

THEME – 8th VINCENT LINGIARI MEMORIAL LECTURE: *40 years since the Referendum. Walking into the future and learning from the past.*

Charles Darwin University, 11th August 2007

My first duty is to acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land that Charles Darwin University stands on. I pay homage to all Elders, Senior People and all members of the Larrakia nation. I acknowledge this place as the country of my birth.

My second duty is to acknowledge my own Ancestors – and my esteemed Elders, Senior People, and all my countrymen of both the Kungarakan and Gurindji nations.

A special welcome and acknowledgment of all Gurindji countrymen present here tonight – It is an honour to be in your presence.

I acknowledge all present here tonight – indigenous and non-indigenous members from various communities throughout the Northern Territory, wider Australia and beyond. I welcome the Vice Chancellor Professor Helen Garnett – other university staff, and of course all students.

I extend my thanks to the people of Kalkarinji and Daguragu communities, the Lingiari Foundation and its supporters, the office of the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, Charles Darwin University, and especially Professor Wendy Brady, Head of the School of Australian Indigenous Knowledge Systems – for inviting me to co-deliver this lecture tonight.

I am pleased to be co-presenter here tonight with The Honourable Fred Chaney A.O. Mr. Chaney has a long-time connection to what is generally known as “Aboriginal affairs” and in fact undertook studies into Aboriginal Affairs policy after he retired from his parliamentary career, some of which was in the portfolio of Aboriginal Affairs. I am certain this audience will be interested as I am to hear Mr. Chaney’s perspective on the last 40 years since the Referendum, and his recommendations and ideas on how we prepare for a different future.

I dedicate my presentation tonight to my Gurindji Grandmother Violet (Polly) Wakelin McGinness who was taken from her country and incarcerated at Kahlin Compound Darwin under an earlier federal government indigenous intervention plan.