



KAYA WANDJOO NGALA NOONGARPEDIA – WELCOME TO OUR NOONGARPEDIA

*Report on a research project.*¹

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Chapter 2: Dumbart jen jen: first steps

This chapter is written as a conversation (held in December 2016) between David Palmer (host), Ingrid Cumming, Jennie Buchanan (both Research Associates of the project) and Gideon Digby (President of Wikimedia Australia), who introduce themselves and go on to discuss their roles in the Noongarpedia adventure.

Introductions

Dave: Wanjoo wanjoo (welcome, welcome) Ingrid, Jennie and Gideon. Can I ask you to begin by introducing yourself and telling us about your role in the Noongarpedia project? No, I have changed my mind. Can I ask you to introduce each other?

Ingrid: Kaya Pop Dave. Nyung koort quoppa noonook djenniny. My heart is happy to see you Dave.

Nidja baal Gideon Digby. Baal quoppaduk wedjela maaman. Baal boordier Noongarpedia. This is Gideon, he is a beautiful non-Aboriginal man who has been central in leading us in the Noongarpedia work. Baal boordier Wikimedia Australia. He is the President of Wikimedia Australia. Baal gnulla koorl Noongarpedia kalyogool. He has been traveling along with us on the project continually.

¹ Australian Research Council Discovery Indigenous project IN140100017 (2014-17): *Noongar kaatdijin bidi – Noongar knowledge networks; or, Why is there no Noongar Wikipedia?*

Nidja Mum Jenö. Baal nyininy koorlboorli yirra yaakiny karnarn. This is Jen Buchanan. She sits behind, standing tall and speaking truly. Baal Katatjin Koorlboorli University of Western Australia. She is a Research Associate of the project and is based at the University of Western Australia.

Jennie: Kaya Dave. Nidja Gideon. As well as being a quobbaduk maaman Gideon has been dabakan koorliny kolbang, helping us to go along steadily from the earliest stages of the project. Not only has he been a magic contact with the global wiki community and a godsend when it comes to the technical elements of setting up and making the 'pedia work, but he has also been the best friend of the project: he is definitely Noongarpedia moort – family.

Gideon: Kaya Dave. Wanjoo to you too. Nidja Ingo Cumming. This is Ingrid Cumming. She is a Wadjuk Balardong Noongar and is a Research Associate who has been working from Curtin University. She has been working closely with Jen and me throughout the project, helping design and carry out the various projects within the Noongarpedia Project. Ingrid and Jen's roles have been a combination of traditional research, connecting with Noongar and Noongar groups, helping to design the early platforms, facilitating Wikibombs, workshops with tertiary students, running the work in schools, acting as language translator and helping to record the project.

Katitjin moort: Noongarpedia as a community not a thing

Dave: Can I get you to start talking about your thinking during the early stages of the work?

Jennie: The development of the 'pedia started from the premise that in order to be successful, three aspects of knowledge networking must be encouraged, with each emphasising the civic nature of cultural communication and knowledge sharing. This involved working with: knowledge *domains*, *sources* and *agents*:

1. Knowledge domains: For practical reasons we limited our project to a number of broad knowledge domains or areas of Noongar knowledge. We started by recognising that these would not be comprehensive or exclusive. The domains were:

- *Country* – places, landscapes, flora, fauna; tribal groups and trading patterns;
- *Narrative* – stories from everyday life, including suburban domestic, urban industrial and regional traditions; literature and other art-forms;
- *Popular culture* and *Music* – including lyrics, traditional and modern and popular culture broadly defined, including 'Gen Next' and *emergent* knowledge;

- *Citizenship* – public knowledge and exchange, from ‘welcome to country’ to international first-peoples forums. This is the most obviously ‘civic’ part of the project in terms of content.

Ingrid: We also recognised that since Noongar does not simply belong to the pre-colonial past, where an antiquarian approach might seek to preserve and archive it, further domains would likely emerge. Indeed, once the project was under way and after contemplation by the senior Noongar involved, we were able to reconfigure the ‘knowledge domain’ classifications around the following:

- *Noongar* (the people and language)
- *Boodjar* (country)
- *Moort* (family or culture-group)
- *Katitjin* (knowledge)

Ingrid: One of the team (Len Collard) has previously described these ideas as the foundation of ‘Noongar theory’:

As Nyungar [alternative spelling of Noongar] writing about the Nyungar world, we engaged a set of propositions as our guiding principles to develop a Nyungar theoretical framework. This theory enabled us to put into context how Nyungar knowledge is constructed, passed on and supported. The foundation of our theory is the trilogy of boodjar (country), moort (family or relations) and katitjin (knowledge). This trilogy provides the structure for our Cosmology. (Collard et al., 2004: 15)

2. Knowledge sources: We identified a number of key ‘sources’ for the trial version of the Noongarpedia. These included:

- *Archives* – existing archives in Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums; informal archives (e.g. individual collections of papers etc.);
- *Family* – the family as an archival resource for knowledge, and with that the attendant problems of recording, verifying, accessing and disseminating such knowledge, much of it oral (Ong, 2012), or in the form of artefacts whose meanings may not be readily apparent to others (Miller, 2009);
- *Media* – old and new media, from colonial newspapers to YouTube;
- *Public Institutions* – official and unofficial, including schools, government departments, workplaces etc.

The project also turned to existing databases in various stages of evolution. Some of these included:

- Len Collard's *Nyungar Boodjera Wangkiny – The People's Land is Speaking: Nyungar Place Nomenclature of the Southwest of Western Australia*, which currently holds 12,000 terms and associated meanings.²
- Len Collard's *Nidja Beeliar Boodjar Noonook Nyininy*, which holds content related to the Murdoch area.³
- Cockburn Council's *Nyungar Wardan Katatjin Bid-Derbal Nara*, which holds content related to the Cockbtrun Sound area.⁴
- Kim Scott's *Wirlomin Noongar Language and Stories Project Incorporated*; a collection of language, stories, music, illustrations, song and dance (Scott et al., 2011a; 2011b).⁵
- *Natj Walanginy (What Singing?): Nyungar Song from the South-West of Western Australia* (an investigation of the aesthetics and sustainability of Noongar-language song traditions) (Bracknell, 2015).
- SWALSC (South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council) and other organisations' and individuals' databases.⁶

Gideon: The third aspect is:

3. Knowledge agents: We looked for ways to encourage and mobilise members of different communities as 'knowledge agents'. We wanted to set up the Noongarpedia as a way for community to form and to act as knowledge producers. So rather than adopting the conventional Western research approach, by having us as the experts and sole producers, we wanted to use a Noongarpedia to *facilitate* others as experts, following a model of 'distributed expertise' that suits the internet era.

In this way we and other Wikimedians became mentors and co-producers. We set out to attract others to a process of becoming volunteers, activists and '*knowledge citizens*', sharing in a global knowledge gift economy. This is in line with Wikipedia's own practice, where 'volunteers' edit all entries. We also thought it would more likely guarantee sustainability of production after this project is completed. Thus, we set out actively to recruit and to mentor *users as researchers and knowledge agents*, all the way through the community, from schoolchildren to elders.

This was in some ways the most important part of the project, since it involved recruiting citizens to the Noongar *online polis* or democratic space.

Some might suggest that we depart from traditional knowledge-transfer techniques, where elders are central to the process of managing the transmission of Noongar

² See: www.mcc.murdoch.edu.au/multimedia/nyungar/.

³ Nidja Beeliar Boodjar Noonook Nyininy: see <http://www.mcc.murdoch.edu.au/multimedia/nyungar/menu9.htm>.

⁴ Nyungar Wardan Katatjin Bid-Derbal Nara: see <http://www.derbalnara.org.au/index.htm>.

⁵ See <http://wirlomin.com.au/>.

⁶ See www.noongar.org.au.

knowledge. We do accept, as Collard et al. (2004) put it: ‘*boordier* or elders are still acknowledged as the custodians of knowledge and wisdom of their *boodjar*, *moort* and *katitjin*, and are responsible for the perpetuation through ongoing communications of Nyungar theories, knowledges and applications’.

Ingrid: However, we take the view that this has always occurred within a context where other Noongar generations have considerable influence and involvement in knowledge. Transmission has never been possible without elders receiving assistance from others. Furthermore, over the past two hundred years Noongar elders have taken on new forms of teaching, including using English and Noongar English, adopting new family systems to combat the loss of old sub-section and skin relationships, using literature, film, and new musical genres (e.g. gospel, country and reggae) to teach their young and relying upon young people to help guide the process of imparting culture (Collard and Palmer, 2015a; 2015b; K. Palmer, 2016).

Although senior Noongar people are both conducting and assisting the project, it is equally true that young people with an interest in popular music and culture, in urban life and technology, and also non-Noongar sympathisers, share responsibility for uploading the language and its burden of knowledge into the digital environment.

Indeed, a difficulty that is potentially dangerous for the future of the language is experienced when Noongar people or groups (whether families or associations) retain *proprietary* control over language (word hoards and usages; not including legitimate intellectual property in textual form), because refusal to open access to the language, by those who see themselves as its custodians, may hasten rather than prevent its further reduction as a speech community.

Kura: the beginning

Dave: Ingrid, can you talk about the early stages of the project. What did you start by doing and how did it get moving?

Ingrid: In the very early parts of the project we all had some work to do to get on the same page so to speak. We also had to think about some of the challenges that might be a head of us.

During the early stages of conversation among the initial team, it became evident that we would have to contend with layers of impacts associated with intergenerational colonial trauma. We predicted that this may deter Noongar community members from supporting the work and sharing their knowledge on culture and language; and that they would be very uncomfortable with Noongar knowledge being put on an open-access global network. Dealing with this was a crucial part of the early work of the project and something that took much of our time during the first year.

However, what seemed more clear as the project progressed was that the Wikipedia platform itself might prove helpful, not just in allowing people to start making Noongar knowledge public but also in allowing us to experiment with how to move through the challenges of postcolonial trauma.

Dave: Jen and Ingo, can you explain this a little more?

Jennie: Well, some of our concerns proved correct. There is massive trauma to people caused by the history of families being separated from each other and from country, of kids being punished for using Noongar language, of Noongar knowledge being stolen at the same time as people were stripped of their ability to pass it onto their young people.

Ingrid: Yes, many Noongar are understandably cautious about making their stories, their language and their knowledge available to those outside their immediate family. For some it is incredibly painful to see others using Noongar language when they and their families have had it taken generations ago. Others have seen outsiders like academics and other researchers make good out of this knowledge, gaining academic qualifications and gaining kudos from what they have learned from Noongar while Noongar families have gained nothing.

Jennie: This is one of the key reasons why Wikipedia and similar platforms had not been taken up by Noongar. In addition, we spent some good time thinking about Noongar community and the history of modes of knowledge transmission. We considered how in the past Noongar knowledge had been presented, utilised, edited, managed and controlled. We predicted that this would be a huge challenge to the project.

Dave: This is very interesting when I think about work that is going on elsewhere in the field of what could be called ‘Indigenous knowledge transformation and transmission’. I’ve been noticing the tensions that have emerged since Indigenous groups have rebuilt their capacity and control over Indigenous knowledge. I have long suspected that one set of tensions comes from an ontological difference between the general *geist*, spirit, or approach to knowledge that is taken for granted by Western knowledge practice and institutions, on the one hand, and on the other, the approach derived from Noongar knowledge systems.

Of course many of the traditional Western ideas and practices have been seriously shaken up by the global digital revolution, particularly since the creation of Web 2.0 platforms.

Typically, Western practice and institutions (such as universities, heritage organisations and old disciplines in the sciences and social sciences) approach their

work with Indigenous groups using the following narrative structure as a frame. This frame takes much of its inspiration from Romantic traditions.

Chapter one of this narrative I'll call the 'Genesis' chapter. Here, so the story goes, Indigenous knowledge existed as pristine, intact and full of magnificence (or at least with great insight). Many of our early coastal explorers, visiting the shores of the west coast of Australia, saw Noongar as those who possessed wisdom untainted by the iniquities of Europe, and representing the key to the study of what was called 'the History of Man'. In this chapter science 'discovers' knowledge that its rich for the taking.

Chapter two I'll call 'Tainting by outsider forces'. Here, ironically, the cruel and despicable forces of colonisation smash Indigenous knowledge-holders. I say ironically because, as Edward Said and others have reminded us, science and the academy were deeply implicated in that process and have since played a huge part in the 'Orientalisation' of Indigenous knowledge (Said, 1987).

Chapter three I'll call the 'Death of culture' chapter. Here, those Indigenous people who survive the onslaught are a 'broken people', culturally deprived and lost, devoid of any traditional knowledge and living in a dysfunctional state with little access to the knowledge, language and benefits of modernity. The only hints of the old knowledge remain in remnant artefacts, often called 'tangible heritage', and in the form of burial sites, rock art, tools and the occasional sacred tree. It is assumed that in limited circumstances some elders possess some of this knowledge.

The final chapter I'll call the 'the Emergence of the New High Priests'. This conclusion to the story starts from the same premise that has prompted most social policy interventions into the lives of Indigenous Australians: that there is a need for special measures to be taken to 'protect' this knowledge, knowledge that is facing a crisis of survival. The job of these new heroes of knowledge, these 'New High Priests', is to capture what remains and see that it is protected in what my Roebourne friend, Ngarluma man Tyson Mowerin, calls 'sleeping archives' (cited in Collard and Palmer, 2015a).

I am not suggesting that elements of this narrative are in some way *untrue*. However, its consequence, knowledge has been *captured* by experts such as historians, anthropologists, archaeologists and curators. This sets up a particular mode of knowledge *transmission* that, by and large, has been *controlled* by non-Aboriginal people and institutions.

Ingrid, can I bring you in here?

Ingrid: Yes, in contrast, Noongar knowledge narratives tend to have a different structure, drawing upon different ontologies. In these sets of stories, there is an

interconnected relationship between katatjin (knowledge/law), boodjar (country), moort (family and community) and wiern (cultural safety, spirit and health).

Noongar katatjin (knowledge) cannot exist in the absence of Noongar family, country and healthy spirit. Conversely, where the other elements exist, knowledge will flourish. The ongoing health (what Westerners might call knowledge integrity) of Noongar katatjin is held in song, on country, through ‘karnarn’ (speaking truly across the generations). In this way Noongar knowledge is a living thing, made alive through country, visits to country and maintained by good relationships across moort (family).

The way that it is ‘protected’ is through it being produced and reproduced across the generations. Rather than collecting and capturing it, knowledge is maintained by dancing it, singing it, walking it, speaking it and sharing it. In this way the knowledge experts are the dancers, singers, storytellers, teachers, and carers of children. In other words, the way that katatjin is made strong and brought back from ‘sleeping’ is to reignite its production. We don't necessarily put it somewhere (like books, museums, dictionaries etc.), we get it happening.

And that’s roughly where we got to after lots of talking and lots of contemplation. This didn’t relieve us of the challenges but it gave us a way of thinking about how we could move ahead.

Jennie: Yes, what we discovered was that the structure of ‘pedia platforms had some things in common with Noongar knowledge practice. Just as Noongar learning has long relied on active processes of doing and producing, ‘pedias get built by those visiting and moving across the divide between those who use the sites passively to *consume* knowledge and those who start to post and become producers of *knowledge*.

Ingrid: There was also a lot of discussion about the language to be used on the ‘pedia site. We thought that ideally it would be wonderful to build a site that was set out using Noongar and only included posts in Noongar. However, this presented a number of important obstacles or challenges.

The first challenge is in coming to a decision about what constitutes Noongar. Research undertaken by our colleagues at the Noongar Boodjar Language Cultural Aboriginal Corporation indicates that Noongar grammar has undergone massive reconfiguration over the past one hundred or so years.⁷

The next challenge would be in recruiting a good number of people who are confident enough in language to become active in posting. The evidence in front of us from what and who we knew suggested that the few people who were confident enough to

⁷ Noongar Language Centre: <http://noongarboodjar.com.au/language/>.

use full sentences in Noongar were not particularly ‘digitally native’ (members of a generation that grew up with competence in digital platforms) or digitally confident.

Furthermore, most of these people are overcommitted and involved in other Noongar renewal work. Clearly, allowing only posts in full Noongar sentences would likely limit the participation of younger people, who were beginning their journey with Noongar language and knowledge, leaving them out of the process until they could first acquire a high level of skill and knowledge.

Jennie: All of this brought us to a point where we decided that it was time to experiment with the use of a ‘pedia platform. We decided to bracket our concerns and ethical questions and start doing a number of things that might take us along the road of creating a ‘pedia.

Within the first several months of the project, much of our time was occupied with gathering as much information and sources about Noongar culture as we could. We started by using the set of listed domains that we had set out within the ARC grant and using them as a structure to help guide our search. This included country, story, citizenship and pop culture. In the first instance we stuck to what was already available on open-source platforms already available online. This allowed us to start creating entries in what we called the ‘hybrid wiki site’ specially created for our project.

We used the term ‘hybrid’ to denote our keenness to design a ‘pedia that would encourage people to use Noongar, English and what Len Collard calls ‘South-west West Australian’ – combining Australian English and Noongar usages and content.

Gideon: Soon it became clear that there is a lot of information about Noongar knowledge already available in digital form, yet widely spread across the World Wide Web. This prompted the idea of creating a blog-like website to show communities, and the world, all the resources found so far during the project. This idea became a reality with the creation of what we called the Gnullar Kadadjiny website.⁸ This was developed to gather Noongar language resources, to be utilised by contributors/editors who were keen on creating entries in language.

Later in the first year the ‘Noongarpedia’ Facebook page was created, attracting over 250 followers, keen to keep updated on the project.⁹ This proved a powerful way for us to connect with people utilising Wikipedia, the most widely used and free social media tool. The Facebook page started generating interest. People started to ask questions about the project; they wanted to stay up to date with project outcomes or

⁸ The Gnullar kadadjiny website was no longer needed after the creation of the Noongarpedia incubator site.

⁹ Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Noongarpedia/>.

findings and keep sight on the events we began to run, and to get hold of resources found by the project.

Quickly the project found a means through which to identify data that helped with the creation of the 'pedia, while staying connected with those who later became key Noongarpedians.

At the same time, Jennie began to establish a relationship with me. At that time I was Vice-President of Wikimedia Australia.

Jennie: Gideon became a critical mentor, support and key member of the Noongarpedia moort (family), instrumental in the ongoing success of the project. He taught us much. For example, we discovered, through a process of trial and error, that Wikipedia's 'Sandboxes' are not an offline and private option to learn, understand and make draft entries. We found that Wikimedians from around the globe began to jump in, editing and in some cases taking down our posts, because we had not done them correctly. Without Gideon to guide us through this lesson it would have been a catastrophe for the project. At the same time, we began to develop our foundation Noongar skeleton site – a hosted and password-protected incubator site for Noongar language use.¹⁰

Early experiments with Noongarpedia

Dave: Gideon, can you tell us about how you started to get involved?

Gideon: Well, I first heard about it when the project media release went out in February 2014. At that stage I was contacted by a Wikipedia contributor who was concerned about the use of the Wikipedia Trade Mark and what he saw as the negative light of the project. He was worried that the question: 'why is there no Noongar Wikipedia?' and the focus on the limits of Wikipedia were not helpful. I looked into it and thought – yeah, it is negative, but it's not such a big problem. I made email contact with Len to see what help we could offer from Wikimedia Australia.

The other person contacted Wikipedia Legal in San Francisco and they sent out a letter to Len and Co. about the use of the WikipediaTM trademark. When I emailed Len he responded with 'Yes, let's set up a meet'. I didn't hear anything further, so I assumed that he had just let the project go because of the trademark issue. I didn't hear anything again until August/September, when Jennie turned up to a Wikimedia meet-up.

¹⁰ Current site available at http://wikimedia.org.au/noongarwp/Main_Page#Knowledge_sources.

Jennie: Yes, I hadn't started work with the project at this point. By July or August when things started moving I knew it was time to look to the Wikimedia community to see where we could get support. I went online to look at Wikimedia Australia links and a 'Meet Up' was advertised down in Fremantle. I did not know that there had been previous contact (I had not known of the lawyer's letter), and I thought the best way to start was to go and meet people in person, to find out who was around and who I could connect with to keep moving with development of the Noongarpedia site. By then we had trialled a few wikis, we had started to play in the Wikipedia Sandbox, met some of the auto-bots who visit and 'tidy up' things across the 'pedia. We had begun to face some of the challenges and difficulties. So it was important to meet people with practical ideas and skills in working in this platform.

As we started experimenting with a Noongapedia site, it became clear that such a site could have real value given the amount of digitally recorded information that already existed that is related to Noongar. One of the immediate benefits of creating a Noongarpedia site was that this content, existing in disparate places, could be drawn together using Noongarpedia as a centralised platform. In this way Noongarpedia could complement other digital sites by being a point of reference for the immense body of works that exist, and a very accessible place for many trying to gain information.

When we began to understand how Wikipedia operates we started to see its potential as a means of recruiting young Noongarmedians as active producers and transmitters of knowledge. In common with traditional Noongar systems, the Noongarpedia site encourages users to be both consumers and producers of knowledge. This very much deepened their experience with Noongar, as users were forced to engage with it across modes: sometimes listening, sometimes reading, sometimes seeing and sometimes making and reproducing.

Ingrid: We also discovered that a 'pedia platform provides a mechanism to validate sources and have people negotiate what gets posted. Indeed, unlike pre-web and Web 1.0 platforms, 'pedias involve communal or crowd-sourced production of knowledge, forcing users to enter into dialogue about what they post with others who may subsequently edit or use discussion pages to debate content. This offered one means through which we could move past the sensitivities of many Noongar families in relation to community ownership and family control over of Noongar knowledge. In a way that is closer to Noongar knowledge protocols, users of Noongarpedia are subjected to public scrutiny about the knowledge they post. The protocols give others a chance to edit or remove content.

Dave: It seems to me that one of the important features of this work is that it is drawing upon new digital and Web 2.0 platforms. Web 2.0 is the term often used to describe the second generation of World Wide Web platforms that were designed to offer users the chance to collaborate and to share information online. Web 2.0 refers

to the shift from static HTML Web pages (Web1.0) to dynamic, interactive, participatory platforms of Web 2.0. Web 1.0 pages were reliant upon the designer and owner of a website to be the sole producer of content. Visitors were passive in the sense that they could only consume content, reading what the host has made available. In this way interacting with Web1.0 sites is similar to consuming television, film or literature where one reads and follows the script of another author or producer. Such knowledge systems are closed, in that authors control what is accessed by others.

Gideon: In contrast, Web 2.0 sites are designed to encourage user-generated content, ease of usability across multiple groups and interoperability (the ability of computer systems to exchange and use information). The term Web 2.0 was first coined by Darcy DiNucci in 1999 and was made popular by Tim O'Reilly and Dale Dougherty at an international conference on emerging web technology in late 2004.

Web 2.0 platforms emerged when conventional and more static websites opened the way for blogs and social networking sites. These new sites allowed users to interact and collaborate in the production of content with each other through social media dialogue. In this way Web 2.0 platforms were designed to draw upon the knowledge and work of visitors as co-creators of user-generated content, using web-based architectures to build knowledge communities. Here knowledge is 'open source' and shared in the sense that consumers are also producers. Axel Bruns (2008) coined the term 'produsage' as a way of describing this kind of user-led content creation. Examples of Web 2.0 include social networking sites, blogs, wikis, folksonomies, video sharing sites, hosted services, Web applications (apps), and mashups (Hartley et al., 2013; Flew, 2008).

Jennie: Noongarpedia also offers a public and free means through which Noongar knowledge can be shared and transmitted, offering a platform that is more likely to be available in the future, not centrally owned or stored. As one of the most Googled sites, Wikipedia itself hosts a range of subsidiary software like Wiktionary and Wikiversity. The immense size and depth of Wikipedia offers enormous potential to those keen on renewing Noongar culture and language for future generations. In addition to the digital platforms Wikimedia offers a worldwide network of editors and Wikipedians (the term used for Wikipedia editors and contributors who have the capacity to train and advise others). Indeed, the experience of the project has been that there exist hosting and technological resources *and* a very helpful and interested voluntary community, who have been willing to work with our project team.

Dave: So this was the starting point of the project. What is in store for us as we move through the following chapters?

Ingrid: Some of the next steps involved trying to make sure we were aware of the range of source material that was already in the public arena. In particular, we wanted

to check out the material available in digital formats and posted in various accessible places. This was important for two reasons.

First, as a team it was important for us to examine what others had produced and start to think about the history of Noongar knowledge and Noongar knowledge transmission. Although we are a team of academics, we hadn't previously worked together to make sure we brought this content together. Our expertise varies and while, between us, we probably had a good idea of many of the online sources, we wanted to make sure we brought all this together in one place.

Second, part of our plan was to start the work by gathering potential sources for those who we were keen to get involved. Even at this stage we knew it would be good to offer potential Noongarpedians a body of work to help them use as sources.

Jennie: At the same time, we still had to deal with the challenges ahead, in particular to decide on what kind of platform we were going to use. For example, we spent much of the first year of the project talking about the merits of building a Noongar-language-only site and the limits this might bring in terms of the numbers of people who could or would participate. As mentioned earlier, another option was to build a hybrid site where people could come to the site in English or Noongar English, using this as the gateway into Noongar knowledge and a means to help build Noongar language. Both approaches had merits and both had certain consequences. If we chose a Noongar-only site, we risked finding that not enough people would be equipped to become active in the project. If we set up a hybrid site, then we might exclude certain Noongar who are concerned that the knowledge platform is too open to exploitation. So we had to take plenty of time with this one.

Dave: Were there any other important things that happened in the first year.

Ingrid: Yes, something very important, in fact devastating to us all. A member of our dear Noongarpedia moort (family) passed away. Niall Lucy, our beautiful chief investigator, friend and, in many ways the hub that held the spokes together, left us after a short and awful illness. This smashed us all and, as Noongar protocols would have it, we went quiet for a time.

On the 11th November 2016 we remembered him in this way on our Noongarpedia Facebook page:

Happy 60th to our wiern maam or spirit man Niall Lucy. Regardless of his passing, he will always be a Chief Investigator of our project and a man we honour and thank for making Noongarpedia a reality. We hope you're proud of the work we are doing. All our love from the team and supporters of Noongarpedia. Woolah, Woolah!

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