

# Mungo...



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The Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation respectfully acknowledges the Yaluk-ut Weelam clan of the Boonwurrung Nation who are the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land.

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February 2020

## FROM THE CO-CHAIR

### Boonwurrung Word of the Month:

*Wilny* – fire

'*Wominjeka, Welcome, come with purpose*' to the start of an interesting year with opportunities to be involved in the Reconciliation movement. Surely this is the time to acknowledge and celebrate the fact that we live in a country with 65,000+ years of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history? As this year's NAIDOC theme is Always Was, Always Will Be, there is much to learn and discover. I'll try to keep our members and friends informed about the important events taking place, especially within our supportive City of Port Phillip.

### January 26th

As a sign of changing attitudes about our approach to celebrating our national day on 26 January, many event organisers described the day as being a time for respect and reflection. This was the spirit that from 6.00 am attracted 300+ people to the first ever We-Akon Diiinja (Mourning Reflection) gathering in Alfred Square, St Kilda, hosted by the Boonwurrung Land and Sea Council in partnership with the City of Port Phillip. Inspirational speakers included the Mayor, faith leaders and Boonwurrung Elders. John Wayne-Parsons sang magnificently, there was didgeridoo playing, and the smoking ceremony was a fitting end to a truly beautiful commemoration. May it not be the last. A citizenship ceremony was held in St Kilda Town Hall later that

morning. Elsewhere, large crowds attended Invasion Day events and rallies in and around the city.

Parbin-ata Carolyn Briggs AM officially welcomes guests to We-Akon Diiinja Mourning Reflection, Sunday 26 January.



### Yaluk-ut Weelam Ngargee

This year's free Indigenous arts and cultural festival features Emma Donovan and The Putbacks, Benny Walker, Coloured Stone Official, Kee'ahn, Pirritu Music,

Key Hoo, The Struggling Kings, and Indigenous HIP HOP Projects, plus activities and workshops for all ages, food and market stalls. **Saturday 1 February**, 11.00 am-7.00 pm, O'Donnell Gardens, St Kilda, hosted by City of Port Phillip.

### Congratulations

Judith 'Aunty Jacko' Jackson received the Frances Penington Award at the Victorian Government's Social Housing Volunteer Awards for her outstanding community contribution, and Uncle Jack Charles won the 2018/19 Mark Farmer Award for advocacy in the area of viral hepatitis, particularly in the Indigenous community. Ashleigh Barty was awarded Young Australian of the Year.



PPCfr member Vivienne McCutcheon congratulates Judith 'Aunty Jacko' Jackson for winning the Frances Penington Award.

### Treaty

History was made in our parliament on 10 December when the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria met formally for the first time. More below.

### 2019

We ended an interesting, productive year with a barbecue at Gasworks Arts Park. I enjoyed the chance to catch up with Judith 'Jacko' Jackson, Dennis Fisher, Todd Condie, Jordan and Adam Sutardy, and our members and meet new friends. Photo inside.

### Looking Ahead

I'm pleased to announce we're presenting another Reconciliation Writing Competition for adults, primary and secondary students from across Victoria to submit entries reflecting the NAIDOC 2020 theme - Always Was, Always Will Be. We will also host a lunch to commemorate National Sorry Day in May. New members are always welcome.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday 18 February**, 6.30 pm, South Melbourne Community Hub, Fishley Street, South Melbourne. All Welcome.

## **FIRES AND CULTURAL BURNING PRACTICES**

During the bushfire crisis which engulfed much of Australia, traditional cultural burning practices have been discussed as an alternative to our current fire management practices. Several Aboriginal leaders have urged '*sensitive and practicable*' country management as Prime Minister Scott Morrison puts hazard management in national parks on the agenda for talks with state premiers. In January, the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council released a statement seeking support for all Aboriginal people, '*whose country and cultural wellbeing has been affected by wrong fire.*' '*Fire is a devastating element that brings great danger and great renewal,*' the statement said. Unlike the fires still raging across the south east of the country, some fires can be used to affect strategic change and regeneration.

In May 2019, the Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Fire Strategy identified '*increased risks to life and property*' resulting from the departure from cultural burning practices, as well as '*significant ecological changes to Victoria's natural environment*'. Their strategy outlined how Traditional Owners and agencies could work together to manage '*the right fire, the right way*'. Development of the Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Fire Strategy was funded by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning to support Traditional Owner rights and interests in reintroducing cultural fire to the landscape.

Elsewhere, the Firesticks Alliance Indigenous Corporation want to re-invigorate the use of cultural burning by facilitating cultural learning pathways to fire and land management. Dennis Barber, an Aboriginal cultural fire practitioner and former park ranger with 15 years' professional firefighting experience, started Koori Country Firesticks in 2016. He says Aboriginal people should be better resourced to lead the implementation of cultural burning across NSW and Australia, alongside existing fire authorities. Firesticks provides an opportunity for people to build on the knowledge they already have on country and look for ways to make use of new technologies and understandings. These can then support cultural identity and practice, facilitate training, implement on-ground works and conduct scientific monitoring to establish a greater understanding of the ecological impact of cultural burning practices. Last June, Yorta Yorta people hosted the National Indigenous Fire Workshop with the Firesticks in the Barmah National Park. For further information, visit <https://www.firesticks.org.au> or <https://www.fvtoc.com.au>

## **FIRST NATIONS FIRE RELIEF APPEAL**

Fires striking the east coast of this sacred land have led to significant destruction and loss of masses of flora and fauna, and sadly the lives of peoples. Many First Nations people have been affected by these tragic events with losses of homes and severe damage to property and important parts of the landscape. These communities have been forced to evacuate the regions of their homes and seek temporary, ongoing living arrangements in other parts of Victoria and NSW, so a fundraiser was

initiated by Neil Morris, a Yorta Yorta man who performs as DRMNGNOW. Neil, a community rights and empowerment advocate for fellow First Nations people, said: '*In my work in this capacity, I developed this fundraiser with direct consultation with, and upon the request of, fire-affected First Nations communities across eastern parts of so-called Australia, such as Gippsland and the South Coast of NSW. This includes those who have lost their homes and been forced to evacuate to other regions.*' Details: <https://au.gofundme.com/f/fire-relief-fund-for-first-nations-communities>.

## **VOICE TO PARLIAMENT ADDS MEMBERS**

Indigenous Australians Minister Ken Wyatt announced members of the new national group last month. They include former Victorian premier Jeff Kennett, Fraser government Aboriginal Affairs minister Fred Chaney and Aboriginal media executive Donna Odegaard, who are among sixteen Australians appointed to help establish the details of the Indigenous Voice to government. Dr Odegaard, chief executive of Aboriginal Broadcasting Australia, will co-chair the national co-design group with a senior bureaucrat from the National Indigenous Australians Agency. Others include: Rodney Dillon - a Palawa Elder from Tasmania and Indigenous rights adviser for Amnesty International; Fiona McLeod SC - a lawyer who represented the commonwealth in the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, Queensland Floods Commission and the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sex Abuse; Jamie Lowe - a Djabwurrung man and National Native Title Council chief executive; Gracelyn Smallwood - Indigenous health expert; Richard Weston - Indigenous children's advocate; Cheryl Kickett-Tucker - Indigenous children's author; Katrina Fanning - Australian Rugby League Indigenous Council chairwoman; Damian Griffiths - First Peoples' Disability Network Australia chairperson; Marcus Stewart - co-chair of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria; Kristal Kinsela-Christie - Indigenous businesswoman; Joseph Elu - Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation deputy chair; Zell Dodd - Indigenous health executive; and Steven Wanta Patrick Jampijinpa - Indigenous youth suicide prevention project worker. The co-design process will be guided by Mr Wyatt's senior advisory group, co-chaired by Indigenous leaders Marcia Langton and Tom Calma.

## **TREATY AND RECVIC**

This year will be an important year in the Treaty process with the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria well and truly established, calling for sovereignty and truth in Victorian Treaty negotiations. The Assembly will not negotiate Treaty/ies, instead it will work with the state of Victoria to prepare for Treaty negotiations, including establishing: a *Treaty Authority* (an independent umpire), a *Treaty Negotiation Framework* (a road map to show how local groups can negotiate their own Treaty/ies), and a *Self-determination Fund* (to help build capacity at a local level). The Assembly will begin its major task of setting up a negotiation framework and Treaty umpire, with Victoria venturing down a path that no Australian federal or state government has attempted.

RecVic is proud to have partnered with local Reconciliation groups, local councils and other community groups throughout 2018-19 to engage the broader community in the Treaty journey through Local Treaty Conversations and their Treaty Road Show. Big thanks to Local Reconciliation Groups who held a Local Treaty Conversation – such as Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation – who supported RecVic's Treaty Road Shows. Treaty is for all Victorians – it will benefit all of us. For updates/news, visit [victreatyadvancement.org.au](http://victreatyadvancement.org.au); or [reconciliationvic.org.au](http://reconciliationvic.org.au)

### FIRST NATIONS CLIMATE JUSTICE WALK

First Nations people have long lived in balance with nature. Come together with those who care about our mother Earth to celebrate and learn from the environmental knowledge and practices First Nations people have employed for millennia. Become versed in Indigenous land management, culturally important endangered species and more as you walk in solidarity to help protect and care for our precious planet. Royal Botanic Gardens, **Saturday 8 February**, 10.00 am. Tickets \$25, children \$13. Bookings: <https://www.rbq.vic.gov.au/whats-on/first-nations-climate-justice-walk/2020-02-08>. Presented as part of the National Sustainable Living Festival 2020.



Above left: Some of the key We-Akon Diliija stakeholders and ceremony participants. Above right: PPCfR members and friends celebrated the end of another productive year with a barbecue at Gasworks Arts Park in December.

### ARTS

**Daddy** is an immersive work from Wiradjuri artist Joel Bray featuring his trademark confection of conversation, dance and all-you-can-eat audience participation. Performed as part of Midsummer Festival, Arts Centre, **Tuesday 4 - Saturday 8 February**; Tickets \$40, \$35 via [artscentremelbourne.com.au](http://artscentremelbourne.com.au).

**Black Ties** is a wildly funny and heart-warming immersive theatre experience that reimagines the wedding rom-com from a distinctively First Nations perspective, and is a world premiere from Ilbijerri Theatre Company (Australia) and Te Rēhia Theatre Company (Aotearoa/ New Zealand). Cast includes Uncle Jack Charles, Lisa Maza, Mark Coles Smith, Tuakoi Ohia and Brady Peeti with a live band, created by a crack team of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Maori theatre makers. Arts Centre Pavilion, **Friday 21-Saturday 29 February**. \$30-\$60.

**Music and Tapestries** presents contemporary chamber music by Yorta Yorta composer Deborah Cheetham AO, inspired by nine tapestries from the Embassy Tapestry Collection designed by Indigenous artists and woven at the Australian Tapestry Workshop. Performing with Cheetham's Short Black Opera will be Pandit Ashis Sengupta (India) - tabla master, Reison Kuroda (Japan) - shakuhachi master, Angela Cortez (Singapore) - mezzo soprano, Plexus (Australia) and Rubiks Collective (Australia). Program presented as part of Asia TOPA 2020. **Friday 14 – Saturday 15 February**. The Australian Tapestry Workshop, South Melbourne.

### MEDIA

**Little J and Big Cuz** - Season 2 of this Logie Award-winning series on culture, community and Saltwater, Desert and Freshwater Country features voice talents of Deborah Mailman and Miranda Tapsell. Fridays at 7:30 pm NITV. (Free material is available to support early childhood educators and primary school teachers in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and skills in their teaching and learning programs.)

**Living Black** - Australia's longest-running televised Indigenous current affairs program. Hosted by Karla Grant it features some of the most recognisable faces in Australia in a documentary style of storytelling that explores compelling human stories.

**The Point** - NITV's flagship news and current affairs program tells compelling stories and investigates the most pressing issues affecting Indigenous Australians. Hosts Rachael Hocking and John-Paul Janke travel the country joined by a team of Aboriginal journalists to examine issues from health, the arts, sport and politics.

**Faboriginal** - A deadly arts game show featuring host Steven Oliver delivering a fun mix of trivia, facts, good old yarning and laughs, designed to test everyone's knowledge of Indigenous art. It features well-known Indigenous comedians, actors, sporting personalities, musicians and artists who compete against one another to determine who the 'true' art connoisseur is. Visit <https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/> for all program details.

**Speaking Out** - Politics, arts and culture discussed from a range of Indigenous perspectives presented by Larissa Behrendt, Radio National, Fridays at 8.00 pm (repeated Tuesdays at 2.00 am) and presented on ABC Local Radio on Sundays at 9.00 pm.

**Away!** - Diverse and vibrant Aboriginal arts and culture program from across Australia, hosted by Daniel Browning. A former news director at Triple J, he has worked for the ABC since 1994. Saturdays at 6.00 pm, repeated Tuesdays at midnight and Thursdays at 1.00 am. Listen to these programs for free on your mobile device on the ABC Listen app, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts or favourite podcast app.

**3KnD Kool and Deadly** - Listen to Den the Fish, aka Dennis Fisher, Co-Chair, Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation on his *Mixing It In* program, playing Indigenous music and reading poetry and short stories. Weeknights, 4.00 pm-7.00 pm. Listen on Digital and 1503 am.

