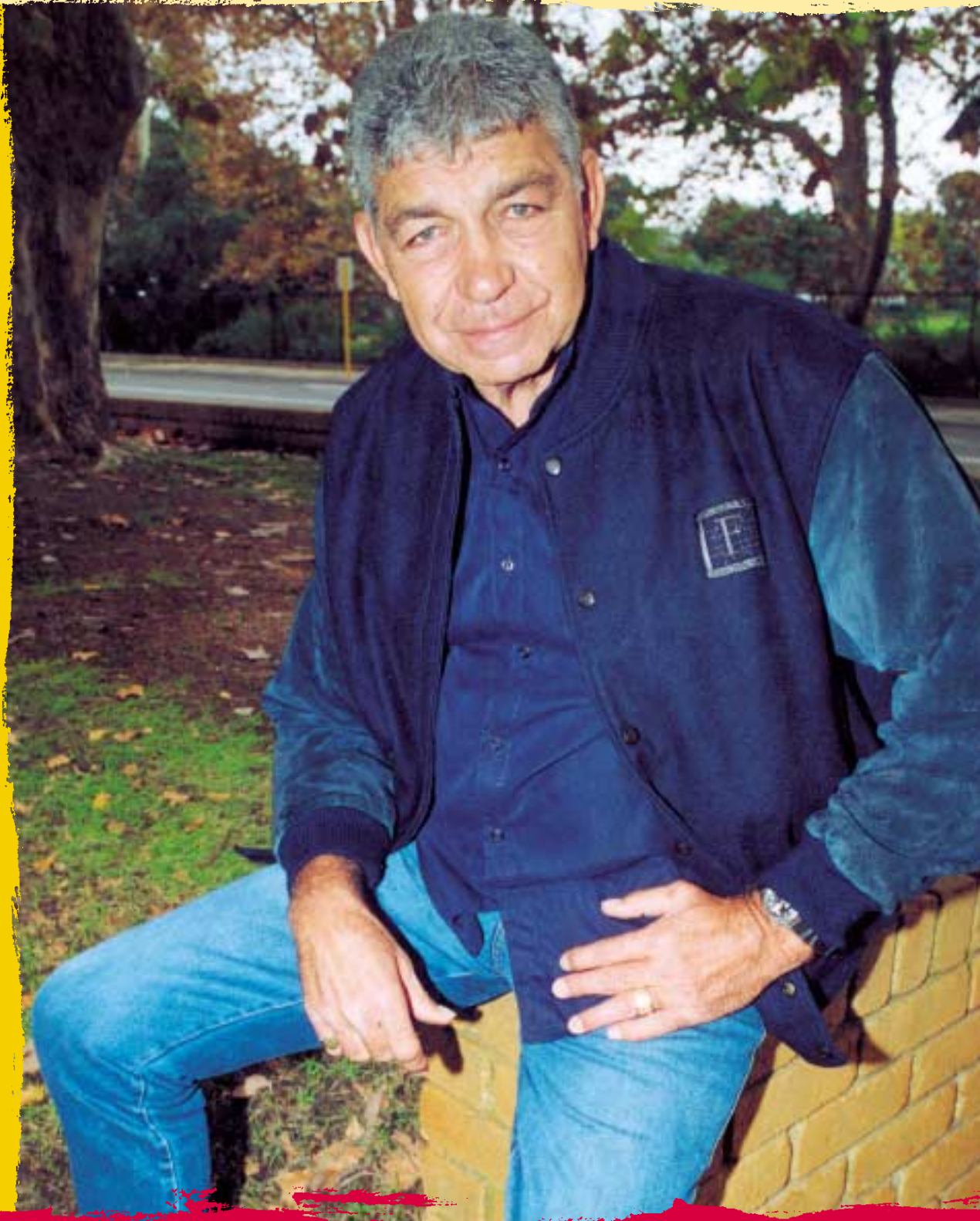


WA Aboriginal

Housing Infrastructure Council News



Leading by example

Bill Dempsey page 5



Message from AHIC Chair Peter Yu

Inaugural Chair of the Aboriginal Housing Infrastructure Council

Abolition of ATSIC

With the announcement by the Prime Minister that ATSIC will be abolished as from 30 June 2004, new arrangements for the delivery of services to Aboriginal communities will come into play. I want to assure communities however that agreements and programs delivering housing and infrastructure services in WA will remain in place for 2004/05 and for AHIC it is business as usual with the Aboriginal Housing and Infrastructure Directorate continuing to roll out the program to communities.

The next twelve months will see considerable lobbying and negotiation about arrangements for housing and infrastructure beyond June 2005. Different models are already being discussed within the Commonwealth Government although at this stage no formal engagement with Aboriginal stakeholders and State or Territory Governments has occurred. AHIC will keep a close eye on developments.

Public Housing Visits

In my role as Chair of AHIC and a State Housing Commission Board member I have recently visited a number of areas across the State, giving me the opportunity to observe first hand the state of mainstream public housing stock. I have to say that although the Department of Housing and Works is doing a good job in some areas, in others there are serious problems. AHIC members have also raised concerns about the standard of mainstream public housing stock and recently inspected a number of properties in the South West region to see the problems for themselves. The inspection of properties in the South West was undertaken at the request of the Katanning Aboriginal Corporation, which has been very active in lobbying and highlighting the condition of housing in that area.

Thanks to those who are associated with the KAC, I am pleased to advise that as a result of the concerns raised by AHIC, planning is in progress for the first year of a four year Regional Upgrade Program with a commitment from DHW to the replacement of 800 houses and major refurbishment to a further 200 units of public housing stock throughout the State. The result of this program will be a great improvement in living conditions for people in public housing, particularly in the country areas. Strategies are also being developed to address the appalling conditions that were observed in Wiluna.

Strategic Issues

AHIC members will be attending a facilitated Strategic Issues workshop to be held in late July to consider the abolition of the ATSIC, urban Aboriginal community housing issues and mainstream public housing stock problems.

The AHIC Strategic Plan identifies home ownership as a priority. To progress this, an Aboriginal Home Ownership Strategic Plan has been developed and endorsed by AHIC. Over the coming months a Steering Committee will be developing strategies to look at home loan schemes that better meet the needs of Aboriginal people and provide sustainable home ownership. I will keep you fully informed on the progress of any new schemes that become available. In the meantime if you would like any information on the Aboriginal Home Ownership Schemes currently in place please do not hesitate to call Robert Isaacs on 08 9429 4051 or toll free 1800 093325.

Tertiary first for busy AHIC member



Barbara Henry is a prime example of the saying "if you want a job done ask a busy woman."

The first Aboriginal person to gain a post graduate degree in health economics and currently completing her masters at Curtin University, Barbara is keen to apply her knowledge to the Aboriginal Housing Infrastructure Council.

With four grown up children and five grandchildren, Barbara decided to build on her extensive knowledge of Aboriginal history and social welfare issues with tertiary qualifications.

So with typical enthusiasm and energy she enrolled for the inaugural program in Aboriginal Health Economics at Perth's Curtin University.

Barbara has a lifetime of working to make a difference trying to ensure that issues impacting on Aboriginal communities and families were dealt with in a culturally appropriate way.

Her extensive experience in research and policy development in Family and Children's Services, the Department of Indigenous Affairs and Department of Social Security (Centrelink) is coupled with her practical knowledge and understanding of the social welfare issues.

Recently Barbara has been involved in the development, implementation and day-to-day management of the Coalition of Aboriginal Agencies Indigenous Family Program, working with families to help them overcome their problems.

"Economic Health is about making the best use of scarce resources, spreading them across the whole spectrum, health, children, social welfare and housing."

"While I am studying Aboriginal Health economics, I am learning that it can be applied to other areas that influence outcomes for Aboriginal people."

"The concept of Aboriginal health goes beyond the narrowness of physical wellbeing, it is 'holistic', inclusive of all elements that impact on family and community wellbeing and functioning."

GOALS

beyond the big sticks

Throughout a football career that will see him pass 150 AFL games and 300 goals in 2004, **Phillip Matera** has always kept an eye on the future.



The youngest of three brothers to make it into AFL ranks, Phillip began his electrician's apprenticeship in his hometown of Wagin in 1990. Work remained high on Phillip's agenda when he ventured to the city to try out with South Fremantle in the WAFL. While his football career blossomed, a placement with Reg Pratt at Tanis Electrical Engineering in Welshpool was just as important.

"Reg is still a mentor to me," Phillip said, "Tanis does a lot of work in the mining industry and I had just come off a mining site in Leonora when I found out I'd been drafted by the Eagles."

The clever forward made his AFL debut in 1996 but remained keen to keep his hand in with his trade. "Footy pays well but I've always had the vision that at some stage I'll need to look at life after football," Phillip said.

With the help of the AFL Players Association and with a nod of approval from the Eagles and coach John Worsfold, Phillip set about starting up an electrical contracting business early in 2003.

When it came time to put on an

apprentice Phillip approached his friends Billy Kickett and Michael Thorne at Perth Employment and Enterprise Development Aboriginal Corporation (PEEDAC), which aims to place young Aboriginal people in employment in the private sector.

"They said they had a young fella on their books who had done his pre-apprenticeship as an electrician," Phillip said. "Being of Aboriginal descent myself, I decided it was only fitting to give him a go."

During his 12 months learning the ropes (and wires) Jeremy Sipkes has impressed his boss.

"Jeremy has a great work ethic and he's doing well at TAFE," Phillip said. "He's a bright kid with a bright future."



Phil Matera and Jeremy Sipkes in action.

The upcoming Preferential Tendering Policy, now being developed by the DHW will provide tender preference for Aboriginal businesses, businesses employing Aboriginal tradespeople and for sub-contractors, is something Phillip says will benefit his business greatly.

"I have a friend Robbie Mallard who is a plumber and we're keen to take advantage of this by putting on some plumbing and electrical apprentices and teaching Aboriginal kids to get trades behind them," Phillip said, "I've also leased a building in Osborne Park which I hope will be a really good training base."

Phillip believes the development of good young Aboriginal tradespeople will do more than just benefit the individuals involved.

"I think we can show the Aboriginal community and the broader community that if we put our minds to it, get the right people and the right facilities, then we can do just about anything," he said.

At 28-years-of-age Phillip Matera remains at the height of his AFL footballing powers, but it's clear he'll be kicking goals well after he hangs up his boots.

big things grow



The Clontarf Foundation is a 'not for profit' organisation that aims to improve the health, employment, education and life skills of Indigenous teenage males in Western Australia.

The Foundation believes that failure to experience achievement when young and a position of under privilege often lead to alienation, anger and antisocial behaviour. Students at Clontarf's three Academies are provided with an opportunity to succeed and thereby experience increased self-esteem. The vehicle for achieving this outcome is Australian Rules football.

The relationship between Clontarf and its Managing Director Gerard Neesham goes back a long way. He taught at Clontarf College in Perth the early 1980s and was married there in 1981.

Throughout a distinguished career as an Australian rules footballer and coach Neesham worked very closely with young Aboriginal men. He could see the talent and he could clearly see the problems young Aboriginal footballers had in making their way through the system.

Neesham coached at senior level from 1987 to 1998, taking Claremont to four WAFL premierships and guiding Fremantle through its difficult first years in the AFL. When his coaching days ended he turned his attention to setting up a sporting academy for Aboriginal men and in 1999 a pilot program for Australian football kicked off at Clontarf Aboriginal College in Perth.

"My talent is in coaching football and developing young men, so I ran the idea past some people I really respected, from one side of Australia to the other, and they were enthused about the idea," Gerard said.

established in Kalgoorlie-Boulder and Geraldton. Former AFL players Dale Kickett, Andrew McGovern and Ashley Prescott are among those involved in the scheme.

Football academy director Brad Puls said football was the vehicle used to attract kids to education: "What we're about is developing self-esteem, problem solving skills, life skills and employment opportunities." he said, "Footy is the trick but really the program is minimal footy and more focus on mental health and social health."

Clontarf has quickly established itself as a powerful football school with success in competitions such as the Smarter Than Smoking Cup and graduates such as Dion Woods (Fremantle), Andrew Krakouer (Richmond), Mark Williams (Hawthorn) and Michael Johnson (Fremantle) being drafted into the AFL. The AFL also recently asked Clontarf to play against the visiting Irish under 18 international rules team.

However Brad said the academy uses indicators such as retention rates, attendance, enrolment and graduation statistics to measure its success.

"When we talk to the kids we tell them that if one out of 100 gets drafted into the AFL then that's a significant positive result." he said. "Most of us need to concern ourselves with what we're going to do after school, so we goal-set and set up a vision for the future.

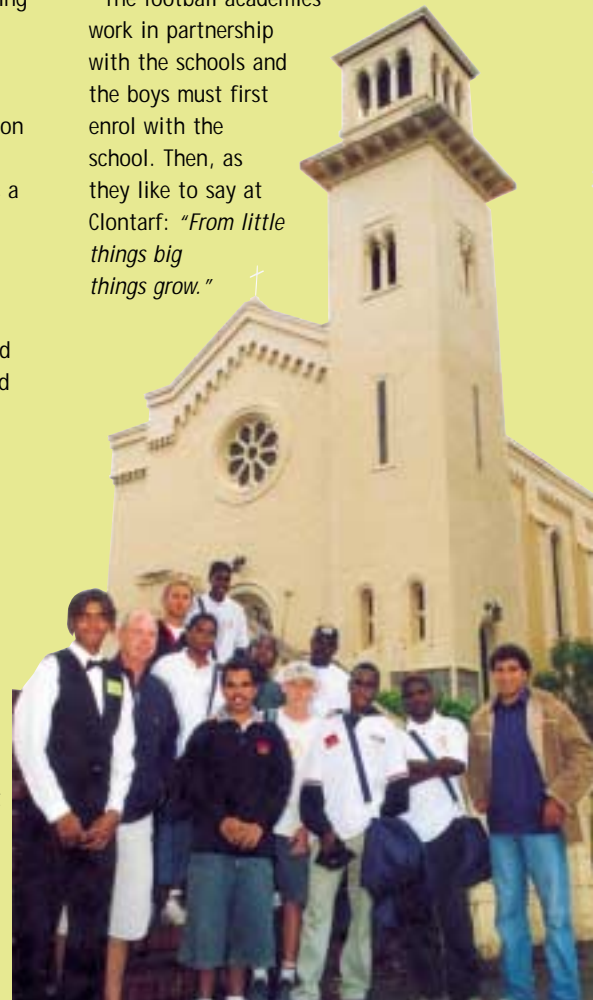
"The boys discuss issues such as buying a car, getting the clothes they want to

In just five years the program has gained a national profile and has expanded, with centres now

wear and even eventually buying a house. Our message is that to get these things you need to have normal nine to five employment," Brad said.

In a typical week Clontarf boys will take part in three 7.30am to 8.30am training sessions and play one or two games. Applicants for the Clontarf, Mid-West (Geraldton Senior High School) or Kalgoorlie-Boulder (Eastern Goldfields SHS) programs must be prepared to commit to both the academic and football training programs.

The football academies work in partnership with the schools and the boys must first enrol with the school. Then, as they like to say at Clontarf: *"From little things big things grow."*





Honour for footballer who led by example

Western Australian football great Bill Dempsey was equally respected for the example he set to others as for his skills as a ruckman during the 16 years he played for West Perth.

He was recently honoured for his long football career, during which he won three premierships, by being inducted into the WA Football Hall of Fame.

A regional project manager with the Aboriginal Housing and Infrastructure Directorate of the Department of Housing and Works for the past 10 years, Bill is still setting an example to fellow Aboriginal people.

In 1969, in the West Perth - East Perth Grand Final, Bill played in front of a then record 51,385. Now he uses different skills to advise West Kimberley Aboriginal communities, helping them with their housing and related issues and encouraging the kids.

Bill is responsible to the Aboriginal communities across one of the biggest areas of the State - covering Broome, Derby and Fitzroy Crossing and all its communities.

“ This is really rewarding work, I enjoy talking to the kids at footy training sessions, ”

“Football is a great leveller and a terrific way to communicate,” Bill said.

Bill was born in the Northern Territory so empathises with the Aboriginal people in the North West.

“I come across many of my rellies up there,” he said. “The work can be hard at times, but it’s very rewarding”.

It was in 1969 that Bill won the Simpson Medal, playing in front of his mother who had been flown down from Darwin.

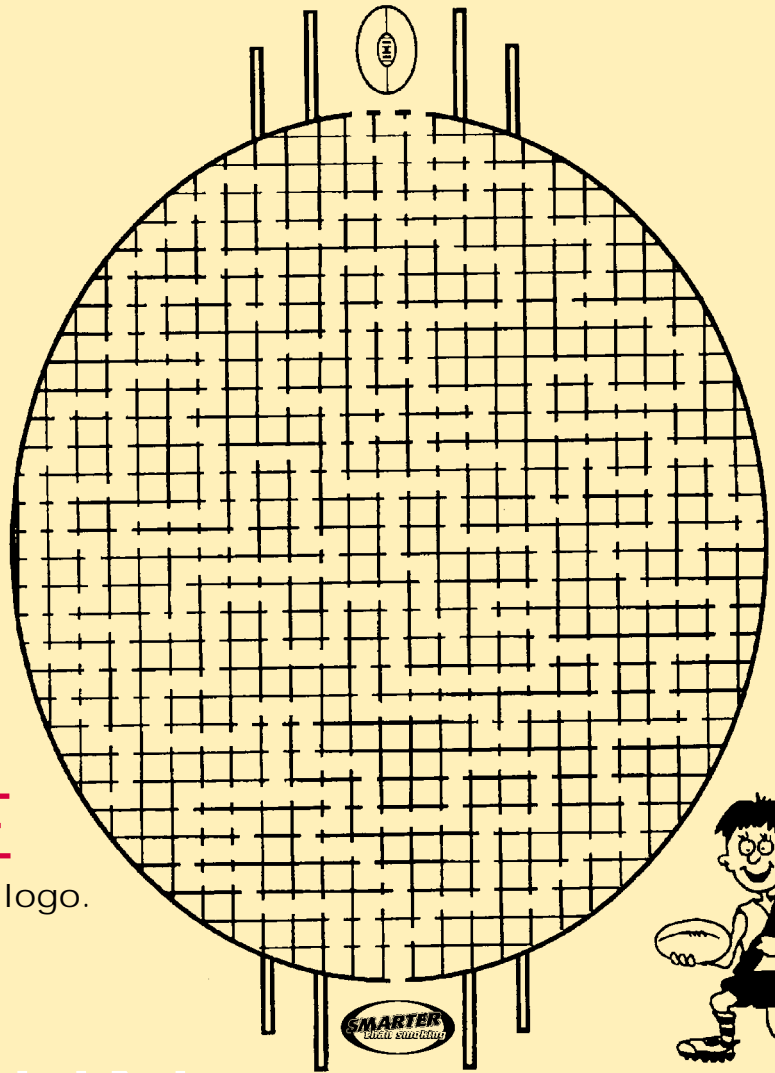
In 1976 he was recognised for his services to football with an MBE.

As a footballer during the 60s and 70s, Bill established a reputation of responding to big crowds and big occasions, but off the field, Bill is a self-deprecating quiet achiever.

A key figure in a golden era for West Perth, Bill played a staggering 343 games. During that time West Perth held three premierships, 1969, 1971 and 1975 and Bill was a major contributor to the club’s success.

“Now I am trying to play a part in helping Aboriginal people in the North West achieve self-determination,” Bill said.

Bill Dempsey



Find your way through the football oval **MAZE** to the Smarter than Smoking logo.

FOOTY FUN

FOOTBALL WORD MATCH

There are many words and phrases that are unique to the game of football. Can you match the following words to their appropriate definitions?

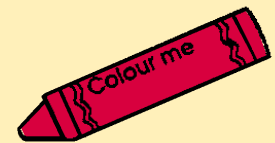
Word/Phrase

1. Barrack
2. Behind
3. Boundary Line
4. Centre Circle
5. Coach
6. Free Kick
7. Goal
8. Handball
9. Interchange Bench
10. Kick
11. Mark
12. Points
13. Premiership
14. Quarters
15. Runner
16. Siren
17. Tackle
18. Umpire

Definition

- A. To catch the ball
- B. When the umpire penalises a team
- C. To move the ball with your foot
- D. The major trophy for the best team in the competition
- E. The person with the whistle who controls the game
- F. To move the ball with your hands
- G. A minor score worth one point
- H. The place where players rest during the game
- I. The centre of the ground where the ball is first bounced
- J. The person who takes messages from the coach to the players
- K. When a player grabs an opponent who has the ball
- L. A major score worth six points
- M. Loud signal blown at the beginning and end of each quarter
- N. The perimeter line around the playing field
- O. The person who trains the team
- P. The total of goals and behinds scored during the game
- Q. The four time periods that make up the game
- R. To cheer for team.

- ANSWERS
- | | | |
|-------|-------|------|
| 18. E | 12. P | 6. B |
| 17. K | 11. A | 5. O |
| 16. M | 10. C | 4. I |
| 15. J | 9. H | 3. N |
| 14. O | 8. F | 2. G |
| 13. D | 7. L | 1. R |



Colour in with your favourite team colours.

Off to the FOOTY

FOOTBALL WORD SEARCH

Find the words in the sleuth below.
 Words may be up, down, backwards or horizontal.
 The leftover letters reveal a secret word.
 Unscramble the letters to complete the sentence below.

Look for these words

- | | | | |
|-----------|--------------|--------|-------|
| Kick | Tackle | Rover | Tag |
| Handballs | Bench | Wing | Skill |
| Mark | Umpire | Pocket | Side |
| Goal | Coach | Push | Leg |
| Behind | Free | Ball | |
| Point | Premierships | Boots | |
| Runner | Ruck | Siren | |

H	P	G	O	A	L	L	A	B
A	R	W	E	R	I	P	M	U
N	E	E	I	L	L	I	K	S
D	M	N	V	N	E	B	C	R
B	I	E	M	O	G	E	U	E
A	E	R	A	F	R	N	R	L
L	R	I	R	R	N	C	B	K
L	S	S	K	E	G	H	O	C
S	H	C	R	E	C	A	O	A
S	I	A	P	O	I	N	T	T
K	P	U	A	E	D	I	S	T
M	S	C	P	O	C	K	E	T
H	H	R	D	N	I	H	E	B

Award for Halls Creek Town Camps Management Committee

At the recent Wunan ATSIC awards Halls Creek Town Camps Management Committee (HCTCMC) were the recipients of the Community Organisation for Community Management award. The award recognised the hard work put in by the Management Committee in turning around management of the Halls Creek Town Camps following major improvements to its financial and maintenance management.

Debbie Thorne, Housing Co-ordinator for the HCTCMC, and the rest of the Committee are very proud of their accomplishments.



Theresa Polkinghorne, Project Officer for Mardiwah Loopa and Debbie Thorne (right).

The HCTCMC is the result of a Housing Task Force set up with the support of Independent MP Larry Graham, the Ngonjuway Council Aboriginal Corporation, Shire of Halls Creek and the Departments of Housing and Works and Indigenous Affairs.

The task force in turn helped to establish the Town Camps Housing Committee. The Committee comprises a chairperson and one other representative from each of the four Halls Creek Indigenous community corporations -Thaingarr Ngarriny (Mardiwah Loop), Yardgee, Lundja (Red Hill) and Yumali (Nicholson Block).

As a result of this initiative, DHW gave a commitment to fund the Housing Co-ordinator's position which is held by Debbie Thorne.

The committee, supported by Debbie, took over the work of the task force and now operates as a locally based Aboriginal Housing Authority, organising tenancy applications, collecting rent, housing maintenance, worker training and the many other tasks associated with housing management.

Rent collections have risen from a lamentable 30 per cent to an acceptable 90 per cent, with \$50,000 of this being allocated to maintenance and improvement.

Power is being saved through the introduction of electronic swipe cards and people no longer risk having the power cut off. The swipe cards have been trialed at Mardiwah Loop communities and are now being installed elsewhere.

Indigenous building and maintenance workers have installed kitchens for the first time at Yumali and Lundja.

Debbie said it was acknowledged that the Aboriginal communities, whose people lived in the town camps needed support and this was being provided by the Committee.

Management Support Program Manager John Spaanderman is another vital member of the team, who trains and supervises a successful team of Indigenous building and maintenance workers.

Halls Creek Shire CEO Peter McConnell nominated the committee for the award.

Matt, when did you start your traineeship and when do you finish it?

It started in April 2003 and finishes in June 2004.

What were you doing before your traineeship?

I was a greenskeeper at Karrinyup country club. I didn't see much future there in terms of a career path, and after a short break from working I applied for the traineeship at the Department.

What made you want to apply for the traineeship?

I really wanted to start working again and I had applied for a few jobs around the same time - but the traineeship was definitely the most appealing.

How did you find out about the traineeship?

By word of mouth; a close friend works in the Aboriginal Housing and Infrastructure Directorate (AHID) at the Department, and he suggested I apply.

Has the traineeship been helpful?

Yes, I have much more confidence and my communication skills have developed. I also have greatly improved computing skills.

What do you hope to achieve when your traineeship is complete?

I hope there will be more opportunities to develop the skills I've acquired here, but ultimately I'd like to retain a position in AHID and possibly later return to my hometown of Carnarvon as an Accommodation Manager.

Which sections of the DHW have you worked in?

I started my traineeship in Information Services as a Data Support and Helpdesk officer. But I am now acting in AHID as an Assistant Customer support officer, which I really enjoy.

Can you give me some comments on the Mentoring Program?

I think the Mentoring program is a great help to all trainees. It's very positive, constructive setup and I think the mentors provide great role models for young Aboriginal people. I'm interested in becoming a mentor myself once I have finished my traineeship.

Tell me a little bit about your fellow trainees?

We are a close-knit group and we help each other out a lot with our workbooks. It was easier to adjust to this work environment with all of us being in the same boat.

Roxanne, my assessor from the Australian Medical Association, who is the training provider, is very helpful with my books and assignments. Roxy provides feedback and helped me to develop a work-plan, which makes the units easier to complete.

What are your out of work interests?

I'm a bit of a sportsman and play both cricket and basketball. I really like gardening and I am also a member of the DHW social club.



Meet Matt Hall

Indigenous Trainee with the Department of Housing and Works