

# Young Indigenous Meatworkers Gazette

News letter of the Boys from the Bush Projects, Remote Area Work Scheme (RAWS)  
Issue No. 11, Sunday, 20 June 2010

Edited by Scott Milne,



This space is reserved for the logos of those meat processing companies that engage RAWS workers

---

## Katherine abattoir soon to reopen

**The Katherine abattoir is expected to reopen in a few months.**

Teys Brothers closed the unviable Katherine abattoir in 2001. The plant has been brought by the Darwin Investment Group, which hopes to reopen the plant in August 2010.

Emma Masters of the ABC News reports that the abattoir's chief executive, John Hughes, says it will focus on feral animals.

“What we're basically looking at doing is trying to do something with the camels in Central Australia, buffalo, maybe horses and donkeys but predominantly it will primarily be feral animals.”



Ms St Clair from the Darwin Investment Group, said they are committed to providing training and support for Indigenous people, for the Katherine abattoir.

John Hughes went on to say, “[We] hope to employ up to 200 people, with the aim to employ 30 percent Aboriginal workers ... with a portion of local people from Katherine”.

And what do the Northern Territory meatworkers presently working at Rockdale Beef think about the idea of

transferring to Katherine, now or in the future?

*“Well, I prefer to stay down here. I want to stick to cattle. ... I might ask for a transfer to a Queensland abattoir in a few years.”* says Kenneth.

*“I don’t think it would work. My cousins would come around and bludge on me and bring grog, and smoking weed. They might put me in trouble.”* says Jarvis.

*“It would work for me, without getting bothered by my family, especially my cousins, if I ask my cousins to get their own job, but not bringing any stuff in my house. It would be better when my house is clean ... nice and tidy.”* says Virgil.

*“It would work for me if I could keep away from those people bringing around drugs and grog ... getting caught up with the wrong people.”* says Barry.

There you have it. The Darwin Investment Group model may meet its stated target of employing and retaining a 30 percent Aboriginal workforce, however, Boys from the Bush Projects believe that we understand and deal with the social dynamic and underlying problem in remote communities, in addition to providing employment opportunities.

With an understanding of the complexity of the problem, it becomes plain to see that solutions do not lie in the provisions of more work skills training programs (particularly those that are separated from the workplace) and associated workplace mentors.

## **Congratulations Travis Mahoney : moved up from the tripe room to the slaughter floor**

Pictured below is 17 year old Travis Mahoney from Alpururulam.

RAWS has zero tolerance of drug and alcohol



Travis began working at Rockdale Beef on 4 March, 2010, in the tripe room. He has now been moved up to the slaughter floor.



*“It’s good on the slaughter floor. I learn more knife skills and the work is more interesting. I’m learning all about the different cuts.”* says Travis.



Travis is a good example of how the meat processing industry can offer young people a good future if they are willing to put in a good days work.

For more information on how to join the Remote Area Work Scheme, contact Milton James on 0429 644 645.

## **Kenneth Philomac obtains his level**

Congratulations goes to Kenneth Philomac, aged 22, for reaching his level.



Kenneth started work at Rockdale Beef on 24 November, 2009, as a Trainee

Packer. He is now an unsupervised multi-skilled worker, moving around the packing floor doing all sorts of jobs.

Kenneth is now paid by piece rates which means the more he produces the more he is paid.



As an experienced worker, Kenneth is now helping out new employees in the packing area.



## **Anton McMillan going well**

Pictured below is Anton McMillan recording the name and weight of the cuts in boxes, on the computer.



## Henry Tabuai starts work

Pictured below is Henry Tabuai, aged 17, getting fitted out with his work gear at Rockdale Beef.



Henry begins on the day shift packing floor.

## Increasing Indigenous unemployment

A new survey by the Australian Bureau of Statistics reveals a fall in the Indigenous employment rate, and a rise in the unemployment.

Indigenous unemployment went up by almost a third in the past year alone. As you would expect regional and remote areas have the lowest levels of employment.

What does this say about the general effectiveness of employment programs?

BFTB Projects – Remote Area Work Scheme is presently achieving 100% effectiveness in employment placement (Rockdale Beef has provided immediate employment to every RAWS participant) and 60% effectiveness in the employment retention rate.

## Our gratitude goes to Catholic Care NT



Catholic Care NT was the sponsor of last month's Work of the Month Award ceremony at Hogs Breath restaurant in Wagga Wagga, attended by all RAWS' workers. It was a great night, enjoyed by all.

## Long standing supporter and sponsor of BFTB Projects

Peter L. Anderson



Total Computer Services

Email: [panderson@atecho.com.au](mailto:panderson@atecho.com.au)  
Phone: 0419 645 916

Recognition must also be given to Peter Anderson who has been a longstanding supporter of BFTB Projects. He has been voluntarily looking after Milton's information technologies for nearly 10 years.

## Not all work - for the meat workers

Narrandera is situated on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River, where the big River Red Gums grow.

On the Queen's birthday weekend some of us went for a picnic lunch up river.



The sun was warm, the air was cold, and the water freezing. This did not stop some brave soles from swimming across the river.



If you look very closely at the picture above you can just make out Anton McMillan clambering around on the log in the middle of the river.



## Community Engagement

Virgil Downs has joined a local Christian youth group, where he is invited to also join in on after church gatherings and barbeques.

Virgil has requested that this picture of him attending his church to be printed in the newsletter. We are not exactly sure how the shot turned out this way. The altar in the background was very dark; too dark for the camera flash to illuminate from this distance, so Milton fiddled around with the time exposure adjustment on the camera with this rather unusual result.



Others have been doing a bit of hunting ... rabbit stew ... yum.



# EDUCATIONAL SECTION FOR RAWS' WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

## Meat pie Plain hamburger

How many teaspoons of fat are in each?



Look at the next page for the answer in  
teaspoons of fat

Meat pies are high in fat.

A plain hamburger with a big bun and lots of salad is a better takeaway food.

Don't have the extras on hamburgers like bacon, egg or cheese – these will make it high in fat.



THIS PROJECT IS FUNDED BY



Australian Government

Soad & Jacqueline James  
Michael McDaid  
Ted & Rosie Sherwood  
Lara Wieland



**FRRR**  
Foundation for Rural  
& Regional Renewal



• Largest caravan yard in SA • The consignment specialists • 150 caravans & camper trailers  
• We also buy caravans-free valuations • Store your caravan \$50 per month