

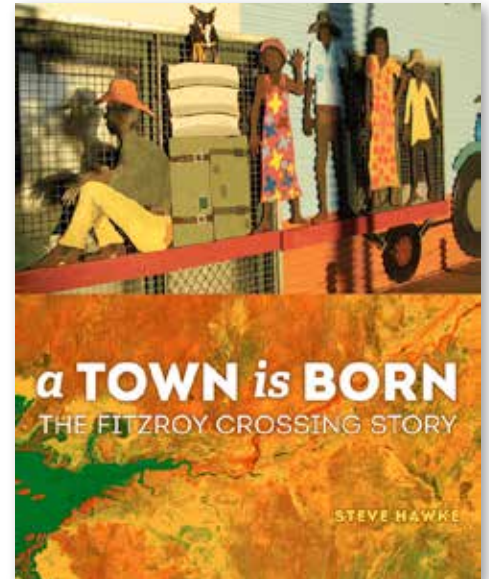
A TOWN IS BORN: THE FITZROY CROSSING STORY

A history of Fitzroy Crossing, with a particular focus on the upheavals of the 1960s following the introduction of the Pastoral Award

Written by Steve Hawke

The 1960s are remembered as a time of change and upheaval throughout the Western world, including Australia. No part of the country changed more in that decade than the remote pastoral regions of the north. But in these tropical parts the winds of change did not bring the anti-war movement, the counterculture, feminism, or the other issues that pre-occupied the cities. Rather, they blew down an industry, a regime, a culture that for the best part of a century had thrived on a semi-feudal system of co-dependence between the all-powerful station bosses, and large communities of unpaid Aboriginal workers and their families.

In the course of a couple of years the township of Fitzroy Crossing in the remote Kimberley changed from a tiny frontier outpost, to a refugee camp with hundreds of people living in fringe camps in third world conditions. From this maelstrom a unique community emerged, with a strong ethos of cooperation and support amongst the various peoples of the Fitzroy Valley.



A Town is Born complements some of Magabala's previously published titles; in particular; *Moola Bulla – In the Shadow of the Mountain*; *Out of the Desert*; *You Call it Desert, We Used to Live Here*; and *Raparapa: Stories from the Fitzroy River Drivers*.



Steve Hawke grew up in Melbourne but found his way to the Northern Territory and then to the Kimberley as a nineteen year old in 1978. Captivated by the country, the history and the people, he stayed for almost fifteen years working for Aboriginal communities and organisations. He now lives in the hills outside Perth, but continues his strong association with the Kimberley, returning most years. His writings on the Kimberley include *Noonkanbah* (1989), *Barefoot Kids* (2007), a children's novel set in Broome, and the play *Jandamarra* that premiered at the Perth International Arts Festival in 2008, and toured the Kimberley in 2011.

A Town is Born will be available from June 2013 in all good bookshops and online from Magabala Books (www.magabala.com) for \$35.00.

Launched in 1987, Magabala Books is a not-for-profit publishing house based in Broome, that aims to promote, preserve and publish Indigenous Australian culture.

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