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**KIMBERLEY  
FOUNDATION  
AUSTRALIA**

**Kimberley Foundation Australia**  
**Annual Research and Activities Report**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2016**



*Kimberley Visions* excavation at Wanjina rock shelter Drysdale River National Park July 2016

Photo: Peter Veth

(All images courtesy of Kimberley Foundation Australia)

**Researching, preserving  
and promoting  
Kimberley rock art.**

## CHAIRMAN'S OVERVIEW



The past year has seen pleasing progress in a number of areas important to the Kimberley Foundation Australia. More indigenous people from the Kimberley are engaged with the science of Kimberley rock art and the scientists are achieving an understanding of the age and context of the art with hitherto unknown techniques. Further, knowledge of the extraordinary repository of information about Australia's ancient past, that is Kimberley rock art, is becoming more widely known across Australia.

The KFA's commitment to promoting scientific knowledge and awareness of Kimberley rock art was furthered in the past year by our collaboration with Kimberley aboriginal communities. Engagement

with Balangarra people, both those from Wyndham and those from Kalumburu has benefited the scientists as well as providing many opportunities for ranger groups, Traditional Owner's and individuals, particularly arising from the research field camps.

Increasing indigenous Board membership remains an objective as is further and broader engagement with the ranger groups.

The Foundation's Directors have every reason to be pleased with the progress made in the last year towards increasing public awareness of Kimberley rock art and its significance and in the huge increase in the scientific understanding of Kimberley rock art. The archaeological and scientific research undertaken so far has revealed two factors that will underpin our approach in the coming years. We now know that the Kimberley's secrets can be revealed and that Australia's earliest story will be told. We also know that we are going to have to employ archaeology and archaeological science expertise in years of painstaking research in many different disciplines.

The support KFA has received from the public has come from a growing group who discover what there is in the Kimberley and realise why Australians must understand it and who further understand the difficulties of working in remote areas of the Kimberley. Our supporters have remained committed and generous.

KFA's work could not proceed without our partners in action. I have already mentioned the community groups with whom we work and the critical importance of that connection. We celebrate also the universities with whom we work. The University of Western Australia, Department of Archaeology, and The University of Melbourne's Earth Sciences are our principal academic partners, but crucial connections with ANU, University of Wollongong, Monash University and University of Queensland exist. The partnership with ANSTO is equally important. The third critical element in our continuing progress is our own Science Advisory Council. Largely made up of academics from the institutions mentioned, its guidance and commitment is at the heart of the valuable work we do. And finally to the Board itself, a dedicated hard working group of individuals with varying skills committed to KFA's goals backed up by our lean office team of part time CEO and part time assistant. Our achievements are theirs.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Maria Myers".

Maria Myers AC  
Chairman, Kimberley Foundation Australia

## LETTER FROM THE CEO



The growing public interest in Australia's rock art is in no small part due to the Foundation's activities, as well as those of the Kimberley Foundation Ian Potter Chair at UWA and the wider group of scientists the Foundation supports. Rock art is simultaneously one of Australia's greatest – and least known – cultural assets and raising its profile beyond academy is important. To this end the Foundation embarked on a project to produce a DVD about the rock art research it funds. Other compelling reasons for the video were to extend KFA's provision of communication and information as well as give KFA the capacity to provide raw footage of KFA-funded research to media outlets. ***Kimberley Rock Art: A World Treasure*** was launched at a fundraising

Footage from the final product was sought by the ABC which culminated in a 6-minute story on the ABC's *7.30 Report* which aired on 2 November 2015. The DVD has screened at every KFA event around the country in the past 12 months to more than 1000 supporters.

The Foundation does not actively court media to promote research findings. That is the domain of the scientists. Inevitably the ABC *7.30 Report* news story attracted national and international media interest in Australia's rock art. The *Dating project* was the subject of a front page story and double-page feature in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on the 20 February 2016 with a smaller version appearing in *The Age*. The *Dating project* is now on the international radar.

The success of the video motivated KFA to produce a DVD to promulgate the case for a Chair in Archaeological Science at The University of Melbourne. Vice Chancellor Professor Glyn Davis saw first-hand the need for cutting-edge science when he visited the scientists in the field in July 2015. Over the next year KFA will build the case for the new Chair and engage in this significant fundraising effort.

Always looking to diversify its fundraising and public relations activities KFA presented a number of different events including a lunch with Professor Geoffrey Blainey at the Stokehouse City in Melbourne. The 5-year *Kimberley Visions* project appeal was launched along with the new video *A World Treasure*. Both enterprises were also launched later the same month in Perth. Two special 'Q and A' lunch events were held to give guests an opportunity to learn about the status of rock art research as well more about what the Kimberley Foundation does and why.

The Foundation increased its digital subscribers by 30% since last year. The website upgrade has been implemented over the last nine months with the new site expected to go live in October 2016.

The response from private philanthropic donors has been an inspiration for KFA. Their commitment and generosity helped KFA meet its 2016 research program target as well as 86% of the 5-year *Kimberley Visions* project.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cas Bennetto". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cas Bennetto  
CEO

## Directors' Report

In accordance with a resolution of the Directors, the Directors state:

### Vision Statement

#### *Researching, preserving and promoting Kimberley rock art*

Our vision is to promote scientific research into the rock art of the Kimberley and, in conjunction with the aboriginal people of the region, ensure it is preserved and recognised for its national and international significance. We believe the more the significance of the rock art is understood, the more likely it is to be preserved.

### Mission

The Foundation supports and encourages integrated scientific research into the rock art of the Kimberley region for the purpose of increasing our knowledge of the earliest Australian people, their art and cultures and their relationship with a changing environment. We recognise the importance of traditional knowledge and support the presentation of it alongside the scientific.

We work with the assistance of local aboriginal people and we are committed to sharing and using this knowledge to ensure the ancient rock art is recognised and promoted for its national and international significance and protected and preserved accordingly.

The Foundation raises and allocates funds with the following aims:

- To foster scientific research into the rock art and its chronological, cultural, ecological and climatic contexts;
- To promote research outcomes to ensure the broadest possible appreciation of the national and international significance of Kimberley rock art;
- To collaborate and share knowledge with aboriginal groups, the public, academic institutions and museums;
- To closely involve local aboriginal people in field research and training;
- To encourage new young scientists into these fields of research;
- To encourage protection and preservation of Kimberley rock art.

With respect to all the objects, the Foundation respects the sensitivity of aboriginal people to their cultural beliefs.

## Review and Results of Operations

The Company was incorporated on 24 September 1998.

The Company did not conduct any fundraising appeals during 2016. A number of sponsored fundraising lunches, public lectures and private donor events were held.

Donations and grants relating to these events totalling \$1,018,646 (2015: \$885,473) were received. The net surplus for the year 2016 was \$368,321 (2015: \$524,161). The Foundation continues to advocate for Kimberley rock art to be researched, preserved and promoted for its national and international significance.

### Kimberley Foundation Ian Potter Chair in Rock Art at the University of Western Australia

Prof Peter Veth took up the position of the newly created Kimberley Foundation Ian Potter Chair in Rock Art in February 2013. The Chair sits within the University of Western Australia's Centre for Rock Art Research + Management (CRAR+M; [www.uwa.edu.au/rock-art](http://www.uwa.edu.au/rock-art)). At present there are two Kimberley Foundation Australia Directors on the CRAR+M Advisory board.

The Chair is funded in perpetuity by the Kimberley Foundation Australia through gifts from The Ian Potter Foundation (\$1.5 Million) and INPEX (\$500k) with matched funding of \$2 Million from the University of Western Australia. Following the commitment from KFA and at its request, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs contributed funds for the Chair's start-up (2013-2015) enabling groundwork and exploratory fieldwork to be conducted. The 'Chair project' is considered a huge success by all supporting partners

The Chair is a Chief Investigator in the Australian Research Council Linkage Project *Dating the Aboriginal Rock Art of the Kimberley Region*. KFA is funding this project and is a Partner Organisation.



In 2015 a 5-year Australian Research Council Linkage Project entitled *Kimberley Visions: Rock Art Style Provinces of North Australia* was granted with KFA contributing \$500,000, totaling \$1.3 million in direct and \$2.4 million of in-kind support (see research section).

The scope of activities undertaken by the Chair over the last three years includes practical and theoretical research, engagement and training with Aboriginal organisations in the Kimberley, supervision of PhD students, outreach, media engagement, heritage promotion and engagement with legislative changes and advocacy.

Peter Veth, Chief Investigator, *Kimberley Visions* project  
Drysdale River National Park

Photo: Cas Bennetto

### 1. Fieldwork and Research

In the short time the Chair has been established, primary and collaborative fieldwork has been conducted with three major Kimberley Aboriginal Corporations – Balanggarra, Dambimangari, and Wunambal Gaambera, covering the vast coastal and inland strip from Derby to Wyndham. Seven distinct and logistically complex trips, each lasting 2-6 weeks resulted in over 200 rock art sites being recorded and over 400 rock art motifs being sampled for dating. These numbers will increase from July 2016 with the start of the *Kimberley Visions* project, where up to 3 months will be spent in the field each year, recording, sampling, excavating rock art sites, and feeding this research into the sustainable management of these sites. The latter activity is conducted with Indigenous Protected Area Rangers and Traditional Owners.

## 2. Outreach and Media

In addition to producing original research to share with the scientific community, an essential Chair function is to engage with and educate the public at local, state, national and international level. To this end the Chair's work has featured in over 100 news media, radio and television outputs in the 3-year period. This includes the Walkley award-winning *First Footprints* television series, for which the Chair was principal scientific advisor. The Chair reports twice a year to Kimberley communities and by phone, e-mail, and Skype at other times.

## 3. Research Plan and Results

KFA's core guiding principles of working with local indigenous people and a commitment to research, preservation and promotion of Kimberley rock art are at the heart of the Kimberley Foundation Ian Potter Chair's Research Plan. The Plan is compliant with UWA's Human Research Ethics Office (approved 2014), and Western Australia's *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*, as well as legislation governing Native Title and Indigenous Protected Areas.

Research results were presented at over 50 academic conferences with concomitant public presentations numbering more than 100. More than 35 academic articles have been written. Plans are in place for a monograph on Kimberley rock art that combines scientific research with contemporary heritage perspectives and is intended for scholarly and public audiences with derivative products such as visualisations and websites intended for Indigenous partner and community research. Similarly, scoping a travelling exhibition on Kimberley rock art and heritage is proposed for the next phase of the Chair's activities. The academic 'products' of this project are thus numerous, varied and evolving. Amplification of the UWA Kimberley-focused postgraduate community from late 2016 will further magnify this output.



Gwion art & hand motifs *Rock Art Dating* project rock art site, at Drysdale River National Park 2016

Photo: Cas Bennetto

### **Annual Science Advisory Council (SAC) Workshop**

The tenth workshop of the KFA Science Advisory Council (SAC) was held on 11 November 2015 at the Woodward Centre, University of Melbourne. *A Decade of Achievement in Kimberley Rock Art Research* was attended by 13 KFA Directors and staff and 31 scientists and researchers. The scientists come together at the multi-disciplinary workshop to report on progress and present and share their research findings with each other and with members of the KFA Board.

John Dodson, former head of ANSTO's Institute for Environmental Research and currently at the Institute of Earth Environment, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Xi'an, summarised the conference saying that the KFA model of philanthropic funding of scientific research works better than any other known model. The proof of this is in the record number of Honours, Masters and PhD students involved; in the funds leveraged and grant successes; in the multiple number of publications and the growing media and public interest.

### **Annual Public Lecture Series**

KFA's annual public lecture series is an important component of the Foundation's commitment to the dissemination of research information and public engagement. The 2015 Lectures Series was delivered by anthropologist Kim Akerman.

Kim Akerman's standing as the foremost ethnographer of northwest Australia is widely recognised. His lecture *Unravelling the Wanjinias - A Start*, was delivered on 29 April 2015 at Allens Linklaters in Sydney, at UWA in Perth on 23 September and at the NGV Melbourne on 9 March 2016. All three lectures were delivered to a full house.

For the first time KFA partnered with the National Museum of Australia, Canberra to deliver a public talk on rock art. Prof Peter Veth, Kimberley Foundation Ian Potter Chair in Rock Art delivered *The global significance of Kimberley rock art* to a full house on 14 April 2016. Following the lecture a panel discussion with Prof Howard Morphy and Prof Sue O'Connor from ANU was facilitated by the NMA's Senior Indigenous Curator, Adjunct Professor Margo Neale. This was followed by light refreshments.

The lectures were sponsored by premium WA wine producer Voyager Estate.

### **Promotion of Knowledge of Rock Art – DVD Project**

In July 2015 the Foundation embarked on a project with consent and involvement of Traditional Owners to produce a DVD about the rock art research it funds. Broome-based cameraman Mark Jones was engaged to film the researchers at work in the Drysdale River National Park and Australian author, journalist, television presenter and KFA supporter George Negus generously agreed to provide the voiceover. The DVD *Kimberley Rock Art: A World Treasure* has been screened at every KFA event since that date to an estimated audience of 1,100 people.

Footage from the final product was sought by the ABC. This culminated in a 6-minute story on the ABC's 7.30 Report which aired on 2 November 2015.

The Foundation teamed up with APT, supporters of KFA's vision to protect and promote Kimberley rock art. APT Kimberley Wilderness Adventures offered KFA a platform at their Information Sessions in Melbourne and Sydney to promote the work funded by KFA. In turn the Foundation briefs the APT Driver-Guides on the rock art in the region to give APT clients a better understanding and more thorough

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experience. APT also promoted the KFA's research mission in its annual magazine distributed to a customer base of approx. 80,000 and to its electronic database.

### Media

It is important for the Foundation to raise its profile, mission and accomplishments. The ABC 7.30 *Report* news story (above) attracted significant national and international media interest in Australia's rock art. The *Dating project* was the subject of a front page story and double-page feature in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on the 20 February 2016 with a smaller version appearing in *The Age*.

All media including press articles, radio interviews, the DVD and the ABC's 7.30 *Report* story can be seen on the website [www.kimberleyfoundation.org.au/news/](http://www.kimberleyfoundation.org.au/news/)

### Fundraising Projects

The Foundation commenced two major research fundraising projects in 2016.

A campaign to raise the funds for the 5-year *Kimberley Visions* project was officially launched in Melbourne and Perth in September 2015 with more than 86% of funds successfully secured.

Early discussion and negotiations for a *Chair in Archaeological Science* took place with The University of Melbourne. KFA has produced a video highlighting the reasons for the Chair and promoting the University of Melbourne as its natural home. Vice Chancellor Professor Glyn has taken a lead role in promulgating the business case. Expenses incurred on this project: \$6,100.

### Events

During the year KFA presented 11 events. Three of these relate to the lectures (above). Three of the 11 events were fundraising events and five events were focused on donor engagement and profiling the Foundation and its mission. The Foundation was also invited to speak at an event hosted by Kimberley cruise operator True North on Sydney Harbour on 5 January 2016.

KFA hosted a fundraising lunch with Professor Geoffrey Blainey on 2 September 2015 at the Stokehouse city, Melbourne. Prof Blainey shared his new thinking about aspects of Australia's earliest Indigenous inhabitants and their unique place in world history. To offset the cost of the venue and catering the occasion was ticketed and Voyager Estate generously provided the wines. The *Kimberley Visions* research campaign was launched at the event. A total of \$144,500 was raised for the project in FY 2016 and an additional \$286,000 in forward pledges was raised for the 5-year life of the project. KFA also launched its new DVD *Kimberley Rock Art: A World Treasure* at the event.

The *Kimberley Visions* project was officially launched in Western Australia in the Vice Chancellory at UWA on 29 September 2015. KFA Chairman Maria Myers and UWA Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor Prof Dawn Freshwater spoke. The Hon Albert Jacob Minister for Environment, Jim Sharp Director General of the Department of Parks and Wildlife, leading WA businessmen, members of CRAR+M, KFA supporters and KFA Directors were present.

KFA Director Susan Bradley hosted a cocktail party and dinner in Broome in July 2015 for Broome-based stakeholders and KFA supporters visiting the Kimberley including The Ian Potter Foundation Chairman Charles Goode AC.



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Two fundraising/donor engagement lunches were held in Sydney, on the 20 October and 18 November respectively. KFA Chairman Maria Myers hosted a Christmas party at the Alexandra Club on 30 November 2015 in Melbourne attended by The Ian Potter Foundation Governors and KFA's major supporters.

Two special 'Q and A' events badged '*Researching Kimberley Mysteries: a new science for an old age*' were held in Sydney and Perth on 20 April and 21 June 2016 respectively. KFA research partners, academics, donors, rock art enthusiasts and guests from government and business were given an opportunity to learn more about what the Kimberley Foundation does and why, as well as about the status of current rock art research. The proceedings in Sydney were chaired by financier and prominent arts benefactor and KFA supporter Simon Mordant AM and in Perth by renowned businessman, philanthropist and KFA Patron, Andrew Forrest. The Sydney event was generously supported by KFA pro bono partner KPMG. The Perth event was sponsored by INPEX, the Japanese oil and gas producer which helped to fund the Kimberley Foundation Ian Potter Chair at UWA.



KFA Director Susan Bradley with KFA supporters Anita Belgiorno-Nettis and Ginny Green at Q&A event, KPMG Sydney

### EVENT SPONSORSHIP AND IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

During the financial year the Foundation secured an \$18,000 sponsorship for its annual public lecture in Perth from the Indigenous Construction Resource Group; and \$3,300 from INPEX who sponsored the Q&A lunch event in Perth on 21 June.

In-Kind contributions were received from: the National Museum of Australia for the venue and catering following the Peter Veth lecture on 14 April; Voyager Estate provided the wines at the Canberra lecture and the Geoffrey Blainey lunch; KPMG provided the venue and catering of the Q& A event in Sydney and also the pro bono audit service.

The total in-kind contribution was \$56,221.

### Communications

The Foundation distributed four quarterly e-newsletters to 2000+ email subscribers which is a 30% increase on last year's subscribers. An additional six e-newsletters promoting public lectures were targeted to state-specific subscribers. An EOFY Appeal email was sent to 2,282 subscribers.

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A revised *Who We Are* brochure was updated and printed; the *Rock Art Styles* flyer had its 3<sup>rd</sup> re-print (2000 copies) and was distributed to tour operators in the Kimberley; and a 6-pp full colour Winter Newsletter was printed and distributed in May 2016.

### Research Publications

**Australian Archaeology** *A 600-year-old Boomerang fragment from Riwi Cave (South Central Kimberley, Western Australia)*; M. C. Langley, I.E. Dilkes-Hall, J. Balme & S O'Connor, 12 May; 2016

**Australian Archaeology** 82:2-11 *World's earliest ground-edge axe production coincides with human colonization of Australia*; P. Hiscock, S. O'Connor, J. Balme and T. Maloney; 2016

**Australian Archaeology** 82:80-85. *Re-excavation of Djuru, a Holocene rockshelter in the southern Kimberley, north Western Australia*; T. Maloney, S. O'Connor, D. Vannieuwenhuyse, J. Balme, J. Fyfe; 2016

**Journal of Archaeological Science Reports** *X-ray computed microtomography and the identification of wood taxa selected for archaeological artefact manufacture: Rare examples from Australian contexts*; R. Whitau, I.E. Dilkes-Hall, E Dotte-Sarout, M. C. Langley, J. Balme, S. O'Connor; 2016

**Journal of Archaeological Science** *Settling in Sahul: Investigating environmental and human history interactions through micromorphological analyses in tropical semi-arid north-west Australia* D. Vannieuwenhuyse, S. O'Connor and J. Balme; January 2016

**Journal of Archaeological Science Reports** 7:775-781 *Dingoes and Aboriginal social organisation in Holocene Australia*; J. Balme and S. O'Connor; 2016

**Quaternary International** (under review) *A late Quaternary record of monsoon variability in the northwest Kimberley, Australia*; E. Field, H. McGowan, P. Moss, S. Marx; 2016.

### Science Advisory Council

The Foundation established a Science Advisory Council (SAC) in 2006 which celebrated its tenth anniversary in FY 2016. KFA's relationship with tertiary and cultural institutions is vital as the Foundation continues to fund and also initiate research centred on Kimberley rock art. The SAC is made up of a diverse group of eminent scientists from tertiary institutions across Australia who guide and shape KFA's long term research program. The Chair of the SAC is Professor Andrew Gleadow FAA, Professor of Geology and former Head of the School of Earth Sciences at the University of Melbourne.

The SAC comprises ten members plus three ex officio member organisations. Two new members: Prof Simon Haberle from ANU was appointed in Sept 2015 and Prof Janet Hergt was appointed in March 2016. Janet is currently Deputy Dean of Science at the University of Melbourne and newly appointed Deputy President of the University's Academic Board.

#### Members

- Chairman, Prof. Andrew Gleadow, University of Melbourne
- Deputy Chairman, Prof. John Dodson, previously ANSTO and currently at the Institute of Earth Environments of The Chinese Academy of Sciences (Xi'an)
- Mr. Kim Akerman, Adjunct Professor of Archaeology and member of the CRAR+M Advisory Board at The University of Western Australia (UWA)
- Prof. Jane Balme, University of Western Australia
- Assoc. Prof. Bruno David, Monash University

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- Prof. Janet Hergt, University of Melbourne
- Prof. Simon Haberle, Australian National University
- Prof. Hamish McGowan, University of Queensland
- Ms Cecilia Myers – Dunkeld Pastoral Co
- Professor Peter Veth, Kimberley Foundation Ian Potter Chair in Rock Art, University of Western Australia
- Dr Karl-Heinz Wyrwoll, University of Western Australia(\*)

(\*) Dr Karl-Heinz Wyrwoll retired from SAC in Nov 2015

### Ex Officio members

- West Australian Museum represented by Dr Moya Smith
- Kimberley Society represented by Dr Mike Donaldson
- UWA Centre for Rock Art Research+Management represented by Prof Jo McDonald

### Alternate members

- Mr Jeff Gresham, Kimberley Society, alternate for Mike Donaldson
- Prof. Sue O'Connor, Australian National University, alternate for Jane Balme
- Assoc Prof Sven Ouzman, CRAR+M alternate for Professors McDonald and Veth
- Dr Mikael Sivverson, Western Australian Museum, alternate for Moya Smith

Members and alternates of the Science Advisory Council do not receive fees.

During the current financial year the SAC participated in the annual workshop (November 2015) and in three teleconferences. Formal agendas and minutes were recorded and kept.



Two figures identified as owl-Wanjina by Wilfred Goonack, Munurra rock art site King Edward River / Mitchell Plateau

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### **KFA Directors**

The names of the Directors in office any time during or since the end of financial year are:

#### **Chairman - Maria Myers AC**

Maria Myers is Chairman of the Kimberley Foundation Australia and director of Dunkeld Pastoral Company Pty Ltd, the Australian String Quartet and the State Library of Victoria and Chairman of the State Library of Victoria Foundation Council. She is a member of the Loreto College Ballarat School Council and a member of St Mary's College Council, University of Melbourne. Maria joined the Board in 2001. In 2016 Maria was awarded a Companion of the Order of Australia for the advancement of the understanding of Indigenous rock art and for her service to the community through philanthropic leadership.

#### **Deputy Chairman - Laurie Brereton**

The Hon Laurie Brereton is Chairman of Beelgara Estate (Australia) Pty Ltd, Wine Insights Pty Ltd & Cumulus Wines Pty Ltd and is Director of Airbus Group Australia Pacific Limited & John Curtin House Limited. In 2004 Laurie retired from public life after a distinguished parliamentary career spanning 34 years in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly and the Australian House of Representatives. Laurie joined the KFA Board in 2006.

#### **Director/Treasurer - Brenda Shanahan**

Brenda Shanahan has served in senior executive positions and board roles in Australia and overseas primarily in stockbroking, funds management and investment consulting. She was appointed Director of DMP Asset Management in 2010. Brenda is a former member of the Australian Stock Exchange, partner of May Mellor Laing & Cruikshank and principal of Investment Consulting and worldwide partner at WM Mercer. Brenda is currently the Chair of St Vincent's Medical Research Institute and Chair of the Advisory Committee on Medical Devices (ACMD), a Director of Challenger Limited, Clinuvel Pharmaceuticals Ltd and Bell Financial Group. Brenda joined the KFA Board in 2009.

#### **Director - Susan Bradley**

Susan Bradley has lived in the Kimberley for 48 years. In 1994/95, at the request of four Ngarinyin aboriginal elders she established 'Bush University'. The Friends of the Ngarinyin developed and with fellow KFA Director Christina Kennedy she formed the Wandjina Foundation in 1997. In 2002 it was renamed the Kimberley Foundation Australia. Susan has been a KFA Board member since. Susan has held many prominent public and private board positions, primarily relating to northern Australia. She lives on a pastoral property in the North Kimberley and manages three cattle stations. She is involved with many Aboriginal communities and is a member of the Commonwealth Regional Development Council.

#### **Director - Julian Burt**

Julian is director/owner of Metzke Pty Ltd and MJW Rail Pty Ltd. He is also a director of Margaret Court AO Community Outreach Foundation and West Australian Opera. Julian is Chairman, Finance Committee, Liberal Party of Australia (WA); Director, St George's Cathedral Foundation for the Arts; Chairman, St George's Cathedral Heritage Precinct Fundraising Committee and is involved in many other community organisations. Julian joined the KFA Board in October 2014.

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### **Director - John Calvert-Jones AM**

John Calvert-Jones is the Executive Chairman of Seafirst Australia, a family investment company. He is a Trustee of the McClelland Gallery and is on The National Gallery of Australia Council. He is a former member of the Australian Stock Exchange Limited, former Chairman and Managing Director of Prudential Bache Securities (Australia) Ltd and has been a Director of several public and private companies. John joined the KFA Board in 2010.

### **Director- Bruce Cameron**

Bruce Cameron is a graduate of Monash University and holds a Bachelor of Jurisprudence and Bachelor of Laws. He is a commercial lawyer with around 30 years' experience in the law and business. Bruce is a senior member of a boutique commercial law practice he established with others in Melbourne in 1986. Bruce assisted the Foundation for several years on a pro bono basis on matters concerning Aboriginal rock art and culture. He is a director and trustee of a number of private companies and trusts which are involved in matters of business and the care of others. Bruce joined the KFA Board in 2010.

### **Director - Professor Andrew Gleadow FAA**

Andrew Gleadow is Emeritus Professor of Geology and former Head of the School of Earth Sciences at the University of Melbourne. He has researched and published widely on the development and application of radiometric dating techniques, particularly in fission track analysis and thermochronology. His work has included dating of hominin fossil sites in East Africa. Andy has received numerous awards for his research, is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Sciences, and a former President of the Geological Society of Australia. Andy was appointed Chair of the KFA Science Advisory Council in November 2013 and joined the KFA Board in 2014.

### **Director - Nolan Hunter**

Nolan Hunter is CEO of the Kimberley Land Council, an organisation representing Traditional Owners in the Kimberley. Nolan is a Bardi man with strong links to his people and culture across saltwater country in northern Western Australia. He spent 14 years with various Commonwealth agencies specialising in indigenous affairs, and has worked with indigenous communities in Australia. Nolan is Chairman of the National Native Title Council as well as an indigenous leader representing the Kimberley in Empowered Communities, a group of indigenous leaders informing policy development to the Dept. of Prime Minister & Cabinet, Indigenous Affairs. Nolan was appointed to the KFA Board in 2014.

### **Director - Christina Kennedy**

Christina Kennedy and fellow KFA Director Susan Bradley established the Foundation in 1997 and together remain the longest serving members. Christina is a physiotherapist and operated a private clinic in Sydney for 25 years. She is now a farmer in Bodalla NSW. She is a director of a number of private companies and a former Director of Film Australia and The Institute for Professional Practice in Heritage and the Arts. She is a member of the University of Western Australia's Centre for Rock Art Research +Management Advisory Board.

### **Director - Wal King AO**

Wal King holds a Bachelor of Engineering, a Master of Engineering Science and an Honorary Doctorate of Science from the University of NSW. Wal has worked in the construction industry for over 40 years and was CEO of Leighton Holdings Limited from 1987 until Dec 2010. He is Chairman of Sundance Resources Ltd; Deputy Chairman of UNSW Foundation Ltd; a Director of Coca-Cola Amatil Ltd, and a Senior Advisor

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to CITIC Mining International Ltd. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Institution of Engineers Australia, a Foundation Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management, the Australian Institute of Building and the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering. Wal joined the Board in 2008.

### Director - Sam Lovell AM

Sam Lovell lives in Derby in the Kimberley. He has been employed by Aboriginal Economic Development (AED), Department of Industry and Resources as an Aboriginal Tourism Project Officer since 1995 and works as an indigenous consultant for Western Power. Sam has a background in tourism and established his own business 'Kimberley Safari Tours' in 1981. A tourism award in his name is presented annually by the Kimberley Tourism Association. Sam is regarded as the 'father' of Indigenous Tourism in WA and is affectionately known as 'Mr Kimberley'. Sam is also a musician and travels across the country to Queensland every year to play at the Tamworth Music Festival. Sam joined the KFA Board in 2009.

### Director - Henric Nicholas QC

The Hon Henric Nicholas is a former Judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, retiring in 2013. He is a former Director of NSW Cultural Management Ltd., a former Chairman of St. Paul's College, University of Sydney, and an honorary councillor of the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW. He is an arts/ law graduate of Sydney University. Henric joined the KFA Board in 2000 and was Chairman of the Board from February 2000 until November 2009.

### Director- Deidre Willmott

Deidre Willmott is Chief Executive Officer of the Chamber of Commerce & Industry WA. Deidre holds law degrees from the University of Western Australia and a Master of Laws from the University of Melbourne. She has been a senior executive at Fortescue Metals Group Ltd and Chief of Staff to the Premier of Western Australia. Deidre joined the KFA Board in 2010.

### Post year-end Board member changes

- John Mullen was appointed to the Board on 1 July 2016
- John Calvert-Jones resigned on 18 August 2016



KFA Directors with TO Mark Unghango at *Rock Art Dating* research camp, Drysdale River National Park

## RESEARCH

Rock art research is central to answering some of the big questions about human migration. Kimberley rock art is a complex archaeological subject and KFA has responded by developing a research program that spans key scientific disciplines. KFA supports a broad range of scientists from the fields of archaeology, geology, palynology and related areas who work with Aboriginal communities to uncover Australia's earliest settlement history.

### Project Selection

The KFA's Science Advisory Council assesses each project proposal in the context of KFA's long-term research interests and with consideration of the interests and participation of indigenous communities, sustainable research outcomes and the wider academic discourse.

KFA provides seed funding for approved 'first stage' research particularly if the research has potential to become an Australian Research Council (ARC) linkage project with academic partners. KFA will then consider funding 'stage two' to support an ARC grant application. Selected projects are anticipated to produce research results that will inform both policies and practical measures, leading to better protection and preservation of Kimberley rock art. Findings will also contribute to measures to find an optimum balance between access and conservation, which is increasingly becoming an issue.

Research findings are communicated via professional journals, the media and a series of public lectures.

### Research themes

The priority research themes reflect leading questions in Kimberley rock art research and guide KFA in identifying and funding research projects:

1. Reconstructing past climate and environments
2. The production, composition and conservation of Kimberley art
3. The antiquity of engraved and pigment art in the Kimberley and how we understand its variability across space and time.
4. The chronology of human occupation of the Kimberley in the context of archaeological and genetic data from Sunda (southeast extension of the continental shelf of Southeast Asia) and Sahul (part of the continental shelf of the Australian continent)
5. Strangers on the shore: Macassans, the mercantile class and pastoralism.

### Projects

In FY2016 KFA approved funding of \$4,716 for a workshop to support an ARC Linkage application called *Past Environments of the Kimberley: Late Pleistocene to Anthropocene* led by Prof Simon Haberle from the Australian National University. A number of researchers came together for a planning meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> June 2016. The proposed ARC submission will be submitted in October 2016. This project follows Haberle's KFA-funded palaeoecology project ***Environmental Transformations linked to Early Human Occupation in Northern Australia*** with researchers Dr George Perry (University of Auckland), Dr Simon Connor, Prof Peter Kershaw and Dr Sander van der Kaars (Monash Uni). The 30 June 2015 balance of \$4,984 was carried forward and spent on additional helicopter fees to conduct a survey of potential palaeoecological sites in the Charnley River region to support the above-mentioned ARC application.

Funding of \$27,200 was approved for a pilot study of High Resolution Records of Environmental Changes led by Prof Jon Woodhead from the Dept Earth Sciences at the University of Melbourne. The pilot was

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intended to assist with Prof Haberle's ARC Linkage application (above). Prof Woodhead concluded at the workshop that the funds would be better spent on studies aimed at establishing environmental reconstructions going back tens to hundreds of thousands of years across northern Australia which are a key component of Woodhead's Laureate Fellowship. A balance of \$27,200 remains.

***Dating the Aboriginal rock art of the Kimberley region WA - landscape geochemistry, surface processes and complementary dating techniques*** (LP130100501), led by Professor Andrew Gleadow, The University of Melbourne.

The Rock Art Dating (RAD) project was designed from the outset to include a multi-disciplinary approach that would enable multiple dating strategies to be explored in parallel. The project is led by Prof Andrew Gleadow with a substantial group of collaborating researchers from the Universities of Melbourne, Wollongong, and Western Australia and ANSTO, and is supported by the Australian Research Council, with the KFA, Dunkeld Pastoral Company Pty Ltd and Archae-aus Pty Ltd as Partner Organisations.

The project is now two years into its three year term, and this report emphasises progress since the last major field seasons at Freshwater Cove and Drysdale River in May and July 2015 respectively.

Progress has been substantial on all fronts, including characterisation of mineral accretions (Postdoc Helen Green), development of uranium-series methods (Helen Green), characterisation and radiocarbon dating of mud wasp nest constituents (PhD student Damien Finch), geomicrobiology (MSc student Jordan Grinpukel) and cosmogenic radionuclide dating (PhD student Gaël Cazes).



*Rock Art Dating* project Damien Finch demonstrates Radiocarbon sampling techniques to TOs Ernie Boona, Scottie Unghango & Mark Unghango

Photo: Helen Green



## 1. Previous Field Work

Three field trips have been completed from August 2014 to February 2016 in collaboration with Traditional Owners to collect sample material for dating and rock surface characterisation. Reports on these field trips were included in the KFA 2015 Annual Report. With each successive field trip there has been a progressive refinement of the sampling strategy and a transition in emphasis from understanding surface processes to dating of on-art samples.

The efficiency of the sampling and recording process has also significantly increased with each field program. Several hundred samples were collected during these trips for radiocarbon, U-series and cosmogenic radionuclide (CRN) dating, and most of these have now been processed and analysed in the laboratory.

## 2. Wet Season Field Trip

A week-long field trip in February 2016 was conducted to observe and identify processes occurring on rock surfaces during wetter conditions. Helen Green, John Dodson, Damien Finch and Cecilia Myers carried out reconnaissance fieldwork with helicopter pilot Nick Sundblom also part of the team. The visit was particularly successful in observing and sampling modern mud wasp nests while they were being formed, and these are now being dated to confirm that they return a modern age, a key constraint on interpreting ages on older material. This pioneering work will provide the first wet season data to support rock art dating results in the Kimberley.

## 3. Laboratory Analyses

Over the past year, a substantial number of measurements for Uranium series dating of mineral accretions and radiocarbon dating of remnant mud wasp nests have been completed based on an increasingly clear understanding of the processes operating on rock art surfaces. These materials are from both under and over the rock art to provide bracketing ages for the different art styles in the Kimberley. For the reliable application of these techniques, it is important that researchers can understand the origin of the accretions. Accretions unrelated to art sites were also collected, as were water samples and swabs of microbial matter forming on the drip lines of shelter walls.

**Rock Surface Characterisation:** Four major 'mineralising systems' that operate largely independently from each other, with different sources of the mineral constituents, different fluid transport pathways and different depositional environments, have now been identified. Of these, the lateral polychrome fringe deposits and dispersed wall coatings are the most important for U-series dating as they contain uranium-bearing phosphate minerals. Lichens, proposed as a potential pathway for the formation of oxalate minerals, and active predominantly during the wet season, were also identified and sampled. Mud wasp nests can be regarded as a fifth independent system with the target dating material being mostly charcoal fragments in the original mud.

**Radiocarbon Dating:** Some 39 new AMS radiocarbon dates have now been completed, out of an eventual total of approximately 100 new dates over the lifetime of the project. Extremely important progress has been made in establishing new procedures for extracting and processing carbon from tiny mud wasp nest remnants. After much initial experimentation, usable amounts of carbon down to as little as 15 micrograms are now being successfully processed, with an excellent success rate of around 50%. These measurements are at the limit of what has previously been possible for AMS radiocarbon measurements and the success being achieved is a tribute to the persistence and skill being shown by Damien Finch.

**Uranium-series dating:** measurements are also progressing strongly and over 80 dates have now been obtained from 38 on-art samples from Freshwater Cove and Drysdale National Park. Additional characterisation work has produced a further 26 dates from 10 on sample material unrelated to art. An

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important advance over the past year has been the development of a protocol for calibrating the initial Thorium concentration, which has been a major limiting factor on the precision of dates obtained on many of the samples so far.

This procedure depends on sampling layered mineral accretions around the same sites sampled for on-art dating, and was a major target for the major July 2016 field trip.

**Cosmogenic Radionuclide Dating:** Work has been proceeding in two complementary directions to first characterise the background landscape evolution rates across the region, and second, to date the time of major rock slab falls that have created, or punctuated the evolution of, rock shelters containing art. Detrital stream samples have been collected over 24 river catchments throughout the east and north Kimberley to provide average catchment-wide erosion rates. As expected, these are very low overall but comparison of different catchments indicates that escarpment retreat is occurring more rapidly and is the dominant landscape evolution mechanism. Large shelter-forming slab falls have also been dated in several locations giving useful maximum ages for occupation and art in those localities. Several sites have also been identified where slab falls can be directly related to the rock art sequence. Work on these is now progressing and further results are expected shortly.

**Geomicrobiology:** Work is proceeding on mineral accretion samples and sterile surface swabs from rock surfaces associated with Drysdale rock art sites. Analysis of organic constituents within mineral accretions by Infrared Spectroscopy indicates the presence of a range of organic as well as inorganic constituents. Initial DNA analysis of these materials is revealing a combination of species from primitive Archaea to Bacterial groups.

The Project was awarded a major grant of \$480,000 under the Australian Research Council's Linkage Projects scheme at the end of June 2013. The Project formally commenced 1 July 2014 and runs for three years from this starting date, ending 30 June 2017. KFA's commitment is \$225,000 over three years. The balance of funds at 30 June 2016 is \$75,000.



Kimberley Visions and Rock Art Dating crew at Barking Owl camp, Drysdale River National Park, 2016

Photo: Cas Bennetto

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