

Carol Morgan's Speech on Ulpanyali.

Good afternoon ladies and gentleman,

Slide 1

I am about to give you a brief presentation of the Indigenous project undertaken by the Carlingford Rotary Club, resulting in a visit to the Ulpanyali Community near Kings Canyon in October 2011.

Slide 2

Ulpanyali is an Indigenous Community living on land leased from the Watarrka National Park. The area has been leased by the NT Government for the Community which is led by a remarkable woman, Julie Clyne, whose forebears lived in this region. It is near Kings Canyon, about 400kms southwest of Alice Springs and about two thirds of the way towards Uluru. The Community currently comprises 24 adults and 17 children.

Slide 3

20 Club members, partners and friends travelled there because we had been put in touch with this community through our daughter who is an Anthropologist with the Central Land Council. The Community matriarch, Julie Clyne, is leading her Community to establish their lives on their land once again. She is an artist and her aim has been to convert one shed on their land to an Art Studio, and the other shed for the men to do car repairs and mechanical work. Her aim of producing professional art work and completing car repairs is to establish some form of independence and the Kings Canyon Resort have agreed to support the Community and sell items when they are available.

Slides 4 & 5

Discussions with the Community Development Officer from the Central Land Council, Hilary Furlong commenced some 18 months ago. After determining the needs from the Community, Carlingford Rotary Club, on the advice of the art teacher Steve Anderson who supports the Community, purchased an Etching press and a Drying Rack, both of which came from Perth, and a frame cutting tool organized by Rotarian Colin Booth.

Slides 6, 7, 8 & 9.

As these slides reveal, we spent an informative and enjoyable afternoon at the Community. The Etching press was used by Julie for the first time, and the Carlingford Rotarians were also able to install the Drying Rack. As Club President, Mike Morgan formally presented the items to the Community and expressed a wish for our continued association.

Slides 10, 11, 12 & 13.

We then moved to the Men's Shed where a 3 tonne Trolley Jack, which was purchased through Repco in Alice Springs, was assembled by the Rotarians. Assorted tools purchased from Bunnings at North Parramatta were also presented.

An interesting learning experience for all of us was the apparent lack of men, other than Brendan. It was a time for 'Men's Business', and although they knew we were coming, their cultural requirements take priority and they were elsewhere. It reminded all of us of the need to understand and respect the very strong cultural ties that still exist with Indigenous Communities in Central and many other parts of Australia.

Slides 14, 15, 16 and 17.

The enjoyment of the afternoon is very apparent in these slides because the children played around us, the women also decided to cook Kangaroo tail on their fire to show us how it is done, and generally, as was pointed out to us by Hilary and Steve, our visit was a major step in bridging the gap between black and white communities, and fostering understanding and trust, in this case with Ulpanyali. Another interesting experience for all of us was to hear the Community members speak in their local Laritja language. For Julie, English is her fourth language as she speaks Pitjatjarra, Arunta as well as Laritja and English. Most of the children did not speak English with us but can understand as we saw at their school a few days later.

The total cost of all items purchased by the Club was \$6,200.

Slides 18, 19 and 20.

2 days later we visited the nearby school at Lilla where the Ulpanyali and other children attend, and provided donated items of school equipment for the children. The Principal, Neville, is a retired teacher who returned to Watarrka school at the request of the community and reopened the school at his own expense, providing educational instruction with his wife and supported by their school community in Tasmania. Finally, with the attendance at around 18 students, the NT government opened the school again and Neville is developing resources and contacts which our Rotarian Colin Booth hopes to foster through his school of Murray Farm Primary.

Slides 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25.

The whole venture was an overwhelming success. Visiting Ulpanyali fostered friendly interaction with those community members present. Because we were providing items that Julie had requested, our visit was seen as non-threatening and we were welcomed and spent a happy and enjoyable time in the company of the Community. Both Steve and Hilary saw it as an important bridge-building achievement between the 2 Communities.

We remain in touch and hope to continue this relationship well into the future and we all saw it as very much fulfilling the International theme for this Rotary year of “Reaching Within to Embrace Humanity.”