Herb & Lorraine Patten as house parents for the Koorie College Hostel students 1982

Isn’t it also significant to your family and community?
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Sefa Dei, G, Hall, B, Rosenberg, D, 2000, Indigenous Knowledges in Global Contexts, University of Toronto Press, Canada.


Image List

1. Gumleaf photograph, Terry Melvin 2007
2. Gumleaf photograph, Terry Melvin 2007
3. Gumleaf photograph, Terry Melvin 2007
9. Uncle Herb Patten & Lorraine Patten, photograph, 2006
10. Gumleaf photograph, Terry Melvin 2007
11. Uncle Herb Patten, Photograph
12. Gumleaf photograph, Terry Melvin 2007
17. Uncle Herb & Lorraine Patten at the Koorie College Hostel, 1982

Backgrounds Photographs, Gumleafs, Terry Melvin p. 31, 32, 34.
Uncle Herb Patten, Background photograph, p. 35

NB The spelling of Aboriginal tribal names is not always consistently applied within the Appendices eg Wiradjeri, Wuradjuri and Wuradjjeri.
Appendix

1. Genealogy

FATHERS SIDE
G/G grandfather [GEORGE MIDDLETON c.b.1850 d.? Ulupna]
G/G grandmother [MAGGIE TOOTLES c.b.1846 d.? Ulupna]
Grandfather [JOHN PATTEN c.b.?d.? Wuradjeri]
Grandmother [CHRISTINA TOOTLES c.b.1880 d.? Ulupna]

MOTHERS SIDE (m)
G/G grandfather [FREDERICK MURRAY c.b.1885 d. Kurnia]
G/G grandmother [SUSAN LUTTON c.b.1863 d.? Gunditjmara]
Grandfather [HERB CECIL MURRAY c.b.1881 d.? Gunditjmara]

MOTHERS SIDE
G/G Grandfather [GEORGE THOMAS c.b. Buchan 1854 d.? Brabralung]
G/G grandmother [AGNES PATTERSON c.b. 1869 Manero d. 1947 Manero]
Grandmother [EVALINE THOMAS b. 1888 c.d. 1950 Brabralung]

PARENTS
Mother [SUSAN EVELYN MURRAY b. Lake Tyers. 1920 d.? Brabralung]
Father [GEORGE MIDDLETON PATTEN c.b. Moama 1915 d.? Wuradjeri]
2. Uncle Herb Patten’s Personal Bibliography

2 a. Newspaper and Internet Reviews

April 19, 2007

RMIT’s Uncle Herb has sure got talent

"http://www.youtube.com/watch

Uncle Herb is a well-known artist and musician. (Photo courtesy Channel Seven).

RMIT University student Uncle Herb Patten has blown his way through to the grand final of Channel Seven’s “Australia’s Got Talent” with his extraordinary Gumleaf-playing.

While the show’s audience knows Uncle Herb for his rendition of Beatles songs like “Imagine” and “Help”, he has many more accomplishments.

Uncle Herb is studying the history of Gumleaf music for his Master of Arts program, part of the Koorie Cohort of postgraduate researchers at RMIT’s.

He is also a renowned artist who has had his works featured in exhibitions, with some bought by the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV).

Uncle Herb, a Koorie Elder of the Gunnai-Kurnai tribes of East Gippsland, was voted as the viewers’ choice at his first semi-final on Sunday, 25 March, which gained him automatic entry into the grand final, to be aired over two weeks on 22 and 29 April.

Uncle Herb will compete in the first episode of the grand final on Sunday, 22 April.
A network spokesperson for the program said that two contestants from each of the four semi-finals were competing in the grand final, with one selected by the judges and one by the general public via a phone vote.

The eight finalists will compete for $250,000.

Throughout the series, Uncle Herb has been supported by his wife of 25 years and fellow Koorie Elder, Aunty Bunta. In 2005, they graduated from the RMIT Indigenous Arts Unit with Diplomas in Visual Arts (Media Arts). It was at this time that eight of their works were bought by the NGV.

“I was first contacted to take part in a new talent show back in January. At that stage they didn’t have a name for it,” said Uncle Herb.

“I did ‘Imagine’ and the spin from then has just been incredible. The radio stations, papers and people. Sony BMG in America even contacted me, so I could get a contract with them after all this.

“It’s been really exhilarating, with all the people who congratulate me. It’s just wonderful that the family’s with me.”

Uncle Herb’s career as a “leafist” spans more than 50 years and started around a campfire in a fringe settlement near Orbost, where he was born.

“When I was five I saw my great-uncle, Hobbs Thomas, playing a leaf around the camp where we were at, and I heard this sound. Well I guess I just had the right leaf at the right moment and I managed to play a sound just like him and it just mushroomed from there,” said Uncle Herb.

Uncle Herb has competed in many Gumleaf-playing tournaments over the years, and has also produced two CDs on Gumleaf-playing, “How to Play the Gumleaf” (Currency Press, Sydney) and “Born an Aussie Son” (Coral Music, Macquarie University, Sydney).

Stories of Aboriginal Heritage Through a Multi Media Exploration of Gumleaf Music

Taking a leaf out of Herb’s music

By Elizabeth Cannatelli

GENIUS has turned a hill farm workshop into a reality television set.
Herb Paton, 84, literally blew judges away on Chann-
el Seven’s Got Talent.
Mr Paton, a good friend of Mr Paton, played the gum-
leaf, or clap hero, in the grand final.

“I never get nervous—the
music is there and there’s nothin’ else I can do, so I
just do it and it works,” said Mr Paton.

Mr Paton was chosen for
the final and performed on
Sunday 18 March.

Winning a mining town and
cross-dressed in metallic
outfit, he thrilled the studio audience with a
rendition of John Farnham’s Help me
on the gumleaf.

Whether he would perform in the show’s finals was in
the hands of the voting public, with the decision to
have been announced on Saturday, 25 March.

However, with
enthusiastic applause
from the studio audience and
three ticks from judges Tom Burlinson,
Denniss Minogue and Red Symons, Mr Paton was
already pretty excited.

I’d be happy to sit
around a campfire and
you can play your
gumleaf every time,” said
Burlinson.

“I’m putting it in my
personal request for you
to play your gumleaf at the next topsy turfy grand
final,” said Minogue.

Even the notoriously crotch Red Symons was
complimentary, saying “When you come on last time I
was filled with delight but last time you surprised me and
I didn’t expect you to do it again but you have.”

Mr Paton’s performance on the show won
the internet for the gumleaf for 56 years.

When I play the gumleaf, I want the audience to
got a real, true feeling in their heart,” he said. “It takes
them away from where they are at that moment.”

No matter how Mr Paton in the week’s vote, Mr
Paton gets in the Kiwi Mail’s vote.

Uncle Herb whistling up plenty of support

Victorian Aboriginal Elder Herb Paton has
won a legion of new fans in the wake of two
performances on the TV show
Australia’s Got Talent.

Uncle Herb, as he is widely known, per-
formed most recently on the
semi-finals of the Channel Seven show broadcast
on Sunday 18 March.

Winning a mining town and
cross-dressed in metallic
outfit, he thrilled the studio audience with a
rendition of John Farnham’s Help me
on the gumleaf.

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got a real, true feeling in their heart,” he said. “It takes
them away from where they are at that moment.”

No matter how Mr Paton in the week’s vote, Uncle
Paton gets in the Kiwi Mail’s vote.

Uncle Herb Paton playing the gumleaf at the 2005 New Zealand
Aboriginal People’s Conference on Education.

‘Uncle Herb whistling up plenty of support’, 2007, The Kiwi Mail, Wednesday 28 March, p. 3.
Music in traditional leaf style

The eyes of Australia were fixed on the rare talent and soulful sounds of one of the nation’s last remaining Aboriginal gumleaf players, Mill Park’s Herb Patten.

More than 1.8 million viewers tuned into Channel 7’s new TV show Australia’s Got Talent on February 28 and saw Patten perform a rendition of the John Lennon classic Imagine on a single gumleaf.

Celebrity judges Red Symons, Dannii Minogue and Dann Burston had no hesitation sending Patten and his uniquely Australian talent through to the show’s semi-finals.

Patten is now in the running for the show’s $250,000 prize.

Patten, 63, told the Whittlesea Leader how he was inspired to play the gumleaf by his grand uncle Lindsay “Booboo” Thomas when he was about five years old.

“I never or less taught myself,” he said.

Patten explained that to play the gumleaf, the leaf is curled over and rested on the bottom lip. When he blows, the sound resonates between the leaf and his top lip.

“It’s got a majestic trill about it,” he said.

“It’s the cheapest musical instrument and I’m one of the only people in the world that can dispose of their instrument when I finish.”

Patten said while wind instruments had keys and fingers, all the notes on the gumleaf were built into his lip and breathing.

He plays a range of music from traditional Australian classics such as Waltzing Matilda to rock’n’roll, jazz, blues, and hip hop hits of the 1970s, 80s and 90s.

He can learn a song by ear.

Patten said he would choose an “up-tempo” song for the Australia’s Got Talent semi-finals.

May 28, 2007

RMIT celebrates reconciliation through art

Many hands make reconciliation artwork, "Hands Together".

RMIT University has marked National Reconciliation Week with the creation of an original artwork.

Aboriginal Elders, community leaders and RMIT staff and students came together at the University’s Bundoora campus for an event on 23 May.

Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Margaret Gardner AO, led a special ceremony acknowledging and celebrating the contribution of Indigenous Australians in RMIT’s 120th year.

The event, which featured music from the Aboriginal Community Elders Services choir and the Charcoal Club band featuring Richard Frankland, culminated in the creation of two artworks using traditional Indigenous paints and techniques.

Guests were asked to place their hands in paint and then onto the canvas. The artwork was entitled “Hands Together”.

Professor Gardner said: “National Reconciliation Week is a time for us to renew our commitment to reconciliation and to think about how we can help turn around the
continuing disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

“This event, through the creation of these artworks, symbolises RMIT’s commitment to recognising reconciliation and celebrates our strong and ongoing connection with Indigenous Australia.”

The new name of RMIT’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Unit was also announced. It will be changed to “Ngarara Willim Indigenous Centre at RMIT University”. Ngarara Willim means “gathering place” in the Wurundjeri language.

RMIT is expanding the Unit and relocating it to the main student centre on the City campus, giving all staff and students a central, and more prominent, point of contact for all Indigenous-related activities and issues.

“It is essential that RMIT maintains an environment that is culturally sensitive and inclusive. This Unit plays an integral role in this process,” said Professor Gardner.

The event was held at the RMIT Union Arts PITspace Gallery and included works by students from the Indigenous Arts Unit of the School of Art.

More RMIT University news.
Harmony at Gathering

Story by REKO RENNIE-GWAYBILLA
Photos by BILL POON

Uncle Herb Patten plays the gumleaves at the Black Harmony Gathering.

While some people spent the day at the Formula Cine Grand Prix last Wednesday, plenty of Melburnians chose to enjoy the more relaxed atmosphere of the 2007 Black Harmony Gathering.

Harmony between Indigenous Australians and other culturally diverse groups was the focus of the event held in the inner-city suburb of Fairfield.

More than 150 people attended the event, hosted by the Indigenous community and presented by Multicultural Arts Victoria.

Uncle Herb Patten played a few tunes on the gumleaves and the Koort Youth Will Shake Spears showed all the mob that he can really dance.

With Fairfield Amphitheatre and the Yarra River providing the stage for the gathering, other acts included Kutcha Edwards, Näära Ho Pan Pipers, Kilyak, Kolbiy, Liz Cavanagh, Eva Jo Edwards, Peter Rotuman, Monica Weightman, King Bili with Soukous Ba Congo and David Drysdale on didgeridoo. MCs Kyle Bellling and Gabby Fashni kept the day rolling along.

Multicultural Arts Victoria Co-ordinator Sally Campbell told the Koori Mail that it was amazing just to see the diversity of community get together and have fun.

"It was a huge community event, where people from all types of communities got up and played instruments - or contributed without having someone co-ordinate everybody," she said.

Day of healing observed

Hopes for our future

By Janae Houghton

The community turned out in force last Friday to the City of Whittlesea’s National Day of Healing celebrations.

The day, aimed at helping the path to reconciliation, was attended by councillors and school children.

Mayor John Fry told the gathering: “On behalf of the Whittlesea City Council, I recognise the rich indigenous heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri William Clan as the traditional custodians of this place.”

“The day in 1997, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander commissioner Mick Dodson released a report into the stolen generation.

“It told of children taken from their mothers and fathers and families, of families who lost their greatest treasure— their children; of the pain of never knowing what happened; of the cruelties suffered by a generation of young people, kept away from those who loved them best of all.”

“His speech was very touching and he was saying he wanted to acknowledge that this happened so that we could all move forward together.”

National Sorry Day started in 1998 and was changed to National Day of Healing last year.

The event offers the community the opportunity to get involved in a number of activities to acknowledge the impact of the policies of forcible removal on Australia’s indigenous populations.

Happier days: Reg Blow plays the didgeridoo as Herb Putten plays Advance Australia Fair on a guitar.

Picture: Craig Cashill

Elders’ lives on display

MORELAND City Council will present a collection of artworks by Potoroo on display at the local Moreland Community Gallery this month.

The work is part of a series of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks.

The exhibition, Elders’ lives on display, features paintings by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

These artists, who are both living in the city and visiting from remote areas, are important for our understanding of the Aboriginal culture.

The exhibition is open to the public on the first floor of the Moreland Community Gallery, located on the corner of Queen and Sydney streets.

The exhibition runs until July 31.

For more information, contact the gallery on 9348 9322.

Photo: Scott Mather

Erlinda Pahia
Collaboration in paint: Artist Erlinda Pahia with one of her works.
Cockie sculptor pecks up art acclaim

UNCLE Herb Patton did not attend Melbourne’s recent Commonwealth Games. And for the organiser’s sake, he reckons it was just as well.

The Bunbury resident says the connection he has with the Games mascot, the Karak red-tailed black cockatoo, may have brought rain during all the Games. “To me and many indigenous people, he is the rain bird who brings forth the wet seasons,” Patton said.

Patton has just won a prize in the Darebin Art Show with his plaster sculpture of the totem bird. Judging the works and announcing the winners, Reserve sport and art lover and playwright Barry Dickins described Patton’s work as “a perfect, evocative piece for anywhere at all, uplifting and restful upon the eye”.

Patton, an artist for the past six years, called himself “a late bloomer” in the field. His main medium is painting and, while busy finishing his Master of Arts at RMIT, he also entered and won a Darebin arts award two years ago for a large floral picture.

This year’s Karak Red Tail Black Cockatoo sculpture is made of plaster and covered with wheat-dust cement.

Darebin Art Show
Bunbury Homestead Art Centre, 7-27 Snake Gully Drive
Until May 14, admission free
Gallery is open Wednesday to Friday 11am to 4pm and on weekends from noon to 5pm
GOLDEN WATTLE FESTIVAL — Australian gum leaf playing championships

Noteworthy success comes from diverse places

By TRISH TOWNSEND

A gum leaf from a young tree bought at the Ballarat Trash and Trivia market, and an iron band collected from Stuart Hill near Ararat were the instruments played by the joint winner of the Australian Gum Leaf Playing Championships, Mr Wilmott of Warrnambool and Keith Greatz of Maryborough yesterday.

Mr Wilmott played his choice of Mushlappers, after the compendium tune of William Mathias on his Ballarat leaf and Keith Townsend, T 1997, "Noteworthy success comes from diverse places", The Courier, Ballarat, Monday 6th October, p. 3.

A leaf out of Herb's book

EVERY morning before dawn, Herb Paton of Narooma can be found down in the yard at the back of Delunery Beach, getting ready to work.

For Herb, that means playing music — in a garden, at just the right time: the annual gum leaf playing championships.

His latest achievement, which took five years to perfect, is a combination of book and computer, which will eventually be released soon.

Herb's best friends are the lizards, who often join in on his music-making.

Monash lures world’s best researchers

Monash University has committed more than $2 million to extend its international research record under a new fellowship scheme designed to attract world-class post-doctoral researchers.

The Logan Fellowships, announced last week by the university’s deputy vice-chancellor, Professor Peter Duvall, offer lucrative conditions and benefits which are expected to attract outstanding up-and-coming researchers as well as international research heavyweights to Monash.

“This substantial funding injection will expand the university’s research efforts and ensure that Monash continues to lead the way with outstanding research development and scholarship,” Professor Duvall said.

Funding has been earmarked for up to 30 fellowships over the next six years. They have been named in honour of Monash’s retiring vice-chancellor, Professor Neil Logan, who is remembered as one of Australia’s most innovative university leaders.

Applicants are now being sought through a world-wide advertising campaign for the first five fellowship positions which start in 1996.

“The terms and conditions of the Logan Fellowships compare very favourably with existing schemes and give Monash a real advantage in competing internationally for the world’s best research talent,” Professor Duvall said.

“Compared to the two other most prestigious national schemes, the Monash initiative is offering almost double the existing amounts of research support grants and provides longer tenure, as well as scope for salary increases.”

Professor Duvall said Monash consistently ranked among Australia’s top institutions for the quality and scope of its research. “And this fellowship initiative will strengthen and build on that record of excellence and achievement as Monash moves forward into the 21st century,” he said.

Key features of the Logan Research Fellowship scheme, which match and generally better the terms and conditions offered under the prestigious Australian Research Council (ARC) Queen Elizabeth II scheme, include:

- a minimum entry salary of $45,362 (equivalent to lecturer) with scope for promotion to the equivalent of senior lecturer salary ranges which start at $51,000
- research support grants of up to $20,000 annually for three years for approved research programs
- tenure of up to six years (in approved conditions)
- flexible eligibility criteria with two to six years post-doctoral experience.

ANSPAG chairman honoured

Chairman of Monash’s Advanced Network System Performance and Applications Group (ANSPAG), Mr Tony Newstead, has been made a Fellow of the Telecommunication Society of Australia (TSA).

Mr Newstead, who has been involved in developing telecommunications infrastructure for more than 30 years, received the honour in recognition of his distinguished contributions to telecommunications both locally and overseas.

A recent report authored by Mr Newstead investigating information technology (IT) use in Australian companies was adopted by the Australian Telecommunications Users Group (ATUG) as a benchmark for the use of telecommunications in business organisations.

The report, “Finding best practice”, identified a lack of understanding in corporate Australia of how emerging telecommunications technology can be used as a strategic weapon rather than just a functional tool.

In presenting Mr Newstead with the honour – one of the first five awarded – the TSA cited his work in telecommunications “particularly the contribution made by the report Telecom 2000” prepared under his leadership”.

A visionary report on telecommunications in Australia, Telecom 2000 has been responsible for much of the progress in the industry over the past two decades.
2 b. Radio Interviews and Reviews

ABC- MESSAGE STICK

**Speaking out**

Herb Patten

Sunday, 25 March 2007 9.30 pm
Presenter: Karen Dorante

This week on Speaking Out Karen Dorante talks to Koorie elder and Gumleaf player, Uncle Herb Patten.

Uncle Herb Patten has captured the attention of the nation at the moment as a contestant in Channel 7's talent show, Australia's Got Talent.

Uncle Herb's talent lies in the ability to play the Gumleaf, a skill he picked up after watching his uncle perform. Now he teaches others to play and through the talent show has introduced the music to a new legion of fans.

Indigenous Programs

**LIVING BLACK**

SBS TV

Wednesdays 6:00pm
Repeats Monday 5:30pm
Friday 3:30pm

16 May 2007
Series 7 Episode 11

KARLA GRANT: Tonight on Living Black, with the 40th anniversary of the 1967 referendum upon us, we look at one of the key organisations that campaigned for Aboriginal rights.
The Aboriginal Advancement League were the ones that built I think the real sense of the word ‘reconciliation’.

KARLA GRANT: And we meet Uncle Herb Patten, who won the hearts of the nation playing a Gumleaf.

It’s coming from you, yourself, Just like the voice. The voice is you. The Gumleaf is you.

KARLA GRANT: After recent success on Channel 7’s show ‘Australia’s Got Talent’, Victorian Aboriginal elder Herb Patten is renowned around Australia for his skill playing the Gumleaf. Video journalist Jacinta Isaacs reveals the other side of Uncle Herb - that of political advocate, artist and natural self-promoter.

VO1: He was crowd-pleaser yet, incredibly, Herb Patten had to be persuaded to appear on the show.

HERB PATTEN: I don't like playing in contests because my music should never be judged. I'm a musician.

VO2: But judged he was. Channel 7 viewers Australia-wide voted Herb into the finals. He may not have won the big bucks but he attracted followers around the country. Judge Red Symons recognises his appeal. CHEERING AND APPLAUSE

RED SYMONS: It was kind of gorgeous. Everything about Herb had exactly the right tone for the show. And I wouldn't have predicted it but it was really pleasing that he actually came well, effectively he was one of the two finalists in the final show.

HERB: And the sound comes over the top. (Plays scale)

VO4: But there's another side to Uncle Herb. He's an artist, student, political activist and he might even say a healer.

HERB: I've played trees without even picking a leaf and I walked past that tree a couple of years later, for some reason or other, it's greener - it's got my
music growing in it. I believe there could be some healing powers in the sounds I make.

VO6: His dedication to Indigenous rights began in the ‘60s.

HERB: It was sort of like a new dawn happening with Aboriginal people starting to get some sort of recognition by governments of the day.

VO7: Herb, a Ganai-Kurnai man from Victoria’s East Gippsland, grew up disconnected from much of his Aboriginal heritage.

HERB: I guess I grew up not knowing the real, true gist of history. Me parents never told me a great deal. I didn't even know there was that many Aboriginal people around until I started to move around. But things changed of course once I understood, when I got out into the broader world.

VO8: Today, every time Uncle Herb picks up a Gumleaf or a paintbrush, he returns to his roots.

HERB: With shields, we can identify who we are traditionally, who we are culturally to our people.

VO9: Melbourne Museum’s Bunjilaka Aboriginal Centre is currently displaying Herb’s artwork.

HERB: I find it very rewarding to paint anything about Gumleaves. It's the biggest one I've done. It's called ‘Gumleaf Infusion’.

CAROLINE MARTIN, MANAGER BUNJILAKA: His personality, his passion for the Gumleaf actually has brought those paintings alive. It’s absolutely amazing.

VO10: Caroline Martin is a Bunerong traditional owner and descendent of the Briggs family in Victoria. She's known Uncle Herb most of her life.

CAROLINE: He is someone that generates warmth and humility. He's got this most amazing ability to actually make you feel like you are the special person
when he's having a conversation with you.

HERB: Your music, it can be modern, it can be old, it can be crazy, it can be just any type of thing, but it's coming from you, yourself. Just like the voice - the voice is you. The Gumleaf is you. (Plays 'Waltzing Matilda)

VO11: And when it comes to his music, Herb Patten has big dreams.

HERB: PAUSE I want a 12-piece band anywhere - white or black, doesn’t make no difference. If you’re a good Gumleaf musician and you can play good quality notes, you know a bit of what music's about, we can get together. Who knows - we could have a 12-piece band as they had back in the '30s. NAT SOT6- Gumleaf song (Waltzing Matilda)

3 March 2007

He's got talent - Uncle Herb Patten

On Awaye! - catch up with Gumleaf maestro, artist and rocker from way back, Uncle Herb Patten.

And - to celebrate his 64th birthday, Uncle Herb is hard at work on the Gumleaf, rehearsing that Beatles' anthem.

Also, Darlene Johnson talks about her new short film 'Crocodile Dreaming', a supernatural fable set in Arnhem Land starring David Gulpilil and Tom E. Lewis.

Presenter Daniel Browning
Producer Daniel Browning and Kerrie Jean Ross
Radio National Social History
Verbatim
with Michelle Rayner

Saturday 01/05/2004
Herb Patten
Summary:
Herb Patten was born in 1943 and spent his early years in a small town called Numeralla, near Orbost, in south-east Victoria. Part of the Ganai-Kurnai tribes of the Gippsland area, Herb is also descended from the Yorta Yorta and Wiradjuri groups from the surrounding country. But, as Herb says, his surname has German origins, and perhaps it's this rich cultural mix which led him towards a life in music, and more particularly, to the special art of Gumleaf playing. Herb taught himself to play the leaf when he was about eight years of age after hearing his great-uncle blowing a leaf in the bush near where the family lived. Since then, Herb has become a skilled and passionate exponent of this form of music. With academic Robin Ryan and others, he has also researched and written about the history of Gumleaf playing in Australia.

In this interview, Herb talks about his years growing up among his extended Aboriginal family, the role that music has played throughout his life, and the art and skill of blowing a Gumleaf.

Visit Australia Ad Lib, an interactive guide to the wild, the weird and the vernacular in Australian music.
Coral Music is a recording label that aims to present a range of musical styles and artists of the Western Pacific region.

Herb Patten is Australia’s leading Aboriginal Gumleaf player. In addition to playing leaf on this album, he sings from his repertoire of mixed language songs, country music, rock ‘n’ roll, jazz and gospel. These genres evoke special cultural and communal meanings for Koorie people in urban settings as well as far-flung communities. Herb’s CD provides a unique insight into this repertoire as well as demonstrating some of the most virtuosic Gumleaf playing recorded to date.

Department of Contemporary Music Studies, Macquarie University, Sydney, NSW 2109, Australia

Visit the Department of Contemporary Music Studies Home Page

Biography
Herb Patten is Australia’s leading Aboriginal Gumleaf player. He was born in 1943 and spent his early years in a small town called Numeralla, near Orbost, in south-east Victoria. Part of the Ganai-Kurnai tribes of the Gippsland area, Herb is also descended from the Yorta Yorta and Wiradjuri groups from the surrounding country. But, as Herb says, his surname has German origins, and perhaps it’s this
Herb taught himself to play the leaf when he was about eight years of age, after hearing his great-uncle blowing a leaf in the bush near where the family lived. Since then, Herb has become a skilled and passionate exponent of this form of music.

AUSTRALIA ADLIB
http://www.abc.net.au/arts/adlib/stories/s872232.htm

Herb Patten was born in Orbost, Victoria, in 1943. He was first recognised as a serious Gumleaf player when he was 7 years old, and the following year, he gave his first public performance, accompanied by his aunt on the piano. From then on he played widely at family and clan gatherings. As a young musician he became the lead singer with the rock band, The House of the Rising Sons. His repertoire of 300 songs together with his musical enthusiasm led him to meet Australian rock giants of the period, Johnny O'Keefe, Col Joy, Little Pattie, and many others.

Herb is an intuitive player who at first played completely by ear. His repertoire spans traditional pop classics and folk music. As well, he wrote the Country and Western ballad, 'Newmerella Pines' and is an authority on the well known Aboriginal folk song 'Jacky Jacky'. In 1995 he played the Gumleaf at the opening of Melbourne’s Moomba Festival and at a concert with the great Dizzy Gillespie.

For the last five years he has given classes on Gumleaf playing for the Music Department of Monash University, Victoria. His work has been acknowledged by invitations to play at the Edinburgh Festival and by performances in Hong Kong.

Relevant publications


www.currency.com.au
3 c. Exhibitions & Organisations

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY EXHIBITION


Current Exhibitions- Art in the Library

RMIT Indigenous artworks acquired by National Gallery of Victoria (July 21, 2005)

Twelve indigenous artworks by RMIT University students have been acquired by the National Gallery of Victoria.

The works include Koorie shields, oil wash studies, acrylic paintings and a pastel drawing which are important examples of contemporary South Eastern Indigenous art and culture.

The art is currently on display at the RMIT School of Art Gallery as part of the ‘Grugidj White Cockatoo’ exhibition. The exhibition represents the culmination of four years’ study in the Indigenous Arts Unit at RMIT University’s Bundoora Campus for Diploma of Visual Arts graduates elder Uncle Herb Patten, elder Aunty Bunta Patten, Turbo Brown and Jarrod Atkinson.
Although urban-based, the artists paint and draw about their respective home regions in the four corners of Victoria.

Uncle Herb’s clan shield and possum cloak designs incorporate the totems and motifs of his mob, the Gunnai people of East Gippsland; Turbo’s work depicts bird and animal life and along the Murray River in the Latje Latje North; Jarrod’s work evokes the living landscape of Central Victoria’s Yorta Yorta country; and the Western District is represented by Aunty Bunta’s charcoal and oil studies of the Grampians/Gariwerd region.

RMIT Indigenous Arts Unit lecturer Sharon West said the works offered “a pictorial expression of love and respect for these environs and serve as a visual documentation of the importance of ‘land’ within Koorie cultural identity”.

Head of RMIT’s School of Art Professor Elizabeth Grierson said future generations would benefit from the cultural knowledge represented within the artworks through the NGV’s acquisition.

The Grugidj White Cockatoo exhibition is on until Friday 22 July at the RMIT School of Art Gallery, Building 2, Bowen Street, Melbourne.

Media enquiries:

- Sharon West 0408 895 188
- Professor Elizabeth Grierson 9925 2219

Images are available from RMIT Media and Communications (03) 9925 2807
Koori elders share traditions

KOORI ELDERS TALKIN’ UP COUNTRY: Picturing landscape and identity
WHERE: Counihan Gallery, Brunswick
WHEN: Until July 23
PREVIEW: Denise Mooney

This showcase of indigenous work by Victorian Koori elders is not what you might expect, according to co-curator Chris Bond.

“This is not an exhibition of dot paintings,” he says. “These artists have been making work in the Western tradition for some time.”

Featuring work by artists such as Uncle Herb Patten, Aunty Bunta Patten (pictured), Aunty Gwen Garoni and Aunty Frances Gallagher from the Aboriginal Community Elders Service in Brunswick, the exhibition has been organised to coincide with NAIDOC (National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee) week.

“It’s quite a vibrant show, each artist has his own particular practice,” says Bond.

Themes of landscape and memory are prevalent in the works, which document the elders’ childhood memories, personal stories and the landscape with which they are connected.

“It’s about the life experiences of all the elders,” Bond says.

One of the most successful artists showing work is Uncle Herb Patten, who is also proficient at the lost art of gum leaf playing.

Bond says Patten’s passion for gum leaves is evident in much of his work, and the exhibition includes several paintings of leaves and a floor installation depicting a gum tree, using stones and rock. His partner Aunty Bunta Patten is also a popular artist.

Bond says her charcoal drawings are “quite beautiful evocations of landscape”, with their stunning contrasts of darkness and sunlight.

There is also a video installation featuring interviews with the artists.

Curator Sharon West met the group at an art workshop she facilitated at RMIT’s Indigenous Arts Unit last year.

“They work well together as a group,” says Bond. “During classes at RMIT there’s always a happy vibe,”
Intersections
Figuring the Indigenous in Australia’s Art History
Dr. Susan Lowish, University of Melbourne
Wednesday, 9 November, 6:30pm
Elisabeth Murdoch Theatre

AHCCA Public Lecture Series >

The relationship between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous in the history of Australian art has been variously configured. In the past, it has been described as one of cultural convergence, erasure, or contention. This lecture will identify and discuss points at which constructions of the Indigenous have been visualised. If intersections are moments and sites of comparison, definition, and possible exchange, what can be made of their evaluation, consequence, and politics? While surveying the field of Australian art, this lecture includes a special focus on recent works by emerging artists.

Dr. Susan Lowish is a Lecturer in Australian Art History in The School of Art History, Cinema, Classics and Archaeology. Her research interests extend from re-visioning Australian landscape and colonial art through Aboriginal art history, to the uses of new media and photography in remote desert communities. Her most recent publication examines the absence of Aboriginal art in the writings of Bernard Smith, and appears in a special volume of Thesis Eleven: Critical Theory and Historical Sociology.

Presented by The School of Art History, Cinema, Classics & Archaeology and FAN
COUNIHANG GALLERY
30 June - 23 July
Opening night: Thursday 29 July
NAIDOC WEEK 2006

Koorie Elders talkin up country:
Picturing landscape and identity
To celebrate NAIDOC Week, Moreland City Council presents a showcase of artworks from Victorian Koorie Elders, honoring the importance of their commitment to the continuance of Koorie life and culture.
Featured artists include Uncle Herb Patten, Aunty Bunta Patten, Aunty Gwen Garoni and Aunty Frances Gallagher from the Aboriginal Community Elders Service Brunswick.
Curated by Trehna Hamm and Sharon West.
Image: Uncle Herb Patten, Gunni Country - Salt water meets fresh

Pastel, acrylic, Ochre, gouache and resin base on paper, 2006.
Gunia, Kunia country.
Fishing on Merri Creek, Westgarth, Wurundjeri people, 2004.
Pastel on paper.

ORGANISATIONS

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICE
(source: VAHS 2003 Annual Report)

The First VAHS
Forty Years Involvement, Herb Patten

229 Gertrude St, Fitzroy
The history of Aboriginal health care needs within Victorian began as an early struggle for the rights and recognition for the Aboriginal people to determine their own affairs, prior to the establishment of the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service in 1973.

The Victorian Aboriginal Health Service was established in 1973 in a shop front in Gertrude Street, Fitzroy. It was set up by a group of Aboriginal volunteers, with a volunteer Doctor, in response to the need for an appropriate and accessible health service.

139 Gertrude St, Fitzroy
The VAHS fought for funding to move to larger premises in 1979, an old VD Clinic in Gertrude Street, which was in poor condition and already too small to house the VAHS medical and dental programs.

186 Nicholson St, Fitzroy
Much effort was put into acquiring funding for a new purpose-built building at its current premises in 186 Nicholson Street, Fitzroy. It moved to its new premises in 1992.

Indigenous Arts Advisory Panel (IAAP)

The Indigenous Arts Advisory Panel advises Council and the Indigenous Arts Program on issues, policy, planning and program development related to Indigenous arts and culture. This panel comprises Indigenous artists and arts workers of high standing in the community.
The members are:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Art Forms/Expertise</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kutcha Edwards</td>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td>Singer, Songwriter and Composer</td>
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<td>Mandy Nicholson</td>
<td>Deputy Chairperson</td>
<td>Visual Artist, Traditional Owner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Bond</td>
<td>Panel member</td>
<td>Artist, Arts Administrator, Producer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelly Koumalatsos</td>
<td>Panel member</td>
<td>Visual Artist</td>
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<td>Jason Eades</td>
<td>Panel member</td>
<td>CEO Koorie Heritage Trust</td>
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<td>Kim Kruger</td>
<td>Panel member</td>
<td>Artist and Arts Administrator - Audience Access</td>
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<td>Project Manager</td>
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<td>Ilbijerri Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Theatre Cooperative</td>
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<td>Lowanna Norris</td>
<td>Panel member</td>
<td>Artist and Arts Administrator Indigenous</td>
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<td>Program Officer,</td>
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<td>Arts Victoria</td>
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<td>Peter Rotumah</td>
<td>Panel member</td>
<td>Artist Singer, Songwriter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lisa Maza</td>
<td>Panel member</td>
<td>Artist, Actor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uncle Herb Patten</td>
<td>Panel member</td>
<td>Visual Artist and Musician</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alister Thorpe</td>
<td>Panel member</td>
<td>Dancer and Visual Artist</td>
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Director: Herb Patten