

- The Cairns Post, Saturday, Aug 9, 1997

# Dancing out of the flames

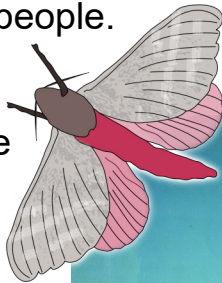
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A selection of memorabilia

**Willie Brim is a Traditional Owner, Cultural Custodian, Bush Doctor and Songman of the Buluwai people of Kuranda in Far North Queensland.**

Willie is a self taught, multiskilled instrumentalist and conscious songwriter. He is a musician responsible for the cultural heritage of his people and revival of their language, music and dance. He writes about spirituality, cultural values and dreaming, the love and connection to his country and the struggle and resilience of his people.



Willie's performance career, political, public and community life spans decades; each chapter building on the last to bring about real change, in his lifetime, for the coming generations.

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## Fight to keep name, art and culture alive

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**THE** Bulwai name almost disappeared when the last five clan members were forced off their traditional lands, in 1914.

The Bulwai language area stretches from Kurnell, Soreau Creek, Freshwater Creek to Benders Bay.

Almost a century after his tribe left, Willie Brim hopes he will live to see the day when a workday of young indigenous people reclaim the sacred sites and open it up to others to learn about the culture.

Mr Brim launched a native title claim over Bare Hill Conservation Park, near Kurnell, in 2002 in order to protect ancient values and artworks, but said other years of fighting red tape he yet to gain recognition for his people.

He also fears a wealth of mismanagement, which has seen the Bulwai name reduced to a clan group under the Designated, rather than recognizing them as two neighbouring groups, has forced "a blanket over the truth".

"It rips my guts out when I see what is happening on our country," he said.

There are no Djanguay stories here, only Bulwai stories.

They are trying to claim this country but in all the paperwork the bush medicine and languages recorded here are Bulwai.

"Djanguay is the communication language to people here," he said. "Djanguay so you must be a Djanguay man, but I also speak English and that doesn't make me an English man."

As the tug-of-war for the scrub and rainforest land continues, Mr Brim said he is watching his history disappear before his eyes.

"When you see what is happening to the rock art, you see the atrocity of delivering the knowledge away," he said.

"Our biggest worry is the water and fungi. Because we're not protecting here those sites need to be protected and maintained."

Mr Brim and his sons regularly visit the DPAs.

"You come here and see the damage being caused by people on their bikes that don't respect what's here," he said.

"We don't want to stop people coming here but they need to be asked for permission, like when you walk onto a site and ask permission."

**Sacred:** Willie Brim is fighting to have a native title claim over Bulwai lands near Kurnell recognized to protect ancient artworks and languages that more than 5000 years old. Mr Brim says the genuine aboriginal language and knowledge



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## Rock of ages hides Bulwai 'creation' site

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**NEWS**

# Award recognises tourism commitment

Kuranda Djabugai Country Tours chairman, senior guide and ranger Willie Brim has been named winner of an individual Gunkai Award for his exceptional commitment and contribution to indigenous tourism.


The inaugural Gunkai Awards were held in conjunction with the 2005 Australian Indigenous Tourism Conference in Perth and the second Gunkai Awards were held at the 2006 AIITC held in Alice Springs last week.

Three awards were presented in individual, organization and indigenous tour guide categories.

Mr Brim was selected for the individual category for his hard work, commitment and contribution to the indigenous tourism industry.

"I am honoured to receive this award and our organization would also like to congratulate all other nominees and winners at this year's award ceremony," Mr Brim said.

"We would encourage all participants in indigenous tourism to do their best and achieve the dream and goals that they have set for themselves and for their communities."



Djabugai Country Tours chairman, senior guide and ranger Willie Brim, seen here with groups of visitors at Bare Hill, has been recognised with an individual Gunkai Award.



Tears of joy for land owners never forgot

It was a naive trip that led returns with a different Queensland First Nations activist park land in Aboriginal traditional territory.

The Djabiny people of far north Queensland were very surprised to find their ancestral Djabiny Djabiny land in a very remote area with no visible negotiations leading to the return.

"They flowed freely as the law allowed and more still revealed their long connection to the land until they were forced off it in 1912 "but we always had our connection," a spokesman said proudly.

On Thursday, the Federal Court handed off its final documents to complete the deal. Australia first made title determination to be recent without litigation.

The Djabiny people have been fighting for native rights to the lands reserved. They will be free to manage the land in the park as well as perform cultural, religious, spiritual and ceremonial activities.

Their rights will extend over 60 years of the 20th-century.

But they will not own or control the land although

NEW beginning Justice Jeffrey Spender with Nolan Riley, 4, and Nyawak Glenore, 3, at Barron Falls.

some Djabiny will be employed to help care for the park and work with Queensland Parks and Wildlife to develop a management plan for the land.

Natural Resources Minister Stephen Robertson said exciting tourist attractions within Barron Djabiny would not be affected. The Shyrd Shyrd, the European National Park, he said,

was like a magic house electricity. It will run through the park.

Throughout the negotiations the Djabiny people have continually expressed their willingness to only exercise their rights in a manner compatible with the continued sustainable management of Barron Djabiny National Park, he said.

EMOTIONAL honeymoon Djabiny and Glenore with Riley and Auld Glenore husband and wife.