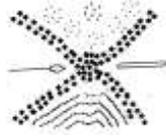


# Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring



Language and Culture Centre

P.O. Box 2420, Kununurra WA 6743

## MDWg Newsletter

Volume 10

January 2012

Welcome to Edition No. 10 of the Mirima Language Centre Newsletter – *Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring* (“Mirima Place for Talking”).

### Learning Miriwoong

MDWg’s language classes keep on playing a major role in our day to day activities. Classes and language transfer activities have been running on different levels.



Weekly classes are being held with the *Werlemen* (girls) program (Wunan Foundation/KDHS) and the Clontarf boys (KDHS); there also is a weekly lesson for the MG Rangers (DEC) and a Public Miriwoong language class (more details inside). During the past two terms, the classes with KDHS groups have fo-

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# Public Miriwoong language classes-

2011 was the second year where MDWg offered a Miriwoong language class open to all learners. Since the beginning of the year a group of keen students attended the weekly lessons, who sometimes scratched their heads about the complexity of Miriwoong grammar. For 2012 we will offer another course for beginners, starting in February. The course will run for the time of the school term and continue during subsequent terms, for a period of ca. 8 weeks each term. We will aim at learning some of the basics

Bare **yarroodayan** – We are standing  
→ we, including all listeners  
("1<sup>st</sup> plural inclusive form")

Bare **yirrandayin** – We are standing  
→ we, but not you listeners  
("1<sup>st</sup> plural exclusive form")

Timing can be a difficult matter and unless otherwise indicated we will continue to offer the weekly class on Tuesdays during lunchtime, i.e. 12:30 to 1:30pm. However, anyone interested in this course who is unable to attend during these hours is encouraged to submit an expression of interest with alternative time slots which may work better for them. If enough students can be found for an alternative time, we might be able to make arrangements. Please let us know at the earliest convenience what time would work best for you.

The cost of the course will be \$60pp per term. All meetings will take place at the Language Centre (conference room unless indicated otherwise). Please register now!

## c) Try to read the following Miriwoong words, based on what you have learnt:

- yoog ('sleep')
- wab ('look back')
- roo ('hold, grab')
- maying/mayeng ('food')
- majang ('boss')
- jilbag ('frighten sb.')
- gooleng ('tree')
- gejawooleng ('fire')
- balaj ('see')

of Miriwoong, starting with the alphabet and pronunciation practice during the first term, before we engage in forming simple sentences in the following terms. No previous knowledge is required for the initial lessons, but from mid of term 1 we will expect students to be familiar with the pronunciation rules.



## Internship program

Since the official start of MDWg's internship program we have had numerous expressions of interest by volunteers from all over Australia and overseas. Catherine Grant from Griffith University (Brisbane) was the first one to be accepted as an intern. During her time at MDWg (October to December) she helped us in a variety of ways, including substantial support for language workers. One of the activities included a half-day teacher training workshop for these.



Interns at Mirima experience immersion in a different cultural environment and soon find out that “no day is like the other”. Being part of language class planning, development of teaching resources, or engaging with our Master-Apprentice teams is all part of the experience.

## Conference room available for hire



The MDWg conference room is a highly popular option for organisations which need a venue for a meeting or event. While the Language Centre makes good use of the facility for its own language classes, meetings and cultural awareness courses, there has hardly been a week where our spacious and comfortable conference room wasn't hired out to external parties. To enquire about room hire simply send

us a request for availability and other details to [admin@mirima.org.au](mailto:admin@mirima.org.au) or telephone Glenda Grange on 9169 1029.

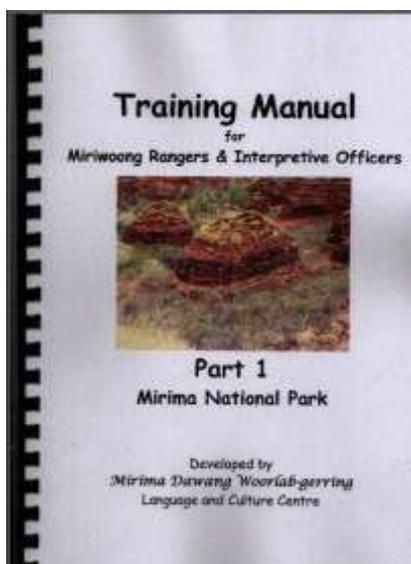
# Survey missions

August is the ideal time for field trips and a team of MDWg language workers and consultants headed out with the MG Rangers from DEC on a couple of survey missions. The first one led us to *Jan-moorra* (near Ningbingi) and the coast where the history and surroundings of a number of sites were discussed and recorded. The second excursion went to Goose Hill. On both occasions, the survey focused on traditional place names and activities, including the Miriwoong



vocabulary involved in talking about these. The information gathered during these trips will result in public signage to be developed in the areas.

The MG Rangers have also resumed their weekly training sessions at MG to learn more about relevant language terms for their work, such as names for flora and fauna, place names and cultural protocol.



## EKAAA nominations

The annual East Kimberley Aboriginal Achievement Awards (EKAAA) were held again in September, starting with an energetic *Wangga* dance performance by the Mirima Dancers. This year, Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring received a nomination for the Organisation of the year award category. Former Mirima chair and now senior consultant David Newry was nominated and received the award for the Outstanding Individual Contribution to Arts and Culture. Congratulations, David!



## Mirima Linguistic Forum

On 13 December, MDWg organized the first *Linguistic Forum at Mirima*, with presentations by Catherine Grant (Griffith University) on *Strengthening the Vitality and Viability of Endangered Music Genres: The Potential of Language Maintenance to Inform Approaches to Music Sustainability* and Knut J. Olawsky (MDWg) on *Current outcomes of the Master-Apprentice Language Learning Program at MDWg*.

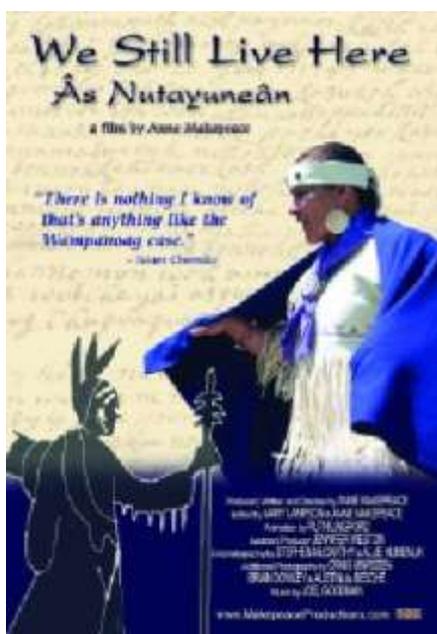
The initiative is set to continue this year with presentations by local linguists and a series of visitors. All with an interest in language and culture are invited to attend.

## DRIL training



From 31. October to 4. November MDWg again hosted a training team from the Resource Network for Linguistic Diversity (RNLD, based in Melbourne). The week-long workshop was part of DRIL—the Documenting and Revitalizing Indigenous Languages Training Program.

Dr Margaret Florey and her team had run workshops at MDWg several times in the past and, as before, the week provided a big boost to the professional skills of MDWg language workers. The focus of this workshop was on the introduction of a new software program—*Miromaa*, which is a powerful and easy-to-handle tool that can incorporate multimedia files in electronic dictionaries at the click of a button. We also learnt about innovative media for use in language classes.



As one of the highlights of the week, MDWg opened up for the first Mirima Movie Night, under the theme “Young and Old Coming Together in Language Work”. In partnership with the DRIL training team we screened a number of short films and documentaries such as *Wadu Matjidi*—A time long gone (Central Australia) and *We Still Live Here* (from North America). The event was well visited and MDWg is planning another Movie Night later this year.

## Seasonal Calendar posters

Parts of the Miriwoong Seasonal Calendar now have appeared in a new format. Following the launch of the website last year, posters of the main seasons are now available for purchase. There are 5 different posters available: one displaying the seasonal cycle, one for each of the three main Miriwoong seasons (hot season, wet season cold season) and one poster of *Garrjang* - the water lily, which is one of the cold season indicators. Poster size ca. 60 x 42 cm. The posters are \$15 each (or \$70 for all 5) - pick-up only and supply is limited. Members of our Miriwoong Language Support



Program will receive a free poster. All proceeds from the sale will flow into further study of traditional weather knowledge and language revitalisation work.

Please note that the posters are not for resale or commercial use of any kind.

## Office for rent

We still have office space available for rent, preferably by an organisation working with Miriwoong and Gajirrabeng people. However, we will consider other parties as well. The office is sized 6x4m and would be suitable to accommodate 2-3 people.

For details please enquire on 9169 1029.



## Word of the Month

Well, we have been waiting for the wet season to finally kick in but while we keep waiting there is no harm in learning some of the relevant words for this time of the year: it is *nyinggiyi-mageny* (wet season) and we could expect *jaloorr-mageny*—the time of rain. We would also watch out for *barrawoondang*—heavy storms that bring wind and flooding. Some typical indicators for this season are the *daloong* (green plum) and *mejerren* (black plum), for which we had an early harvest this year. With a bit of luck you might also find some *boodbarang*—konkerberries—Enjoy!

— Still struggling with those words? - Why not join us at the Miriwoong language class starting in February. For info and pre-registration please send an e-mail to [info@mirima.org.au](mailto:info@mirima.org.au).



## MLSP

Our MLSP members will receive a visit from us in the next few weeks. Apart from encouraging our member organizations to extend their membership we would like to provide them with a complimentary copy of the Seasonal Calendar poster for their office.

*Dept. of Water*

*Dept. of Environment and Conservation*

*Kimberley Development Commission*

*St. John's Ambulance*

*Knapman Films*

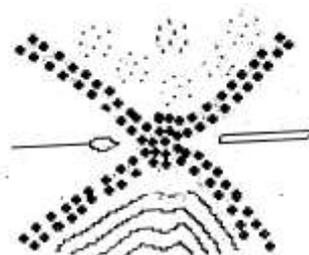
*Save the Children*

*Wunan Foundation*

*Yawoorroong Miriwoong Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang*

## *Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring*

Button Drive  
P.O. Box 2420  
Kununurra WA 6743



Phone: (08) 9169 1029  
Fax: (08) 9168 2639  
E-mail: [info@mirima.org.au](mailto:info@mirima.org.au)  
Web: [www.mirima.org.au](http://www.mirima.org.au)  
Facebook: mirima

Our P.O. Box number is 2420.

Stay connected!

Language and Culture Centre