

WALK A WHILE NEWS - June 2014

Making friends, making music, making progress.

In March, Ken took a small team of musicians and a few other supporters out to central Australia to visit with elders and community members at Haasts Bluff and Papunya.

They visited the Haasts Bluff Arts Centre to meet some of the local painters and they also spent time speaking with some of the elders and community members.

They went with a song that has been written by some friends from the Melbourne Gospel Choir and the intention of recording some indigenous voices to be mixed into the final piece. The city musicians and indigenous people from the different communities all came together around a big table. They spent time chatting together over a meal, and then they made music together.

It took many hours, but everyone had a lot of fun, especially trying to translate the song into the local native language, because a lot of their words are much longer than ours. But just getting the locals' perspective on why they want the cross built was pure gold.

Also on that trip with Ken in March was Steve Walker, CA, B.Bus. We are thankful to Steve for offering his time and expertise in the capacity of accountant, financial advisor and business advisor for Walk a While Foundation. Steve is another person who is not charging for his time – he sees this as a way he can contribute to the work of Walk a While. (We would also like to thank Anne Peterson who graciously took on the job of preparing the initial budget for Walk a While.)

Tom Ivory was another member of the group who visited with Ken in March. Ken had never met Tom and was unaware of his background in earthworks and heavy machinery operation. When Tom decided to join the group – mainly musicians - he wondered why he was even there. But he got really excited when the group climbed Memory Mountain and Ken showed him the markers where the track is going to be constructed. Tom told Ken about his experience with heavy machinery and promptly offered his time and expertise, free of charge, to help with the earthworks required for the road up Memory Mountain.

When the team went into Alice Springs later and spoke to the guys who have been contracted to construct and erect the cross, Tom's expertise really came to the fore. He obviously had a great understanding of what will be involved and was able to speak to the construction guys in their language. The contractor agreed that if Tom does the excavation for the first section of the road, we'll be able to save thousands of dollars.

Tom was also a great help when it came time to inspect the GBM building that we're hoping to get for our first creative arts centre. He has given us valuable advice about how we can make some small repairs so the building is even better suited to our needs.

We still need help. Will you help raise this cross? Will you tell other people about the project and encourage them to become involved?

The need is urgent. There is a deadline – imposed by the Central Lands Council permit – by which we need to have the cross erected.