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Annette Kogolo (Aboriginal Liason Officer and KIS Interpreter), Geoffrey Lane and Paul Charters (Specialist Doctors), Patsy Bedford and Topsy Chestnut (KIS Interpreters) at Fitzroy Crossing Hospital in April 2003

## **Interpreting in Specialist Clinics at Fitzroy Crossing Hospital**

The partnership between Nindilingarri Cultural Health Services and Fitzroy Valley Health Services has recognized the need for better communication between their

Aboriginal patients and visiting specialists and has decided to employ interpreters for specialist clinics at Fitzroy Crossing Hospital.

The first clinic was with the Cardio Specialists at the beginning of April. Maureen Carter Coordinator of Nindilingarri Cultural Health Services and an accredited interpreter herself said that she had been

waiting for years to see the hospital using interpreters and sees this new initiative as providing a positive model for other hospitals in the Kimberley.

Patsy Bedford said that interpreting in the specialist clinics is very worthwhile. Hospitals and the machines are a big unknown thing for many Aboriginal people and that the work of the interpreter is more than just medical interpreting.

### **Negotiating a New Agreement at Argyle Diamond Mine**



**David Newry and Michael Neal at community meeting at Argyle Diamond Mine April 2003**

Argyle Diamonds, Dawang (the group of traditional owners) and the Kimberley Land Council have had two big meetings over the past few months working towards a strong agreement that benefits everyone involved with the Argyle Diamond Mine.

Kimberley Interpreting Service interpreters have worked at both of these meetings. They work as a bridge in communication between the community group and Argyle and KLC people.

The feedback from Dawang was that the meetings are good because they were able to understand a lot about what is going on.

Linda Weatherhead from the KLC says, “using interpreters is a sign that Argyle is serious about communicating messages and making sure that people understand. The interpreters were very helpful for the KLC in getting the message across. We would not have been able to deal with so many difficult issues if interpreters weren’t there.”

Argyle Diamonds have shown how important they see the work of interpreters within their work in the East Kimberley by funding a professional development workshop for interpreters working on negotiations with traditional owners.

### **Professional Development Workshop for East Kimberley Interpreters**

Argyle Diamonds, KIS and Mirima Dawang Woorlab–geering in partnership will deliver a three day professional development workshop for a group of interpreters who will work on the negotiations currently underway at Argyle Diamond Mine.

The programme is designed to help the interpreters develop more skills when working in big meetings, work out how they are going to explain mining ideas and words in Aboriginal languages and to get the whole interpreting team educated about the negotiations that have happened so far.

The group of interpreters are from Balgo, Halls Creek, Warmun, Bow River, Wagabun and Kununurra.

There will be at least ten more meetings between now and the end of the year about the agreement so there will be a lot of work for the interpreters.

## VII FEL Conference in Broome

The Seventh International Conference hosted by the Foundation for Endangered Languages will be held in Broome from 22 – 24 September 2003. This is a great opportunity for local language specialists working to maintain endangered languages in the Kimberley to meet linguists and language speakers from all over the world. The theme for the conference is "Maintaining the Links: Language, Identity and the Land", and the Kimberley is well represented with speakers from Kimberley Language Resource Centre, Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring, Language and Culture Centre and Kimberley linguists Frances Kofod, Margaret Sefton, Joe Blythe, Claire Bower and Janet Sharp. As minority language groups around the world are endeavouring to maintain their languages, traditions and identities in the face of immense pressures from more dominant languages and cultures, the conference hopes to better understand the relationships between language, culture and identity of its speakers, and the land. These understandings can then provide an important guide to establishing priorities, when choosing approaches to documentation and revitalization of endangered languages.

The program is divided into seven sub-sections:

- Languages and land claims
- Toponymy
- Planning for the future
- Language, identity and the environment
- Language and identity: home and away
- Language Revitalization: Revival and Maintenance
- Documenting Endangered Languages

and includes speakers from South Africa, Alaska, Canada and Panama.

Broome was selected as the venue for this year's conference because it is a region of great linguistic diversity. There are twenty-five traditional Aboriginal languages still spoken in the Kimberley although many have only a handful of speakers and only two are spoken by children as their first language. As the 'gateway to the Kimberley', Broome is also close to the Pilbara region where there are some 20 languages still spoken.

In the last twenty years, regional language centres have emerged as a result of grass roots movements to reclaim and protect local languages. They concern themselves with the production of language materials, facilitation of language revitalisation projects, documentation, archiving and the delivery of interpreting and translation services. The two Kimberley Language Centres are the coordinating bodies for Kimberley Interpreting Service and KIS staff and committee members will be in attendance at the conference to discover how the outcomes of the conference can be applied to indigenous language interpreting.

The Foundation for Endangered Languages is a registered charity in England and Wales. FEL conferences, besides being opportunities to discuss the

issues from a global viewpoint, are working meetings of the Foundation, defining their overall policy for future years. Participants at the conference need to be members of the Foundation and there will be full facilities to join at the conference. If you want to know more about the conference check out the website at [www.ogmios.org/conference](http://www.ogmios.org/conference) or contact Joe Blythe on [dubala@myplace.net.au](mailto:dubala@myplace.net.au)

## Photos from the last FEL Conference in Antigua, Guatamala August 2002



Mc Kenna Brown (back row 2<sup>nd</sup> from left) interpreting from Kauchikel and Spanish



Tzu'tujiil Mayan language lesson, San Pedro de la Laguna

## NW Expo

At the beginning of May all types of businesses from the Kimberley and Pilbra presented their goods, products and merchandise at the Broome racecourse for the NW Expo.

Kimberley Interpreting Service and the Kimberley Language Resource Centre had a stall where language books, CD's, language maps and other posters were on display.

This Expo gave both organisations an opportunity to talk to many people from the government and private sectors about the work that both organisations do and how they can be used by the community .

## KIS Funding For 2003-2004

KIS has been successful in gaining funding for the next three years from the Commonwealth Governments Kimberley Sustainable Regions Programme. This money is to be used to develop a strategic/business plan and look at different ways that we can find money to do all of the work that needs to be done to build the interpreting service into a good business.

We have been talking with the State Government for the past four months about trying to secure operational funding for the next three years. We have been promised money from the Office of Aboriginal Health, Department of Indigenous Affairs and the Ministry of Justice.