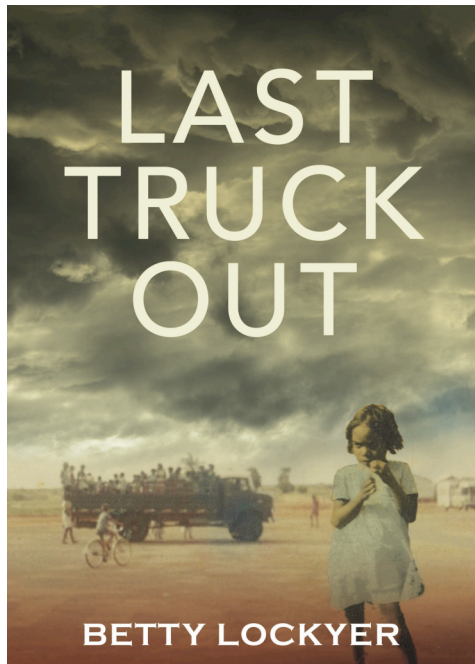


## MEDIA RELEASE

PAPERBACK \$26.95

## LAST TRUCK OUT

Betty Lockyer



Betty Lockyer's mother was heavy with child and on the last truck out. It was the Second World War and families were being evacuated from Broome to Beagle Bay Mission, Betty was born two weeks later.

**Last Truck Out** is an emotional account of Betty Lockyer's life that describes her early school years, as she witnessed children being forcibly removed from their families. Her story reveals the deep hurt caused to displaced and dispossessed Aboriginal people by government policy. With an Aboriginal mother and an Asian father, Lockyer remembers her own family being regulated by these strict assimilation policies.

*"All those children were subjected to the so-called Native Protection Policy and forcibly removed from their families to assimilate in white man's society. The theory was that, in three generations or so, the half-caste and quarter-caste children would be bred out and the Aboriginal problem would no longer exist."*

This brought pain to many Aboriginal people, but Lockyer's story is one of candour and humour that captures the universal resilience of children to live in the moment as she remembers the heady days of her childhood among the mangroves and gambling houses.

Her own achievements saw her summonsed for an audience before the Most Reverend Bishop Otto Raible. For two years he personally sponsored her secondary schooling, 2000 miles away in Perth. Lockyer was to only learn of this when she returned to Broome and the Bishop had returned home to Germany.

*"At assembly, all I could see was a sea of white faces sprinkled with a few brown faces in between. They were the few Asian borders and I believe that I was the only Aboriginal student who had ever attended the school...Even the nuns asked if goats and cattle still ran down the streets and whether the people still ran the donkey drays...I kind of forgave them for their embarrassing questions and ignorance of our Kimberley country."*

**Last Truck Out** tells of a time and place unique to Australia.

Launched in 1987, **Magabala Books** is a not-for-profit Aboriginal Corporation that aims to promote, preserve and publish Indigenous Australian Culture.

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