

K.I.C.S News

August— October 2017



Ph: (08) 89 710 196
Fax: (08) 89 721 012
Email: kics@bigpond.com
PO Box 1601
KATHERINE NT 0851
Office 9 Third St.
www.kics.org.au

[Find us on Facebook](#)

Program Coordinator:

Amanda Tootell Hours:
Hours: Mon. Tues. Wed. 9- 2pm

Field Team 1

Playgroup Leader

Carmel Coutts

Playgroup Support Assistant

Colin Coutts

Administration

Royelene Hill

Hours: Tues. Wed. Thurs. 8 - 2pm

Field Team 2

Playgroup Leader

Liz O'Brien

Playgroup Support Assistant

Jamie O'Brien

KICS is turning 30!
During this year and into
2018 we will showcase this
event through the pages of
our newsletters.

In this issue
meet Yve Weinberg and
John Naylor our
3rd KICS Team
1991 to 1994.



Top: John Naylor and children at a KICS
Playgroup at Yarralin.

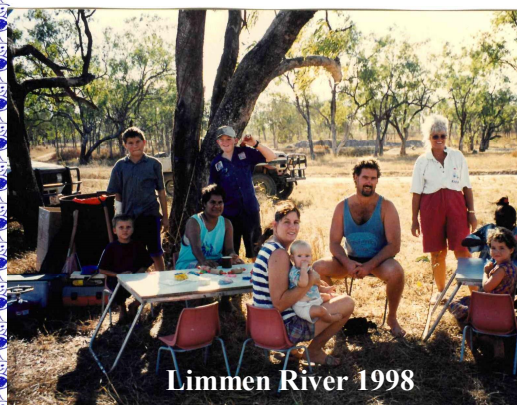


1991 - Neil Gibson the Teaching Principal at Hodgson
River Downs with students and Yve Weinberg enjoying
a KICS Playgroup.



Right: Keep River National Park: holding the
KICS AG M via the two way radio.

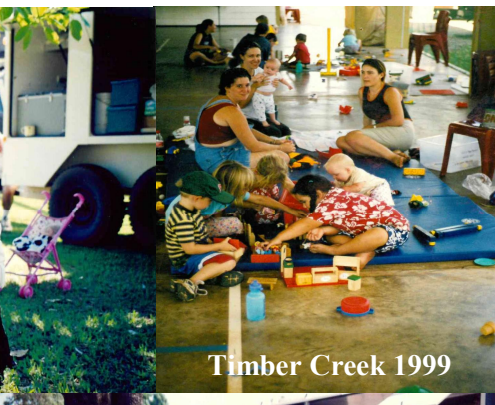
Memories!



Limmen River 1998



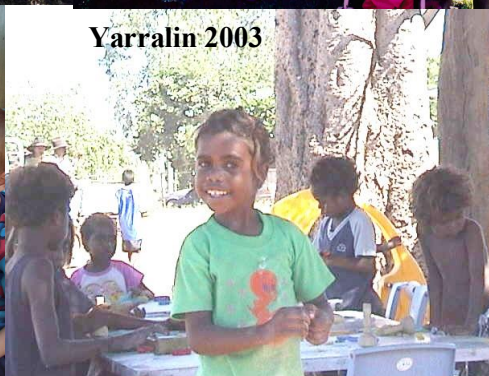
Barunga 1998



Timber Creek 1999



Mallapunyah Springs 2006



Yarralin 2003



KSA Swim Week 1998

Katherine Isolated Children's Service
2017- Contact Details

Staff

Program Coordinator

Mandy Tootell

Ph: 89 710 196

Fax: 89 721 012

Email: coordinator@kics.org.au

Admin Assistant

Roylene Hill

Ph: 89 710 196

Fax: 89 721 012

Email: kics@bigpond.com

Field Team One

Carmel & Colin Coutts

Carmel M:

Colin M: 0457 186 394

Sat P: 0011 8707 7674 4609

Email: fieldteam1@kics.org.au

Field Team Two

Liz & Jamie O'Brien

Liz M: 0408 237 959

Jamie M: 0438 383 156

Sat P: 0011 8707 7674 4925

Email: fieldteam2@kics.org.au

Board Members

Chairperson

Megan Burke (Tim) Broadmere Stn.

Ph: 89 759 610

Fax: 89 759 681

Email: kandoopartners@gmail.com

Vice Chairperson

Cassie Cox (Anthony) Anthony Lagoon Stn.

Ph: 89 644 520

Fax: 89 644 595

Email: ccox@aaco.com.au

Secretary

Jade Andrews (Jak) Newcastle Waters Stn.

Ph: 89 644 527

Fax: 89 644 533

Email: Jade.Andrews@pastoral.com

Treasurer

Katie Payne (Andrew) Larrizona Stn.

Ph: 89 750 579

Fax:

Email: katie.andy@bigpond.com

Katherine School of the Air Rep.

Clancy Snell

Ph: 89 721 833

Fax: 89 723 651

Email: clancy.snell1@ntschoools.net

ICPA Representative

Lauren Hoar (Simon) Moroak Stn.

Ph: 89 754 888

Fax: 89 754 828

Email: hoarla9@hotmail.com

Indigenous Representative

Annie Craig (Steven) Nelson Springs Stn.

Ph: 91 687 384

Fax: 91 687 408

Email: bluegloss@activ8.net.au

Public-Officer

Linda Blackwood (Adam) Toyden

Ph: 89 721 770

Fax: 89 721 771

Email: Abinda1@bigpond.com

Parent Representatives

Emma Miller (Neil) Margaret Downs Stn.

Ph: 89 750 723

Fax: 89 750 686

Email: emmamiller2011@gmail.com

Cecily Bethel (Stephen) Kalala Stn.

Ph: 89 759 990

Fax: 89 759 977

Email: kalala.murphy@bigpond.com

Sally Dyer (Justin) Hayfield Stn.

Ph: 89 759 920

Fax: 89 759 739

Email: apn.hayfield@bigpond.com

Jess Coronos (Tim) Broadmere Stn.

Ph: 89 759 610

Fax: 89 758 863

Email: jessburke85@hotmail.com

Victoria Burke (Sam) Broadmere Stn.

Ph: 89 759 610

Fax: 89 759 681

Email: tori.burke@outlook.com

Hello Everyone

October school holiday time, enjoy! With the heat bumped up and the odd rain cloud about let's hope the *Wet* gets off to an early start! The past months have been busy for all of the KICS Team: keeping playgroups on track and the multitude of other things that keep the wheel turning to make it all happen. From all reports, the kids are having a *wow* of a time at the educational /fun playgroups that Carmel, Col, Liz and Jamie prepare and roll out wherever the itinerary takes them.

We have had a few new families pop up and this is good, but don't forget I need the paper work so you are all in the system for notices of playgroups etc. Not forgetting that playgroup is for babies as well: please let us know when there are new additions to the family: (this very important statistical information is passed on to our funding body). From what I'm told, the big people also enjoy our playgroups and this is also very good! I see many lovely photos our Teams download as evidence.

Our fundraising is well and truly on the move with the ongoing Book Club, Toy (educational resources) Catalogues now in circulation, Book Fair hitting the track to your place sometime soon and not forgetting the Woolworth's Earn and Learn stickers: we certainly scored with the KICS *in store* box: it was more than half full! The Grey Nomads would have been very kind to us popping their shopping stickers into our box. Good on them! A kindly lady all the way from Ballarat in Victoria also sent her stickers to us! Thanks also to you and Katherine locals for your support with Earn & Learn and our ongoing fundraising! Shopping opportunities we make available to you under the guise of fundraising is ultimately for the benefit of your kids. **Stop Press:** *Final count of our Earn & Learn Stickers 2,520! WOW!*

Following this, I have included a report from Elaine & John Edwards our 2nd KICS Team. Yve Weinberg & John Naylor our 3rd KICS Team have also sent in their memories to share with you as we celebrate our 30th Birthday. It all makes very interesting reading, with KICS history jumping off the page to enlighten you and for your enjoyment.

Please see Mandy's and the Team's reports in this issue: with some lovely photos as well.

All the best for a safe and enjoyable school break.



Cheers from us...*Royelene*

An Overview from Elaine and John Edwards KICS - July 1989 to April 1991

Memories!

We were the second team (called coordinators in those days) to deliver the Katherine Isolated Children's Service to the bush. Kate and John King before us had laid down a solid foundation to carry on the aims of the service and that certainly made our job easier. They had established a network of families and communities, set up an office, arranged for the purchase of the first field rig and got the playgroups going. They provided us with the essentials to both carry on and to build on.

We started work in early July 1989 and made our first bush trip several weeks later. This was followed by a further four sorties (up to 14 days) before the *Wet* set in. The wet season provided us with a lot of thinking time to reflect on how we might be able to become more efficient - e.g. provide timely and relevant information to bush families and be able to visit each family more often.

We wanted to make at least three visits per year to stations and communities that had young children. The area was enormous - over 4000,000 square km (east and west of Katherine, border to border and south to the Canning Stock Route) - and the logistics were just as great.

In order to achieve this we had to make long trips with day trips fitted in for the areas less than a days drive from Katherine and, we had to be able to carry enough resources to be in the field for up to six weeks. We also had to run the office, replace supplies and consumables, prepare lesson plans, write reports, maintain the KICS rig and last, but not least, keep the KICS Board on side - which proved to be a bit of a problem at first. And, most of all, we had to deliver an educational playgroup that was appropriate and fun for the children, their families and the communities.

To put things in perspective - the following from a bygone era!

There was no internet or email, no digital camera, no GPS or mobile phones - so, 'mud maps' were the go! Our vehicle along with stations and community vehicles had two way short wave radio for keeping in touch with the outside world. When we were in the field we had to check in with Katherine School of the Air on a sched every Friday to let them know we were okay and to see if there were any messages. On occasion, our trip schedule needed to be altered mid- stream.

Continued next page:

Arranging a trip was a job in itself - only a few stations had landline phones so we generally had to rely on snail mail to contact most stations to arrange visits. Letters were sent and replies recorded. We had an Apple 2E in the office for record keeping. We had regular contact with all NT Government Departments that provided services to the area we serviced and this liaison was a great help in making things work out. There was always some way to let communities know when we would be coming.

We were not only the playgroup people! We reported to station managers and the NT Roads Department on the conditions of roads (there were very few) and tracks (there were many) and we collected (informally) information on health and educational matters. We were a part of a Remote Area Service Committee that met about every three months to exchange information.

After our last trip for the year (early October), we approached Captain Dean Curtis, Chairman of the KICS Board, about replacing the Service's vehicle and caravan with a pop - top camper van and toy trailer: our rationale was that we could reduce mileage and running costs and deliver more services. It didn't take much persuasion and, he got the Board to agree.

Eight months into the job and with a new camper van and trailer in tow we were finally able to stay bush for extended periods of time without having to return to Katherine. We travelled and played six days a week and on the seventh day, completed paper work and house-keeping chores.

Each day in the field we got off to an early start - up at six and on the road so as to reach the next venue for an 8:30 start for the playgroup. There was always a smoko midmorning and usually lunch in the station cook house or community centre sometime around noon. After lunch we spent time with family/families and this became a most important part of each visit. Often the mum had little or no personal contact with an outsider for weeks on end.

We would leave the family in the afternoon to find a campsite that was close enough to our next venue so as to arrive on time for the next day's playgroup. After a shower, updating our records and preparing for tomorrow we crashed into bed.

Our longest trip took 45 days to complete and covered 5,987km - we had 31 playgroups for 396 children with 149 adults in attendance (they played too) and made 53 home and 19 community visits. That year 1990, we managed to make three visits to each family and community.

Between the long field trips we arranged sorties to nearby stations and worked in our office. In addition to arranging field trips, we spent much of our office time developing and implementing a number of administrative procedures. For example, designing and standardising various reporting forms and implementing and maintaining inventory and budget controls. In addition, we prepared duty statements, drafted the Service's Constitution, prepared reports, set up the employee's superannuation account and prepared all of the paper work for KICS to become an incorporated body. Following incorporation the first general election of Board Members was held.

Until incorporation, the NT Isolated Children's Parents' Association ICPA appointed a Board of Management that ran the service: they set the policy, occupied all seats on the Board (except the chair), and arranged grants through the Commonwealth Government.

We had an arrangement with the Board that gave us time off in lieu of payment for overtime. This worked well as the Service's field work shut down over the Wet and we were able to have time off on full pay - but were always on call during paid leave time.

In October 1990, at the end of the field season, the ICPA held an AGM and convened a KICS Board Meeting - we indicated that we would resign our position effective April 1991. Captain Dean Curtis submitted his final Chairman's report to the Board and to ICPA.

Although the organization that was required to deliver the service back then was considerably different than it is now, we suspect that the playgroups today are most likely very similar to the ones held in the 90's. Perhaps one would agree that the more things change, the more they stay the same.

Elaine & John Edwards
May 2017

For us, the Dry was a very busy time of year. The roads (?), such as they were in the late 80s, became almost none existent in the Wet which meant that during the Dry Season ten and twelve hour work days, six days a week, was the norm.

During the Dry our time in the field was spent travelling, running playgroups, visiting families, delivering resources, where ever they were needed and fixing all things that went wrong with the unit. Perhaps someone on Rosewood Station will remember one of our 'most interesting' breakdowns in the bush.

On this occasion, just before we reached our camping spot for the night - near enough to get to Rosewood Station for a playgroup early in the morning - the springs on the trailer broke - again! At two o'clock in the morning while John was still underneath the rig trying to patch things together Elaine went off into the bush and came back dragging an old bed springs - asking if any bits of this might help. Within an hour the bed springs had been put to good use and we arrived safely at Rosewood Station the next morning and the playgroup took place right on time. After lunch the bed springs were discarded and the trailer springs welded back into place - fixed good enough for us to finish the trip with no more major problems.

Breakdowns were part of our life - we dealt with them as they popped up. Help was always at hand at stations but, in the bush, it was up to you to be able to get back on the road. With a bit of ingenuity - things just got fixed!

During the Wet we had a chance to clear up office work, order new books and toys, plan the next years activities, search for new dress up clothes, set out a new budget, arrange all necessary meetings for the coming year and enjoy a break with time off in lieu for the overtime put in while in the field. And, of course, buy a new set of trailer springs (and hangers) to take with us just in case!

The Board was supportive of this Wet / Dry work arrangement - it certainly served the community well as it was at that time. We enjoy the newsletters and are looking forward to catching up next year.

John and Elaine Edwards

KICS 2nd Field Team 1989 - 1991

KICS BOARD OF MANAGEMENT as of 20 October 1990

Meridith Fogarty
"Timber Creek"
PMB 38
Katherine 0850 NT
Phone: 750737

Here is a list of the mums who were KICS Board Members in 1990 - 1991.

Beth Hales
"McArthur River"
PMB 79
Katherine 0850 NT
Phone: 759996

As John and Elaine had kept memorabilia of their time as a KICS Team this information survived the Katherine flood in 1998.

Thank you Meridith, Beth, Margaret and Adele for your contribution to KICS!



Margaret Harrower
"Mountain Valley"
CMB
Katherine NT

Phone: 754777

Adele Liebelt
"Dunmarra Roadhouse"
PMB 27
Via Katherine 0852 NT

Phone: 759922



John hitching up for another KICS run!



Pigeon Hole Community 1989



Cape Crawford (Heartbreak) 1990

Copy file

home

PMB 38

Timber Creek

via Katherine NT 0851

20 Sept 1990.

The Chairman

K. I. C. S.

P.O. Box 1601

Katherine NT 0851.

Dear Mr Curtis,

Following the final visit of the K.I.C.S. team Elaine & John Edwards to Timber Creek I would like to congratulate you on their programme. The children, in ages from about 3 to 13, mix well, and participate with enjoyment in various activities. I have the utmost admiration for the obvious care and attention ^{with} which Elaine and John have prepared the programme and their wonderful rapport with the children.

My position is largely an impartial observer, as I am the supervisor to the five Fogarty Children at Timber Creek. I am semi-retired, and have spent my life, first teaching, then rearing children, and in later years part time teaching. The group on each of the three visits has had about a dozen children, who, though these visits are able to participate in ^{group} activities which are often impractical in the usual daytime routine, due purely to lack of numbers. It is great to see the children encouraged in team work and sharing of handcraft equipment and toys.

I will not be working here next year, and the enjoyment and fun these children shared on these visits is something I will well remember.

Congratulations on such a successful programme.

Yours faithfully
Shirley Hamilton.

A KICS Playgroup at Timber Creek around the time Shirley Hamilton wrote the above letter to the KICS Board.



A word from Mandy...

Hello and welcome to the change in the weather! The KICS trailers had a major overhaul and structural check in the mid-year break and have had parts re welded and rivets re riveted. However, they are both getting quite old and shaken. I have applied for a grant with the NT Community Benefit Fund for both a new vehicle with all the trimmings and a new trailer, we will find out after November 30 if we are successful in this round of funding. The KICS Teams have been travelling well with no major incidents to the vehicles except a kangaroo into the side of Liz and Jamie!

On 16 August I attended the Chamber of Commerce NT -Women in Business Luncheon here in Katherine with the discussion topic -Building and Maintaining a Great Team to get some pointers from other organisations about recruitment and retaining staff. I also attended the DSS: Families and Children Services Roundtable facilitated by Murawin on 21 September. It was really quite useful to talk with organisations similar to KICS about some of our funding and operational woes and to also get into the ear of department staff from Canberra! We are still with the Department of Education but am yet to hear definitely in writing whether KICS will move to the Department of Social Services (DSS) or to the Prime Minister & Cabinet (PMC) for future funding.

I am in the process of planning our itinerary for term 4, although it is very much a draft until the weather sets in with the possibility of roads closing and cutting us off from some of our venues. If you are scheduled for a playgroup and roads are too wet to travel on, we would very much appreciate hearing from you about your road conditions. The Teams continue to be grateful for any assistance that families and community contacts give them by way of accommodation, meals, camping spots and directions to the best fishing hole! It really is the best job in the world but I can understand how the exhaustion sets in at this end of the year as the weather heats up!

I am keen to hear your ideas about the upcoming 30th anniversary celebration next year and Mrs Hill has been gathering stories and photos from the archives. We would very much like to hear from past and present KICS kids and families about their KICS mobile playgroup memories! It really is a wonderful service for remote and socially, geographically isolated children.

Mandy Tootell

KICS Coordinator



Mandy and sons Flynn and Liam joined in at the KICS playgroup at Manyallaluk on the 25 August. A log under a shade tree (spotted by the boys) turned out to be a great spot for a picnic lunch on the way home.





Three Down, One to Go! Well after 9361km, 19 community and 9 station playgroups, 2 camp drafts and 2 KSA Mini School playgroups, Term 3 is drawing to a close. We have camped in rest areas, at river crossings, in caravan parks and on a few stations which is a welcome relief from setting up the tent and cooking on our little stove.

We have been from one side of the Territory and back again, stayed out for two weeks at a time and travelled over more corrugation than you could poke a stick at: and though it gets tiring at times it is a joy to see how happy the kids are to see us when we arrive and this makes it all very worthwhile. Our mermaid material cushions on the calming/quiet mat have been a hit everywhere for both the kids and adults. Dramatic play with the doctor's surgery and hair salon has kept everyone entertained. Next Term will be a very exciting time with much fun to be had with what we have programmed.

On picking the trailers up at the start of the Term after some much needed TLC the difference in towing and tyre wear was something to behold. No more wheel rotations out in the field to ensure even wear all round. Woohoo! The troopies are unstoppable and once we sort out the intermittent air conditioning issue, bring on the wet season build up! We have two weeks to go until the end of Term 3, then a bit of a break before we jump into Term 4 with renewed enthusiasm: and me, Col wearing joggers hopefully the injured ankle will be up to it!

See you all around the tracks next Term for KICS playgroup fun!

Carmel & Col



Barunga



Campbell Springs



Camfield Station

Team 2 Liz & Jamie

How fast this year is travelling! It's been wonderful seeing familiar faces, meeting new families whether on a newly visited station or a transient family in one of our regular communities. The immense satisfaction of when the children are calling out -see you next time- as they return to their afternoon routine gives us great pleasure in that it was a successful Playgroup session where every child had been kept busy and active with the range of outdoor equipment that is loaded into our overladen trailer: our emphasis and main objective is always keep busy, active and have no child sitting idle and for every child to be included in one or more activities of the morning.

Appreciation is extended to us by community Elders, parents and teachers for the extensive variety of what we pack into our morning visit. What a wonderful way to spend our mornings, and then to enjoy the afternoons watching the impressive Territory pass by as we drive to our bush home by a river, in the back tracks of the bush in readiness for our next destination.

We would also like to thank stations for their hospitality of a bed, a feed, a cold beer or two, great conversation and of course the **great steak** that has been on more than one occasion placed in our camp fridge to enjoy for our evening meal!!! We hope to see you all soon!

Liz & Jamie



Pigeon Hole



Yarralin



Nelson Springs



Victoria River Downs VRD

In late January 1991 we were living in a caravan in Alice Springs and had just finished running a vacation care program. Where to next? We had spent 1988 and 1989 in Katherine working in the Tourist Industry. We had worked and travelled in outback South Australia in 1990. Would we go back to SA or to Katherine or maybe go to Queensland?

One Saturday morning I bought the NT News and turned to the Positions Vacant and there was our perfect job! Katherine Isolated Children's Service was advertising for a couple to travel the Katherine Region, running playgroups and providing parent information. By the end of March we had applied for the job, been accepted and were ready to start! We received a comprehensive handover from Elaine and John Edwards, contacted lots of families and were off on our first trip in April 1991!

That first trip was a real learning experience for us! Although we had talked a lot with Elaine and John about how the playgroups were organised and we had also participated in a playgroup run by Smile-a-Mile in rural Darwin, this was the first time we'd put all that planning into action. Our very first playgroup was held at Hodgson River where there was a small school and also 3 Katherine School of the Air (KSA) students. We were so thrilled with the children's responses: they played and explored a range of activities for nearly 3 hours and then happily sat down for the stories and songs to finish off the playgroup. We hardly stopped for a moment! And then all the children trooped off for lunch and we started to pack up.... I thought we'd never get everything packed back into the trailer as it seemed like an impossible jigsaw puzzle! And then when we found a campsite between Hodgson River and our next day's playgroup we had to unload everything we had used and clean it and do the repack jigsaw!

By the end of our first short 2 week trip we had met so many friendly and welcoming people and enjoyed seeing lots of children play and explore. We had also managed to get ourselves into a more efficient routine of cleaning everything before we packed up, and the jigsaw in the trailer was much less confusing!

Our 3½ years with KICS was an amazing experience! We loved meeting all the families on stations, at wayside inns, on communities. We loved the curiosity and resilience of the children we met and it was so much fun working out activities for the range of children at each site. Many of the mothers on stations would arrange to meet up at one place so that as well as the children enjoying the activities, they could mix with the other children.

After our introductory 2 week trip in 1991 we set off on a 6 week trip covering the rest of the KICS territory. While this was a great adventure and wonderful to meet everyone, the length of time out bush posed a lot of logistical difficulties, especially carrying enough consumables for all the art / craft activities, washing of the dress ups etc. We also found that working 6 days a week for 6 weeks left us feeling a bit worn out. After discussing it with the Board we decided on trips of about 3 - 4 weeks. This meant that on one trip we would travel around stations and communities west of the Stuart Highway, then return to Katherine for a week during which we would reload all the consumables, wash the dress ups, clean the vehicle and trailer, attend to mail, phone calls, respond to the requests in the Day Book, do any vehicle or trailer maintenance and then set out for another 3-4 weeks on the east of the highway. At the end of that trip we would plan a different set of activities, reload with new consumables, and off again! We managed to get around the entire KICS area 3 times a year, as well as run playgroups at events such as KSA Sports Day, some of the smaller KSA mini schools, KSA Swim School and at Brunette Races on a couple of occasions.

Yve & John, thank you for sharing the memories and for your commitment to KICS during the early years.

Dry Season Playgroup Routine:

Each morning we would listen in to the KSA morning radio sched just before we arrived at that day's playgroup location. Playgroups started at 9 am and finished at 12 noon. Usually at stations and wayside inns there would be a morning tea break and everyone enjoyed the delicious contributions people had brought along. It was a good opportunity for people to get together and chat while their children explored and played. We had several boxes of parent resources, pamphlets, books, tapes etc that people could take, or in the case of books and tapes, could borrow.

For every Playgroup there was a Day Book for everyone to look at and record their names and the names of the children attending. It had the day's program outlined and explanations of the educational benefits for each activity. There was a section where anyone could make comments or requests. These were lovely records of each playgroup trip and at the end of each trip we would make sure we had listed all the requests / suggestions so we could act on them. We also used the record of names to assist us in keeping accurate records for our funding requirements. At each playgroup we would take photos, back in Katherine we'd get these printed and glue them into sketch books with details of who / where / when. These were very popular when we next visited. Sadly all the Day books and Photo Books perished in the '98 floods!

At the end of each playgroup we had songs and stories while all the children sat on a tarp in the shade. John would start cleaning and packing and then when all the children went off for their lunch we would both clean and pack. Often we would be invited to lunch with the host family, and this was a lovely way to relax and enjoy their company before we set off in the afternoon. We tried to get a camp about 30 km from the next day's playgroup so that the morning didn't have to be too rushed. Once we set up camp I would write up the next day's program, go through the requests / suggestions from that day's playgroup and add to the To Do, when we are back in Katherine list, and make more playdough. John would do any maintenance needed.

We always had playgroups on a Saturday morning as that was the only way we could fit in the number of visits across the region. On Saturday nights we tried to find a campsite which was a bit more interesting than a gravel pit, but often that wasn't possible. Sunday was a sleep-in day, followed by clothes washing, a VJY radio phone call to John's Mum and then relaxation!

One of the things we instituted while we were with KICS was the Playgroup in a Box project. The idea was to provide a plastic storage box containing resources and consumables with a small folder of suggested play activities based on a theme (e.g. Wild Animals, Flight, Insects, etc). Usually the resources would include several books, song tapes, puzzles, toys, exploratory games, paint, playdough recipe, crayons, art paper, craft materials and anything else required for the activities. The Variety Club supported this project with a donation of \$2000 which provided us with 20 Playgroup In a Box kits. Restocking the kits came out of KICS funds. The Variety Club delivered the first Playgroup in a Box to Patsy at Limmen Bight. After that we would take kits out when we visited people who had requested them and kits were also delivered by KSA teachers, other government workers, or collected by families when they came to town. The response was very positive and we were pleased that KICS was able to provide a support even when we weren't physically running a playgroup.

The KICS board was made up of parents (usually mothers) in the KICS area, an ICPA rep. and a couple of other community positions. We found everyone on the KICS Board was incredibly supportive. In the KICS office there was a person working for a few hours a week, attending to admin, keeping us informed and also helping with any queries while we were out of range. These were the days where our communication was by VHF radio or a telephone at stations we visited. There were no mobile or satellite phones, no internet, no digital cameras! In the office we had a second-hand Apple 2E Computer, which we thought was very flash!

The person who worked in the office when we first started, was a lovely and very efficient person Judy, who unfortunately left Katherine after our first year, as her husband was in the RAAF. After that Sarah Vaughan joined us and provided wonderfully efficient and friendly service. She contributed hugely to the Playgroup in a Box project, and in fact loved it so much she decided to train as an early childhood teacher a couple of years later!

In late 1992 we were approached by Peter Hanson, KICS' contact at the Federal Department of Human Services (who funded us) about the possibility of incorporating another team who would work in conjunction with KICS by helping Indigenous Communities develop their own regular playgroups which would provide childcare for young mothers wishing to train under the RAMjet (Remote Area Mobile - jobs education & training) program. This program ran for about 2 years, with Kate King, part of the original KICS team and another Team member, Bernadette. This program really expanded KICS' reach into the region. Peter Hanson and the RAMjet program manager Kristy Dickerson were extremely supportive of both the KICS teams!

At the end of 1993 John and I bought a property 20 km out of Katherine and by April 1994 we decided it was time for us to stay in one place for a while. It was incredibly sad to say goodbye: the KICS job was truly a wonderful experience and we are so grateful for the time we had as part of the KICS family



Sunday afternoon camped at Jasper Gorge, (washing done)
Yve working on the KICS newsletter.



KICS Playgroup at Mistake Creek with Yve & John.

We were living in Wagga Wagga when I found the position available for a K.I.C.S team for 2010. We had always wanted to move to Katherine as it has such a great feel to it. The K.I.C.S job seemed ideal as Henry was only 2 and Georgina 1 and we saw it as a great family adventure.

We moved up to Katherine in February 2010 and hit the road soon after. It was a pretty wild ride with a 1 and 2 year old. We bought a tent and made the decision to camp out as much as possible. This was great fun for all, but also tiring. We found some pretty awesome campsites. One of the main things that we remember from our time is how excited everyone was to see the K.I.C.S trailer arrive, and it was always a rush to see which toys / activities were packed for that trip.

It was an exceptional year and Henry and Georgina still remember bits, especially going in and out of the window of the K.I.C.S vehicle. I truly believed in the ethos of K.I.C.S and was quick to apply for the position of Co-ordinator in 2013. I was the Co-ordinator with K.I.C.S for 1½ years and even this had its challenges, with trailers snapping near Jasper Gorge and ensuring that teams arrived safely to each playgroup destination.

KICS encompasses so many different things: bringing kids together, allowing mothers / carers the chance to catch up, new activities to try at home, resources and book fairs, a chance to touch base with town and many more. The KICS team are always working together to ensure that stations folk and communities do not feel too far from anyone!

Gill Russell
September 2017

Thank you Gill & James, the KICS story belongs to you as well!



The Very Special Birthday List...

August

11/08/2016 Tallis Herrod
 14/08/2013 Jett Dahl
 15/08/2014 Josiah Hockey
 17/08/2016 Emma-Jayne Hockey
 17/08/2016 Samson Starr
 21/08/2014 Ada Burke
 23/08/2008 Matilda Johnson
 29/08/2016 Eliza Bryant
 30/08/2011 Alexander Hunter
 30/0/2010 Savannah Lorimer
 31/08/2007 Henry Russell
 31/08/2011 Justin Andrews

October



01/10/2010 Caleb Gill
 01/10/2010 Charlie Hore
 04/10/2012 Henry Johnson
 04/10/2010 Sophie Brett
 08/10/2014 Brody Hoar
 09/10/2009 George Dahl
 16/10/2012 Betty Bethel
 20/10/2012 Poppy Bewg
 22/10/2010 Joe Brown
 26/10/2006 Amy Schilling
 26/10/2015 Orry Dyer
 27/10/2013 Alexis Desreaux
 31/10/2011 Ella Rippon
 31/10/2008 Josh Armstrong

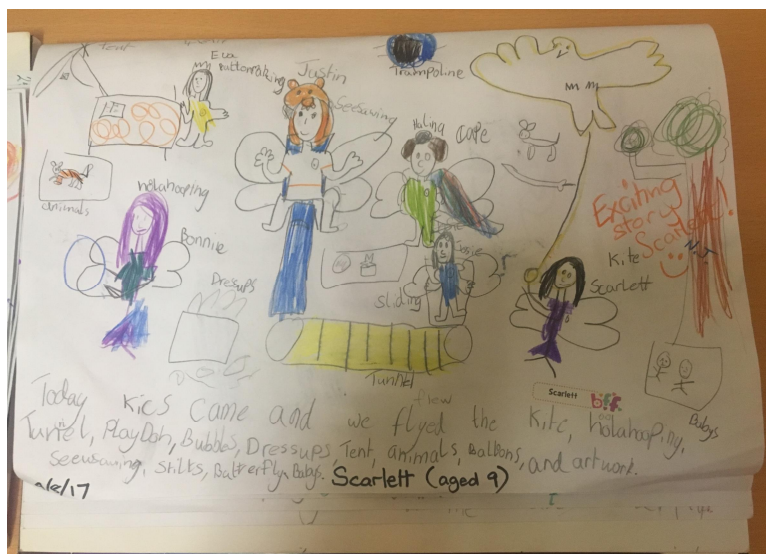
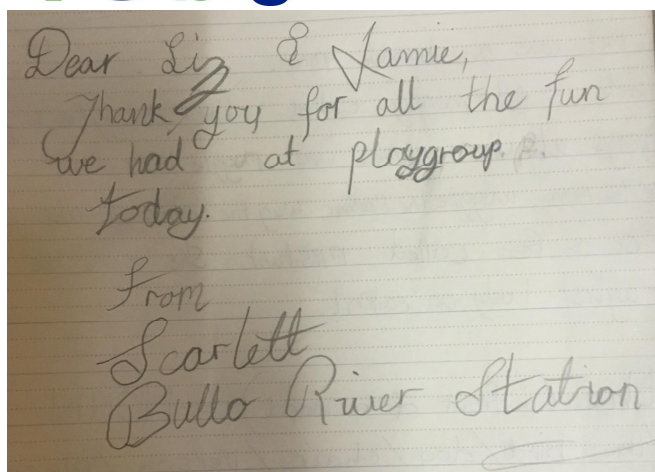
September

02/09/2006 Michael Skerrett
 03/09/2014 Darius Sauer
 04/09/2014 William Burke
 06/09/2007 Issabella Rasheed
 07/09/2010 Hayley Richter
 13/09/2006 Xavier Underwood
 15/09/2009 Keely Hutchinson
 16/09/2015 Georgie Keane
 20/09/2007 Chase Hutchinson
 20/09/2009 Jack Leslie
 22/09/2008 Lachlan Brett
 24/09/2011 Bibianna Bode

Memories!



feedback from you...



K.I.C.S is funded through Budget Based Funding (BBF) from the Commonwealth Department of Education and through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) by the Prime Minister & Cabinet (PMC).



facebook

If you are into FBing then do a search for K.I.C.S. and like our page.

During Term 4 our fundraising ventures include Scholastic Book Fair, and the Christmas Toy/ Resources Catalogues from

Parent Direct, Chalk &

Educational Experience.

These catalogues are now in circulation. Thank you for orders already placed. We are very appreciative of your support affording us the opportunity to gain bonuses in the way of toys and educational resources to enhance our playgroup service.



For Sale



K.I.C.S T-Shirts - \$15

Sizes 00 to 14 (generous fit).

Available in a range of colours.

Scholastic Book Club

Scholastic Book Club Issues 7 & 8 will take us through to the end of the year. Issue 7 will be circulated after the October break.



If you do not wish to receive the Book Club catalogues please let us know. As a non profit service it will help with unnecessary postal costs.

Easy to clean!

K.I.C.S.



Great for campdrafts - camping- school rooms - playgroups.

Indoor / Outdoor Waterproof Mats.

Made from 100% recycled plastic.

Road tested at K.I.C.S Playgroups.

1.8 x 3 m \$110 each

Also comes in green.

Reversible, Foldable

Contact K.I.C.S - 08 8971 0196

kics@bigpond.com

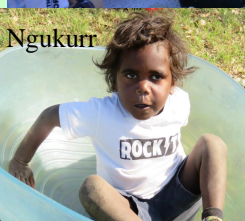


Photo Gallery

2017



Broadmere



Ngukurr



Mataranka



Elliott



Moroak



Kununurra Campdraft



Corella Creek



Bullo River



Beswick

Memories!



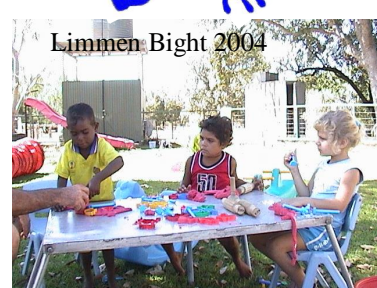
Borrooloola Rodeo 2011



Newcastle Waters 2008



Urapunga 2004



Limmen Bight 2004