

Dr George Tjapaljarri interview
transcript with Peter Bartlett & Smithy
Zimeran - Part 2

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I stepped on it !

White people said there is something inside and I said " Don't go in!"

SZ : Don't any one go in.

GW': Yes I stepped on it and passed the billycans outside. I stepped on it and it was moving around. They dug the well and they saw it lying there.

I throw all the billycan, bucket and flour drum. I look nothing further.

I went through a narrow (part of well) and got out.

I went down by myself to get those buckets and billycans

There where no Billycans on the surface, that's why I went in and got them. Inside Jupiter Well Puntutjarlpa

We were sucking the sweet exudante off the young desert oak. The white fell's were still there giving us flour

A man from Warburton with a broken finger (Tommy Dodd ?)

I was making damper. Making a damper with flour. Really Beautiful one.

PB : When you first met those Europeans.

GW : You mob. All those europeans found them at Jupiter Well

PB : Where did they take him. Did they go to Yaya bore or Papunya.

GW : Wait !

SZ : Wait

PB : Or he stayed out bush.

GW : Yeah Wait don't get impatient. Those people always give damper and stuff. And I saw. Haa " Nyilunga " (name of person he knew) Nyilunga from Nguti. I struck a branch of desert oak with sweet exudante and broke it off and picked it up and then I saw a team of Landrovers with tents (canvas canopies)

SZ : Landrovers

GW : Yeah Not a landrover but a big supply truck and it dropped off a motor car like an insect and it followed behind.

SZ: Yes.

GW : And he pulled up and said " My name is Nyilun Tjangala. Nyilun Tjangala.

SZ : Yes

GW : (Making crying sound) And he point " this one is my place here. My place is right here Nyuti Nyuti.

SZ : Yes.

GW : We parked the vehicles

SZ : With the food ?

GW : With the food.

GW : There was lots of stuff, rice, other grains, tin meat and different jams. O Jingle's It was spread out everywhere. Too much. We had an eastern shade and a western shade.

SZ : Yes

GW : That Nyilun brought it for us. Spread it out. Hundred bags (one hundred pound bags of flour) Hundred bags. Nyilun threw it onto the ground. Then threw the loose bags of flour.

SZ : Yes

GW : After unloading he left us.

SZ : Were you knowledgeable about damper.

GW : Nothing, only me. This one here my son Katja taught me. Bloke from Warburton. Who was it ? Who knew how.

SZ Tommy Dodd not him ?

GW : Who was it Wahats his name

SZ : Andrew Lawson

GW : Yeah! He taught me. Andrew Lawson. Tjungarri bloke.

" This is how you do it " " like this Like this. Do it this way Do it this way. Cook it like this ".

Big laugh.

I made it. Big one exactly how he told me. Big one, not little one.

SZ : Looks like grass seed cake.

GW : Before! We were eating raw flour (Big cough) We used to tip the tea out to. Only tea. We used to chuck the black tea away.

Only drank water ?.

GW : Hey Tjapaljarri. We used to chuck the tea away and eat the sugar by itself. Carton of sugar.

Big laugh

We thought it was honey dew. I used to eat sugar and I am still here. Good one.

SZ : Yes from there where did you go

GW : After sitting for awhile I moved on eastward. I went east for good. To Tjuluya, Matatji and Wulyunjutjarra.

I went to Wulyuntjutjarra and I had a funny feeling about what I would see.

I saw a white man with a load. In the morning we went to Tjurlyamatatji.

And I said Ahhh I saw Jeremy Long and Nosepeg was also there at Winparku.

They were all parked facing this way. Big truck with flour and stuff and Toyota (Landrover).

" Have a look. You mob have a look " Wala Wala

SZ : Which way is Tjurluyamatatji

GW : Near Ngami.

SZ : Yes east.

GW : Here Hmmm south side. There is a malle tree thats where it is on the soakage.

SZ : Yes

GW : I went over and threw a spear. The spear broke.

As I was walking and I grabbed a poisons snake. I dug a hole. It was a really poisonous one and that snake was comeing towards me under the ground.

I could see it and grabbed it. I grabbed it with two hands and I bit it on the head and then I heard a noise.

Makes noise like a motor car.

I turned around and looked. Hello ! Jeremy Long was comeing. Comeing close. He pulled up really close.

" Oh He might see me naked "

And Nosepeg said " Its us two Jupurrula's " Nosepeg and Jeremy Long.

I shouldn't mention his name. Sorry,

SZ : Is alright.

GW : Its okay. He's in heaven. Up there.

Another two here. Two brother in laws Jangala and Tjungarri and Walpiri one side - (Name of man). They pick them up and we went to Wala Wala.

We got off. We told other people and white people talk about going to Jupiter Well and Puntutjarpa. Pick them up.

I was looking slowly. The other people instead of going in were drawing water with a rope. Plenty rope, big rope. Its some where there. I hid it away.

Tape side B

PB : Okay thats it start again.

SZ : After that.

GW : From there. We sat down for awhile. We got together. I picked up someone. I picked up one bloke near Yunala. We got together. We got ready to go to Wala Wala. We got together the people from Warburton. Got together. Hmmm We camped overnight.

We hit the road Illpilli (Ehrenberg Ranges), Tjuka Nyina. (Sandy Blight Junction).

The other white people turned south to Warburton.

We camped at Ilpilli during the rain. We slept. It rained all night. He gave us blankets

one by one. We covered ourselves and slept.

Next morning we got up and rolled our swags. We loaded our spears. Every thing else.

Mt Leibig. We got into Mt Leibig. We had a bit of an argument and spearing and then moved on.

One day and they said Papunya. And we saw Allumpara. And they showed us the Papunya ranges east. Closer we were looking. One night we made it from Wala Wala and camped at Illpili.

We camped. We saw Papunya settlement. As we came in we saw big mobs of houses.

They were all looking at us. All the dead people.

And one white bloke said " You have got to go back there " (To Jeremy Long) They tookus right back. They unloaded the flour and unloaded the spears, swag and all.

(to the camp)

PB : How long was he at Papunya.

GW : Yes We got off at Papunya. They left us there.

SZ : How long were you at Papunya.

GW : No we sit down long time.

SZ : Long Time

GW : Long time. Here and here. Many Years.

SZ : How long. Sixty five you people got bought in.

GW : Yeah Sixty five they bought us in Poor Bugger.

SZ : From 65 he was there. This is how he is asking you.

GW : Yes

Sz Were you a long time in Papunya.

GW : Yes Ha We sit down long time. Tjapalyi

PB : Was he there in 71 when all the men started painting murals.

GW : Yeah.

PB : Did you see the men starting painting.

SZ : You people were there when they started painting in Papunya.

GW : Yes

SZ : But you were not painting.

GW : Yes. We saw it. It was good. We thought ohh we will make some painting to. They gave us painting board. Forever. We all started painting.

SZ : After living in Papunya where did you go.

GW : We lived there for long time. It wasn't a long time.

After living in Papunya I went to Docker River and with that one old Jungarri (Willie Nagampala) He took me to Docker River.

We got shifted . they moved us. All there whole lot. Docker River Warburton and Tjukula. Tjukula Finish. They shifted us and settled around Tjukula.

SZ : Kintore wasnt there.

GW Yes I was there when there was no Kintore. Around Docker River Around Warakuna.

PB : What was life like then at the community. Was it good ?

SZ : How did you feel when you got mixed up with many people from different communities.

GW : No No Family to much. All Pintupi people moved in.

SZ : Were you living happily.

GW : Yes we were living happily because there were lots of families. Tjukula, Warakuna mob, Warburton and Karrilwarri Whole lot of people. Yes

SZ : What happened after you stayed there.

GW : I stayed there. I then shifted to Warburton and then shifted back to Warakuna. I stopped there at Warakuna. then Ivan shepard took me to Kintore.

SZ : Yes

PB : Did he worry about bush way or was he happy to go european way.

SZ : Were you worried about your own country.

GW : Yes I was worried about my own country. We got shifted whole lot. Kintore Kiwiikurra mob all there. One outstation Moyon there, thats my uncles place.

PB : Was he happy when every one started to shift back.

GW : No one place. In Kintore outstation.

SZ : Every one felt happy when they moved back to Kintore.

GW : Yes we became freind at Papunya. Whole lot finish. All the Pintupi mob. All there. Moyon.

SZ : Stopping in Kintore

GW : Hmmm We stopped there for long time and come and worked Kiwiikurra people come here and worked. This one Tjagamarra married to Yukulji (Bush Napaljarri) We lived and we are going to live for a long time.

We sat down for a long time and the community talked about and the coucil talked. Yes Today we are going to put some houses at Kiwiikurra , Kintore and Moyon and they put me doctor.

Oh we got to put one doctor man. Number one. They got me at Kintore.

PB : When did he start at the clinic at Kintore or working as traditional healer at Papunyh or at

GW : Yeah. Started off at Papunya and at Kintore.

SZ : He got a full time job at Kintore then as doctor.

GW : One. Witchdoctor.

PB : So he was just bush witchdoctor.

GW : Yes

PB : And then they got him a job in the clinic.

GW : Yes Yes. One man. Traditional Healer.

PB : At Papunya.

GW : And at Kintore and Kiwiikurra and I learned to drive now.

Driver, me driver. All the doctors taught me how to drive. Poor bugger.

Finish him up my work, Kintore.

In the clinic we both worked together and this one's the new one. I had two jobs. Old one (clinic) New one (clinic) At kintore. My work.

PB : Any stories about that.

SZ : Your job was traditional healer ?

GW : Yes one

SZ : And you used to go to Kiwiikurra to.

GW : Yes Yes.

SZ : Well tell it.

GW : Yes. You got to listen tjapaljarri. I got to tell you.

Outstation Ngutjul, Tinki Outstation, Pinpirringa. Yeah I drive off this direction. To Ininti. Go back Moyan, Mantardi come back. I was one man driver. Bandages and everything. Foot bandages.

PB : What about boneing stick

GW : Whole lot

PB : From boneing stic

GW : Yeah I know I am knowledgable

Even needle. Even kill'em needle (anesthetic) Every thing. We winner. Conway (tjapangardi), Eric (Tjagamarra). We working. I am one traditional healer.

Doctor George.

SZ : After doing all this work where did you go

GW : I went to Kiwwikurra.

SZ: No more Kintore doctor. Nothing ?

GW : No I still worked as a doctor in two places

I go to Kintore work. Come back. Kintore to Kiwwikurra i go there and then come back.
From Kintore I go there and work and then come back.

At Kiwiikurra I have two jobs. From there, there. I always look after Kintore to. Always
Kintore and all the doctors call me. To Kiwwikurra I come.

SZ : And then.

GW : I all way's worked along time. I worked and worked, They gave me motor car.

SZ : They gave you motor car.

GW : they gave me motor car. they gave me bus, last one they gave me a toyota.
Sisters toyota.

Thats the one that was left at Mangi. Yes They gave it to me. Money. They bought it
with money for me and they just gave it to me. Me worker.

PB : That's when the bush mob came in?.

SZ Were the bush mob found the same time.

GW : I heard about them when I was living at Kintore.

Yes. They came in footwalk. They chased them north. He shot at them. Sorry I cant
mention his fathers name. Nyilarri's father. Near Winparku (Mt Webb W.A.)
There is a tank there.

SZ : At Winparku

GW : Near Kunamanarra. Right there the old fella fired the shots. Only smoke came
out. The bullet could have got into me.

SZ : You heard about them from Kintore

GW : I heard about it from Kintore, they were chasing north. There near Marruwa, east
of Marruwa.

They talked on the radio " They have found them " East of Marruwa. I went and saw
them. " Ahh here they are. People are looking after them. " Poor bugger

This many were sitting down. These two old ladies and three women and this one, this
manny (four) Hmmm There is one somewhere still in the bush. Walawala and
Walinpirri and Pensioner (Thomas). This one somewhere.

SZ : Yes and then ?.

GW : We got them and kept them at kiwiikurra. Not Kiwiikurra I moved to Kintore. We got a house, they gave it to me. They gave me a house at Kintore. That's it .

PB : Ask him when did he first start painting on canvas ?.

SZ : First time where did you start painting ?.

GW : At Papunya. In papunya the white bloke used to follow us around, gave us painting board. In Papunya.

SZ : At Kintore ? .

GW : Hmmm At Yaya bore

PB : Kakali bore.

GW : Besides Kakali bore. No No whats that south of Kakali bore.

SZ : Ilambara

GW : Ilampia, Waluwiyi' Yinyilingi. He used to follow us around and do painting and get our tucker.

SZ : And then you shifted to Kintore you already knew how to paint ?.

GW : Yes I knew how to Paint

PB : Who started you painting on paintboard.

GW : Yeah we started from Papunya.

SZ : Who gave you knowledge.

GW : One white man and saw other. Me " Ohhh This is how they do and we started a different way Tingarri Dreaming for painting.

SZ : Yes

GW : Our own.

PB :Which european

SZ : Jeff Beadorn

GW : Yes Jeff Beadon Jeff Beadon Hmm. Good one we used to paint.

SZ : Still painting today ?.

GW : Still painting today ! But now today is really top painter. This one. the art gallery is on top. Somewhere there is another one sitting on top. Somewhere in Melbourne and Canberra.

PB : When he first started what was he doing dreamings or snakes?.

GW : Yeah Snake and dreaming and fire burnt out area.

SZ : That your own dreaming ?.

GW : Yeah I am doing my own dreaming through Wanpurrutintja. Through Wanpurrutintja. Through Nguluntja and through Ngunyarrma we do our own.

The area burnt out by fire, it burnt all the men. Poor buggers. They all got burnt dream time.

PB : Okay whats his favorite painting. Main one ?.

SZ : Whats your main painting ?.

GW : Fire Fire !.

SZ : Main painting whats the main one ?.

GW : Fire dreaming we do, where it got burnt out one.

PB : What from ?.

GW : Fire. Woodfire wood fire.

PB : Why did he paint that ?.

SZ Thats his own story.

PB : Ask him why.

SZ : They can't touch it anyone. thats his own story. He ask you a question. Thats why I am asking you. You tell him this is my own story

GW : Dreaming DrBaming. My work. Own dreaming and Woma snake. Fire. All sorts I

do, I make spears. See my country not other peoples country. No all ways my own country. You see.

PB : He does a painting and its got a lot of eggs, like eggs. Whats that one.

SZ : Dreaming painting you do. Others look at it like an egg. What is that one

GW : Bush Banana

SZ : Yes Thats bush banana

GW : Yes thats bush banana. You know that yes?.

SZ : Whats the place ?.

GW : (starts singing about bush banana.

SZ : What is the place. Dreaming or sheild ceremony or some thing ?.

GW : Thats their song. They make balls. They do it. Not me no. Yunala

SZ : Whats the dreaming at Yunala

GW : Yunala we make bush banana dreaming now. Yes we make Yunala.

SZ : Bush banana now that looks like an egg.

GW : Yes shape like an egg. Yes Ahhh Yeah that is Yunala. Yunala food, poorbugger I always eat it. Tjapali (PB) Thats the one that hangs on the tree. Thats alright we put that story down. Our own country.

PB : See they say here that you have said they are men. Which men doing what. One time you told those women at the art gallery that they were men.

SZ : No sometimes they are fruit. They are bush tucker. man is just a round circle. dreaming man they make circle. this one like a

GW : Yunala. Bush banana.

SZ : Bush banana

GW : Bush banana same one thats all

SZ : Some times they put yams

PB : Yams

SZ : Yams not Yala (species of yam) It grows in the mulga

GW : Area mulga

SZ : Katjutati

GW : Katjutati yams not yala thats a big one.

SZ : Some times they make same shape. Yams bush banana.

GW : Thats good. Thats it Yeah Yeah its really good.

SZ : Yunturrngu (synonym for bush banana)

GW : Same again Walpurru (dangerous word) Yes this is our own tucker Yes we put those one.

SZ That grows on mallee trees

GW : Yes and on the sandhills they grow. Walpurru Thats what we put down on the painting.

PB : Any stories about thAt fire any songs or stories.

SZ : He's got a song for that. You got dreaming for that fire?.

GW : Starts to sing then say's " dreaming. They sit around at the salt lake. All the men.they got burnt. Fire dreaming. Dreaming. They got burnt.

Starts singing song about fire dreaming.. Yes thats my place Nguluntja.

Big laugh. Thats allright I was singing it. I put painting. I put painting Yeah. Big Laugh.

PB : Which place is this one.

SZ : East

GW : East

Sz : South of Jupiter well.

GW : Jupiter Well that way and Nguluntja this way. Far. South. This one is closer. They all got burnt. Dreaming I said. Tingarri dreaming.

SZ : No thats all right thats dreaming song

GW : Tjapiljani. They might think its nothing. (Starts singing song again). That one got burnt. They were all burnt to death. Hmmm Yes Its not a little one. If you ask me it's a big one. You might think its a small one. Big one Hmmm. (Sings song again) The dreaming was walking around my place.

PB : Can anyone listen to that song.

GW : Pintingkura (bird that lives on the clay pan or salt lake)

SZ : Yes thats for men

PB : Women cannot.

SZ : You cannot continue singing

GW : Yes

PB : That little bit can women hear it or only men

GW : Only for men. Yes

SZ : Women can hear . Thats public.

GW : From the camp.

SZ : Yes even young men.

GW : Over there at Nguluntja

SZ : Can Women hear it

GW : They always hear it. Dreaming. Hmmm

PB : So white people can hear it if they put it in the art gallery no one could get upset.

GW : Yeah

Sz : Yes

GW : Singing

SZ : Dont sing it again.

GW : Sorry I will leave it I know I know. I sang one song for you. Nguluntja. Desert. They got burnt in the desert. There were flames everywhere.

To much dreaming. Dangerous one. Cant touch him. Only fire burnt them all,
Tjapaljarri.

PB : Okay we might get through some site names.

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