**Remembering Territory families**

**The voice of Tennant – the Affianos family**

In the early fifties, a guy, Len Kittle, who’s quite a famous Territory name, started up a paper and he called it the *Tennant Creek Times*. I think it was only one page and I think there was only a few editions printed. We've got a couple of them, but then it just disappeared off the scene. There was a little newsletter called the *Peko Clarion* that Peko mine used to put out, but other than that there was nothing there for many years. Then APEX decided to fill the void by publishing a paper and they called it the *Tennant Creek Times* the same as Len Kittle called it... My mother bought it at the beginning of 1983 ... and she loved it. She used to run it like a big social club.

The Tennant Creek of Jasmine’s childhood was multicultural and made wealthy by the money from the mines. Jasmine lived with her family in a Sidney Williams hut in town. She recalled:

Like most of the white people here in the ‘50s, ‘40s and even before and even afterwards, they had come here – I don’t know if on the run is the correct word – to seek a new beginning is probably more appropriate. They found it here.

Even by as late as the 1960s, living conditions were tough but in Tennant Creek there was a strong sense of safety and above all, community. Jasmine recalled:

No, we didn’t have air-conditioning at all. In fact I remember on those really hot nights that we get here, you know we used to all lie on the lounge room, you know put mattresses in the lounge room, because I think we had maybe one or two of those old grey metal fans. You know, my mother would just wet all these face washers and have us covered in face washers with this, you know, fan blowing across us. I can remember how long it took to get, as it swiveled, to get to us and, *Oh no, it’s going to be so long*, so I can remember some really, really hot nights. But we didn’t ever have to lock the house or ever think about anything like that. Always the doors were open...
When asked if she ever felt like leaving Tennant Creek, Jasmine responded:

Yeah, every summer when those blow flies start to buzz around and the mercury rises and I think, that’s it! I’m going but... This is one thing I love about Tennant Creek. We are in the most pristine environment in the world. We don’t have air pollution, we don’t have ground pollution, we don’t have industry. When you can wake up and you can breathe and you’re not sick and that sky’s so beautiful and that smell of the bush in the morning if you get up early enough and you go for a walk. It’s just like this incredible aroma therapy!

Jasmine had a varied career returning briefly to Tennant Creek to teach at the school, but also working in Tully in Queensland and at a women’s refuge in Sydney for four years. She returned to Tennant in 1989 to help her mother with the paper and has remained there ever since. She has a passionate love of people, country and landscape.

I can remember from those boarding school days that home sick really does hurt your heart... So we’d get one of those planes in on the afternoon and I can remember stepping off that plane into this oven of heat, you know, and it’d be like, oh I’m home! ... Tennant Creek’s got a thing and lots of people have come here and they’ve been on the bones of their arse and someone’s helped them out and they’ve stayed and they’ve become business people and taken other responsible positions and because of that they feel as though they’ve got a huge debt to Tennant Creek... There’s many people who leave a little piece of their heart in Tennant Creek because of the help they have received... When someone dies here, everyone helps. You’re never alone... But the soul is here because there are people from here. Most of the born and bred locals are Aboriginal people and they carry on that spirit. They feel like this is their town. This is their home... Tennant Creek has got a heart of gold.

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