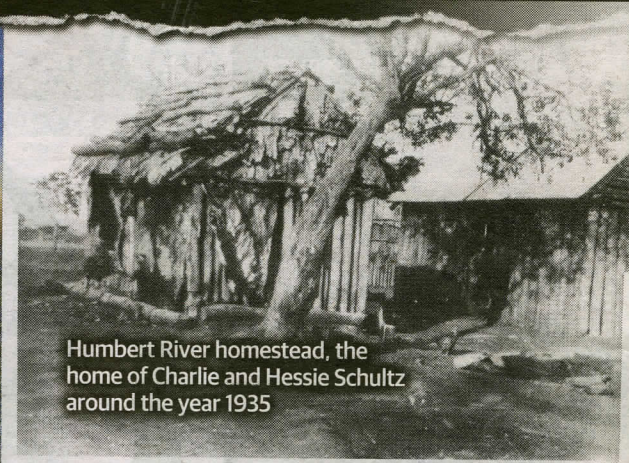
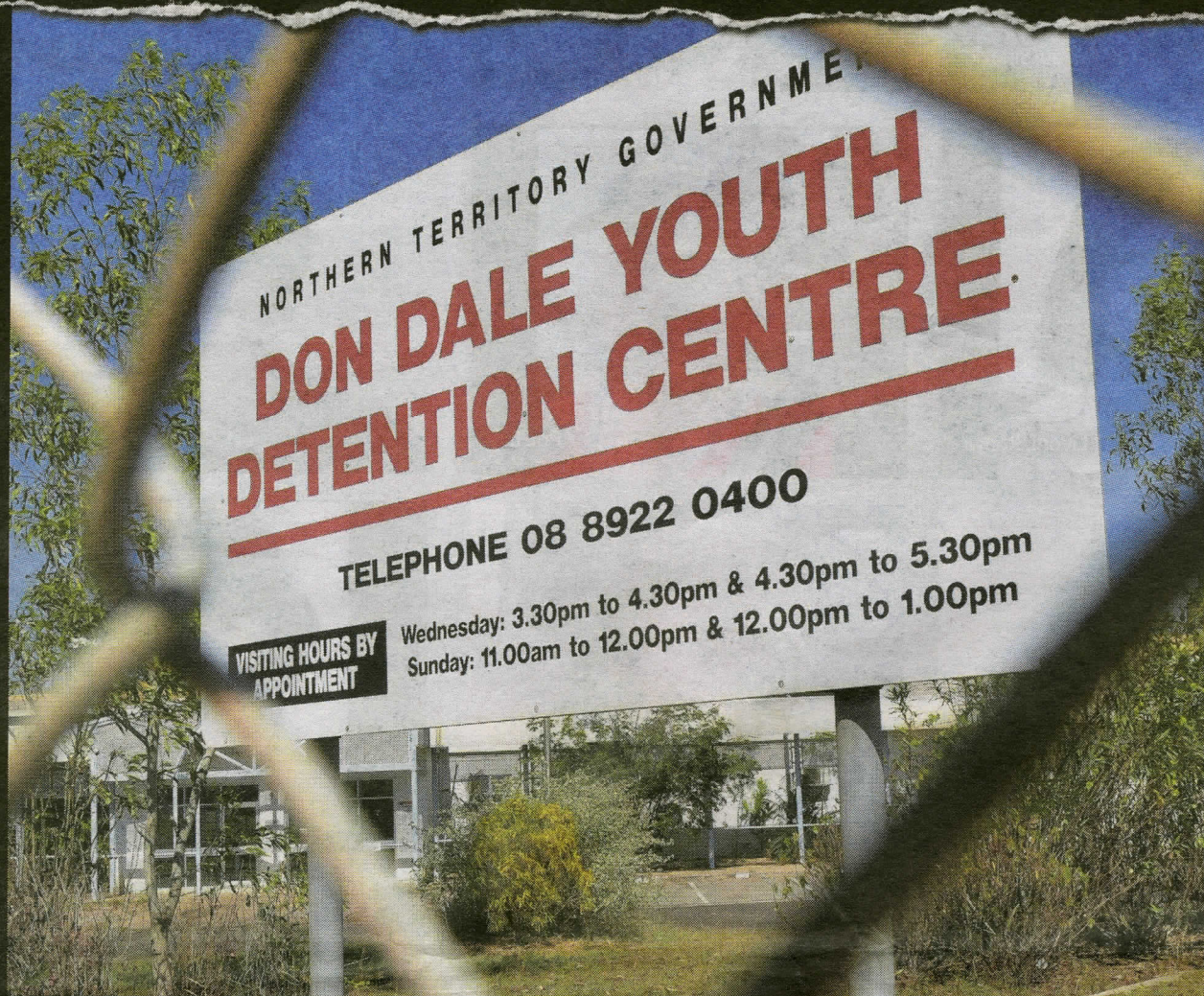
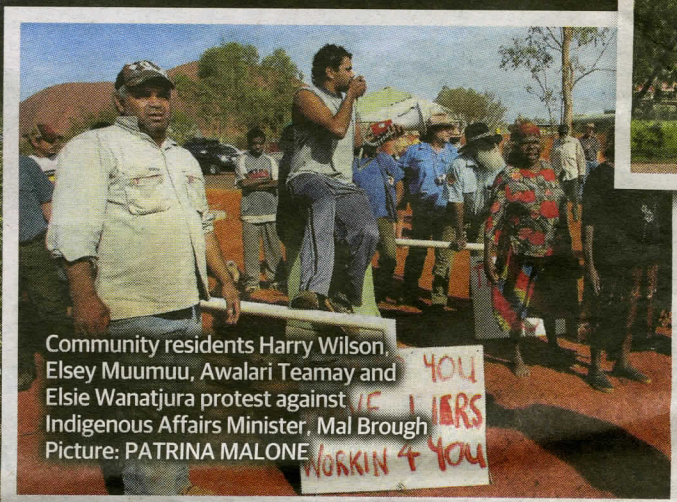


# Winds of change blow



Humbert River homestead, the home of Charlie and Hessie Schultz around the year 1935



Community residents Harry Wilson, Elsey Muumuu, Awalari Teamay and Elsie Wanatjura protest against Indigenous Affairs Minister, Mal Brough  
Picture: PATRINA MALONE

## BARRY COULTER

THE latest Don Dale issue is of great importance and has kept me awake at night.

These issues appear to be cyclical in nature, they come around every 10 or 20 years and I would like to go back over a few of them and the people that created them.

Firstly can I say we were blessed in my time in politics that we have among us, people like Roger Steele and Don Dale with real life experiences which I will elaborate on in a moment.

Unlike current politicians and would-be ones — now is the era of ministerial advisors, press officers and union reps.

If you are not one of these don't take offence.

Steele at 13 was flogged with a syphon hose by his father in front of a police officer at the Bennett St cells, in fact it was a court order "to be chastised in front of a Police Officer" which his father took a bit further before he put him on a bus bound for Humbert River Stock Camp under guidance of old man Schultz.

Roger Steel then went on to become a drover, stockman, station manager, stock inspector, Minister of the Crown and Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

Don Dale grew up in a box in an alleyway in the back streets of Melbourne at one time in his childhood and be-

came a street smart kid, fast on his feet, quick with his mouth and fists. Eventually he became a policeman, a Darwin City alderman, Minister of the Crown, indeed Minister for Corrections for most of his political career from 1983 to 1989 until it was cut short due to ill health.

He would be rolling in his grave at the current controversy at the establishment that now bears his name. Don took over from me as Corrections Minister.

The Head of Corrections during my time was the legendary Terry Fegan.

We travelled the world together looking at different incarceration models, in particular for kids.

We found in the Everglades of Florida "The Last Chance Ranch".

No security fences, it was an island surrounded by alligators, you had to be under 18, in for murder or strong arm holdups or other serious offences with a good chance of rehabilitation.

When they said, "Go make your bed" they didn't mean tuck your sheets in, they provided you with a hammer and saw.

This was the model for the Wildman River Wilderness Work Camp, under the supervision of one of the greatest prison officers we have ever had, in fact the longest serving, 37 years in Australia, 30 years in the NT.

The road to the new prison is named after him, I am talking about Paul Nuku. A great sportsman, fitness fanatic, boxer and martial artist.

The camp won awards and accolades from all over Australia as the way to go, it operated from May 1986 until 2004.

Paul became the subject of an inquiry into his disciplinary methods, and in my opinion poorly supported by the establishment he had devoted his life to. I have video footage of him and inmates crying together, and that's because they were leaving, the bond had become so great.

Before Don Dale we had Giles and Malak House. Giles House was under the super-

vision of Helen Daff, who came to Australia from Prague at the age of 21 and did not see her family again. She came to the northern territory in 1959, joining the Welfare Department.

As part of my ministerial responsibilities I attended Giles House with Sally Thomas, then a Magistrate I think and went on to be the Administrator of the NT.

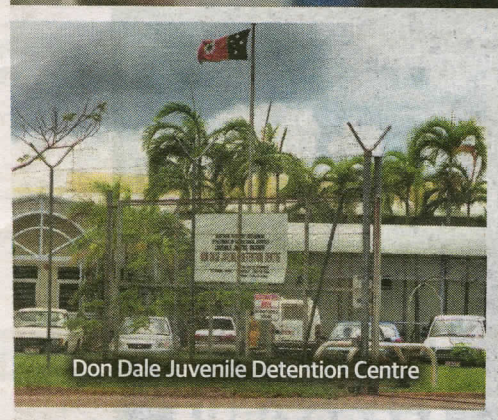
I vividly remember sitting with Sally talking to the inmates about their lives and circumstances, their time in Giles House and their future prospects.

Helen Daff was also subject to complaints from time to time with regards to her tactics and management style.

Sleeping quarters  
at Illpurla station



Youth camp owner Barry Abbott

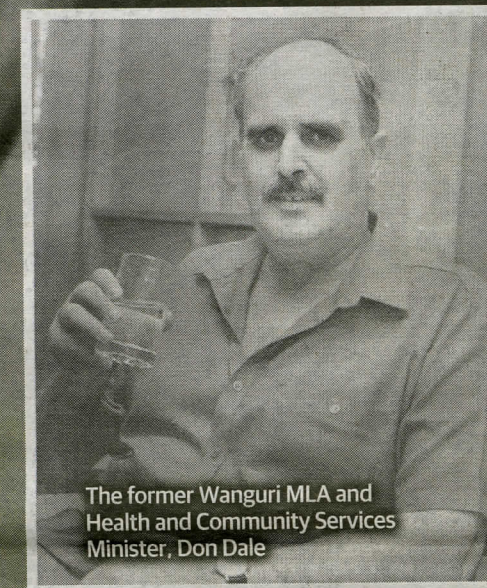


Don Dale Juvenile Detention Centre

A scene from last month's  
controversial 4 Corners story on  
disciplinary methods at Don Dale



Charlie and Hessie Schultz and  
baby Donna. Charlie came to  
Humbert River in 1927 for a few  
months and stayed for 43 years



The former Wanguri MLA and  
Health and Community Services  
Minister, Don Dale

A lot of those kids under her supervision are truly thankful for her intervention, love and care, albeit tough love at times. Giles House operated from 1978 to 1991.

Malak House operated from 1987 until 1991 for 10-to-17-year-olds. And not without its controversies either, break outs, sex scandals and disciplinary matters under the spotlight before being shut down and inmates transferred to Don Dale.

Other projects to keep kids out of detention centres included Illpurla.

This was used to provide kids with a new start under the supervision of Tony Bohning, Head of Corrections, Alice Springs and Barry Ab-

bott a traditional owner of the area. Barry went on to face charges of deprivation of liberty and assault.

The children were petrol sniffers he locked up in an arc mesh cage similar to a paddy wagon.

His defence was the justification of force, provided it was not unnecessary and not likely to cause death or harm and in circumstances where a person in "Loco Parentis" is using such force to discipline, manage or control the child. Illpurla was a residential rehabilitation Centre that operated for 40 years.

Harry Wilson of Peppimernarti ran Stock Camps for wayward kids, Harry was part of the Stolen Generation and

a strict disciplinarian. His main aim was to teach kids skills, respect and love of country and themselves.

He received a two-year bond in 1991 for assault.

So you can see a pattern forming, always ends in tears over disciplinary matters.

With regards to the current crisis, if you take the footage back to 2009 to the present day, you've got 2000 days, or at three shifts per day, 6000 shifts, 50,000 operational hours and at say five people per shift, 250,000 man hours.

Now I know people will say one minute of the footage seen, is too much and I can only hope, that in the combined hours, there was also

love, kindness, education, fun and sporting activities, vocational training and life skill development, counselling, discipline and preparation for a return to society provided.

As a society we all need to get involved if we can. The Last Chance Ranch was heavily supported by musicians, sports men and women and industry leaders.

The Gap Centre in Alice Springs, under Graham Ross was supported by Ted Egan, Bloodwood and many others.

Even if it is only as a special visitor status, if we still have them get involved. Some of these kids are broken, they come from intergenerational backgrounds of violence, sexual abuse and drugs and

some, unfortunately will graduate to the big house, prison — not Parliament.

The things that have changed since I was last in a prison or detention centre is the advent of ice, and steel cages and straight jackets have been replaced by restraining chairs and spit hoods to prevent self harm and promote hygiene.

I thought Brian Martin was the right man for the job, however I accept his reason for stepping down.

How I wish someone like the ALP Member for Arnhem 1983 -95 was still around, he was part of the Groote Eylandt taskforce, inquiring into why Groote Eylandts were over-represented in the pris-

on population, we travelled together around Australia looking at diversionary programs, in particular in Western Australia. He was able to succeed in both cultures, understood Balander ways and was a senior Traditional Owner and lawyer.

Justice Margaret White, AO would have benefited by his presence.

I wish Mick Gooda well in his new role. The old Don Dale needs to be bulldozed.

We will enter a new cycle, prepare yourself for the worst and hope for the best.

**Barry Coulter was a former CLP Deputy Chief Minister, Treasurer and Corrections Minister for the NT Government**