



Keepers of the Story

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A **STUDYGUIDE** BY KATY MARRINER



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CAAMA Productions

Keepers of the Story was produced by Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) Productions, the film and television production branch of CAAMA, in association with Imparja Television and Wawili Pitjas.

The Central Australian Indigenous Media Association (CAAMA) began operations in 1980 and was the first Aboriginal group to be allocated a broadcasting license. The Aboriginal people of Central Australia own CAAMA and its objectives focus on the social, cultural and economic advancement of Aboriginal peoples. CAAMA produces media products that engender pride in Aboriginal communities, while informing and educating the wider community.

Established in 1988 CAAMA Productions is part of the CAAMA media group. CAAMA Production's primary purpose is to represent Indigenous people, culture and language in film and television. CAAMA Productions was the recipient of the 2005 Film Australia Stanley Hawes Award for Outstanding Contribution to Australian Documentary.

Visit CAAMA at www.caama.com.au to learn more about CAAMA and CAAMA Productions.

Nganampa Anwernekenhe

Keepers of the Story is part of the *Nganampa Anwernekenhe* television series. *Nganampa Anwernekenhe* is produced by Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) Productions, the film and television production branch of CAAMA, in association with Imparja Television.

Over 180 programs have been produced since the *Nganampa Anwernekenhe* television series was initiated in 1988. The primary aim of the series is the maintenance of Aboriginal languages and culture. *Nganampa Anwernekenhe* also provides an opportunity for Indigenous filmmakers to work on an Indigenous language television series. Each program must have an Indigenous Australian in the key creative roles which include writer, director, cinematographer and sound recordist.

Visit Australian Screen at <http://aso.gov.au/titles/series/nganampa-anwernekenhe/> to learn more about *Nganampa Anwernekenhe*.

Keeping the story of Jandamarra alive is the responsibility of the Bunuba people. For the storytellers, Jandamarra is an unsung hero of whom the whole Australian population can be proud.

Since the passing of the key story holder Banjo Woorunmurra, other senior people like George Brooking, Dillon Andrews, Selina Middleton and Danny Marr have all played an important role in the preservation of Jandamarra's story.

About the filmmaker

'When we began talking to Bunuba storykeepers about the Jandamarra it was clear that they felt that the keeping of the story of Jandamarra was very important to them. This keeping of story is evident in the projects they have done in the past: a book written in collaboration between white historian Howard Pederson and Bunuba elder Mr Wooranmurra (deceased) and key Bunuba people, a play written with Steve Hawke and now the documentary *Jandamarra's War* made for television.' - Mitch Torres, Director

Mitch Torres is the writer and director of *Keepers of the Story*. Her credits as a director include the award winning documentary *Whispering in our Hearts* as well as *Case 442*, *Saltwater Bluesman*, *The Healing Sounds of the Bungarun Orchestra*, *Behind the Ball* and *Memories of Iwany*. Torres has recently directed *Jandamarra's War* for ABC TV, and the series *Milli Milli Nganka*, and has written an episode for the television series *The Circuit*.

This study guide to accompany *Keepers of the Story*, a documentary written and directed by Mitch Torres, provides information and suggestions for learning activities in Civics and Citizenship, Australian History, English, Humanities and Social Sciences, Indigenous Studies and Media.

Teachers should preview *Keepers of the Story* before showing it to students. The film would appeal to students in upper primary classes and is suitable for secondary students at all levels.

Keepers of the Story is in Bunuba and English languages with English subtitles. Bunuba is one of at least forty-four languages that were spoken in the Kimberley. Some are no longer used, but approximately thirty are still spoken to varying degrees.

Duration: 25 minutes



CREDITS

DIRECTOR AND WRITER

Mitch Torres

PRODUCER

Eileen Torres

PHOTOGRAPHY

Dan Woods,

Clinton Ferstl

EDITOR

Clinton Ferstl

SOUND RECORDIST

Petris Torres

THEME MUSIC

Petris Torres

ORIGINAL MUSIC

Bunuba Joonba,

Andrews Family,

George Brooking

PRODUCTION

ASSISTANT

Ebony Hill

DIRECTOR'S ASSISTANT

Catriona McKenzie

SERIES PRODUCER

Tanya Fraser

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Ray Lillis

Imparja Television

Imparja Television is an Australian television network broadcasting to remote eastern and central Australia. 'Imparja' is an Arrernte word meaning footprints. The word is used to indicate that Imparja Television aims to service Arrernte people wherever they may live. Imparja Television describe their range as a footprint. The network is unique in Australia and the world, being totally owned and controlled by Northern Territory and South Australian Aboriginal shareholders.

Imparja Television delivers information and communication services to the community, while promoting Indigenous culture and values.

Visit Imparja Television at <http://www.imparja.com/>

Find out more about Imparja Television at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imparja_Television

USING KEEPERS OF THE STORY IN THE CLASSROOM

Teachers may select from the following information and activities to support students' viewing and close analysis of *Keepers of the Story*.

MAKING A START

- Did you enjoy watching *Keepers of the Story*?
- As you watch *Keepers of the Story*, make viewing notes about Jandamarra and the people both past and present who are part of his story. Use a data chart like the one below to help you organise your notes. Drawing on the contents of your data chart, spend time as a class discussing Jandamarra and the people who are part of the Jandamarra story.
- Draw a concept map that shows the connections between *Keepers of the Story* and your world.



JANDAMARRA

Jandamarra, also known as Pigeon, was born in 1873. He was an Indigenous Australian of the Bunuba people.

At an early age, Jandamarra and his mother came in from the bush to live on Lennard River Station, one of the first pastoral stations in the Kimberley. It was during this time that Jandamarra was nicknamed 'Pigeon' and became an exceptionally talented stockman. As a young adult, Jandamarra returned to a traditional life with his people.

Like other Aboriginal people, Jandamarra was imprisoned for stealing stock. After he was released from jail, Jandamarra worked at Lillimooloor Station with a white man called Bill Richardson. When Richardson joined the police force, Jandamarra rode with him when the police captured many of his own people.

During a patrol of the Napier Ranges in the West Kimberley in late 1894, Jandamarra helped to arrest a large group of his people, men and women. They were held at Lillimooloor Police Station.



That night, after speaking with his captured uncle, Jandamarra was remorseful. Jandamarra chose to be loyal to his people. He shot Richardson, armed the Bunuba people and began a guerilla campaign against the colonists.

On November 10, 1894, Jandamarra and some of his followers attacked a party of white men who were driving cattle to set up a large station in the heart of Bunuba land. Two of these men, Burke and Gibbs, were killed. This began what became known as 'The Bunuba War'.

When news of Jandamarra's action became known, a posse of armed police and settlers attacked Jandamarra and his followers in Windjana Gorge. Jandamarra was wounded but escaped. Intent on retribution, police attacked Aboriginal camps around Fitzroy Crossing. Many Aboriginal people were killed.

For three years, Jandamarra led a resistance against police and European settlers in defence of his lands and his people. His ability to elude the police and disappear without trace made him a legend amongst Bunuba people of the time. They believed that Jandamarra had magical power.

The Western Australia police recruited Mingo Mick, a talented Aboriginal tracker. Mingo Mick was also reputed to possess magical powers. Mingo Mick tracked Jandamarra down and shot him to death at Tunnel Creek on April 1, 1897. The police cut off Jandamarra's head as proof that he was dead and it was sent to England as a trophy. His family buried his body. The police showcased a head of another Bunuba man in a glass case which everyone thought was Jandamarra's head but his had already been sent to London to a gun manufacturer.

- Imagine that you are a journalist working for a Western Australian newspaper in the 1890s. Write a newspaper report about Jandamarra and one or more of his exploits.
- or
- Imagine that you are a citizen living in Western Australia in the 1890s. Write a letter to the newspaper expressing your opinion of

Above: -----



Jandamarra and one or more of his exploits.

- Jandamarra is referred to as a freedom fighter, a warrior, an outlaw, a murderer, a notorious native and as the Aboriginal Ned Kelly in different versions of his story. Which label do you think best describes Jandamarra? Explain your decision to the class by drawing on evidence from *Keepers of the Story*.
- 'He started a fight for country, his spirit country, a long time ago, against whiteman.' (Danny Marr)

Why did Jandamarra become a legend to the Bunuba people of the time?

Do you think Jandamarra was a hero?

- Write the story of Jandamarra that would appear in a tourist guide to the Kimberley.
- For more information about Jandamarra, visit:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jandamarra>
<http://www.jandamarra.com.au/>

The National Library of Australia provides a comprehensive index of resources on Jandamarra.

Visit <http://trove.nla.gov.au/result?q=jandamarra> to view newspaper articles from the time and the bibliographic details of books, journals, magazines and articles, as well as music, sound and video.

BUNUBA COUNTRY

Bunuba country is in the southern part of the



'He started a fight for country, his spirit country, a long time ago against whiteman.'

DANNY MARR (ABOVE)

Kimberley Region in the far north of Western Australia. It stretches from the town of Fitzroy Crossing to the King Leopold Ranges. Bunuba lands include the Napier and Oscar Ranges.

- Have you ever visited Bunuba country?

Locate Bunuba country on a map of Australia. Use print and electronic texts to find out more about Bunuba country and about the people who live there. Share your findings with others in the class.

A useful starting point is the Indigenous Language Map located at <http://www.abc.net.au/indigenous/map/>.

- Draw a map of Bunuba country. Show the places that are key to Jandamarra's story on the map. Annotate the map or use a key to provide more details about each place. Make sure that your map has a title, a border and a north point and that you have indicated all sources.
- 'The story of Jandamarra is the story of the Bunuba people.' What do you understand this statement to mean?
- What problems currently face the Aboriginal people of Fitzroy Crossing? Investigate how the media has portrayed these problems. How is the community addressing these problems? The keepers of Jandamarra's story believe that the spirit of Jandamarra is still alive and present

Above: -----



in their community.
Can the story of Jandamarra help Bunuba people of today?

GEORGE, DILLON AND SELINA

Keepers of the Story features George Brookings, Dillon Andrews and Selina Middleton.

- What do we learn about George, Dillon and Selina as they tell Jandamarra's story?
- Use 'Think, Pair, Share' to discuss your impressions of George, Dillon and Selina. Review the notes that you have made about George, Dillon and Selina in the table. Talk about your impressions of George, Dillon and Selina with a partner. Share your conversation about one of the keepers of Jandamarra's story with the rest of the class.
- What words would you use to describe the relationship between George, Dillon and Selina? Match the words that you have selected with moments from *Keepers of the Story*.
- Why does the filmmaker show George, Dillon and Selina camping out in Bunuba country?

THE KEEPERS

The practice of telling oral stories is an important aspect of Aboriginal culture. Specific cultural practices, histories, languages, laws and family relationships have been passed on in this way.



These stories link past, present and future generations of Indigenous Australians. *Keepers of the Story* is about the passing on of a life history.

George Brookings, Dillon Andrews and Selina Middleton are among some of the keepers of Jandamarra's story. Since the passing of Banjo Woorunmurra, George, Dillon and Selina have played an important role in the preservation and passing on of Jandamarra's story. In *Keepers of the Story*, Dillon speaks about the kind of man Jandamarra may have been given the evidence that has been passed down through oral history in the Bunuba community. George describes the witty charms of Jandamarra. Selina explains why the story of Jandamarra is important to present and preserve for future Bunuba people.

The storytellers value their cultural stories and recognise the importance of sharing these stories. The stories were passed onto them by elders in their community and as elders they are now responsible for passing on the stories to the next generation.

Above: -----



written by Howard Petersen in collaboration with Bunuba elder Banjo Woorunmurra (deceased). A stage play titled *Jandamarra* was produced by the Black Swan Theatre Company and Bunuba Films in 2008. In 2011, four performances of *Jandamarra* are scheduled at Kimberley venues. A documentary about his life is currently in production (2011) and a feature film is in development.

- Why do you think so many writers, performers and filmmakers have adapted Jandamarra's story?
- 'Jandamarra's story is not dead' (Danny Marr)
Why keep the story of Jandamarra alive?
Who is Danny Marr? What role does he play in the keeping of Jandamarra's story?
- Australian singer-songwriter Paul Kelly wrote the song 'Pigeon/Jundamurra' in 1989. Read about Kelly's trip to Fitzroy crossing and his interest in Jandamarra at <http://www.paulkelly.com.au/index.php?page=RollingStoneTourDiary>.
The song was released on the 1989 album, *So Much Water, So Close To Home*.
You can read the lyrics of the song at <http://www.amws.com.au/pk/lyrics/pigeon-jundamurra.html>

BOTH SIDES OF THE STORY

- Mitch Torres, the director of the documentary, *Jandamarra's War* intends to tell 'both sides of the story'.
What are 'both sides' of the story? Why is it important to tell 'both sides' of the story?
- 'When I was in school all I heard about was Christopher Columbus. William Dampier and all that. We wasn't taught about Jandamarra. We wasn't taught about our own people.' (Dillon Andrews)
Do you think that the teaching of Australian History has become more inclusive?

BETRAYAL AND LOYALTY

The police recruited Jandamarra to track down Aboriginal offenders.

- Why do you think Jandamarra worked with Richardson?
- 'He had to choose between his people and his friend.' (Danny Marr)
As a class, discuss Jandamarra's decision to shoot Richardson? Would it have been a difficult choice to make?
- What role did Bunuba men and women play in the Jandamarra story?

INJUSTICE

In the 1890s, European settlers claimed large parts of the Kimberley as their own. In the process

- Why have George, Dillon and Selina become keepers of Jandamarra's story?
- Spend time as a class, discussing the different roles that the keepers play in the telling of the Jandamarra story.
- George, Dillon and Selina claim that telling the story is their responsibility.
Why do they make this claim?
- 'Jandamarra's memory is still strong in the Bunuba people and they speak about him as if he were present today in their lives.' (Mitch Torres)
Who is Mitch Torres? What role does she play in the keeping of Jandamarra's story?

ADAPTING THE JANDAMARRA STORY

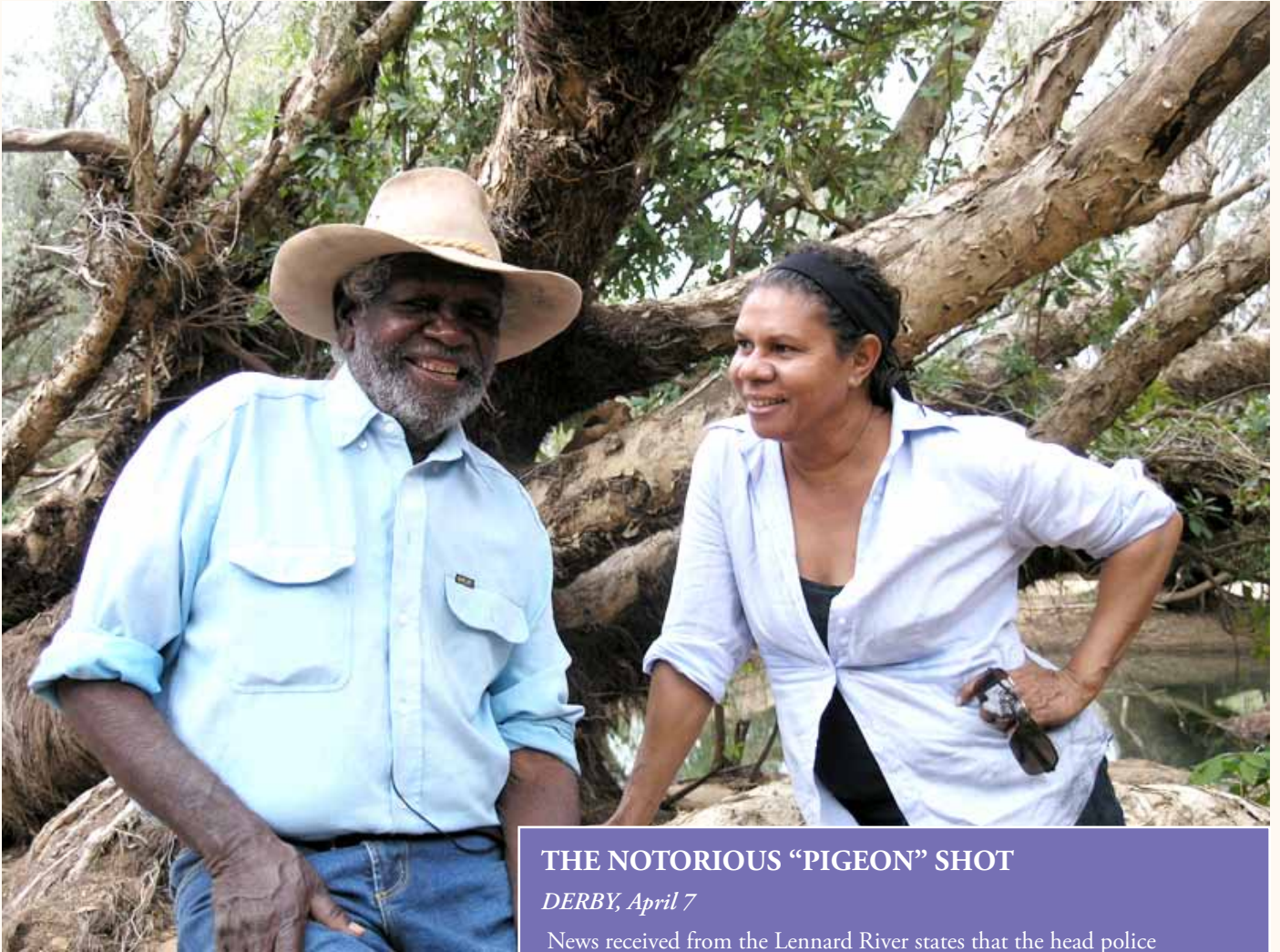
'Jandamarra's story is not dead. We made a book. We did a stage play. And now we are making a documentary. And one day, we will make a feature film.' (Danny Marr)

Jandamarra's war against the white settlers is a source of pride and inspiration for the Bunuba people.

Jandamarra's life has been the subject of two novels, Ion Idriess's *Outlaws of the Leopold* (1952) and Mudrooroo's *Long Live Sandawarra* (1972). The definitive historical account of Jandamarra's story is *Jandamarra and the Bunuba Resistance*

Jandamarra's story is not dead. We made a book. We did a stage play. And now we are making a documentary. And one day, we will make a feature film.'

DANNY MARR (ABOVE)



Aboriginal people were driven from their lands or rounded up and forced to work on newly established cattle stations.

Aboriginals no longer had access to their land. They could not hunt. They could not visit sacred sites. They were deprived of resources and resorted to spearing stock. If Aboriginals were caught, they were chained around the neck, marched to Derby, and forced to work or put on state ships to Rottnest Island off the coast of Perth; most of them never returned to country and are buried on the now tourist destination.

Jandamarra led one of the longest and most successful campaigns to defend Aboriginal country in Australian history.

For the Western Australian Government, Jandamarra's war against the pastoralists was a disaster. Western Australia's first Premier, John Forrest, was under mounting pressure to bring an end to Jandamarra's rebellion. Britain insisted the Aborigines be treated justly but the pastoralists, believed the Kimberley could only be settled with force. Forrest enlisted extra police, and settlers were even sworn in as special constables.

THE NOTORIOUS "PIGEON" SHOT

DERBY, April 7

News received from the Lennard River states that the head police Chisholm and a party consisting of Anderson and Buckland, after following "Pigeon" for some days, came upon him on the morning of the 1st, and after a severe contest shot him. This ends that career of the most desperate native that the colony has known. It is hoped that the police will now turn their attention to capturing his associates. The public here are jubilant over the event.

The following telegram has been received by the Commissioner of Police from Corporal Pearson of Derby: - "Derby, 7th April. - "Pigeon, was shot dead by Lennard River police on the 1st inst. Full particulars on arrival of Lennard party."

Source: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article33131970>

Jandamarra's rebellion was used to justify attacking and capturing hundreds of Aboriginal people, many of whom had nothing to do with him or the Bunuba people.

- Based on *Keepers of the Story* and internet research, what does Jandamarra's story reveal about the 19th Century conflict between Aboriginal people and white settlers?
- Was Jandamarra's rebellion and the rebellion of the Bunuba people justified?
- Read the newspaper report, above, from the *Western Mail*. The report was published on Friday 9 April 1897. It was published in a column titled 'NATIVE TROUBLES'.
 - Share your observations about this report of Jandamarra's death with your peers.

Above: -----

How does the report portray the police?
 How does the report portray Jandamarra?
 Who are the 'public' referred to in the report?
 Why do you think Mingo Mick isn't mentioned?

DEMOCRACY

- Jandamarra is recognised as one of the people who helped shape Australian Democracy by the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House in Canberra - <http://moadoph.gov.au/>.

Read the overview of Jandamarra's contribution and view the photograph of Jandamarra at <http://explore.moadoph.gov.au/people/131-tjandamarra-jandamarra/list#description>.

Were you surprised to learn that Jandamarra has been recognised in this way?

What does his inclusion reveal about the views and values of a contemporary Australia?

Who are the other Indigenous Australians named as making a positive contribution to Australian democracy? Begin your search at <http://explore.moadoph.gov.au/people>.

- Drawing on *Keepers of the Story* and other primary and secondary sources, explain Jandamarra's legacy.

BEHIND THE SCENES

- Who do you think is the intended audience for *Keepers of the Story*?
- Why do you think the filmmaker used the shooting of the documentary *Jandamarra's War* as a backdrop for *Keepers of the Story*?

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KEEPERS OF THE STORY is a **CAAMA PRODUCTION** for Imparja TV, in the **NGANAMPA ANWERNEKENHE** series.



Keepers of the Story is available on DVD from **RONIN FILMS**, PO Box 680, Mitchell, ACT 2911.
PHONE (02) 6248 0851
EMAIL: orders@roninfilms.com.au

- Discuss the filmmaker's use of archival material.
- How does the filmmaker portray Bunuba country?

Spend time as a class, discussing the filmmaker's decisions about the settings featured in *Keepers of the Story*.

EXTENDED ANALYSIS

- Complete a detailed analysis of *Keepers of the Story*. Your analysis should provide:
 - A synopsis of the documentary
 - A description of the roles played by Indigenous Australians.
 - An explanation of the filmmaker's purpose.
 - An assessment of the documentary's portrayal of Indigenous Australia.
 - A comment on how the film uses various documentary techniques.
 - Your judgement of the documentary's worth.

CREATE

- How would you tell the story of Jandamarra? Working with a partner, adapt the story of Jandamarra for a selected audience. You may choose the form of your adaptation.



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