

GUNDJEIHMI

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



Fifteen years on and still no mine at Jabiluka

Sunday May 19th marks fifteen years since Yvonne Margarula - Senior Traditional Owner of the Mirarr clan – was arrested for 'trespassing' on her traditional land at Jabiluka.

In the early hours of May 19th 1998 Yvonne Margarula was arrested along three other Aboriginal people - Jacqui Katona, Christine Christophersen and Reuben Nango - on the Jabiluka mineral lease. The highly controversial proposed Jabiluka uranium mine was under construction at the time of the arrests but development of the mine was eventually halted as a result of the campaign lead by Ms Margarula.

Ms Margarula argued that her protest against the Jabiluka uranium mine was “traditional action taking a modern form” and that her long standing opposition to the mine was fulfilling her duties as a Traditional Owner. However, in an extraordinary court ruling Ms Margarula was found guilty of trespassing on her own land and after appeal was fined \$500.

Yvonne's arrest took place on a shipping container which was the property of the mining company and she was aware of the fact that she may be arrested. This combination of factors was enough to see tens of thousands of years of living culture and connection with land overruled by the imposition of an unwanted mining project. Amidst significant publicity surrounding this ludicrous legal situation, Yvonne's fine was anonymously paid and legal history was made.

Fifteen years ago Yvonne Margarula stood on her country and said no to unwanted mining just as her father said no to unwanted mining on Mirarr country at Ranger fifteen years before that. The efforts of the Mirarr to protect their country and culture continue. Please support the Mirarr in their continued fight to ensure responsibility at Ranger and to permanently protect Jabiluka.

Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation Sunday May 19th, 2013