

PRESS RELEASE

Cultural materials to be returned to Waanyi People

Doomadgee, QLD (June 8, 2017) – The Waanyi PBC has entered into a landmark partnership with the University of Queensland, that will see huge archives of cultural materials relating to the Waanyi people, land claims and the native title process returned to Waanyi Country.

The Waanyi Cultural Materials Research Project is headed by Professor David Trigger from the University of Queensland, who has gathered and archived cultural materials and information relating to the Waanyi people and Waanyi country for the past 40 years. Throughout this long term project, an extremely large archive of photographs, video footage, written field notes and documents pertaining to land claims and the native title process have been collected.

The project will provide access for the Waanyi people in the region to these previously unseen cultural materials in two ways. First, by creating a digital archive, and building the systems necessary for people in Waanyi country to access it, and secondly through a number of visits to Country where specific culturally important materials and information will be presented to the Waanyi people by Professor Trigger and his UQ team.

Chair of the Waanyi PBC Alec Doomadgee says this is an important step in making sure the Waanyi culture and heritage is preserved for generations to come.

“Getting our Culture back to Country is so important for our people. But more importantly, the next generation of Waanyi people will be able to access these important cultural artefacts through the online archive. This is a great moment for the Waanyi people, which can’t come soon enough.”

Archaeologist and Research Fellow Kate Connell, who has travelled to Waanyi country many times as part of this research project and for cultural surveys, has begun the process of digitising the cultural materials to allow them to be stored on the database. She says the completion of the project will mean the Waanyi people will have access to their cultural heritage in Waanyi Country.

“Often when we are out on Waanyi country doing cultural heritage surveys, people ask for copies of photos or videos that they know David has of their own relatives. The completion of this project will mean that you won’t need to come through UQ for that information, it will be accessible in Doomadgee or online”

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