

Preface and acknowledgements

This volume has its origins in an Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Project (LP1000200359), 'Pintupi dialogues: reconstructing memories of art, land and community through the visual record'. The project brought together Nicolas Peterson and Pip Deveson from The Australian National University, Peter Thorley from the National Museum of Australia, Fred Myers from New York University and Papunya Tula Limited to work on 13 hours of archival footage shot by Ian Dunlop at the Central Australian outstation of Yayayi in 1974. The footage was of particular interest not only because it recorded the lives of people who had only settled down in the previous 12 years, but also because it documented one of the first outstations that was established following the election of the Whitlam Government in 1972. Self-determination was the focus of the ARC project, with outstations seen as a major manifestation of Indigenous aspirations in this respect. Understanding Indigenous views is crucial to avoid trivialising this complex and highly contested policy area.

The original footage was divided into a number of shorter edited sequences dealing with different topics for community use, and also made into an hour-long film, *Remembering Yayayi*. Marlene Nampitjinpa, who was born in the bush in 1959 and was three years old at the time of first meeting Europeans, comments on the 1974 footage in which she features along with her parents and many other relatives.

Towards the conclusion of the ARC project, it was planned to hold a conference that would explore the early history of the establishment of outstations across northern Australia as manifestations of Aboriginal-led self-determination. The papers published here were originally presented at The Australian National University on 16 and 17 December 2013 in a lively proceedings that brought together a number of retired employees of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs,

an older generation of anthropologists who had been in the field during the 1970s and an audience of younger scholars working with people in the existing and transformed outstations.

We would like to acknowledge the generous support we have received from the National Museum of Australia, particularly the support of three of its directors, Craddock Morton, Andrew Sayers and Mathew Trinca. The ongoing support of Paul Sweeney from Papunya Tula Limited has been crucial to the success of the project. The comments of the anonymous referees have done much to strengthen the volume and were extremely helpful. Thanks are also due to Karina Pelling for the maps and Christine Huber for assistance with the publishing process.

It is with great sadness that we report the death of the Reverend Bill Edwards on 24 July 2015.

This text is taken from *Experiments in self-determination: Histories of the outstation movement in Australia*, edited by Nicolas Peterson and Fred Myers, published 2016 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.