

Pitjantjatjara Council Resource Centre

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Early History

The provision of resources and the presence of resource people on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands began in 1937, when the Ernabella pastoral lease was purchased by the Presbyterian Church for the purpose of providing a “safe haven” for Aboriginal people. The change of purpose for Ernabella was significant with it becoming a buffer zone, allowing Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people to adapt to change at their own pace, without suffering under the pressures of injustice.

The sheep industry was retained and the wool spun into yarn for use in the Handicraft industry, which began in 1948. A small school was established in 1940 and a medical clinic was opened in 1943. People were helped to develop their skills in various occupations while continuing with their traditional life style.

The pressures on the Ernabella community increased and resulted in other communities being established. In 1961, the Amata and Fregon communities began, followed by the Indulkana community in 1968. Everard Park (now Mimili), was purchased in 1973 and Kenmore Park in 1976. Although these properties continued to function as cattle enterprises, the communities became incorporated and took on the functions of community life including housing, health and schooling. The Homelands movement began in the 1970's and included Pipalyatjara in the far west. Many other Homelands across the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands emerged through this period. Each community and homeland had at least one advisor and places like Ernabella had many.

Likewise on the Ngaanyatjarra Lands, Warburton was started in 1934. The policies used were not ideal, however the Homelands movement in the 1970's brought a new freedom to Ngaanyatjarra people. Four communities were established including Jamieson, Blackstone, Wingellina and Warakurna, providing new opportunities for Ngaanyatjarras.

Background

There was much discussion toward the end of the 1970's about the increasing number of advisory staff on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands. The need for resident advisors was generated by the large injection of funds from the Commonwealth Government during this period. Although progress was significant, the ratio of advisors to local residents was changing. Increasingly advisors were employed to assist local people in a transition to new roles, which included all aspects of community management within the life of the community.

Plans to base advisory people at non-community locations both on and off the Lands were discussed. It was less expensive to base these people in small towns rather than in communities or homelands. As people became involved in Land Rights in the late 1970's, the need to employ Lawyers, Anthropologists and other advisory personnel became apparent. It was impossible to base these extra people on the Lands and if it was, the social pressures would have increased many fold.

The proliferation of homelands, the injection of Federal Government funds and the real possibility of obtaining Land Rights resulted in the need to develop a Resource Centre.

Pitjantjatjara Council Resource Centre

In the winter of 1976, many communities from across the Lands gathered at Amata in South Australia to talk about their land and the family boundaries they wanted to establish. The initial meeting resulted in the formation of a regional council, which became known as the Pitjantjatjara Council. This council met every two months alternating from community to community across the region from Warburton in Western Australia to Indulkana in South Australia and including Docker River in the Northern Territory. Each community had the opportunity to host the regional meeting and therefore had the forum on which to express their views ranging from those on Land Rights to issues of common concern at the local and area level. This was the first time Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people could share the intensity of their local needs and concerns. A strength emerged out of this sharing as well as a desire to take action. It was mandatory for advisors to attend these regional meetings and hence they became vital in the process of facilitating the decisions, which resulted. It wasn't long before the amount of facilitating outweighed the personnel available for the task. Hence communities began to realize the need to employ regional advisors. This raised the question of where to base them. If they lived on the Lands, the extra cost of housing would be prohibitive. The end result was to base these regional advisors in Alice Springs, a town, which had the resources to meet the needs of most families. The cost of housing would be borne by the advisor and the Pitjantjatjara Council would provide office facilities housed within a "Resource Centre" out of which the advisors would operate.

Administration of Funding

Alice Springs was chosen for other reasons including ease of communication with external agencies and a daily air service to and from other capital cities. The Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people lived on their Lands in the north west corner of South Australia and adjacent Lands in Western Australia and the Northern Territory. A decision was made to rationalize the administration of funding to communities spread over the two States and Territory. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs (now ATSIC) expanded their office in Alice Springs to administer this area as a single entity. Field officers would attend each Pitjantjatjara Council meeting and listen to the requests and suggestions of the meeting, some of which were to rationalize funding to homelands and communities. This resulted in a more appropriate funding program across the region with communities and homelands becoming stronger and more cohesive. This process also involved the community and homeland advisors as well as the regional advisors from the Pitjantjatjara Council Resource Center in Alice Springs.

Functions of the Pitjantjatjara Council

It was now obvious (late 1970's) that the Council had two major functions. As well as helping each State and the Territory to gain Land Rights, the Council had a very strong role helping build and launch the administrative structures required by communities and homelands to function successfully. This was achieved in a number of ways, which included the creation and funding of Homelands Councils, Health Councils and the present day area councils, eg. Ngaanyatjarra Council and Anangu Pitjantjatjara. The Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council also emerged out of the Pitjantjatjara Council forum.

Something else that emerged was the need to develop regional and area programs which were normally beyond the capacity of communities and homelands to manage. These regional programs required the Council to employ regional advisors who operated out of

the Resource Centre in Alice Springs. Aboriginal Airlines is an example of a regional program, which was developed through the Pitjantjatjara Council structure.

Establishing the Resource Center in Alice Springs

Once the objective of gaining Land Rights for all members of the Pitjantjatjara Council had been established, the task of achieving it began. Many people were involved in the process including the Council's first Land Rights lawyer, Phillip Toyne. He had worked part-time with the Council since its beginning in 1976. This arrangement came to an end in January 1979 when he became the first full-time Alice Springs based advisor. He worked from a small outhouse converted into an office at the rear of the Legal Aid office in Bath Street.

It wasn't until later in the same year (1979) that the council employed its first project advisor, Mike Last. He had gained many years of field experience at Ernabella, which was one of the larger communities on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara lands. Mike's initial task was to find suitable accommodation in which to establish the Pitjantjatjara Council Resource Centre. The Ernabella community had a unique relationship with the Uniting Church in Alice Springs. This resulted in the Pitjantjatjara Council being able to establish its Resource Centre in the unoccupied "B" block of the Uniting Church hostel, Griffith House in Harley Street. The single bedrooms were very suitable for offices and opened into an enclosed courtyard, which provided a user friendly venue in which Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara, and Yankunytjatjara people could meet. At this time Phillip and Mike were based at the Centre with a secretary and a telephonist. Although the offices were not air conditioned, the area was very shaded and acceptable to Aboriginal people.

The Council was already assisting the development of the Pitjantjatjara Homelands Council in the late 1970's. Area advisors were required and Tony Davies was employed in late 1978, as a field based bore mechanic by the Council. Tony had a large area to cover and the program he was involved in was very successful. In the early 1980's a second bore mechanic was employed by the Council to service the Ngaanyatjarra Lands in Western Australia allowing Tony to manage the increasing work load in communities and homelands on the South Australian Lands.

The dream of gaining Land Rights for the South Australian communities was becoming a reality and in mid 1980 the Council employed its first anthropologist, Danny Vachon a Canadian who had worked extensively with the Indulkana community. A few months later the Council employed its first essential services advisor, David Sidey who had worked for many years at Ernabella. As a regional advisor for the Council he was able to help many of the smaller communities and homelands with their essential service developments.

The demands on the four advisors based at the Resource Center grew rapidly and their presence on the Lands was required regularly. Each advisor had gained their pilot's licence and hired aircraft from the local aeroclub for commuting to and from the Lands. Air travel greatly reduced travelling time and increased the ability of advisors to attend meetings and visit communities and homelands. Aeroplane usage increased and in February 1981, the Pitjantjatjara Council purchased its first aeroplane, a four seater Cessna 182. The purchase was financed through a loan from the Yunyarinyi community at Kenmore Park on the South Australian Lands.

Principles

There were a number of principles established in the Resource Centre, which made it successful.

1. Commitment was the first principle and each person, who worked for the Centre, had a commitment to the vision of the Council. This commitment was a necessary ingredient because it strengthened the resolve of Aboriginal people to remain cohesive.
2. Trust was also an important principle. Each advisor needed to have a regard for each other. The advisory team would have become dysfunctional if there was no trust in each others abilities to perform their tasks.
3. A Cost Effective Service. It was essential to deliver a service to member communities and homelands of the Pitjantjatjara Council with the least amount of expense. This could only be achieved by being cost effective within every operation of the Resource Centre.
4. Experienced Personnel. Another feature of the center was to employ advisors who had good field experience. Regional advice and aid needed to have the hallmark of quality because it would affect the lives of many people.
5. Input. If communities and homelands were progressing well with their programs and they only required a minimal amount of input, then that amount was given. It was essential not to over supply resources unless they were urgently needed.
6. Information Archive. Many people came to work in communities and homelands across the Lands. The experience they gained and the data they collected often went with them when they left the field. The Resource Centre became a place where this information could be stored and made available to new advisors.

Expansion of the Centre

The events, which occurred during 1980, began to form the shape of the Resource Centre. Three streams were emerging simultaneously, the first being Land and Mining, the second Structure and the third Community Management and Services. These three streams were not independent of each other and required individual as well as joint development.

1. **Land and Mining.** Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people had always lived on their Lands except for times when pastoralists had made it difficult for them to visit their homelands and places of significance. Generally they had access to vast tracts of land and were able to maintain their relationship with these Lands. Hence when there was an opportunity to gain title for them, everybody was enthusiastic. This excitement was shared by all across the region as they met and planned their strategies for obtaining it. People could now talk about controlling the entry of outsiders onto their Lands. Control over mining was now a possibility. As each day past, progress in developing a Land Rights title continued in favour of local people.

As the opportunity of gaining Land title became reality, people became aware of the responsibilities this would create. The granting of title wasn't the end of the story but the beginning of a commitment to manage it. In 1982 a second lawyer

and anthropologist were appointed to the Pitjantjatjara Council Legal Service based in the Resource Centre.

2. **Structure.** Pitjantjatjara Council became an umbrella organization, which provided a forum for all Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people to express their views. People had never had this opportunity to speak and have their voices heard by others across the Lands. This was the first time people on the Lands could be heard with one voice. What was even more interesting was the fact that external agencies including Government, were prepared to listen and in some cases, begin to amend their policies toward Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people. Until Pitjantjatjara Council began in 1976, people only had a few years experience, managing their own communities. Hence the idea of Councils, and their operation and function was very new.

As people gained confidence with the concept of Pitjantjatjara Council, other smaller councils began to emerge. The Pitjantjatjara Homelands Health Service began in 1978, followed by the Pitjantjatjara Homelands Council in 1979. These councils serviced communities and homelands in South Australia and Western Australia and based their advisors on the Lands.

In June 1980, many Ngaanyatjarra people came to Warburton to talk about solutions to problems they experienced. The Pitjantjatjara Homelands Council was meeting some of their needs by providing a bore mechanic to service homeland water supplies, however Ngaanyatjarras were wanting to manage their own resources and advisory personnel. The end result was the formation of another structure, which was named the Ngaanyatjarra Council. The advisory input to this council consisted of the advisors working for each community, as well as those based in the area. In 1984 more regional advisors were required, so a Ngaanyatjara Council office was opened at the Pitjantjatjara Council Resource Centre in Alice Springs.

The Nganampa Health Council began in 1983, after a review of the existing health services, provided to communities and homelands on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands. The review recommended the formation of a local Health Council, which would have a strong relationship with people on the Lands. Nganampa Health opened an office in the Resource Centre, to service its clinics in each community. This program is still operating.

In 1981, Land Rights was granted by the South Australia Government to Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people. This event resulted in the formation of another structure, Anangu Pitjantjatjara, a statutory body in which the Land title could be vested. This body would also be responsible to fulfill its tasks outlined in the legislation. Hence in a period of seven to eight years Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people had built structures, which would allow them to manage their Lands.

In February 1983, approximately forty men gather at Mimili to discuss issues, which were significant to them. They could see the benefits of having their own forum at which they could talk and make decisions that were united. This was the beginning of Yankunytjatjara Council. It had the quality of being a local area Council as well as the significance of being located on the eastern end of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands.

3. **Community Management and Services.** Communities and Homelands across the region under the umbrella of Pitjantjatjara Council, were continually asking for assistance with projects, which were usually beyond their capacity to organize and develop. They required services with programs such as water drilling projects, other essential services including lighting and power supplies,

the provision of road and air transport, the provision of land management and accountancy services and many others. The need for these services were verified through the new structures which had been developed. As funding became available a new service would be established often resulting in an expansion in the Resource Centre in Alice Springs.

There have been many successful projects developed across the Lands, one being the Aboriginal Airlines. The Ngaanyatjarra communities had been serviced by a local operator based in Alice Springs until the early 1980's. This service terminated, so the Ngaanyatjarra communities through the Ngaanyatjarra Council, approached advisors at the Resource Centre for help. The request was to investigate and pursue the establishment of a Ngaanyatjarra owned air service. The result was the obtaining of a charter licence, the engaging of Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF) to manage the operation and the purchase of an aeroplane (Cessna 206 VH-FUY). In December 1982 Ngaanyatjarra Air began flying its own aircraft between Alice Springs and the Ngaanyatjarra communities. The first full time pilot was Mr Ron Watts with a second pilot, Mr Max Chapman assisting during the early stages of operation.

Another significant development was the establishment of an Aboriginal owned accounting service. Many Aboriginal communities and organizations in Central Australia including the Resource Centre relied on local Alice Springs based accountants to manage their funds. These accountancy groups were often not able to provide the financial reports required by funding bodies. Hence the Aboriginal Organizations of which Pitjantjatjara Council was a part, began researching the possibilities of creating its own accountancy service. This led to the formation of the Joint Aboriginal Management and Information Service (JAMIS) in 1983. This was the beginning of computerized accounting for the Resource Centre and in September 1983 the Council employed its first accountant. Eventually the JAMIS system, which used two mini computers was superseded. In the latter part of the 1980's, organizations including the Resource Centre, were able to operate their own office based personal computer systems equipped with accountancy programs. As a result, Yami Lester the director of Pitjantjatjara Council, gave a directive in December 1986, to the Resource Centre to establish the Pitjantjatjara Council Accounting Service (Pitcas). This service was made available to all communities and homelands under the umbrella of the Pitjantjatjara Council.

In 1980 the land used by the "Little Sisters" just outside Heavy Tree Gap in Alice Springs was made available to the Aboriginal Organisations of Central Australia for use as an Agricultural Resource Centre for Aboriginal communities and homelands. Pitjantjatjara Council had the expertise to develop the resource and in 1981 began building the first regional plant nursery to service Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people. Tangentyere Council was encouraged by Resource Centre staff to provide a similar land management service to the town camps and communities and homelands to the west, north and east of Alice Springs. Hence a second plant nursery was established on the land, known as "The Little Sisters".

In 1981 it was obvious that the Resource Centre would need larger facilities to house the developments arising from the growth of regional and area councils. The Uniting Church was aware of the Council's need and offered the use of its Bath Street hostel located adjacent to the present facilities. This hostel was once again ideal with a central lawn area and conference room surrounded by rooms on three sides. The venue was very user friendly with a large yard for off-the-street parking. In January 1982 after some small renovations and repairs the Resource Centre began occupying the complex.

The bond between Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people and the Uniting Church began many years earlier when the Rev. Jim Downing became involved with Finke and other communities. He established the original Institute for Aboriginal Development (IAD) complex on a block of land adjoining the Griffith House land many years earlier. As the Resource Centre expanded, it was able to occupy the original IAD building.

A New Landlord

Soon after moving into the Bath Street complex, the Uniting Church was approached with an offer to build a five star International Hotel/Motel on its land. This was a very attractive offer, because the land they owned (four adjacent blocks) was in the middle of the Central Business District (CBD) with road frontage in Hartley and Bath Street. Pedestrians would have a right-of-way from the Coles Complex in Bath Street to the town centre east of Hartley Street.

Before the Hotel/Motel proposal could proceed, it had to be presented to the Uniting Church Synod for their approval. There were many people within the Church including the Rev. Jim Downing who preferred the land to be used for the benefit of Aboriginal Organizations. Pitjantjatjara Council had shown conclusively the emerging need for facilities for organizations. The old manse in Hartley Street next to Griffith House was also in use as a pre-school for Aboriginal children under the umbrella of Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (CAAC).

Representatives from Aboriginal Organizations were invited to attend the Synod meeting in Darwin in early 1983 to present an alternative proposal to the Hotel/Motel project. The Aboriginal Development Commission (ADC) had advised the Synod that if the Aboriginal Organizations of Central Australia were successful in their bid for the land, they would finance the purchase of it. The two proposals were discussed in depth by the Synod and their decision was in favour of the Aboriginal Organizations. The Synod extended its favour by donating one of the four blocks being sold to the Aboriginal Development Commission.

The Commission (ADC) became the new owners of the land and the new landlord for the Resource Centre.

A New Beginning

There was much excitement among the Aboriginal Organizations in Alice Springs. Everybody began to dream about having craft outlets, medical centers, resource centers and the like. In September 1983, after the purchase was complete, Mr Barry Shanahan, a local architect was engaged by the Aboriginal Development Commission (ADC) to prepare plans for a combined Aboriginal Organizations Resource Centre. These plans were prepared in consultation with the organizations of the day and included Central Land Council, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Tangentyere Council, Institute for Aboriginal Development, Pitjantjatjara Council and Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association.

A number of plans were drawn and it became clear that a multi story building complex was necessary to house everybody. The process of clarifying the needs of each organization was long and tedious. However plans were finally presented to the Alice Springs Town Council, only to be rejected because the building height exceeded the building code set for the CBD by a few meters.

A controversy resulted and solicitors were engaged to seek an exemption from the height regulation. The process consumed all of 1984 and half of 1985 without success. The idea of having a Central Australian Aboriginal Resource Centre was fading away.

Commercial Development

Time had passed and Aboriginal Organizations were rapidly increasing in size. It was becoming obvious that the needs of all organizations would not be accommodated on the land purchased from the Uniting Church.

New life was injected into the process during the second half of 1985, when it became known that the supermarket chain “Woolworths” was looking for larger premises than it occupied in Todd Mall. The architect was quick to seize on the opportunity to pursue a commercial development on the Hartley, Bath Street land as a solution for accommodating Woolworths. The organizations could see the benefits for them because each would have a financial share in the venture.

The Need to Move

Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people had a new dilemma. They had enjoyed the benefits of their Resource Centre being based in the CBD of Alice Springs with easy access to shops and services. Their budgets were geared to renting office space with the Aboriginal Development Commission providing the necessary capital for Resource Centre extensions.

Pitjantjatjara Council was very much in favour of the Woolworths development because they also realized that the Bath Street complex they occupied was becoming too small. The Council had already added four transportables to the complex. Alternatively everybody realized that a large amount of capital would be required to move the present Resource Centre to a new location. There was plenty of office space for rent around town, however nothing of the size and layout of the hostel. Splitting up the Resource Centre was out of the question because of the economies of scale in sharing facilities.

In Search of a New Home

Since the purchase of the Uniting Church land in 1983, Aboriginal Organizations had undergone many changes. As the numbers increased, so did territorial boundaries. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) had undergone its own changes and included an Aboriginal presence in senior management. Some of these people like Charlie Perkins, had strong ties to traditional people in Central Australia. These ties translated into favour for organizations and people, who had direct links to the land on which the town of Alice Springs was built. Hence a pecking order began to emerge between organizations. Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people had very little direct linkage with the land in and around the town. It was mooted that they re-locate their Resource Centre south of the town or even as far away as Marla in South Australia.

A large amount of capital would be required for re-location before the Resource Centre could shift to make way for the Woolworths development. The Council obviously favoured a site close to the CBD as this enhanced its capacity to function successfully. Sites south of the town decreased this capacity substantially. The architect found a number of sites in the Industrial area just off Larapinta Drive to the west of the CBD. Developing a new Resource Centre for Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people wasn't an easy task. The Centre was very large now with more development expected. The needs of many people had to be integrated into a workable solution. The funding body (DAA) was still not happy to allow Pitjantjatjara Council ownership of a resource facility in Alice Springs, however the other Aboriginal Organizations could see the dilemma the Resource Centre faced. They applied their own pressure until the eleventh hour.

A large block of vacant land still existed in Wilkinson Street, less than a kilometer west of the CBD. It was ideal for the Council's needs, however the present owners couldn't sell it before meeting the building covenant requirements agreed to with the Northern Territory Government. It was now early 1986 and Woolworths was applying pressure for a decision or else it would be forced to establish elsewhere in town. The funding body (DAA) wasn't in favour of the Aboriginal Development Commission (ADC) funding a Pitjantjatjara Council Resource Centre so close to the CBD, however they didn't want to lose the Woolworths development opportunity on the Harlley, Bath Street land. The Northern Territory Government would have to agree for the covenant over the Wilkinson Street land to be extinguished before it could be sold for use by the Pitjantjatjara Council. This situation had become a very intense and required the management skills of a number of dedicated people.

In May 1986, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs allowed the Aboriginal Development Commission to fund the Combined Aboriginal Organizations of Alice Springs, which included the Pitjantjatjara Council, to purchase No. 3 Wilkinson Street. The Northern Territory Government agreed to extinguish the existing covenant on the land, replacing it with a new covenant in favour of Pitjantjatjara Council building a Resource Centre. This became the Council's new home from then until now. The Combined Aboriginal Organizations appointed Pitjantjatjara Council as the trustee to obtain and administer the financial loan necessary to build the Resource Centre.

Yeperenye Centre

In early August 1986, Pitjantjatjara Council moved its Resource Centre from the Bath Street complex into transportables on the eastern end of the block at No. 3 Wilkinson Street, Alice Springs. The bulldozers moved in and demolished the structures on the Harlley, Bath Street blocks making way for the new development. The Aboriginal Development Commission purchased the adjoining four blocks of land to complement the Centre with a two level car park. The present Yeperenye Centre, which houses Woolworths is a result of a relationship, which began between the Pitjantjatjaras, Yankunytjatjaras and the Uniting Church many years earlier.

The Yeperenye Centre has been a financial success because Woolworths required a 25 year lease with an option for a further 25 years. Yeperenye is ideally located in the Alice Springs CBD and is another Aboriginal success story. Pitjantjatjara Council along with the other Aboriginal Organizations each had a financial share in the Centre.

No. 3 Wilkinson Street

This was the beginning of a new era for the Pitjantjatjara Council Resource Centre. In a period of seven years the growth of the Centre was beyond expectation. This fact became very real when it was time to house the various resources in temporary accommodation on the eastern end of the land at No. 3 Wilkinson Street.

In 1979 the resources housed in the Centre were:

1. Pitjantjatjara Council Legal Service.
2. Pitjantjatjara Council Projects and Land Management.

In 1986 the resources were:

1. Pitjantjatjara Council Legal Service.
2. Pitjantjatjara Council Anthropology Service.

3. Pitjantjatjara Council Administration.
4. Pitjantjatjara Council Accounting.
5. Pitjantjatjara Council Projects.
6. Pitjantjatjara Council Land Management
7. Aboriginal Airlines.
8. Ngaanyatjarra Council.
9. Ngaanyatjarra Health.
10. Ngaanyatjarra Accounting.
11. Ngaanyatjarra Services.
12. Anangu Pitjantjatjara Administration.
13. Anangu Pitjantjatjara Services.
14. Nganampa Health Council.
15. Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara Women's Council.
16. Anangu Winkiku Stores (AWS).

Fifteen transportables of various sizes were required to provide accommodation until the new office complex was built. The Alice Springs Town Council had approved the use of the transportables for a one year period after which they had to be removed. The process of obtaining the land, moving onto it, arranging the loan for the office complex, overseeing the construction phase and landscaping the complex involved the dedicated services of the director and executive, lawyers, the administrator, projects and land management. Staff from all sections of the Centre were involved in the design of their office space. The buildings were completed and occupied in September 1987, thirteen months after moving to Wilkinson Street.

The finished product was very user friendly. The Centre was designed with large amounts of off-the-street parking to accommodate people visiting from the Lands. The building layout, around a large open courtyard, allowed good visual and spatial contact with people. The experience gained from using the hostel facilities, which the Council originally occupied in the Griffith House complex was invaluable when designing the Resource Centre for Wilkinson Street.

Expansions and Contractions

During the 1990's, the number of resources stayed much the same, however many experienced large expansions. Adjoining properties were purchased to house Anangu Winkiku Stores, Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara Women's Council and Anangu Pitjantjatjara. The expansions in Aboriginal Airlines resulted in it finally moving to nearby premises in Wilkinson Street. Anangu Pitjantjatjara moved onto the Lands when the Resource Centre at Umuwa was completed in 1991, making way for new expansions in Alice Springs.

Expansions in Ngaanyatjarra Council resulted in all sections moving out of the Centre to a separate location some kilometers away. When ATSIC was introduced in 1988, to

replace the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA), the funding and administration of budgets for the Ngaanyatjarra Council was transferred from the Alice Springs office to the Kalgoorlie office of ATSIC. Policies changed and the Ngaanyatjarra Council had less need to be integrated with other parts of the Resource Centre.

Projects expanded and rented a large shed further along Wilkinson Street to house their trucks and equipment. In the mid 1990's they were able to purchase the industrial site and sheds opposite the Resource Centre. This location was more convenient and in 2000, after some more renovations, moved their office facilities from the Resource Centre to the new site to be integrated with the rest of their operation.

The Resource Centre has experienced some contractions as well. Over the years some resources have become amalgamated with others while some are no longer needed. Anangu Winkiku Stores played a significant role for many years helping stores across the Lands until the time came for it to be disbanded. Staff and funding changes in the Land Management Unit resulted in it being replaced by Anangu Pitjantjatjara and Ngaanyatjarra Land Management. As policies change within the various Councils and external organizations, the resources required will also change.

In the latter part of the 1990's, the Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara Women's Council experienced the most expansion. As a Council they successfully obtained funds for many high priority programs for the benefit of people on the Lands. Hence more advisory personnel were required, which increased the need for office space.

Other resources within the Centre have expanded without the need for increased office space. They have been able to employ external agencies to assist with increased work loads.

Future of the Resource Centre

Since its beginning in 1979, the Resource Centre has undergone many changes as the Councils across the Lands have grown and matured. This includes the Pitjantjatjara Council, which was instrumental in gaining Land Rights for Anangu Pitjantjatjara, Ngaanyatjarra Council and Uluru (Ayres Rock). It played a special role in bringing new insight to Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people about ways in which their voices could be heard locally, nationally and internationally. Once they discovered the structures of regional and area councils through which they could express themselves, using decision making processes they were familiar with, they could successfully dialogue with external agencies. The Council also played a significant role through its Resource Centre in providing good advice and aid to those living on the Lands.

The future of the Resource Centre lies in the ability of its personnel,

1. To hear what people are saying on the Lands
2. To hear what the consensus is
3. To provide a professional service
4. To be people of integrity who can be trusted by Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people
5. To be people who can manage finance well
6. To be people who are experienced

All these qualities reflect character. Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people assess character very quickly because they are people of relationship. The process of building relationship provides a platform for mutual exchange between Resource Centre personnel and those living on the Lands. The future of the Centre, its direction and its content, depends on its ability to interpret and reflect the outcomes of its relationship with Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people.

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