

MOSS



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Lyrics: Susan Craig

Music: Mark Simpkin

Foreword

Between 1788 and 1900 the Aboriginal population in Australia was reduced by 90%.

This was due to the introduction of new diseases, loss of land and loss of people through mass killings by early European occupation.

The remaining people were mistreated, displaced and forced into settlements tearing apart their families and their heritage. The Australian Government enforced their laws and governance and a way of life that failed to include, respect and recognise another human being's heritage, ancestral culture and most importantly . . . humanity.

Profound cultural and emotional consequences flowed on from this for generations to come.

PREFACE

After a road trip through the Australian outback last year, I was devastated to see first-hand the number of Australian Aboriginal communities struggling to survive in the poorest of conditions I've ever known. Until then, I hadn't interacted with an indigenous person ever and was ignorant and misguided about Australia's history in relation to European settlement, until now.

We must all help to close the gap, so disadvantaged indigenous people have the opportunities and the chance to ignite the light they have inside them and realize their dreams.

What would I know about dust and dreams, from the comfort of my air conditioned four wheel drive and life back in suburbia? I can only say that when you see human injustice of such great magnitude and in particular in a country with such abundance, you only need to see that for a split second to know how wrong it is and feel the compulsion to help.

After listening deeply and understanding more over the last year, I have had the pleasure of learning from the following people who do shine and who have influenced my understanding and evolved my thinking.

Alex. In his own words was a “freshie” from the Kimberley who taught me the importance of a Song Lines, which are historical documentations or encyclopaedias of vast forms of information on geography, environmental management, survival, archaeology, social and cultural anthropology, navigation, mythical stories and legends.

Dusty Feet Dance Group, from Port Augusta, who performed at the anti uranium dump rally last year with representatives from the Adnyamathanha people of South Australia. It was moving to see urban South Australian’s standing shoulder to shoulder with these wonderful people, speaking with one voice on such an important issue.

Back Track Organisation Armadale NSW, who make a real impact and achieve life changing results for young outback people, both Aboriginal and European. When you look into the faces of these young people and see their achievements, be prepared to be inspired!

Mr. Jack (Kanya) Buckskin. Jack Buckskin is a linguist and teacher of an endangered language. Jack’s mission is to teach the Kaurna language, the language of his ancestors, to as many people as he can. Jack assisted us in not only creating and recording some amazing haunting ancient sounds with his didg, rhythmic clapsticks and his ancestral vocals, but has also assisted in the translation of some of our lyrics into Kaurna language. The language of the Adelaide Plains. For someone to recognise the erosion of a language and to embark on a project to research, arrest and rebuild is unique and to be applauded. Jack is a delightful person and such a talent and his collaboration on Dust and Dreams has been so valuable. We hope our collaboration helps to create awareness of his mission.

Thank you also, to Mark Simpkin for his musical composition. Mark’s innate musical understanding and creativity wraps passionately and perfectly around this story. And, to other **MOSS band members**, Ian, Justin and David for breathing life into Dust and Dreams and being great human beings.

What I’ve learned from my encounters and conversations, is that all of these amazing people have developed a way of life which embraces their heritage within the modern world in the most productive and positive way, and we should all learn from this. Our Aboriginal culture is a precious gift to be preserved and nurtured and we can all help by extending our arms and actively participate and engage either professionally or personally. You’ll be a better person for doing so.

Bringing our two worlds together under one sky in harmony, with respect and love is the only way forward. Thank you. Susan Craig.