



Annual Review 2016

We are delighted to share with you highlights of our work in 2016...

Victorian Digital Storytelling Program

This year saw the return to four Victorian communities with the near completion of the multi-year Digital Storytelling Program funded by an Innovation Grant from the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation (LMCF). Community multi-touch books developed using a template funded by Gandel Philanthropy have now been populated with a cultural story in each of the communities as follows:

- Shepparton, 'Tongala' (a Bangerang story about the creation of the Murray River),
- Mildura (stories shared by three tribal groups, the Mutthi Mutthi, Ngiyampaa and Barkandji),
- Swan Hill ('Pondi', a Wemba Wemba story about the Giant Murray River Cod and the creation of the Murray River) and
- Thornbury ('Birrarrung', a Wurundjeri story about the creation of the Yarra River).



Students in Shepparton learning how to use garageband and working together on the creation of their own digital books in which they document their program learnings, word bank and collate related media.

SharingStories will travel to Heywood in early 2017 to work with community on production of a multi-touch book interpretation of an important Guditjimara story.

Funds permitting we plan to work with Victorian communities to evolve the community based multi-touch books into versions that can be shared with the broader public. These will include bi-lingual functionality, making the story available in both Language and English. We are also planning to develop comprehensive teacher resources to accompany each book. These valuable resources will be held by communities in the local Language & Culture Nests which provide educational material to schools in their region. Ideally, approved content will also be made available in interactive display panels and installations in related regional galleries. Learnings from the Victorian program are being consolidated into an adaptable program template which can be utilised across the country. We are also seeking funds to continue work on the Gandjalala (Sugar Bag Hunter) and Mukarr (Giant Green Sea Turtle) stories with the Wägilak and Liya-dhälinymirr Djambarrpuyñu clans in North East Arnhem Land.

These programs involved a wonderful arts practice, production of shadow, puppet and projection work and consolidation and incorporation of media already produced into two new interactive multi-touch books. This work builds on earlier work supported by the Wales Family Trust and the Eldon & Anne Foote Trust

administered by LMCF. Some of the outcomes will be featured in an exhibition at Manly Art Gallery from May-July 2017, as part of the Guringai Festival and NAIDOC Week celebrations.



(Left) Filming the Bungul (dance) associated with the Gandjalala Song Cycle to be incorporated with artwork in the multi-touch book and (Right) participants creating artwork to illustrate the story of Gandjalala.



Artwork produced for the Gandjalala multi-touch book by Miko Cameron.

Continuation of recording of the Ancestral Dreaming Track and Song Cycle of Woonyoombo, the Night Heron resulting in production of a range of new multi-media outcomes.

The SharingStories team returned to Country with Senior Nyikina Mangala Cultural Custodians Annie Milgin and Darragah Watson to continue mapping the Song Cycle and Ancestral Dreaming Track of 'Woonyoombo' in the West Kimberley Region. Woonyoombo created the Fitzroy River and left behind extensive cultural knowledge for the Nykina Mangala people. Annie and Darragah added new songs and information to the map which will be added to the multi-touch book produced with the community last year and serve as an important cultural archive. Content will also be incorporated into interactive display panels that can be exhibited locally and travel as part of a major touring exhibition scheduled to commence in 2019. Directed by Annie, our team used a drone and 360 degree video technology to record from an aerial perspective important sites and to produce an immersive media experience. Annie was deeply gratified to see her Country from this perspective. The drone also allowed access to areas that were impossible to reach physically which was of significant value. This work was generously supported by the Australia Council for the Arts.



Annie Nayina Milgin looking for sites on Country and working with SharingStories facilitators to record country with the drone.

Professional Development in Wilcannia (NSW) and Yirrkala (northeast Arnhem Land)

This year we provided professional development for Wilcannia Central School (NSW) teachers building skills in the use of digital media in the classroom, engaging children in a creative, culturally relevant learning process. SharingStories has been working with the Paakantji community over many years; recently developing a Language Lightbox, a user-friendly digital device enabling communities to record and learn language. SharingStories also conducted professional development at the Yirrkala Homelands School in Yirrkala, North East Arnhem Land, supporting teacher capacity to teach digital literacies in culturally relevant ways in the school environment. Yirrkala has long been a leader in the field of culturally relevant learning practices with whom we are excited to be developing a delivery partnership.

SharingStories delegates at the Festival of Pacific Arts in Guam



At the invitation of the Commonwealth Department of Communication and the Arts, SharingStories travelled to Guam to participate in the Festival of Pacific Arts that occurs once every four years. Nyikina Mangala Senior Custodian Annie Milgin and Adnyamathanha Custodians Leslie Coulthard and Tracey Jackson were accompanied by SharingStories Program Facilitator Conor Fox and Strategy and Partnerships Director Brynnie Goodwill. SharingStories presented workshops and talks showcasing the digital media developed with young people and senior custodians, featuring excerpts from the multi-touch books, 'Woonyoomboo', 'Yulu's Coal' and 'Bunjil the Eagle'. Our team developed strong connections with other custodians across the Pacific including an Indigenous Healers Circle, as well as deepening connections between the Adnyamathanha and Nyikina Mangala community.

Women's Journey to Nyikina Mangala Country



(Left) Annie Milgin and Lesley Coulthard with SharingStories Chairperson Amanda Milledge and visiting women. (Right) Annie showcasing the production of bush soaps using local leaves and oils.

Six women from Sydney and Melbourne joined SharingStories on Nyikina Mangala Country for a week of cultural learning with Annie Milgin and Senior Women from the Walmajarri and Karajarri communities. With the support of The Yiriman Project, we camped by a waterhole on the Jirrkalyie River at Oongookoorr, a favourite camping place. Visitors were involved in sugar bag (honey) hunting, a soap-making and ointment workshop, and jewellery-making techniques. The days often ended with evening yarning circles, and the culmination of the trip included a visit to the Jarlmalangah Community, school and cultural centre and an overnight camp at beautiful Kalkabiny (Honeymoon Springs). A special guest on the trip was Adnyamathanha custodian Lesley Coulthard who forged a strong friendship with Annie in Guam; the two were keen to continue learning about each other's communities and country. Country Arts SA helped to support Lesley's participation in this program.



(Left) Annie Milgin and Lesley Coulthard smoking Karen Mahlab, one of the visitors on Country, as part of a Welcome to Country. (Right) Women representatives of Yiriman, Karajarri Rangers and other delivery partners of the Women On Country Trip.

In Conversation with Annie Milgin and Liz Thompson. Discussion relating to the importance of Digital Storytelling to help Indigenous peoples protect, maintain and grow cultural knowledge (Sydney/ Melbourne)



Annie Milgin and Liz Thompson presenting at the offices of Arnold Bloch Leibler

We were very lucky this year to have Annie Milgin in conversation with Liz Thompson at special events held in Sydney and Melbourne just prior to Annie’s leaving for Guam. The Sydney event was held at The Ethics Centre and in Melbourne the event was hosted by SharingStories’ Melbourne pro bono lawyers Arnold Bloch Leibler. Annie talked about the critical need to hold culture for future generations, and how digital media helped to engage young people in learning about and producing new forms and interpretations of culture. More than 65 philanthropists and other guests attended both events and explored with Annie and Liz the challenges, joys and importance of the work in which SharingStories and communities are engaged.

Board Retreat on Country

The SharingStories Board had its first retreat on Country this year, just prior to the Women’s Journey, with Board member Annie Milgin our host on Nykina Mangala Country. Being ‘on location’ and sharing stories together helped deepen directors’ understanding of our work. The Board discussed ways of building our capacity to assist communities seeking to hold and share culture for all generations, into the future.



(Left) SharingStories Board (missing Nākarrma Mark Guyula) on Nykina Mangala Country. (Right) Board Members Annie Milgin and Tim Goodwin at the site of the Blue Tongue Lizard.

SharingStories exhibits in India

Through a grant from the Australia-India Council, SharingStories held Digital Storytelling Programs with undergraduates from Benares University Department of Journalism and Mass Media and young people from the Jeevan Shiksha Samaj Seva Samiti School in Varanasi, India. Media developed during the school program was exhibited at Kriti Gallery alongside media, photographs and artwork created by children from

Indigenous communities in Australia. Liz Thompson conducted the workshops with Taz Miller and local facilitator Ajay Pandey. SharingStories has been invited to present a larger exhibition at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts in New Delhi, which we would like to do when program funding permits.



(Left) Seema, a student from Jeevan Shiksha Samaj Seva Samiti School in Varanasi, with family and relatives in front of an image produced as part of the program and exhibition installation. (Right) Students visiting the Kriti exhibition and filling out teaching and learning lesson plans.



Students visiting the Kriti exhibition. BHU undergraduates walking visitors through the exhibition they staged as a result of the SSF program.

Ongoing work at Lake Mungo with local delivery partners

As part of our Digital Storytelling Program in Mildura, SharingStories has been assisting with documentation of cultural knowledge relating to the Lake Mungo area by three different language groups with connection to this Country: Barkandji/Paakantyi, Ngiyampaa and Mutthi Mutthi. New partnerships have developed with the Mungo Joint Management Advisory Committee, Willandra Lakes Region World Heritage Area Aboriginal Advisory Group, National Parks NSW, Arts Mildura, Western Local Land Service and Discovery Rangers as a result of this work. Ultimately the stories of each community will form a new, interactive display experience at the Lake Mungo Tourism Centre.



Senior Mutthi Mutthi, Ngiyampaa and Paakantyi custodians leading the initial program at Lake Mungo .

Castlemaine Art Gallery and Museum Permanent Display Featuring 'Bunjil the Eagle'

At the urging of Jaara Senior Custodian Uncle Rick Nelson, SharingStories shared the community multi-touch book 'Bunjil the Eagle' with Jennifer Kalionis, Director of the Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum (CAGHM). This has resulted in our working in partnership with CAGHM to secure funding from Telematics Trust to redevelop the permanent outdated display relating to local Koorie culture. The new display will feature an interactive panel showcasing the multi-touch book content from 'Bunjil the Eagle'. The exhibition will also include media developed by SharingStories with local custodians and young people relating to bush tucker and bush medicine in the region. The new display is intended to open approximately April 2017 and will provide an important cultural starting point for school tours and community tours, engaging people young and old, families, visitors and new audiences.

Letter from the CEO and Chair...

2017 has been a year of consolidation for SharingStories. In a difficult funding environment, we have been successful at raising the funds we need to ensure we continue our planned program of work, even though our core resources have been stretched. The many accomplishments of this year would not have been possible without the support of our fabulous funders, partners, volunteers, Board and staff. Thank you for your extraordinary contribution and connection to our work. We are deeply grateful for all you do.

At the core of our business is a commitment to learning both ways – Elder and child, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, speaking and listening, traditional and modern, oral storytelling and digital storytelling. By building spaces where learning both ways is real for Indigenous children, Elders and all Australians, SharingStories is telling an old story and creating a new one – of the hope and power of Indigenous cultural knowledge.

As such we take pride in our way of working, an approach that encompasses a mutually respectful collaboration of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Our board is equally represented by Indigenous and non-Indigenous directors each of them bringing their unique strengths, experience and insights to the table. It is a luxury for us to meet face to face since we are spread across Australia. However, the directors benefited enormously from such a meeting in September this year on the Country of board member, Annie Milgin, in West Kimberley. We are very grateful to Annie and her community for the work they put into hosting this meeting.

During the years ahead, SharingStories will be busy undertaking its program of work on the ground, collaborating in depth, and over the long term, with communities to support the creation of digital media documenting stories, language and culture. At the direction of communities with whom we work, we will also be looking for new and innovative ways to share media developed in order to grow knowledge of, and respect for, Indigenous culture especially in educational and tourism settings. To this end, we welcome working in partnership with others who possess the necessary skills. We firmly believe that Australian society is enriched by a greater understanding and valuing of Indigenous stories as a vital part of the physical and spiritual landscape of Country.



Liz Thompson & Amanda Milledge

Acknowledgement and deepest thanks

Special thanks to our partners and funders for the year ending 2016 without whose support this work simply would not be possible...

Arts Mildura • ANZ • Australia Council for the Arts • Australia-India Council • Bangerang Cultural Centre • Bell Charitable Fund • Castlemaine Art Gallery & Museum • Collier Charitable Fund • Commonwealth Indigenous Languages & Arts • Country Arts SA • Dusseldorp Forum • Fouress Foundation • Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC) • Lord Mayors Charitable Foundation • Manly Art Gallery & Museum • Mungo Youth Project • National Parks NSW • Ngalpala • SharingStories Donors Circle • Swinburne University of Technology • Telstra Foundation • The Funding Network • Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. • Wales Family Trust • Weymando Trust • Western (NSW) Local Land Service and Discovery Rangers • Wilcannia Central School • Willandra Lakes Region World Heritage Area • The Yiriman Project • Yirrkala Homeland Schools

To our sponsors and pro bono supporters...

AESOP • Arnold Bloch Leibler • Gilbert & Tobin • Maddocks • Jane Tewson and Igniting Change

To the wonderful custodians, communities and schools with whom we are working...

Adnyamathanha, Bangerang, Barkandji, Buruwuy, Darlinybuy, Jaara, Kija, Liya-dhālinymirr Djambarrpuynu, Gan Gan, Garrthalala, Gunditjmarra, Mutthi Mutthi, Ngayampaa, Ngaanyatjarra, Nyikina Mangala, Paakantji, Wāgilak, Wemba Wemba, Wurundjeri

Frog Hollow School, Heywood & District Secondary College, Mildura Primary School, Nyikina Mangala Community School, St. Georges Rd. Primary School, Swan Hill Primary School, Thornbury Primary School, Warburton Campus Ngaanyatjarra Lands School, Wilcannia Central School, Yirrkala Homeland Schools

And to the generous individual supporters who have donated to SharingStories throughout the year.