

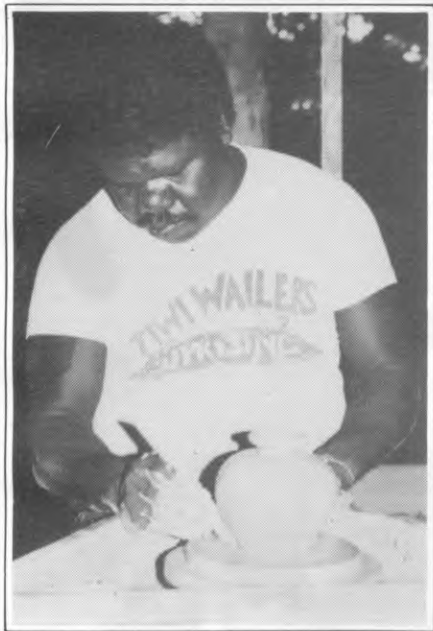
were many sarongs, wall hangings, shirts and ponchos on display all with distinctive Tiwi design patterns. As well there are carvings.

The boss, Danny Munkara printed a special design for me incorporating the Aboriginal flag, the Tiwi Islands and the legend, Remember Your Ancestors.

Next door was Tiwi pottery, where again very distinctive design pottery is produced.

Bima Wear is a dress-making industry that produces a range of clothing, some incorporating Tiwi design patterns. It started out producing school uniforms.

All these commercial ventures are controlled by the Tiwi people, with profits going back to the community. Tiwi Design, Bima Wear and Tiwi Pottery are marketed locally as well as across Australia and represent a good economic future. For those not employed in these ventures, there are the maintenance crews who seem to spend a lot of

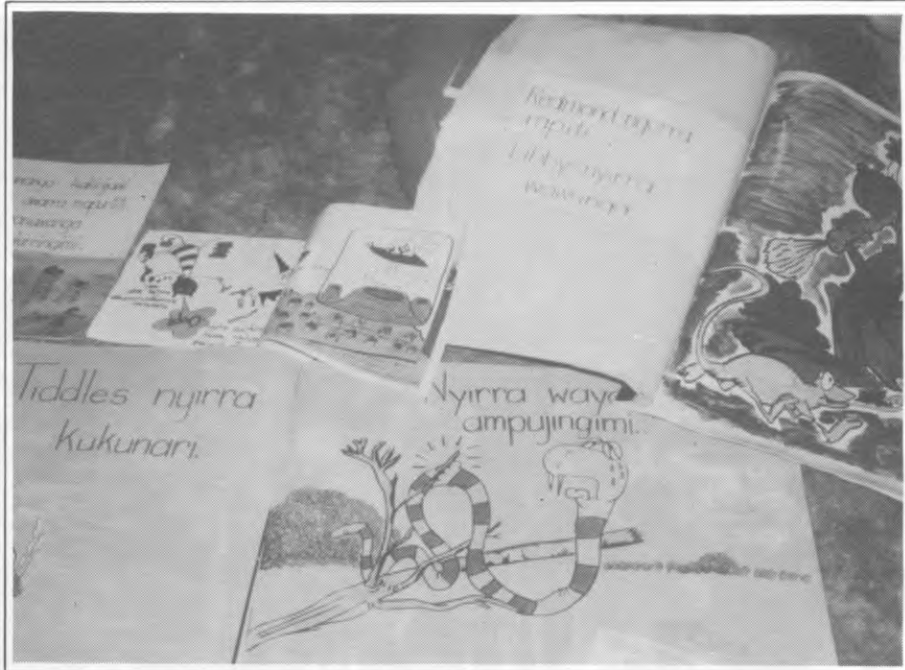


time riding around in Toyota four-wheel vehicles.

Some play a local card game, tigeran (spelt by sound) for money while others are fishing, hunting or just resting.

One strange thing was the food the local store at Nguiu was selling. In thirty degree temperatures I found hot chips and pies a bit hard to take. I think it unfortunate that junk food is produced in a place that needs all the nutrition it can get. However local food like kawarri (goanna), milipukani (mangrove worms), marntuwungini (dugong) and jarrikarlani (sea turtle) is still on the menu at home.

At around half past four all work ceases on both islands as people head for 'the club'. It's a building set aside for having a beer. I found the environment very much like a public bar in Otago, the difference being the lack of



chairs inside, the noise and the steep price (\$2.50 NZ per 12 oz glass).

Again white supervisors oversee several aboriginal barmen, presumably because there could be problems. I was told by white and black people about the problems associated with drinking.

In some more traditional communities where contact with white people has been limited, some of the younger members of the tribe are being thrown off the land because of their heavy drinking. Even in areas where there had been a lot of white contact, drinking is acknowledged as a big problem amongst aboriginals.

While in most aboriginal communities, it is an offence to bring in alcohol, it only seems to encourage aboriginals

to hang around white settlements where alcohol is available.

Love of sport

Just as Maoris love their sport, so to do Tiwi Islanders. At the time of my visit, 'footy fever' gripped the islands. All I heard was talk about Imalu, the recent local champions, and how the Saints (St Marys) would thrash Wanderers on Saturday.

A natural ability with ball handling, speed and agility, are the hallmarks of these Tiwi players, having produced an Aussie great, David Kantilla who represented South Adelaide in 1964 and then went on to coach locals, Imalu to two seasons wins in a row.

Current national champ, Maurice

