

mparntwe ALICE SPRINGS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

How many years have you called Alice Springs home?

Charlie has been in Alice Springs for thirty-seven years (37), and Deb for twenty-two years (22).

What is a moment in your life that profoundly shaped you who you are today, and how did it influence the person you've become?

Charlie says that his support for Aboriginal rights, and subsequent work with Aboriginal people, led to his move to Alice Springs to work in Land Management for the Central Land Council. Deb says that she decided to leave her home on Sydney's northern beaches and move to Alice Springs to be with Charlie.

How do you contribute to your community group, activity, or action?

Though now 'retired' from meetings Charlie has contributed to many local community groups over the years: The Arid Lands Environment Centre, Olive Pink Botanic Garden, the Rangelands Society, and local politics. Charlie was the first person to run supported walking tours on the Larapinta Trail, founding Trek Larapinta in 1998 before the Trail was even complete. When Deb arrived in 2002, she became Charlie's assistant on the Trail and an active member of the vibrant Alice Springs art community. When Charlie sold the trekking business in 2008 (having walked up Mt Sonder about a hundred times), they became Larapinta Creative Camps and Deb stepped into the lead role, running fully supported Camps for interstate artists in remote locations.

What significance does your community group, activity, or action hold?

Though anchored in the Alice Springs community, we (Deb and Charlie) see ourselves as part of a wider community — a web of artists and walkers from all over Australia who have participated in our walks and creative camps. We are ambassadors for Alice Springs. In August this year, we will share our love of Alice Springs on Swedish National Television as a small Centralian part of a documentary series on Australia, and we will be in Sweden to watch it!

What motivates you to volunteer?

We both love introducing people to the unique and compelling beauty and cultural complexity of the Centre. Providing an insight into this region that is different to that represented by most media and tourism. The people we have met through our businesses have developed a deep appreciation and respect for this place in response, some returning many times. These people in turn spread the message of the unique value of Central Australia to their family, friends and colleagues.

What achievements are you most proud of?

As an artist and a scientist, we have brought a special synergy to our roles as tour leaders. We are both trailblazers, first on the Larapinta, and then with our Creative Camps. Supported walks on the Trail are now a huge business with many different operators bringing visitors and dollars to the region in a sustainable way. The Creative Camps was one of the first...

COMMUNITY BUILDER OF THE WEEK

CELEBRATING THOSE WHO STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITY



Photography by: PHIL WILLIAMS

CHARLIE CARTER & DEB CLARKE

creative tourism enterprises in Australia. Now at age 70 and 77, we have retired, but the business is still set to go if someone out there wants to carry on this wonderful creative work and lifestyle.

Anything else you would like to say?

Here in Mparntwe/Alice Springs, we live at the cultural interface. Though it is not always comfortable, it is a privilege. With compassion, cooperation, and compromise this could be the place where reconciliation becomes a living reality, not just an idea. We are also perfectly placed to lead the way in the transition to solar energy. Let's make this town proud!

Explore the Larapinta Creative Camps website to discover the beautiful journey shared over the years.



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO NOMINATE SOMEONE AS THE COMMUNITY BUILDER OF THE WEEK, PLEASE SEND YOUR NOMINATION VIA EMAIL TO: INFO@MASCF.ORG



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ENCOURAGE,
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