

In Gaol during Cyclone Tracey by Patrick Tyabada

Story 00.50 – 06.21 of archive tape REID_N02-024108.mp3 (side A field tape 10) 18.33mins. Patrick Tyabada talks about getting arrested, locked up in Fannie Bay Gaol, and then transferred to Alice Springs when Cyclone Tracy damaged the gaol. Recorded at Peppimenarti about in late September 1988. Present: Tyimiliny, Robert Daly and Patrick Tyabada. Speaker: Patrick Tyabada.

- 1 Tyamirri, wamumu ngayi deminyngi tip Daly River, were ngayi wagarri ngayi
So, the police arrested me at Daly River, there was my two brothers, and me
- 2 yentyingirr wurr tye Darwin wumngirr midum. Nginni pefi tye diwin warrakma
and they took us in and locked us up. We were there about three months
- 3 nyinnimbi sentence ngaddi tye, ngaddi tye Fannie Bay nginni tye four month
then we got sentenced, they took us to Fannie Bay gaol and we were there for four
months.
- 4 Nyinnimbi wudumngirr tyuk jail yeyi ngaddi tye prison farm Garden (or Gun?) Point.
From there they sent us to another gaol, to that prison farm at Gun Point.
- 5 Nginni tye kidin wunggume, nyinnimbi syiri marrawuk yirrini pagu tye
We stayed there for a year, but then a cyclone came through.
- 6 Darwin wum ta wudiningirr wurrirr tye Fannie Bay wakay napa prisoner.
It hit Darwin so they moved us back to Fannie Bay gaol, every single one of us.
- 7 Kuru syewe wudum madipap yeniny wurr intyat nyine jailhouse nide,
They sea surged right up and came into the gaol, right inside the lockup,
- 8 mudiga caravan kuru nidambirri nyine waddi tye syewe!
and the sea washed in cars and caravans!
- 9 Wunu ngan wudumbunburr mentyigerrgirr weri nyinnin kuru bakuty dini tye.
It came right into that sunken area where they used to hang people.
- 10 Wunu ngan ngarrgu nginni nganmadi tye.
And it came right into that area where we were kept inside.
- 11 Syiri marrawuk nyinnin yerrnangan streetlight wudini fakurr, building.
That cyclone destroyed everything like telegraph poles, and buildings.
- 12 Mityity, watypela daba pal mem werre, muk, bandage werri.
There were women and men with broken arms, injuries, bandaged up.
- 13 Nyine waddi lali tye elifela, nyinnimbi awa prisoner whole lot warrentyingirr tye,
They came round next morning, and shifted the entire prison population into the
- 14 underground jail nginni tye Darwin watchhouse nginni tye three month!

underground cells at the Darwin Watchhouse where we were for the next three months!

- 15 A wamumu wirrminy ‘Ngumbuduwurr tyuk nime pe Alice Spring pefi, three hundred n fifty prisoner!’.
Then the police announced ‘We’re gonna send all three hundred n fifty prisoners to Alice Springs!’.
- 16 Wudumngirr tyuk Alice Spring ngaddi tye, warrgantyingirr tye handcuff werre daba
So they did send us to Alice Springs, we went and they handcuffed us all, around our wrists
- 17 ngaddi tye airport, aeroplane nganniny madiwap nyinnimbi ngerrminy pat Katherine first stop.
and we went to the airport, got on the plane, then we set off and Katherine was our first stop.
- 18 Nyinnimbi Tennant Creek, mirri yedi filpurr nyine tye - Alice Spring.
From there, to Tennant Creek, and finally as the sun was setting, to Alice Springs.
- 19 Nganniny tyerr wamumu peyambirri widdinge tye, ganniny fel, ngaddi tye
So we landed, and the police were all there waiting for us, they jumped to it, and we went
- 20 wuddumngirr wurr jail nyin nide, three room peyi one each ngagurr were ngayi wagarri
and they put us in jail there, we had three rooms, one each, for my two brothers,
- 21 ngayi wuddumngirr midum. Three week nginni tye la that room! minde tye ityi ngurmu!
and for me, so they locked us up. We were locked up for three weeks in that room! with nothing to do!
- 22 Nginni nganmadi pefi tye three weeks, let ‘im out wirrminyngirr ngadde wurrkama nyine.
So we sat there for three weeks, then they let us out so we could work.
- 23 Ngayi laundry nide ngagadi wurrkama tye, yerr dress ngerme pul ngaddi Yirara College
I went to work in the laundry, washing the school uniforms of the Yirara College
- 24 nem schoolgirl nem. Minbe ngagurr napa, prisoner awa bakuty nginni tye kidin wagarri.
schoolgirls. It wasn’t just us three, there were lots of us prisoners there for about two years.
- 25 Nyinnimbi minbe tye waringirr tyeri tye, nginni pefi tye diwin warrakma
After that we didn’t feel so homesick, after we’d been there about three months,

- 26 after two years ngerrmen'geny tarrat, parole ngurmu wa.
and after two years we got out, we got parole.
- 27 Wa nyinninggi wa boss ngagurr yentyingirr tye, missionhouse peyendi werrminy baty
The boss guy from there took us, to that mission house they have there in
- 28 Alice Spring. Father nyin nide, nyine demengirr babaty tye dini.
Alice Springs. The priest there, he took charge of us.
- 29 Ngaddi lali tye, 'Kak nyine ngudinirr miwul pe, yarra fipal pe Darwin pefi!'
menyngirr
We went round, 'I'm sending you home now, you're on your way back to Darwin!'
he told us.
- 30 Nyinnimbi nganniny madiwap aeroplane Darwin, Brother Kinnane peyi wirringe tye.
So next we boarded the plane to Darwin, and Brother Kinane was waiting there for us.
- 31 Nganniny fel wudumngirr miwul Dirrpederr pefi nyine. Membirr ngayi minbe tye
So we got off and they sent us back to Daly River then. My own kids, I could hardly
- 32 nginyirriwurr yilil. Ngini tye peyi nuwurr, one week ngini tye, wulmen Tyintya
recognize them. So I stayed there, probably just a week, and then my oldman Tyintya
- 33 wirringyngiti kay kinnyine. Ngagadi wurrkama tye Peppimenarti, tyamen napa!
(Harry Wilson), he picked me up, and from then I worked at Peppimenarti, done!