

Leroy and Rosalie maintained close links with his Flinders family, welcoming many visits from family members to their Riverland home and visiting the Ranges several times a year. He loved to laugh and joke with family and friends. It was with great pride that he hosted two weddings on his properties - of Glenis and Kingsley Coulthard and of Lorraine and Ken Briscoe. His family are pleased that he had just spent two wonderful weeks with his extended family, particularly his Ngarlami Gertie at Nepabunna. Other highlights were family trips to Innamincka, Cairns, Bright & the snowfields, Kangaroo Island, Broome, Perth, the Gold Coast, Mornington Peninsula etc. Together with Rosalie, he planned to return to his beloved Flinders once the girls completed their schooling.

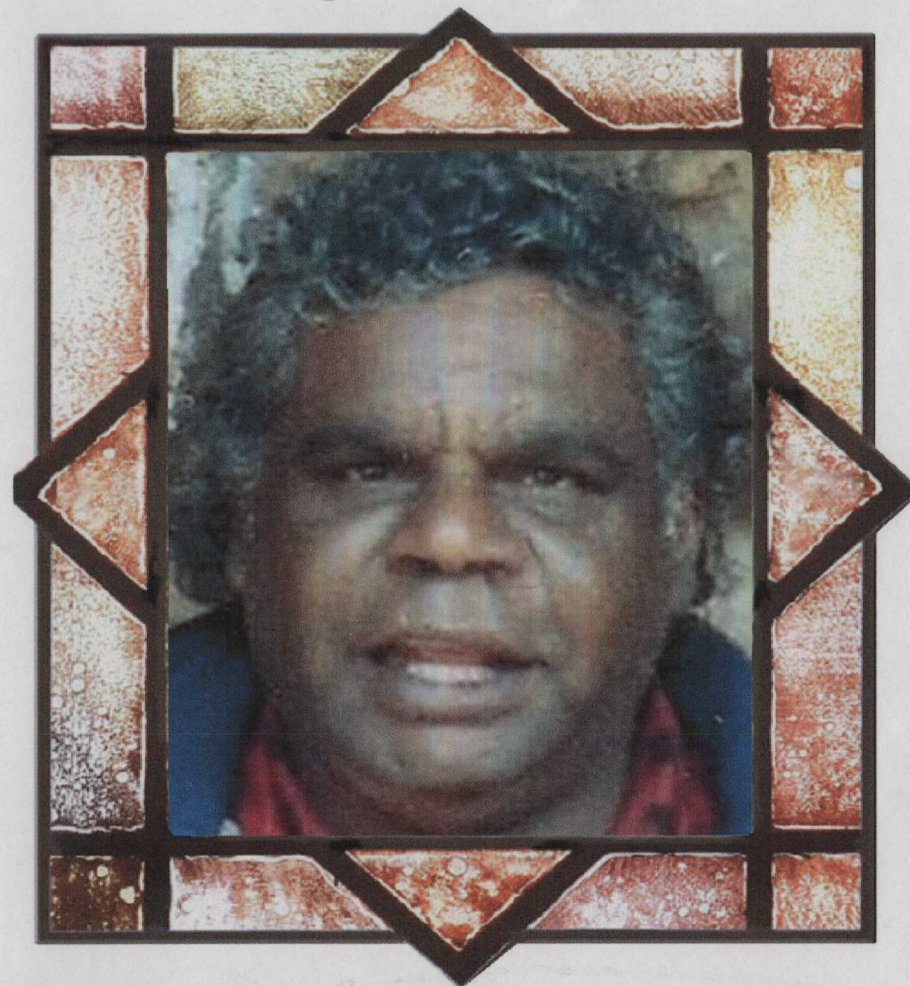
Leroy passed away very suddenly but peacefully in his sleep at his home in Gurra alongside the River Murray. He is mourned and sadly missed by his wife and daughters, his sister Lorraine, brother-in-law Ken, mother-in-law Dora, Auntie Gertie, nephews and nieces Graham, Alison, Sally, Brett and their children, by the many other family members that he called aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, cousins, in-laws, nieces and nephews and by all who knew and loved him.



Think of me when you're lonely,
Think of me when you're blue,
Think of me when you're far away,
Cause I'll be thinking of you.

*Thank you for attending today's service to celebrate
the life of our dearly beloved family member. We
invite you to join us at the Copley Cemetery and then
for refreshments at the Copley Hall*

*In loving memory of
Leroy Dennis Richards*



11.9.52 – 2.11.2003



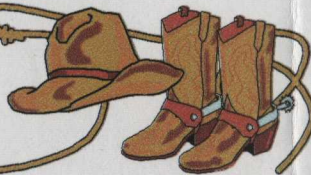
Born in Leigh Creek on September 11th 1952. Leroy was the 2nd born child of Andrew and Grace Richards (nee Coulthard). Brother to Randolph (dec'd) & Lorraine. Husband of Rosalie and Father of Laura Chandrakanthi (deceased) and Rebecca Grace (twins) and Amanda Joy. He was known to family and friends by several names, including 'Barthi' and 'Cat Man'

Leroy spent much of his early years at Moolawartanha station with his family. His Father was the first GPO licensed Aboriginal Mail run driver in SA, working the Copley to Moolawartanha run. His Parents then both worked on Moolawartanha station for a number

of years. Together with his brother Randolph and sister Lorraine, he had a very happy childhood playing games around their brush shed home and along the Hamilton Creek. Leroy and his older brother would often go hunting with their father, shooting dingoes and trapping rabbits. During his childhood he spent a lot of time at Nepabunna with his Grandmother where he mastered fluent 'Yura Ngawarla'. He also learnt many traditional songs and stories from the homelands of both of his parents. Throughout his life he sought out and listened to his Elders and became very knowledgeable about his heritage and culture.

His knowledge and incredible memory was, up until his passing, respected and often sought after by Yuras and Udneyus. Leroy developed a great love for and an intimate knowledge of the Yarta and Muda of both his Mother and Father. Other places where the family lived were Leigh Creek Station, Mt. Serle, Blinman, Parachilna, Hawker and Port Augusta. One of the real highlights of his life occurred when his Father took his Brother and himself on a number of visits to the Pukatua Ochre mine in the mid 1960s, training them to take over his custodianship of that important site and Muda. One of his great desires was to see this knowledge recorded. From 1999 to 2002 he spent time recording this information with his wife Rosalie, his oldest Brother and a number of Anthropologists/Linguists and has left a lasting legacy with these records. Story telling in schools, leading school bush trips and working on a number of Operation Flinders expeditions were ways he could both enjoy the company of young people and pass on his culture. He had commenced a book of his early memories and experiences and was recently excited to be asked to contribute a Yura perspective to a book planned about stations worked on by his Grandfather, father and himself.

*You will be loving remembered,
forever in our hearts*



At 14 he commenced work at Gidgealpa Station, finding it very hard to leave his wider family network behind. Over the next 17 years he embarked on a plan to extend his knowledge of his Grandparents' Lands. This included time in the Lakes and Desert country of his Grandmother Minnie, the Central Flinders of his Grandfather Percy and the Northern Flinders of his Mother's family. His plan was to not work too long in one place but to move around his Yarta taking in all that the Land teaches. Leroy developed a photographic memory of the Land's formation and could always tell you about a particular place in graphic detail or identify sites from photos. His memory of people and events was also amazing.

His work included stockman, head stockman, shearer, mustering, horse breaking, droving, surveyor's assistant, fencing supervisor, camp cook, railway construction worker, fettler, and trench digger, at stations such as Innamincka, Balcanoona, Leigh Creek, Nilpena, Puttapa, Willapa, Wooltana, Moolooloo, Mt Fitton, Wertaloona, Murnpeowie, Frome Downs, Umberatanha and at Port Augusta, Kitchener and Leigh Creek town.

At the age of 31, Leroy met his future wife, Rosalie, while she was Principal of Nepabunna School. The whole community there and at Mt Serle station acted as matchmakers, while she fell in love with his laugh and smile, his love of family and children, his guitar playing, his respect for his culture and his intelligent discussion of a huge range of subjects. They were married in the Riverland and lived there for the remainder of Leroy's life, close to Rosalie's family and work as teacher and Principal. Their three children were born: Laura (deceased) and Rebecca, followed by Amanda, and brought enormous joy into his life. He took great delight in each moment spent with them and in his very close relationship with them. He remained very proud of his daughters, of their essence and their achievements.

For 15 years, Leroy undertook a totally new role as fruit-grower, with its many and varied tasks, on their two properties. In his last four years, he undertook work on a casual basis, at Berri Ltd. He then enjoyed acting as a cannery hand in the filming of "Peaches", having many chats to the stars.

Music was very important to Leroy, who loved singing and listening to Country Music, playing by ear brilliant guitar, piano accordion and banjo, and even tinkering successfully with violin and piano. He was a popular entertainer at the Country Music Festivals at Barmera and Mildura, winning a number of awards both there and at the national Aboriginal Country Music Festival. He played guitar with Tommy Emmanuel and Barry Thornton who both remembered and commented on this, years later. Leroy's arrangement of one song was used by Barry Thornton in accompanying Slim Dusty in Concert and recordings. He was a noted horse-rider, including riding successfully in a number of rodeos and continued to love the atmosphere and skills of the rodeo. Good at sports, he remembered success in school athletics and cross country events. While working one year at the railways in Port Augusta, he played football and was soon promoted to the A Grade Spencer Gulf League Team (South Augusta). He now loved to watch the football, especially his team, the Crows!

