

for immediate release
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Noongar Voices paints a unique picture of Wheatbelt life

Radio documentary series *Noongar Voices of the Central Eastern Wheatbelt* to air on ABC Radio National

Noongar people of the Central Eastern Wheatbelt have shared their life stories in a three part radio documentary series, *Noongar Voices of the Central Eastern Wheatbelt*, to be aired on ABC Radio National's Indigenous arts and culture program, *Away!* from Saturday, 25 September. The radio documentaries will be launched in Tammin with a community celebration on Monday, 27 September 2010.

The series draws on extracts from oral history interviews conducted by Mary Anne Jebb and Bill Bunbury for Community Arts Network WA (CAN WA) as part of the three year Strategic Partnerships Initiative. The aim of the story-sharing project is to assist Noongar people to record their life stories and provide opportunities for the broader community to gain an insight into Noongar life in the Wheatbelt.

'The programmes give Noongars a chance to tell their own stories and histories, how they had to adapt to a white world and how they kept their culture alive through stories of their people and the land.' said radio producer, Bill Bunbury.

The programs explore the aspects of Wheatbelt life for Noongar people, how they lived and played, and experiences of growing up on Noongar reserves. The stories span the generations of families who have experienced living and adapting to Wadjella (white man) ways including those who were a part of the Stolen Generations. By sharing their stories, participants have created a moving account of family and community life, Noongar beliefs and connection to Country in the Wheatbelt.

'Our forefathers are dying out ...' said participant, Pam Jetta.

'...we need to listen to the voices, go back to the land and find out about our people.'

The Noongar Voices programmes will air on ABC Radio National's *Away!* program on the following dates:

The end of the beginning – Saturday, 25 September at 6pm (repeated 27/09 at 3pm)

Holes in the tin – Saturday, 2 October at 6pm (repeated 4/10 at 3pm)

You can hear the ants breathing – 9 October (repeated 11/10 at 3pm)

The project is funded by Healthway, promoting the Respect Yourself, Respect Your Culture message; Australia Council for the Arts and Department of Culture and the Arts.

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About Community Arts Network WA

Community Arts Network Western Australia is the peak body for community arts and cultural development in WA. We facilitate community arts and culture funding, advocacy, youth arts and nationally recognised training programs for community wellbeing. Our two Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Development Units in Kellerberrin and Narrogin engage Aboriginal communities in self-determined arts and cultural activities to contribute to the cultural, social and economic vitality and sustainability of these communities.

ENDS

See below for sample images. For media enquiries and further information on the launch, please contact:

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Images (L-R, Top to bottom): Winnie McHenry collects bush medicine; Irene and Hazel Winmar; Bill Bunbury, Linda Champion, Mick Hayden Sr.; Tom Hayden.

