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Australian Institute of Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander Studies

Finding aid

MYLES_H01

**Sound recordings collected by
Helen Myles, 1999.**

ACCESS

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SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Date: 1999

Extent: 8 audiocassettes (approximately 90 minutes each)

Production history

This collection was deposited with AIATSIS on 18 July, 2001.

The field interviews were undertaken in 1999 under instruction from Helen Myles, by Libby Morgan and Kerry Klimm. The project was funded by the Queensland Community Heritage Grants Program within the Environment Protection Agency.

The project was conceived following a workshop held by the Apunipima Cape York Health Council and Cairns Base Hospital in 1997, which focussed on how older women from the Aurukun, Lockhart River and Kowanyama communities could assist younger women during pregnancy and following the birth. It became apparent during the workshop that traditional Indigenous knowledge surrounding pregnancy and childbirth was in need of protecting and preserving and that this could also assist with providing more culturally appropriate health care to Aboriginal mothers from the region.

A publication resulting from this research entitled 'Saving the knowledge: Memories of traditional birthing in Cape York', which was distributed to educational and medical institutions, as well as medical staff, at the request of the women who were interviewed.

RELATED MATERIAL

Important: before you click on any links in this section, please read our [sensitivity message](#).

The culmination of the interviews, a pamphlet entitled [*Saving the Knowledge: Memories of traditional birthing in Cape York*](#) is held in the AIATSIS library.

For a complete listing of related material held by AIATSIS, consult our [online catalogue](#), Mura®. To conduct a search of available audio finding aids, please [click here](#).

ARCHIVIST'S NOTE

This finding aid was compiled from information provided by Helen Myles and audition sheets prepared by AIATSIS staff.

Timing points may be slightly out depending on the technologies and procedures in place at the time the recordings were auditioned.

ITEM LIST

Archive number	Field recording number	Description
<u>MYLES_H01_036389</u>	Tape 1, side A (no side B)	Interviews with Rebecca Wolmby, Bertha Yungkaporta and Peggy Kelinda at Aurukun, 1999
<u>MYLES_H01_036390</u>	Tape 2, side A	Interviews with Cissy Rocky and Minnie Pascoe at Lockhart River, 1999
<u>MYLES_H01_036391</u>	Tape 2, side B	Interview with Dorothy Short at Lockhart River, 1999
<u>MYLES_H01_036392</u>	Tape 3, side A (no side B)	Interview with Minnie Pascoe at Lockhart River, 1999
<u>MYLES_H01_036393</u>	Tape 4, side A	Interview with Maria Butcher at Lockhart River, 1999
<u>MYLES_H01_036394</u>	Tape 4, side B	Interview with Winnie Claudie at Lockhart River, 1999
<u>MYLES_H01_036395</u>	Tape 5, side A (no side B)	Interview with Maria Aiden at Kowanyama, 1999
<u>MYLES_H01_036396</u>	Tape 6, side A	Interview with Maria Aiden at Kowanyama, 1999
<u>MYLES_H01_036397</u>	Tape 6, side B	Interview with Priscilla Major at Kowanyama, 1999
<u>MYLES_H01_036398</u>	Tape 7, side A	Interview with Rebecca Wolmby at Aurukun, 1999
<u>MYLES_H01_036399</u>	Tape 7, side B	Interviews with Bertha Yungkaporta and Peggy Kelinda at Aurukun, 1999
<u>MYLES_H01_036900</u>	Tape 8, side A	Interviews with Winnie Claudie, Cissy Rocky and Minnie Pascoe at Lockhart River, 1999
<u>MYLES_H01_036901</u>	Tape 8, side B	Interviews with Dorothy Short and Maria Butcher at Lockhart River, 1999

ITEM DESCRIPTIONS

MYLES_H01_036389

Performer/speaker(s):	Rebecca Wolmby, Bertha Yungkaporta, Peggy Kelinda.
Personal subject(s):	-
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history; Reproduction; Reproduction – childbirth; Food – Bush tucker; Indigenous knowledge – Health and medicine
Language/people:	English
Places:	Aurukun (Qld NW Cape York SD54-07)
Recording quality:	Fair - a little fuzzy at points and with some feedback
Notes:	RESTRICTED, WOMEN ONLY

Timing point	Description
	<u>Interview with Rebecca Wolmby (RW), Aurukun, 1999.</u>
00:00:00	Archive announcement.
00:00:08	Pause.
00:00:13	RW speaks of how women used to give birth in the old days and the role of the expectant mother's mother. She speaks of her own birth.
00:01:45	RW speaks of the female relatives involved in the birthing process.
00:02:10	RW speaks of tasks pregnant women were not allowed to undertake, and foods they avoided eating.
00:03:30	RW speaks about how the place to give birth was chosen.
00:03:57	RW speaks of there being no particular ceremonies once the baby was born.
00:04:10	RW speaks of the actual birthing process, and the separate roles of the women involved in the process. She notes that no bush medicine was used.
00:06:20	RW notes that they never had any problems on the old days. Today, mothers fly to Cairns base hospital.
00:07:36	RW speaks of post-birthing practices, including what was done with the umbilical cord and afterbirth, and how new mothers encouraged milk to flow.
00:14:35	RW speaks of the umbilical cord, and the naming practices, as well as when the father of the child is informed.
00:16:40	RW speaks of expecting mothers avoiding waterholes.
00:17:36	Pause.
00:17:45	<u>Interview with Bertha Yungkaporta (BY), at Aurukun, 1999.</u>
00:17:50	BY speaks of her own experiences of giving birth to her children.
00:19:52	BY speaks of pregnant women not being allowed to carry heavy items and of food restrictions for pregnant women.
00:21:34	BY speaks of how relatives assisted the pregnant woman with domestic tasks and obtaining food.
00:22:43	BY speaks of her own relatives' involvement in her pregnancy and birth.
00:25:13	BY speaks of how to encourage breast milk to flow, and the post-natal care for the mother, as well as the treatment of the afterbirth.
00:27:22	BY discusses when it is appropriate for the father to meet the child, and how long he

	must wait after the birth until he is allowed to move back home.
00:29:15	BY speaks of the role of female relatives during childbirth.
00:30:40	Pause.
00:30:43	<u>Interview with Peggy Kelinda (PK), at Arukun, 1999.</u>
00:30:52	PK speaks of the differences between childbirth in the old days compared to now. She also discusses her own experiences, and involvement of her female relatives.
00:33:30	PK speaks of post-birth practices relating to the umbilical cord and afterbirth.
00:35:16	PK speaks of activities which were off limits to pregnant women, as well as acceptable activities, and the relatives involved in maintaining this.
00:37:35	PK discusses how long the new father and his sisters must wait before seeing the child, and how the relatives meet the baby.
00:39:42	PK speaks of the treatment of the afterbirth, and its significance in linking the baby to the land.
00:40:32	PK speaks of how to encourage milk production.
00:42:43	Interviewer asks about importance of going back to old ways of giving birth. PK notes that the older women would be willing to help, but the younger girls are hesitant.
00:43:52	PK speaks of painting the baby, and food restrictions for the expectant mother.
00:46:01	PK speaks of breastfeeding.
00:46:52	End of archive tape 036389, field tape 1, side A.

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MYLES_H01_036390

Performer/speaker(s):	Cissy Rocky, Minnie Pascoe
Personal subject(s):	-
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history; Reproduction; Reproduction – childbirth; Food – Bush tucker; Indigenous knowledge – Health and medicine
Language/people:	English
Places:	Lockhart River (Qld NE Cape York SD54-04)
Recording quality:	Good – some minimal background noise
Notes:	RESTRICTED – WOMEN ONLY

Timing point	Description
	<u>Interview with Cissy Rocky (CR), and Minnie Pascoe (MP), Lockhart River, 1999.</u>
00:00:00	Archive announcement.
00:00:07	Pause.
00:00:11	Interviewer introduces the topic of childbirth on the old days. CR speaks of how babies were delivered back then, and the signs of pregnancy.
00:02:27	CR speaks of the foods pregnant women were not allowed to eat.
00:05:52	CR notes that she was born at Portland Road.
00:07:20	CR mentions the relatives that attended her mother during childbirth, and their role in assisting the expectant mother, including provision of bush medicine.
00:08:30	CR speaks of calling the name of the baby to encourage it to come out.
00:12:00	CR explains that men are not allowed near during the labour.
00:13:07	CR speaks of father being notified, and his family.
00:13:31	CR discusses how the other women used bush medicine to assist the new mother to heal.
00:15:20	Interviewer asks what happened if there was a problem? CR speaks of using bush medicine, and keeping the father away until the mother and child were healthy.
00:15:50	CR speaks of the child growing up, and again of keeping the father away.
00:17:32	CR speaks of when the father could see the baby.
00:18:40	CR speaks of the father bringing food or gifts for the mother and baby following childbirth, but not being allowed to interfere.
00:20:13	CR speaks of her own experiences of giving birth to her children.
00:22:34	Interviewer asks about the importance of continuing with the older ways of childbirth. CR speaks of how important it is to walk around, and stay active, importance of being fit and healthy.
00:23:33	Interviewer asks about the position the mother takes for the birth. CR speaks about the mother moving around, to encourage the baby to come soon.
00:24:47	CR speaks again of calling the baby's name during childbirth and of the assistance from elders.
00:26:16	CR discusses using hot flat rocks from the fire as part of the healing process following childbirth.
00:27:25	CR speaks of encouraging milk production and breast feeding.
00:28:40	CR notes the signs of pregnancy
00:30:11	End of archive tape 036390, field tape 2, side A.

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MYLES_H01_036391

Performer/speaker(s):	Dorothy Short
Personal subject(s):	-
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history; Reproduction; Reproduction – childbirth; Food – Bush tucker; Indigenous knowledge – Health and medicine
Language/people:	English, Umpila (Y45) people
Places:	Lockhart River (Qld NE Cape York SD54-04)
Recording quality:	Good
Notes:	RESTRICTED – WOMEN ONLY

Timing point	Description
	<u>Interview with Dorothy Short (DS), Lockhart River, 1999.</u>
00:00:00	Archive announcement
00:00:07	Pause.
00:00:14	DS introduces herself and notes that she is an Umpila (Y45) woman.
00:00:41	DS speaks of what it was like giving birth in the old days, and of having her first son. She discusses the process of childbirth, and the post-natal care given to the mother.
00:03:13	Interviewer asks about how the process helped to ease the pain. DS notes that the pain went after having given birth. Hot stones were used to ease the pain and she speaks of the treatment of the umbilical cord.
00:04:50	DS discusses the foods that she was not allowed to eat when pregnant, as well as domestic tasks.
00:07:33	DS notes that there was not any bush medicine to help a woman through labour, rather, medicine was only used afterwards if the mother was sick following childbirth. She describes some of the medicines, and the process for making them.
00:09:27	DS speaks of the women calling the baby's name until it comes out. She speaks of restrictions on speaking to someone of that same name and says that a gift exchange must occur prior to interaction with them again.
00:10:39	DS mentions that she gave birth in the village in a bark house on the ground.
00:11:17	Interviewer asks about the men – DS explains that no men are allowed near the house until the baby has been born.
00:12:20	Interviewer asks about what would happen with problems during childbirth. DS says she never had any problems, and was never sick as the older ladies were caring for her.
00:12:53	DS notes that there was no ceremony following the birth.
00:13:18	DS speaks of how to encourage breast milk production.
00:14:07	Interviewer asks whether the father did anything specific when he first saw the baby. DS explains that there was a difference in protocol between if the woman was single or married.
00:15:12	DS speaks of the best position to give birth in and of the assistance from the older women.
00:16:02	' <i>Pikum</i> ' (spelling?) mentioned – DS explains that this is the basket that is used to bring the warm stones.
00:16:30	DS discusses how a baby's name is chosen and who helps with the task.
00:17:35	DS speaks of her mother's generation.

00:18:25	DS discusses the baby's health in relation to the food eaten.
00:18:58	Interviewer asks about the importance of the old ways of birthing and bringing it into today's ways. DS thinks it is a good thing, as it is hard for young women to travel to Cairns hospital to give birth.
00:22:05	DS explains that nowadays the pregnant women just go where they want, whereas she was expected to stay at home, and not go out, until she had the baby.
00:23:05	End of 036391, field tape 2, side B.

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MYLES_H01_036392

Performer/speaker(s):	Minnie Pascoe
Personal subject(s):	-
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history; Reproduction; Reproduction – childbirth; Food – Bush tucker; Indigenous knowledge – Health and medicine
Language/people:	English
Places:	Lockhart River (Qld NE Cape York SD54-04)
Recording quality:	Good
Notes:	RESTRICTED – WOMEN ONLY

Timing point	Description
	<u>Interview with Minnie Pascoe (MP), Lockhart River, 1999.</u>
00:00:00	Archive Announcement
00:00:07	Pause.
00:00:09	MP introduces herself and speaks of her pregnancy, and foods she was not allowed to eat.
00:01:25	MP discusses the older women assisting the mother-to-be during childbirth, and of calling the baby's name until it came out.
00:04:32	MP speaks of the time immediately following the birth – cutting the cord, and what is done with the afterbirth.
00:05:05	MP speaks of the use of warm, flat stones and of washing the new mother.
00:06:31	MP speaks of the father not seeing the baby until it is bigger, and of breast feeding.
00:08:45	Interviewer asks about who would be a midwife? MP explains that they look after the mothers, and mentions her mother.
00:09:45	MP speaks of the importance of eating the right food, and having the right women there during labour, in relation to the health of the baby.
00:10:56	MP speaks of the importance of this knowledge for the young girls to hear.
00:12:06	MP is asked how to look after the baby when hunting? She talks of her parents spending time with the baby.
00:13:10	MP agrees that the children were healthy because of what she did, and because she looked after them so well.
00:14:23	Interviewer asks about how the father found out the gender of the baby? MP notes that they were told afterwards.
00:15:08	End of 039392, Field Tape 3, side A.

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MYLES_H01_036393

Performer/speaker(s):	Maria Butcher
Personal subject(s):	-
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history; Reproduction; Reproduction – childbirth; Food – Bush tucker; Indigenous knowledge – Health and medicine
Language/people:	English
Places:	Lockhart River (Qld NE Cape York SD54-04)
Recording quality:	Good, other than some distortion initially
Notes:	RESTRICTED – WOMEN ONLY

Timing point	Description
	<u>Interview with Maria Butcher (MB), Lockhart River, 1999.</u>
00:00:00	Archive Announcement.
00:00:07	Pause.
00:00:11	Interviewer introduces MB and notes the topic of the interview as traditional birthing practices. MB states her name, and place of birth as Old Lockhart.
00:00:44	Tape distortion issues, starts again with introduction.
00:00:50	MB speaks of food restrictions for the pregnant woman, and explains an overview of the practice of giving birth, including who is allowed near the mother, how the baby is coaxed out, and the use of warm stones for the mother. She also discusses the umbilical cord.
00:05:50	MB describes the process for making a cot from palm tree and lawyer cane.
00:06:32	MB speaks further about the labour, including the sitting position for the midwives and mother. She discusses the afterbirth, and again of the umbilical cord.
00:09:00	MB discusses traditional birth control methods.
00:10:18	MB speaks of childbirth being free of issues in the old days.
00:10:50	MB discusses breastfeeding.
00:11:54	MB speaks of how a mother should be positioned when giving birth.
00:12:53	MB discusses the possibility of women returning to the old ways of giving birth.
00:14:20	MB speaks generally of midwives.
00:15:35	MB explains the importance of recording this information.
00:16:50	MB speaks of how to bathe the mother following the birth, and wash the baby.
00:17:50	MB discusses who could see the child and when – in particular, relating to whether the father and mother of the newborn were married or not.
00:18:58	MB speaks of the places where women used to give birth, prior to modern housing. She also discusses how the midwives kept the husbands away during labour.
00:21:14	MB speaks of her sister-in-law's experience of giving birth.
00:21:40	MB briefly discusses godparents, and then continues to talk of foods that are allowed or off limits for the mother.
0:24:00	End of 036393, Tape 4, side A.

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MYLES_H01_036394

Performer/speaker(s):	Winnie Claudie
Personal subject(s):	-
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history; Reproduction; Reproduction – childbirth; Food – Bush tucker; Indigenous knowledge – Health and medicine
Language/people:	English
Places:	Lockhart River (Qld NE Cape York SD54-04)
Recording quality:	Good
Notes:	RESTRICTED – WOMEN ONLY

Timing point	Description
	<u>Interview with Winnie Claudie (WC), Lockhart River, 1999.</u>
00:00:00	Archive Announcement.
00:00:07	Pause.
00:00:25	Interviewer introduces the interview topic as oral history relating to traditional childbirth practices.
00:00:33	WC speaks of her own experiences when she gave birth to her first child.
00:03:21	Interviewer asks about foods she was not allowed to eat when pregnant. WC recalls that she ate everything when pregnant. Following prompting from the interviewer, WC remembers that she was not allowed to eat meat from large animals.
00:05:35	WC explains the significance of the midwife calling out a name during labour to coax the baby out.
00:06:26	WC speaks of sitting positions during labour, and of post-labour care.
00:07:10	WC discusses what was done with the umbilical cord following birth.
00:08:12	WC speaks of how to encourage milk production in new mothers.
00:09:42	WC elaborates upon of when the father could see the new baby.
00:10:59	WC considers whether young women should go back to the old ways of giving birth.
00:12:00	WC explains why she feels that people were healthier in the old days.
00:12:29	WC recollects advice from her mother, and speaks of her children.
00:13:26	End of 036394, Field Tape 4, side B.

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MYLES_H01_036395

Performer/speaker(s):	Maria Aiden, Priscilla Major
Personal subject(s):	-
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history; Reproduction; Reproduction – childbirth; Food – Bush tucker; Indigenous knowledge – Health and medicine
Language/people:	English
Places:	Kowanyama (Qld NW Cape York SD54-15)
Recording quality:	Fair to good
Notes:	RESTRICTED – WOMEN ONLY

Timing point	Description
	<u>Interview with Maria Aiden (MA), Kowanyama, 1999.</u>
00:00:00	Archive announcement.
00:00:07	Pause.
00:00:10	MA introduces herself and her birthplace.
00:00:25	MA discusses restricted foods for pregnant women.
00:01:45	MA speaks of asking her grandmother, and her cousin (who was a midwife) to be present at the birth of her first child.
00:03:15	MA speaks of the actual birth, including the best position for the mother to be in, how to coax the baby out and calling of a family member's name.
00:04:48	MA speaks of post-birth practices, including healing the mother, what is done with the afterbirth and umbilical cord and when men are allowed to meet the newborn.
00:08:27	MA discusses the link between the expecting mother eating healthy foods leading to a healthy baby.
00:09:00	MA speaks of when and how the other family members meet the newborn.
00:11:25	MA agrees that the food back then lead to healthier babies.
00:11:42	MA speaks of techniques used to encourage milk production, and the duration of breastfeeding.
00:12:45	Interviewer asks about any particular ceremonies that were conducted following the birth. MA discusses this briefly.
00:13:18	Pause, followed by very faint discussion.
00:13:45	<u>Tape cuts to interview with Priscilla Major (PM) about traditional birthing practices.</u>
00:13:50	PM speaks of food restrictions when pregnant.
00:14:56	PM discusses conversations she had with her grandmother and the older women about birthing practices and speaks of the midwives and their role. She also recollects a time she wanted to see her new niece but was not allowed.
00:18:26	Tape distortion.
00:18:29	PM speaks of who an expectant mother can share food with, and tells a story of when she and her cousin's wife were both pregnant. PM explains what 'running foot' means.
00:22:15	Loud beep on tape, followed by a discussion about calling a name during labour, and further discussion about who a pregnant woman should not share food with.
00:23:43	PM speaks of care for the mother following the birth, and infection prevention.
00:25:25	Tape distortion, then PM explains the process of promising a child to a future husband.
00:28:29	PM discusses when a father can first see his child, tasks he is allowed to undertake and of some ceremonies and celebrations that were undertaken following the birth back in

	the old days.
00:30:48	PM speaks of the birthing process, including who was present at the time, and how the mother and midwives would be positioned.
00:32:25	Interviewer clarifies with PM who an expecting mother is able to eat with.
00:34:33	PM speaks of digging a hole to deliver the baby in the old days and discusses several different ways of healing the mother following the birth, including the use of particular fungi, and blady grass. PM discusses what happened when a young girl came of age.
00:38:56	PM speaks of when the baby is bought back from hospital.
00:40:42	End of 036395, Field tape 5, side A.

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MYLES_H01_036396

Performer/speaker(s):	Maria Aiden
Personal subject(s):	-
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history; Reproduction; Reproduction – childbirth; Food – Bush tucker; Indigenous knowledge – Health and medicine
Language/people:	English
Places:	Kowanyama (Qld NW Cape York SD54-15)
Recording quality:	Good
Notes:	RESTRICTED – WOMEN ONLY

Timing point	Description
	<u>Interview with Maria Aiden (MA), Kowanyama, 1999</u>
00:00:00	Archive announcement.
00:00:07	Pause.
00:00:09	MA introduces herself and her birthplace.
00:00:28	MA speaks of food she was not allowed to eat whilst pregnant, and what she was allowed to eat instead.
00:01:55	MA speaks of who is called for when a woman goes into labour, and of the midwives more generally. She discusses her own experiences and the midwives who attended her, as well as the position she gave birth in.
00:05:20	MA speaks of the post-natal practices, what is done with the afterbirth, and of the mother.
00:06:14	MA discusses the process of coaxing the baby out during labour, including calling the name and the issues of the baby 'running foot'.
00:08:33	MA speaks of what is done with the umbilical cord and afterbirth.
00:10:43	MA describes how the midwife cleans the new mother following the birth.
00:11:20	MA discusses when the father was allowed to see the baby.
00:12:08	MA notes the link between healthy traditional food and the health of the baby.
00:12:40	MA speaks of introducing the newborn to the rest of the family.
00:14:19	MA speaks of the father of the newborn child.
00:15:33	Interviewer asks about where women would give birth before houses.
00:16:00	MA speaks of the importance for younger generations to understand the old ways.
00:16:50	MA agrees that the babies were healthier in the old days as a result of the foods they ate.
00:17:03	MA speaks of how the women would encourage milk production, and the length of time babies would be breastfed.
00:18:12	MA speaks of bush bangles being worn by the mother.
00:19:13	End of 036396, field tape 6, side A.

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MYLES_H01_036397

Performer/speaker(s):	Priscilla Major
Personal subject(s):	-
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history; Reproduction; Reproduction – childbirth; Food – Bush tucker; Indigenous knowledge – Health and medicine
Language/people:	English
Places:	Kowanyama (Qld NW Cape York SD54-15)
Recording quality:	Good
Notes:	RESTRICTED – WOMEN ONLY

Timing point	Description
	<u>Interview with Priscilla Major (PM), Kowanyama, 1999.</u>
00:00:00	Archive announcement.
00:00:07	Pause.
00:00:13	PM introduces herself.
00:00:20	PM speaks of what could and could not be eaten by pregnant women.
00:02:08	PM speaks of having her first son in Cairns, and her eldest cousin being present.
00:03:03	PM recounts the stories her grandmother used to tell her about pregnancy in the old days, and describes the role of the midwives. She also recollects the day her eldest niece was born.
00:08:08	PM discusses placing the babies ‘toe to toe’ with other people, and speaks of ‘running foot’ with other family members. She speaks of being pregnant at the same time as her cousin’s wife.
00:13:20	PM speaks of which relatives a pregnant woman can or cannot share food with.
00:13:56	PM speaks of the age of the women a pregnant woman has around her during labour.
00:14:53	PM speaks of how infections are prevented following the birth.
00:17:40	PM explains the context of the bands used when the baby is promised to someone, and the use of the bangles.
00:21:12	PM discusses when the father can see the baby and speaks of her own experiences. She also discusses limitations on what the father can assist with based on the gender of the baby.
00:26:22	PM discusses the birthing process, in terms of who is present, and how they help. She also relates a story about how her older sister had to help deliver a baby.
00:30:09	PM recaps who an expecting mother can eat with and who she should avoid eating with.
00:32:17	PM speaks again on what was done with the afterbirth following the birth. She again discusses post-birth care for the mother, and how she learnt midwifery skills. She explains what happened when young girls came of age.
00:37:32	PM discusses a ritual which happens once a baby is brought back from the hospital, to ensure that they won’t be disobedient or greedy as they grow up.
00:40:44	End of 036397, Field tape 6, Side A.

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MYLES_H01_036398

Performer/speaker(s):	Rebecca Wolmby
Personal subject(s):	-
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history; Reproduction; Reproduction – childbirth; Food – Bush tucker; Indigenous knowledge – Health and medicine
Language/people:	English
Places:	Aurukun (Qld NW Cape York SD54-07)
Recording quality:	Good
Notes:	RESTRICTED – WOMEN ONLY

Timing point	Description
	<u>Interview with Rebecca Wolmby (RW), Aurukun, 1999.</u>
00:00:00	Archive announcement.
00:00:06	Pause.
00:00:09	RW introduces herself.
00:00:40	RW speaks of giving birth in the old days. She gives an overview of the role of the pregnant woman's mother in the birth. RW discusses calling of a name during labour and what is done with the umbilical cord and afterbirth.
00:02:24	RW speaks of her own birthplace.
00:02:45	RW speaks of what to avoid doing when experiencing labour pains, and of pregnant women avoiding going near the water. She also speaks again of the expectant mother relying upon advice from her own mother.
00:04:40	RW discusses how the place to give birth is decided.
00:05:39	Tape distortion, and HM reintroduces RW, and asks how women gave birth in the old days. RW speaks of her own mother giving birth on the beach and of giving birth to her own children at home.
00:07:16	RW speaks of other women present at the birth.
00:07:40	RW discusses tasks a women is not allowed to do while pregnant and the roods that are restricted during this time.
00:09:02	RW explains how a birthplace was chosen.
00:10:03	Interviewer asks about any ceremonies performed around the birth, RW says there were not any.
00:10:15	RW speaks of how the other women would assist during labour.
00:11:17	RW discusses the position the expectant mother gives birth in.
00:12:25	Interviewer asks about any bush medicine used, RW explains that labour was all done naturally with no medicine, and that there were never any problems with the births.
00:13:17	RW speaks of the babies being healthy as a result of everyone eating healthily.
00:14:06	RW speaks of the post-birth care of the mother, bringing out the rest of the afterbirth, and treatment of the umbilical cord.
00:15:54	RW speaks of how milk production was encouraged.
00:17:12	RW discusses how to heal the new mother following the birth.
00:18:15	RW speaks of when the father and other relatives are allowed to see the newborn baby, and the ritual that accompanies this event.
00:20:00	RW speaks of the importance of returning to the old ways of giving birth.
00:21:20	RW discusses naming the baby, based upon the size of the umbilical cord.

00:22:16	RW explains how the father finds out whether he has a little boy or girl.
00:22:45	RW speaks of how to connect the baby to the land.
00:23:26	RW again discusses pregnant women avoiding waterholes.
00:24:50	End of 036398, Field tape 7, side A.

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MYLES_H01_036399

Performer/speaker(s):	Bertha Yungkaporta, Peggy Kelinda
Personal subject(s):	-
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history; Reproduction; Reproduction – childbirth; Food – Bush tucker; Indigenous knowledge – Health and medicine
Language/people:	English
Places:	Aurukun (Qld NW Cape York SD54-07)
Recording quality:	Good
Notes:	RESTRICTED – WOMEN ONLY

Timing point	Description
	<u>Interview with Bertha Yungkaporta, (BY), Aurukun, 1999.</u>
00:00:00	Archive announcement.
00:00:06	Pause.
00:00:09	Interviewer introduces BY. BY speaks of her own experiences giving birth, and how she was assisted by other women during childbirth.
00:03:12	BY discusses tasks she was not allowed to do when pregnant, and foods that were restricted.
00:05:00	BY speaks of the women who helped her when she was pregnant, and how they assisted.
00:08:47	BY speaks of how milk production was encouraged.
00:09:29	BY discusses how the new mother was healed, following the birth.
00:10:07	BY speaks about what was done with the afterbirth.
00:10:57	BY discusses when the father was allowed to hold the baby for the first time, and when he is allowed back in the house.
00:12:54	BY discusses the importance of returning to the old ways of giving birth.
00:14:04	BY speaks of giving birth as painful, and the importance of having other women present, to ensure that the expectant mother was well taken care of.
00:16:22	BY notes that she had her baby at home, not out in the bush, that she was healthy, and so was her baby.
00:17:06	BY discusses the possibility of the women giving birth at home again, but notes that it is different now.
00:18:03	<u>Interview with Peggy Kelinda (PK), at Aurukun, 1999.</u>
00:18:13	PK speaks of the differences between giving birth in the old days and now, and describes her own experiences.
00:22:49	PK explains the tasks a mother was not allowed to undertake while pregnant and the foods that were restricted to her during this time.
00:28:05	PK speaks of the women who assisted her during labour and who decided where she would give birth.
00:29:00	PK speaks of the husband moving out during this time, and of those who were not allowed nearby during labour.
00:30:15	PK discusses the process by which other family members met the newborn.
00:31:55	PK describes how the women assisted during labour.
00:32:50	PK speaks of the baby being connected to the land via the umbilical cord. She explains the process following the birth undertaken to connect the baby to the land.

00:33:40	PK discusses how to encourage production of breast milk.
00:36:30	PK discusses the importance of returning to the old ways of giving birth and of telling these stories.
00:39:27	PK discusses the prospect of women giving birth at home, rather than flying to Cairns Regional Hospital.
00:40:42	PK expresses concern about this information being lost when her generation passes on, and the shyness of young girls of involving the older generation in childbirth.
00:42:45	PK speaks of when the baby is painted.
00:44:54	PK discusses how long the baby stays on breast milk.
00:45:45	End of 036399, Field tape 7, side B.

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MYLES_H01_036900

Performer/speaker(s):	Winnie Claudie, Cissy Rocky, Minnie Pascoe
Personal subject(s):	-
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history; Reproduction; Reproduction – childbirth; Food – Bush tucker; Indigenous knowledge – Health and medicine
Language/people:	English
Places:	Lockhart River (Qld NE Cape York SD54-04)
Recording quality:	Good for Winnie Claudie, fair for Cissy Rocky and Minnie Pascoe (tape is somewhat muffled).
Notes:	RESTRICTED – WOMEN ONLY

Timing point	Description
	<u>Interview with Winnie Claudie (WC), Lockhart River, 1999.</u>
00:00:00	Archive announcement.
00:00:07	Pause.
00:00:14	Interviewer introduces WC and the topic of oral history in relation to Indigenous birthing traditions.
00:00:23	WC recalls having her first baby. She speaks of the women who assisted her.
00:03:10	WC speaks of not knowing of any foods that she was not allowed to eat while pregnant, however, with prompting, remembers that certain meats were restricted.
00:05:17	WC discusses the position to give birth in.
00:05:44	WC speaks of being washed following the birth, and of what was done with the umbilical cord.
00:07:04	WC speaks of how milk production was encouraged.
00:07:47	WC discusses when the father was allowed to see the baby.
00:08:56	Interviewer asks WC how she feels about the younger girls not giving birth like in the old days.
00:09:28	WC speaks about why she thinks that babies were healthier in the old days.
00:09:51	Pause.
00:09:56	<u>Interview with Cissy Rocky (CR), Lockhart River, 1999.</u>
00:10:10	CR explains how babies were delivered in her time, including the first signs of pregnancy.
00:11:35	CR discusses the foods restrictions that were in place while she was pregnant.
00:13:24	CR elaborates upon the women who assisted her mother to give birth, and how they assisted during childbirth.
00:16:37	CR speaks of the people who attended a birth in the old days, and what the men did.
00:17:40	CR discusses notifying the husband's family of the new birth.
00:18:04	CR explains how the older women helped the new mother to heal, following the birth.
00:19:42	Interviewer asks what happened if there was a problem. CR discusses bush medicine and post-birth care practices.
00:20:11	CR discusses where the husband stayed during this time. She also discusses the father's role and tasks he was allowed to undertake.
00:22:20	CR speaks of her experience of giving birth at Lockhart River. She notes that these days, young women go to Cairns to give birth.

00:23:45	CR imparts the importance of continuing with domestic tasks when pregnant and of being fit and healthy, as well as staying mobile.
00:25:26	CR speaks again of the importance of calling the right name during labour, to encourage the baby to come out, and the use of warm, flat rocks.
00:28:34	CR speaks of breastfeeding and how to encourage production of breast milk.
00:29:50	CR speaks of the physical signs of pregnancy.
00:30:52	Pause.
00:31:04	<u>Interview with Minnie Pascoe (MP), Lockhart River, 1999.</u>
00:31:15	MP discusses food restrictions while pregnant.
00:31:59	MP speaks of her experience of childbirth and who assisted her.
00:32:37	MP explains how the other women assisted during labour and the practice of calling a name to coax the baby out.
00:33:36	MP speaks of the umbilical cord and afterbirth.
00:34:45	MP discusses care of the mother following the birth.
00:35:30	MP imparts how long it was until the father saw the newborn baby.
00:35:45	MP speaks of how milk production was encouraged and of breastfeeding.
00:37:12	MP discusses the importance of passing this knowledge on.
00:37:43	Pause.
00:37:57	MP continues on.
00:38:15	Tape cuts out suddenly. End of 036900, Field tape 8, side A

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MYLES_H01_036901

Performer/speaker(s):	Dorothy Short, Maria Butcher
Personal subject(s):	-
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history; Reproduction; Reproduction – childbirth; Food – Bush tucker; Indigenous knowledge – Health and medicine
Language/people:	English, Umpila (Y45) people
Places:	Lockhart River (Qld NE Cape York SD54-04)
Recording quality:	Good
Notes:	RESTRICTED – WOMEN ONLY

Timing point	Description
	<u>Interview with Dorothy Short (DS), Lockhart River, 1999.</u>
00:00:00	Archive announcement.
00:00:06	Pause.
00:00:15	DS introduces herself, and speaks of belonging to the Umpila (Y45) group.
00:00:37	DS speaks generally of giving birth in the old days, and mentions the positions of the women assisting the mother during labour, as well as the practices during and following labour. She also touches on the importance of breast milk for the newborn.
00:03:05	DS speaks of techniques which eased the pain.
00:04:23	DS discusses the foods she was not allowed to eat when pregnant and why, and of tasks she was not allowed to undertake at this time.
00:06:22	DS discusses the use of bush medicine following the birth.
00:08:10	DS speaks of calling a relative's name out aloud during labour, to encourage the baby to come out.
00:09:29	DS speaks of her own experience of giving birth.
00:10:09	DS discusses the importance of removing all the men from the space during labour.
00:11:12	DS notes that she had no problems with her baby, and no problems following the birth.
00:12:05	DS discusses how to encourage the production of milk.
00:12:53	DS speaks about the role of the father.
00:13:45	DS speaks of the position she thought best for giving birth, the role of older women in caring for the new mother and how this helped ensure a healthy baby and mother.
00:15:12	DS speaks of the importance of reintroducing some of the old ways of birthing and care of the baby today.
00:17:45	Interviewer thanks DS for speaking with her.
00:18:08	Pause.
00:18:19	<u>Interview with Maria Butcher (MB) at Lockhart River, 1999.</u>
00:18:26	MB speaks of the foods pregnant women were not allowed to eat, and gives an overview of pregnancy and childbirth.
00:23:57	MB elaborates upon calling out a name during childbirth, and the role of the midwives.
00:25:38	MB discusses what is done with the cord and afterbirth following the birth.
00:26:15	MB notes that in the old days, there were no problems with the birth, and that the children were healthy.
00:26:50	MB speaks of breastfeeding.

00:27:12	MB explains the position for the mother during labour.
00:28:10	MB notes that she would like the stronger young women these days to return to the older ways of giving birth.
00:29:39	MB speaks about which women can be midwives.
00:33:02	MB explains why recording this information is important.
00:31:18	MB discusses how the mother was bathed following the birth.
00:32:06	MB discusses the making of humpies briefly, and places that women gave birth in.
00:33:03	MB notes that children are given godparents when they are older.
00:33:34	MB discusses foods for the new mother, and those which she avoided.
00:35:25	Tape distortion.
00:36:05	End of 036901, Field Tape 8, side B.

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