

WARUMPI ROCKS

Warumpi Band Just Went Off

'Just went off!' That was the consensus of everyone who attended the 1998 Stompem Ground festival in Broome earlier in July.

And from the very beginning of this story, I would like to say loud and clear. 'There is absolutely NO truth to the rumour that Warumpi Band are breaking up!'

At Stompem Ground, the shining star (as always) was George Diulaynga pictured in full flight on our cover this month. He is a rock star, and (I'm sure you'll agree) is looking better than ever. Anyone who has had the privilege of seeing Warumpi Band live, knows that they do, just that. Go off! And why shouldn't they. Warumpi Band has made history in this country.

Let's reminisce. Out of all the groundbreaking Aboriginal super groups of the 1980's, Warumpi have really and truly stood the test of time. Their following has remained true, as has their music. And their popularity? Well, wherever they may go, in rain or hail or snow, Warumpi Band still plays to capacity crowds. Rumour has it (or fact actually) that the line for autographs was just as long for George and Warumpi Band as it as for Peter Garrett and Midnight Oil. And ask any Aboriginal broadcaster around Australia, who they get the most requests for. I bet it is for Warumpi Band.

Let's go back to 1980. I know that you can all add up, but for the record, the Deadly Vibe record, 1980 was 18 years ago (OK I know that half of you will say you weren't even born)! It was in 1980, that a young Neil Murray arrived from Victoria to take up a position working in support of the growing outstation movement West of Alice Springs. Amongst other things, Neil Murray bought a guitar and an amplifier. Neil met a man called Sammy Butcher and his brother Gordon Butcher and together with other interested young men, they pooled their resources to gradually expand their equipment as well as their music repertoire. The following year (1981) the Warumpi signature rock star, George Dulaynga arrived from Elcho Island in the Top End to step into the lead vocal slot for the Band. By 1982 the band was touring the Northern Territory and West Australia Kimberley region developing their unique sound and original music. Not to mention their fanatic and frenetic audience. In late 1983 they released the first rock track in Aboriginal language (Luritja) entitled '*Jailanguru Pakarnu*' (*out from jail*).

The debut album **Big Name No Blankets** was recorded and released in 1984. The band performed in the major cities promoting the album to much critical acclaim. In 1985 the band toured national as well as in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

Midnight Oil, inspired by the Warumpi's outback touring, embarked on a month-long tour of Aboriginal communities in July 1985. In the Northern Territory, Warumpi Band accompanied them. It was after this particular tour that Warumpi Band recorded **Go Bush**. The strong and respectful relationship between Midnight Oil and Warumpi Band has likewise stood the test of time, and only a month ago, long time friends Peter Garrett and George were singing on the one stage.

The band toured nationally in 1987 to promote the new album that gave us the single 'My Island Home', which has become an indigenous anthem, and of course, more recently a success hit for Christine Anu.

From mid 1987-1992 the band took a break. And it was during this break that Neil Murray released the first of his two solo albums.

In 1985 Warumpi Band toured Europe performing in Germany, France, Poland, Switzerland, Italy and the UK.

In 1996, Warumpi signed to CAAMA music Alice Springs, and since then have revived the magic of the past and continued to go from strength to strength. The next album **Too Much Humbug** (CAAMA Music) was launched as part of the Deadly Sounds Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music Awards in 1996, where the band was presented with the award 'Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Music'.

And 1998 sees Warumpi still going strong and sounding stronger than ever, as any Stompem Ground punter will tell you. They continue to tour, sell albums, and enjoy a following that is now in its second generation.

Warumpi Band, we at Deadly Vibe salute you for all of your history making and success. We look forward to the future and all that is still to come. We anticipate the next time we see you perform live and know that on our network, your music is still the most requested. Congratulations!