

# **I**ndigenous Peoples and Property Law

The Faculty of Law is conducting a seminar series entitled *Indigenous Peoples & Property Law* as the first in a program of short courses and seminars planned for 1997. The first seminar is scheduled for 1-2 March, with remaining seminars to be conducted on 19-20 April and 10-11 May.

The Dean of Law, Jenny Blokland, said that the NTU Faculty of Law was one of the first schools to give undergraduate law students the opportunity to study a unit on "Aborigines and the Legal System". This initial unit concerned the interaction of Aboriginal people with a range of legal areas: criminal law, international law, property law, constitutional law, family law, evidence law and intellectual property.

The Faculty is now offering a new unit which will examine three main areas: Aboriginal law concerning land; land claims: criteria and procedure; and

natural resources.

Jenny said, "I suspect that many people outside the University are very interested in the topics that will be covered in this new unit. With the recent decision of the High Court in *Wik*, and the Federal Government's response expected shortly, it seems an especially timely point at which to invite people to join our class."

"Martin Flynn is the academic coordinator of the program and he has assembled an interesting group of people who are specialists in these areas to present each seminar."

"The seminars are conducted over three weekends so that anyone with an interest in the subject may attend. People may choose to attend one, two or all three of the seminars."

The Dean said that the Faculty was looking at conducting a number of such seminars and short courses this year.

"The Faculty has developed a program of seminars and short courses with a view to attracting members of the legal profession and other members of the community to the University. For example, in April, we will be conducting a short course on Migration Law, which has received accreditation from the Migration Board. Students who successfully complete the course will be entitled to apply for registration as Migration Agents."

Other courses to be offered by the Faculty include Environmental and Planning Law, Employment Law, Islamic Law, Indonesian Law, and Law and Society (Malaysia). Any member seeking further information in relation to these courses should contact Parr Palmer at the Faculty of Law on tel 8946 6959.

## Irreplacable Loss for Central Australia Kwementjaye Rodd (1958 - 1997)

Staff and delegates of the Central Land Council were devastated to learn of the sudden tragic death of CLC lawyer Kwementjaye Rodd recently.

CLC Chairman, Mr Breaden, said today that Mr Rodd was irreplacable.

"Many, many people throughout Central Australia, black and white, will mourn this loss for a long time to come," he said.

Mr Rodd's contribution to the struggle for Aboriginal land rights was enormous.

He worked on a large number of land claims under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976* and was instrumental in gaining living areas or 'excisions' under the *Pastoral Land Act 1992* for the many Aboriginal people dispossessed by the pastoral industry. He was also involved in negotiating just agreements with traditional land owners and mining compa-

nies.

However, possibly his most significant work was undertaken assisting the Arrernte custodians of the proposed Alice Springs dam site. His unstinting dedication to achieving protection of their sacred sites will long be remembered by the custodians and the Aboriginal women of Central Australia.

His work was often thankless, stressful and frustrating but Mr Rodd's wit and humour always prevailed and he is remembered for his patience, compassion and depth of knowledge about Aboriginal culture and the struggle for land rights by Aboriginal people in Central Australia.

Aboriginal staff of the CLC have spoken of his ability to communicate with Aboriginal people as a 'rare gift'. They felt that his belief in justice and his empathy with the people he worked so

hard for were invaluable. Other staff described him as a 'team player'.

Late last year he brought to a successful conclusion the long running Warumungu land claim in Tennant Creek.

His hard work on other land claims made his contribution to the Central Land Council legendary. When he passed away he was trying to finalise the grant of land on Brumby Plains to Aboriginal land owners.

Kwementjaye Rodd also worked at the Pitjantjatjara Council for a short period and is fondly remembered by people living on Pitjantjatjara lands.

Mr Breaden extended his deepest sympathy to Mr Rodd's long time partner, Maggie Kavanagh and Mr Rodd's family.

— Central Land Council