



Beside Australian highways, country and suburban roads there are many white crosses marking the places where fatal car accidents have occurred. Today many young people make pilgrimages to the battlefields of the World Wars. These are often marked by fields of white crosses. It seems to me that in our post Christian culture many people associate crosses most strongly with premature and violent death in war or on the road rather than with the Christian church

The handicapped men have recently been making Aussie Memorial Crosses at the Green House. These consist of two gum tree twigs nailed or glued together and tied with a piece of string with a gum nut at each end. They are very quickly and easily made. I intended to leave them at places where we pray for the healing of the land, such as massacre sites.

We have started talking to the men about the wars in which Australians have fought. They are interested in such things. We started with Vietnam because one of them did nasho. Whenever we hear of someone of like mind visiting one of these places we will give them two crosses to take and leave there, one for the military casualties (friend and foe) and one for the local people, the civilian casualties. Two crosses have been taken to Vietnam. We spend a few weeks talking about and praying for a particular place. The crosses we have made are used in our meditation practice before they are given away. We are thinking about the Kokoda Trail at the moment. In this way we will work our way around the places Australians have fought, prevailing on friends and relatives who go there to deliver the crosses as a symbol of our prayers for the place and the people.

The Juvenile Justice managers said that constructing these crosses would not be a suitable project for young people on Community Service Orders, as they could not be asked to make religious symbols. When the battlefield connection was explained the managers decided that the Aussie memorial cross is, after all, a cultural symbol and that making them is an OK project that their young clients may enjoy. I find it interesting to explore the interface between religion and culture.

I did not originally expect there to be a demand for these memorial crosses but new local applications keep emerging. People love a symbol they can touch. Our clients enjoy being able to make something that is valued in the wider community.



healing the land

Coming of the Light to the Torres Strait, a

celebration on July Sat 3rd. Kabbarli, a local service provider for Aboriginal and Islander people, last year took a group of their clients to Rockhampton to celebrate the Coming of the Light. This is an annual festival celebrating the arrival of the missionaries in the Torres Strait Islands. On their return Kabbarli asked us to help organize a local celebration this year so that they could return hospitality. The Coming of the Light has not been celebrated on the Sunshine Coast in the past. Local Islander people usually travel to Brisbane for the service and celebrations.

The event includes a reenactment, church service, and feast. Kawana Waters Anglican church agreed to host it. The church is situated on a lake which will allow the reenactment to take place on the beach.

where Kawana Church on Sportsmans Drive (take Meridan St off Nicklin Way)

when 3rd July 2010

time 9am for 9,30 start

reenactment 9.30 to 10.30

service 10..30 to 11.30

traditional dancing 11.30 to 12

kapmauri (earth oven) lunch 12 onwards

gold coin donation requested for Kapmauri Lunch

It is part of the Naidoc week events. Everyone is welcome.



For many years I always wore two pendants.

One was a chunky wooden holding cross on a leather thong the other a fine silver tree within a circle. The tree of life represented a commitment to the environment and my personal 'yes' to life. When I first attempted to engage with the local indigenous people it became apparent that the cross was seen by many of them as a symbol of oppression. I removed both pendants and feeling vaguely undressed, gave some thought to what might be a suitable symbolic expression of the present stage of my journey.

The camphor leaf

The biggest environmental pest in our area is the camphor laurel. It is a large, beautiful and useful tree, which, if left unhindered, creates a monoculture, seriously reducing the natural biodiversity. There are no mature camphors on the property now, but still thousands of seedlings appear each year. I spend a great deal of time and effort removing them. My daughter in law, a jeweller, has been exploring colonial Australian themes. Her work includes a series of installations based on weeds or invasive species. She made a pendant for me from a flattened florin depicting a single camphor leaf with the engraved words 'replace camphors with natives'. It is the symbol of my one woman camphor eradication campaign. I thus have a keen practical interest in the place of exotic plants in the Australian countryside. In the context of reconciliation, I think of the camphor as a metaphor for European settlement extinguishing indigenous culture. I always wear the camphor pendant now. I use the same symbol with the caption 'healing the land' on letterheads, cards etc. The symbol is taken from an actual camphor leaf but can also be seen as a tree of life.

The cross

We have indigenous youth justice clients come to our property to do community service. One of their tasks was to make a large cross from some recycled timber, and to install it at the edge of the bush. After several

people asked if someone had been buried there, we got the young people to put wording on the horizontal arm of the cross

*We acknowledge the traditional owners
We pray for the healing of the land*

It amuses me that in my search for useful symbols for my journey, I have replaced one silver tree of life and wooden cross with another silver tree of life and different wooden cross. Last Sunday's epistle included the words 'The leaves of the tree (of life) are for the healing of the nations'. Rev 22 v2. I pray that it may be so.



The Greenhouse News Buderim November 09

After two members of our group experienced spirits at a local park dedicated to the 'Kanakas', we contacted the local elders to discuss this and asked advice about how to proceed. After an initial meeting a 'prayer warrior' from the Islander community who had lived in the area for some years, came to pray for the cleansing of the land. The park concerned includes a spring where the Islander women used to do their washing. She said that they had always known the spirits were there and confirmed the detail of what our visionaries had said about them. She apologized to the spirits for not caring about them before now and prayed for them to be at peace. A simple communion service was held and water and oil poured on the ground near the spring as a symbol of cleansing. When we expressed some surprise at a spate of people experiencing aboriginal spirits she said that this is what she would expect to happen when people prayed for the healing of the land.

She told of going to her home islands to forgive the 'blackbirders' who had taken her ancestors by force to Australia. She was supportive of our plan to travel to the places our ancestors lived to express sorrow and repentance for the way these communities treated the aboriginal people.

The Kanaka elders told us some stories of local mistreatment of their people which are not remembered in the local white history. We will now have a gathering in which these stories will be told and sorrow and repentance expressed. Telling the truth about the past seems to be an important part of the reconciliation process.

This process seems quite strange, wonderful, and mysterious. We feel privileged to be involved in it.

While we were waiting for our visitors to arrive at the place where they used to live, a group of us said sorry and asked for forgiveness for the mistreatment of the South Sea

Islanders who lived on Buderim. We left bunches of flowers there and at the park.

The Sorrys

We apologize on behalf of the white people for the dispossession of the aboriginal and Islander people. We apologize for the M..... family being forced off their land.

We apologize for the many injustices done to the aboriginal and Islander people. We apologize for the times when black people were punished unfairly, disproportionately, or without due legal process for someone else's crime or mistake. We apologize for the times when the wrong person was punished or when a large group was punished for one person's behavior. We are sorry for the bad feeling between black and white people.

We celebrate the times when there were have been good relationships between different racial groups. We thank you in particular for the shared Christian heritage. We remember that the Kanakas raised money for the church bell in the Nambour Anglican Church in 1903 and are pleased that this is being remembered and celebrated tomorrow.

We pray for a new spirit of different racial groups
We ask for gifts of flourish between us. We want to celebrate the good
We want to participate in



reconciliation between locally and all over Australia. understanding and love to want to know the truth. We and acknowledge the pain. the process of reconciliation.



The Greenhouse News Buderim September 09

Our family land includes 25 acres of bush. We are keen conservationists. On returning here to live 3 years ago some of us started praying together regularly with some friends, particularly for the healing of the land, for the local people and for reconciliation with the traditional owners of the land. One of our friends saw a vision of a battle between two groups of indigenous people. Since then people have told us on

six separate occasions about seeing or hearing the spirits of indigenous people at specific local places. We didn't know what to make of this at first and wondered what to do with the information. We finally concluded that we as a group should offer to go on site and pray specifically for these 'haunted' places for the spirits to be at rest. One of the visionaries is a part indigenous woman who we invited to visit our property where she identified a burial site and another place where aboriginal people had been killed. She performed a ritual, making stone circles on occasions. We participated in this. When she had finished she said that we should do our 'ceremony'. A small gathering prayed on the site.

Since then we have prayed at two other places. These have been owned by people with no church affiliation who have accepted our offer to pray with them for the healing of their land. Some unchurched neighbours have also joined in. One gathering was in the Murdering Creek area which was named for an indigenous massacre. Two of the other places where people experience spirits are the sites of former indigenous / kanaka settlements on Buderim. We are in contact with the descendants of these people and are waiting for them to advise us what to do next.

With respect to our land and the Murdering Creek area we have been advised by the indigenous woman previously mentioned, and directed by the visionaries in our group. We have been told that any indigenous ceremony should take precedence over our ceremony, as a sign of respect. Because the various people involved come from different Christian denominations and none it has been important to develop inclusive ceremonies. It seems to be important to pray on the site where the troubled spirits have been seen or heard. It is necessary to get permission from the indigenous people before proceeding. Our indigenous advisor seems to routinely speak to the dead elders. This seems to be a common practice among indigenous people.

For many years I have often used a method described by Kenneth McAll in *Healing the Family Tree* when praying for friends, patients, and my family. This involves drawing up the person's family tree taking particular note of recurring troubles, black sheep, suicides, lost babies etc. The procedure involves praying for these people to be at peace, apologizing to God for their sins and the sins committed against them, remembering any resentments held towards family members and forgiving them. The written document is then taken to a eucharist and the people lovingly brought to God.

The results have sometimes been miraculous with family members being dramatically healed of addictions, mental illnesses etc often simultaneously and at a distance.

We held a eucharist on our family land and it was suggested that everyone present bring their family trees to be prayed for. In this context my sister and I decided that we should repent of the sins of our ancestors. All our forebears came to Australia before 1850. We have few particulars of their lives but believe that most people who lived in Australia at that time and since have been complicit in racism and dispossession. At the eucharist my sister named our family names and the towns our forbears had lived in and I repented in sackcloth and ashes. In view of the intractable nature of indigenous difficulties it seems to us that to repent, fast, and pray for our sins, the sins of our ancestors, and the sins of our people is the right thing to do.

We are planning a pilgrimage / retreat to the Tenterfield area where our mother's family came from to pray and repent on the sites of known massacres and to pray in the towns where our family lived.

We also have a family member with an indigenous background and are applying the same principles to praying for their family. In these ways we are attempting to attend to our own local and family business as our contribution to the larger task of praying for Australia.