



PIONEER ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MONDAY 22 MAY 2017 | JODIE BELL

Firstly, I would like to pay my respects to the Arunda people, the Elders both past and present. I also extend my respects to all Elders who are here with us tonight.

In the Kimberley region we initially received a great deal of support from the ABC to get our voices on air. In 1986 Wayne Bynder along with Graeme Steele travelled through the region to find out if anyone wanted to establish their own radio stations. It was in 1987 when Waringarri Media seconded Wayne from ABC to help establish their service. They commenced broadcasting one hour per week on ABC regional radio. This became the pattern for later establishing the radio stations in Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek and Broome. Also in 1988 we saw the development of BRACS where we initially had 13 remote communities across the state, receiving this service. Later in years saw the establishment of the Derby radio station.

Our media organisations in our region could not have developed without the dedication and hard work of our pioneers. These pioneers include:

Bill Thaiday backed up by his lovely wife Rose provided much needed training and support to several of our stations in the early days.

Dot West who started as a trainee manager at Waringarri in 1987 and took over from Wayne Bynder in 1988 as its manager. Dot then moved to Broome to help the development of Goolarri Radio and since this time has been instrumental in the growth of Media in WA and nationally.

Nooley Preston was a strong presence at our regional meetings and was Wangki Radio's first broadcaster – he spoke in language on radio – this wasn't met very favourably by some bureaucrats with the Department of Transport and Communication who controlled the ABC's transmitters – in 1988 one senior officer said 'I will not have foreign languages go to air on a national broadcast transmitter'. Luckily however, this attitude didn't prevail.

Josie Farrer, who is now our Labor member of state parliament was the driving force behind the establishment of PRK in Halls Creek. While in Broome Eileen Torres led a small team of dedicated people. Later in 90's Derby established themselves with the dedication of Kenny Prouse and Gordon Marshall.

These pioneers were supported by others including Teddy Carlton, Ivan McPhee, Kenny Staggs, Stephen Baamba Albert, Joe Lannigan, Sandy Dann who incidentally has just celebrated 25 years as a broadcaster, Mark Bin Bakar, Robert Lee and Kevin Fong.

The development of the remote media services were led and supported by the likes of Wayne Barker and Troy Albert to be later joined by Keith Lethbridge, Henry Augustine, Bernadette Angus, Kevin Waina, Julie Anne Bennett, Tadam Lockyer and the late Annette Victor.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognise the dedicated work of our non-Indigenous supporters in helping to establish what we have today. I would like to recognise the work of Neil Turner, John Smoker, David Melzer, Renee Romeril, Tony Walker and the late Clare Chang.

In the Kimberley region we now have 5 licenced town stations, twelve RIBS and a number of retransmission sites, a narrowcast television station, a radio network and a production house – all of this was made possible through the hard work of our pioneers – the ones listed above and the many more who are too numerous to mention.