**Kaya!**

This newsletter is to keep members up to date with what’s happening with the Wirlomin Noongar Language and Stories Project. You can also check out the website [www.wirlomin.com.au](http://www.wirlomin.com.au)

As a volunteer organisation, we appreciate the assistance of members in keeping everything Wirlomin-related happening.

**Aunty Hazel Honoured**

Wirloomi Elder Hazel Brown was awarded Elder of the Year for the Great Southern region as part of NAIDOC week this July. Aunty Hazel’s commitment to keeping her family, language and culture strong was commended at a ceremony in Albany.

Many Wirloomi people have received other awards this year too. Kim Scott won the West Australian of the Year and Dallas Winmar won the Kate Challis RAKA award for her play *Yibiyung*.

**Southern Schools Tour**

The Wirloomi Project toured schools in Tambellup, Katanning and Albany between the 7th and 12th of May 2012. Nine schools were visited in five days and one community meeting was held. A total of 954 children and 128 adults attended. The aims of the school tour were: to promote Noongar arts and culture through language, storytelling and dance; to promote, foster and encourage Indigenous authors and illustrators; to promote the Wirloomi books as literature/art; to provide opportunity for people to participate in cross-cultural shared activities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people whilst learning about Indigenous culture; to broaden the audience and gauge the response of the communities, particularly school students, Noongar and non-Noongar, to our latest pre-publication stories, and; to provide opportunities for Wirloomi family members to develop as presenters.
Trish Young and Leanne Eades, AIEOs from Katanning Primary School, wrote thanking the Wirlomin Project for visiting their school, stating:

“We as Noongar workers are proud to see the language being passed on to our students... a large number of Noongar students benefited from this wonderful cultural experience. We also have a large number of students who are descendents of the Wirlomin family tree.”

Kellie Woods, Connie Moses, Russell Nelly, Helen Nelly and Iris Woods with St Patrick’s Primary School students

Miram Bolton, Ebony Riley, Lakotta Miller, Rosie Woods, Teana Mcroberts, Drucilla Sandy, Ms Leanne Eades and Iris Woods at Katanning Primary School

NAIDOC Week Activities

As part of NAIDOC week this year, Noongar men led by Anthony Roberts and David Coyne retold Wirlomin Noongar stories through dance at an event at the Albany Regional Prison attended by proud Wirlomin Elders and family. The performance drew on Wirlomin stories including Noongar Mambara Bakitj.

NAIDOC week also saw Iris Woods and Jason Miniter give cultural presentations at schools in the Great Southern.

Shakespeare in Noongar

Wirlomin Noongar language educator Roma Winmar Yibiyung recently lent her expertise as the language consultant for Yirra Yaakin Aboriginal Theatre’s production of Shakespeare’s sonnets. In a world-first, the actors performed at the Globe Theatre in London using an Aboriginal language, Noongar.

Wirlomin Showcases

The Wirlomin Project was showcased in May at the WA English Teacher’s Association Conference in Perth. English teachers were enthralled with a demonstration of the Wirlomin school visit program.

In June at the International Indigenous Research Development Conference in Auckland, New Zealand, Maori and Native American elders and scholars were moved to tears upon hearing the Wirlomin story of cultural revival from Clint Bracknell, and send their best wishes to all Wirlomin members.

This Year in Wirlomin

It has been a busy year for the Wirlomin committee volunteers. Mary, Lefki and Marg have provided the organisational know-how and administrative support we would be totally lost without. Iris Woods, Kim Scott, Roma Winmar and Ezzard Flowers continue to provide direction for the project, language expertise and unwavering commitment. Clint Bracknell has advised on emerging technologies for archiving language material and promoting Wirlomin activities. Part of this includes the gradual preparation of a language booklet for Wirlomin members based on wordlists provided by Wirlomin Elders Hazel Brown and Lomas Roberts (RIP).

This year we have organised a workshop, a public meeting and a tour of southern schools. We now have a website, a newsletter and are registered as an incorporated association. Two new Wirlomin books are due to be published at the beginning of next year and we have much more planned before then.