

## **WALK A WHILE NEWS – July 2014**

### **Music and Unity**

Judd Field, Director of the Melbourne Gospel Choir, and David Crabtree, Senior Pastor of Dayspring Church in Sydney, both accompanied Ken Duncan on a recent visit to the Ikuntji community in Haasts Bluff, NT. Here is Judd Field's story about that trip.

*Having travelled with Ken a few years back to the slums of India with a World Vision team, I knew what I was getting myself into. Ken is hilarious to travel with: getting up at dawn to photograph everything, randomly stopping elephants in the street for photo ops, buying piles of CD's trying to "corner the market" on Indian music, all with the widest grin and sense of adventure. And it was while driving into the desperately poor and needy Indian slums, that Ken first mentioned to me an Indigenous community in Central Australia who also needed help - to build a massive cross on their mountain, to draw the local people to Christ.*

*"Wow, how exciting," I thought, "that God is moving in our indigenous people." Little did I realise, a few years later I would have helped Roma Waterman write a song called "Power in the Cross" to help raise funds for this project. Or that I would be bringing my eldest son with me to visit this community and present the song to the local elders to see if they approved, or maybe wanted to add anything from their culture to the song.*

*The significance of a song in indigenous culture is not lost on me. I've heard the stories of young indigenous men trying to "sing" a young lady they are interested in courting, and the young lady blocking her ears saying "don't sing me, don't sing me" as they are very aware of the power of the "song" to draw them to be attracted to the man. The indigenous can even navigate with a song - the dreamtime song-lines go from Uluru to every part of the country - so I wanted to be very respectful of to their culture and also bring some of their "song" back with us.*

*We were joined on this trip by a team from "Sounds of the Nations", a mission based organisation that aims to redeem the original sounds and songs of countries around the world for the Kingdom, to empower the locals to sing their own worship song in their style and their language. So involving the local elders in this song of the Cross was a very significant moment for all of us.*

*As we drove down a red, dusty road west of Alice Springs, I wondered what to expect in the remote community of Haasts Bluff. My western media-fueled fears of drunken abuse had me nervous, but what I encountered couldn't be further from my fears. I met beautiful, warm, friendly people in a tidy, peaceful community. I was truly blown away. If anyone wants to know the solution to reconciliation, it's Jesus. He was shining all over that place. What a testimony to the power of the cross; the power of Jesus to restore what the enemy tries to steal and destroy.*

*Every few nights, the communities around this area have these simple unplanned "sing-a-longs", where they gather under a tin roof or the stars and sing praise and worship for hours. They are writing their own incredibly beautiful, pure worship songs, in their own local languages, on dusty old keyboards, often with only 10 keys still working. It was incredibly moving to witness their humble spirit and to hear their song. God is moving in the Great South Land and no white man can claim the glory –*

*it's all going to God. Hallelujah!*

*So we climbed Memory Mountain, where the local elders want to build this huge cross. It's an amazing hill rising majestically in the middle of a vast plain, at a major cross road. I found that very significant. Standing on top of Memory Mountain you can turn 360 degrees and see for miles in every direction. A warm wind was blowing across us, just like the Holy Spirit is breathing life into our nation. Breathtaking is the only word for it.*

*But what came later was, for me, even more breathtaking. On our last night, the elders sat with us for dinner, then translated "Power in the Cross" into their local language and sang it in language so we could record them singing and add their voices to the song. I felt very moved and incredibly humbled. So now this song is truly a reflection of reconciliation at the Cross, both in the natural and spiritually.*

*"Power in the Cross", a song of unity and reconciliation at the Cross, featuring indigenous elders along with Roma Waterman, myself and the Melbourne Gospel Choir, will only be available for downloading when you make a special donation to "Help Raise the Cross" at [www.walkawhile.org.au](http://www.walkawhile.org.au).*

*Our prayer is that as you listen to the song, you will be drawn to unite even more with the people God placed in our land, and empower us to do all we can to help these amazing elders raise the cross in the heart of our nation for all the world to see. Jesus said, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all me unto me". We pray that as we lift a symbol of that sacrifice, as we lift the Cross for all to see, Jesus will draw all men to Himself.*

#### **NEWS ITEM #5 – August 2014:**

##### **Arts Centre Update – and special thanks:**

For some time we've been actively searching for a building we can use as a permanent base for a new creative arts centre in the Ikuntji Community at Haasts Bluff. It has been a long, hard, road as we've dealt with many different government departments.

But we have had some wonderful assistance along the way and we'd like to thank some of those people who have supported us on this journey.

Special thanks must go to Lucy Wicks, Federal Member for Robertson (our local MP) for championing this cause in the Liberal party.

Thanks to Nigel Scullion, Senator for the Northern Territory & Minister for Indigenous Affairs. Nigel and his staff understand the vision for the Arts Centre and are working with us to help secure the building.

And thanks also to Mark Coffey, NT State Manager for Dept of Prime Minister & Cabinet, who made our most recent trip possible by gaining permission for us to stay in the GBM building at Haasts Bluff. Mark is also working with us through the process of securing that building permanently.

And now we've received some very exciting news. Mark Coffey rang Ken to advise he'd been in touch with Nigel Scullion's office and to confirm they want to help us. They want to see the Creative Arts Centre become a reality and they are working towards giving us access to the GBM Building. Mark's assistance in gaining permission for Ken and the group to stay there during their visit in March was

vital - it really helped us understand how fantastic this building is going to be once it's staffed and equipped. We'd love this building to become our hub and a meeting place where creative people can come together and really produce amazing work.

Mark Coffey has now handed us over to Cate Heys from the Indigenous Co-ordination Centre (ICC), in Alice Springs. Steve Walker will liaise with Cate to find out what needs to happen to make this a reality. Now that we have this contact, we're trying to move things ahead as quickly as we possibly can. There's a process involved, but Cate is proving to be a great help and we're pushing forward.

We'll keep you informed as we get more news.