

Mungo...



Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation Inc.
ABN: 444 16 152 998
P.O. Box 1446, St Kilda South, Vic 3182
Phone: (03) 9699 8804
Mobile: 0418 675 734
Email: rosemary.rule@gmail.com
www.ppcfr.org

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.

This newsletter is supported by a Community Grant from the City of Port Phillip, and we acknowledge Martin Foley MP, State Labor Member for Albert Park, for his ongoing support.

July 2020

FROM THE CO-CHAIR

Boonwurrung Word of the Month:
Baanyabeel – rain

NAIDOC Week

The Covid-19 epidemic has meant the postponement of the official national celebrations for NAIDOC Week, **5-12 July 2020**. The St Kilda-Elsternwick Baptist Church had a special Sunday service to acknowledge the depth and sophistication of First Nations culture and its potential to enrich our nation, while the Victorian NAIDOC Committee will run a number of online events this month (more inside).

Black Lives Matter

It has been tragic to hear of the recent deaths of African-Americans, however, the groundswell of support for Indigenous Australians around the country perhaps offers some hope for meaningful change to the current situation, especially relating to the key findings of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. The Royal Commission revealed that Aboriginal people are more likely to die in custody because they are arrested and jailed at disproportionate rates; regrettably this is as true in 2020 as it was in 1991. The challenge for all of us is how to effectively overturn the blatant neglect of, and violence against, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Australian criminal justice system; refer below.

Council Update

Reconciliation Week and Mabo Day online performances were well received. At the time of writing, the City of Port Phillip had no plans in place for NAIDOC Week commemorations.

Congratulations

To the City of Port Phillip receiving the Highly Commended Award for their We-Akon Dilinja event in the new Local Government Category of the 2020 HART Awards; to Djon Mundine OAM, recipient of the 2020 Red Ochre Award for Lifetime Achievement for promoting contemporary Indigenous art; to Tara June Winch and Tony Birch whose books *The Yield* and

The White Girl are long listed for the 2020 Miles Franklin Award; and to the recipients of the 2020 Queen's Birthday Honours.

Some of the participants in the HART Awards for We-Akon Dilinja Mourning Reflection on 26 January. The HART Awards (Helping Achieve Reconciliation Together) recognise initiatives by local governments and community organisations that are advancing Reconciliation in Victoria.



Reconciliation Week

PPCfR Co-Chair Dennis Fisher is also an Aboriginal Heritage Guide at the Royal Botanic Gardens. One of his poems (see last page) was posted out during their commemorations 'as the RBG work towards greater mutual respect and understanding of our shared history.'



PPCfR Co-chair Dennis Fisher in his role as Aboriginal Heritage Guide at the Royal Botanic Gardens.

Rosemary Rule

Next meeting: Our July meeting will be via Zoom on **Tuesday 21 July**, 6.30 pm. Please email Deb Stewart – deb.stewart33@gmail.com if you'd like to participate.

NAIDOC WEEK

Under the banner of this year's theme *Always Was, Always Will Be* the Victorian NAIDOC Committee will be running a number of online events from **5-12 July** to mark the historic week, and will celebrate people involved in previous NAIDOC weeks as well as helping the Victorian community learn about NAIDOC's history and community. The week will include a flag raising, pride night, virtual march and dance up, and limited-edition merchandise will be available. Refer vicnaidoc.com.

BLACK LIVES MATTER

The tragic death of George Floyd at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer has sparked global outrage and reignited the Black Lives Matter movement over the past fortnight. International protests have demanded that governments and justice systems address the targeted violence towards black peoples everywhere. In Australia, tens of thousands of protesters called for an end to Aboriginal deaths in custody, as well as all unlawful brutality against Australian black communities. (In 1991, 14.3% of the male prison population in Australia was Indigenous; in March 2020 it was 28.6%. Today, 4.7% of all Indigenous men are in jail compared with just 0.3% of all non-Indigenous men.) Over 400 Aboriginal deaths in custody have tragically occurred since 1991, yet no one has been convicted for any of these deaths. Despite the immense public attention on injustice against First Peoples over the last week, police brutality and deaths in custody have continued. Along with the hundreds of Aboriginal lives lost in recent decades, it is difficult to ignore the blatant neglect of, and violence against, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Australian criminal justice system. All is not lost; reforms on several levels are imminent, albeit overdue. Labor Senator Pat Dodson, who worked on the 1991 Royal Commission Into Aboriginal Deaths In Custody, has criticised 30 years of government failure to *'relieve this awful blight on this nation's history.'* In a speech to the Senate Mr Dodson demanded the federal government make it a *'top priority'* to pressure the states and territories to take action on reducing Aboriginal incarceration rates and deaths in custody. *'And don't pussyfoot around with the states, saying: "Oh, it's the states' responsibility." Well, we know you've been capable of finding ways of dealing with that. For too long there have been nice words and good intentions, but the lack of action and commitment has not seen a reduction in deaths in custody; it's seen an escalation in the social indicators that diminish First Nations people and diminish us as a nation. It diminishes us as a nation because we are incapable of dealing with incarceration rates in the last 10 years.'*

There have been renewed calls for the federal government to respond to the most recent in a series of more than a dozen inquiries into justice issues in the past decade and legal experts are calling for investigations into Indigenous deaths in custody to be reopened. ANTA Victoria has compiled a list of things we can all do to support Black Lives Matter and help end

injustice against First Nations Peoples. They include learning about Aboriginal history and culture (refer The Koori History Website, Creative Spirits and Deadly Questions) and acknowledging the Traditional Owners. Find out how to offer support: <https://antarvictoria.org.au/>

As Christians, **St Kilda-Elsternwick Baptist Church** members are sorrowful as they recall the church's record of disparagement of First Nations culture and its determination to impose its particular brand of spirituality on people who were inherently spiritual. They wish to acknowledge the many past failures of the Christian church for its blindness to the goodness, depth and sophistication of First Nations culture and spirituality. Many in the congregation have felt the tragedy of the recent police shootings in America and have expressed their desire to support the Black Lives Matter movement and draw attention to the need for change in our own country where incarceration rates of First Nations people are so appallingly high. Several of the church community have met together to develop a piece of artwork to honour the 437 First Nations people who have died in police custody since the release of the Royal Commission in 1991. An installation is being prepared which will feature 437 sticks decorated with the familiar colours of red, yellow and black. This collection will remember those individuals who have lost their lives while under the eye of our all-too-inadequate policing system. It will, in addition, draw attention to the extent of grief, frustration and helplessness felt by so many family members and friends of those individuals who have died in police custody.

Digby Hannah

CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION DELAYED

It is all but confirmed that Australians will *not* vote on constitutional recognition for Indigenous Australians before the next federal election. Indigenous Affairs Minister Ken Wyatt says it's now *'unlikely'* to happen. Last year the government promised a referendum on constitutional recognition before the next election, and that the government would not place a timeline on when the vote will happen. Ken Wyatt committed the government to deliver a vote on the issue within three years, pledging to *'bring forward a consensus option'* during the current term of parliament, but apparently changed his mind in June. *'The [government] supports holding a referendum to recognise Indigenous Australians in the constitution,'* he tweeted. *'It is unlikely to happen in this term of parliament... Constitutional recognition is too important [to] rush and too important to fail... We will not be placing a timeline on this process.'* Mr Wyatt also said options for an Indigenous voice to parliament would be presented to the government by November and would be followed by public consultation. The comments came after calls by the shadow minister for Indigenous Australians, Linda Burney, for a clearer timeline from Prime Minister Scott Morrison on when the vote would go ahead. *'[We want to know] what [the Prime Minister] means by a referendum, what he means by a Voice to parliament and what the timetable is,'* she

said. If the referendum did not go ahead, Australians 'would be extremely disappointed,' she said.

FIRST PEOPLES' ASSEMBLY

Aunty Geraldine Atkinson has been elected Co-chair of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria. The 32-member Assembly met in June to discuss terms for Treaty which Aunty Geraldine says is still in early stages as a pact between Victoria's First Nations people and the government. Discussions include whether Victoria has a single Treaty, many Treaties, or a hybrid of both. For news updates, visit www.firstpeoplesvic.org.



The Victorian First Peoples' Assembly has elected Aunty Geraldine Atkinson as its inaugural Co-chair.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

Professor Marcia Langton was among those recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours List, and was awarded the Officer of the Order of Australia for her distinguished service to tertiary education, and as an advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Marcia is an associate provost and the foundation chair of Australian Indigenous studies at the University of Melbourne. Medals of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to Indigenous visual arts and the community were awarded to Victorian artists Frances Harrison and Lennie Hayes. Indigenous health practitioner Merinda Harrison-Drake received a Medal of the Order of Australia for her service to Indigenous health in Gippsland. Early childhood educator and founder of Yarn Strong Sista, Sue Lopez Atkinson, received an AM honour for significant service to early childhood education and to the Indigenous community.

HEALTH BOOST

The Morrison Government will invest almost \$35 million in 42 key research projects in areas such as ending avoidable Indigenous deafness, ending avoidable Indigenous blindness, and helping to eradicate chronic kidney disease. As part of this funding, the government is investing \$14.44 million from the first grant round of the Indigenous Health Research Fund. The projects, to be run by the nine successful grant recipients, will identify what will contribute to successful healthcare delivery in Indigenous populations and what barriers

exist. Backed by the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF), the Fund will invest \$160 million over ten years (2019-20 to 2028-29) in health and medical research that can make a difference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people suffering debilitating diseases.

RECONCILIATION VICTORIA UPDATE

RecVic's National Reconciliation Week webinar *In This Together* with their new Co-chair Shane Charles is now available via <https://medicine.unimelb.edu.au/school-structure/rural-health>. RecVic has moved office to 4-6 Ballarat Street, Brunswick, 3056, and no longer has a PO Box. Phone/email remain unchanged: 9016 0657; info@reconciliationvic.org.au.

REC STONNINGTON NEWS

As part of the City of Stonnington's Reconciliation Week online event, some Rec Stonnington members took part in a videoed Acknowledgement of Country at council's request. (<https://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/News-and-notices/2020/News-items/Reconciliation-Week-In-this-together>) This Acknowledgement will now be permanently on City of Stonnington's website. Also, in what we are guessing is a sign of the times with so much publicity and action on Black Lives Matter, our group was joined by three new members for our Zoom meeting in June, and we look forward to being joined by one more new member at our July meeting. As a group we are now exploring the topic of White Privilege at a future meeting.

Ro Bailey

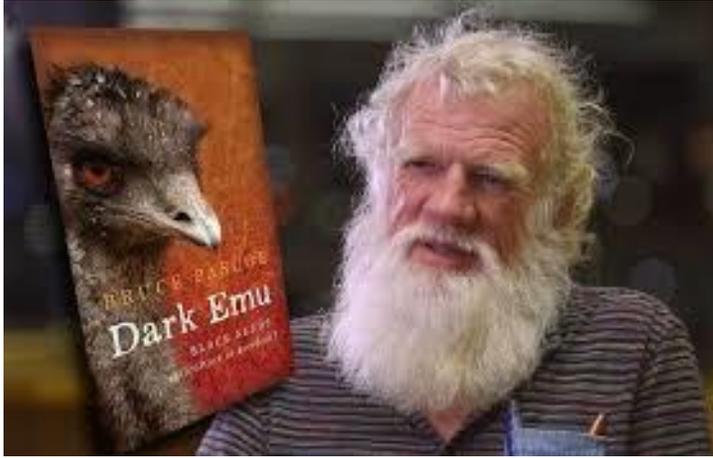
WORKING HARD FOR RECONCILIATION

PPCfR members Jo Bond (left) and Rosemary Rule were required to don hard hats and high-vis vests to visit the group's offices in the South Melbourne Town Hall Community Hub, supervised by a City of Port Phillip Senior Project Services Manager. The entire building has been closed pending an engineering report. Hopefully the Hub in Fishley Street will be re-opened and our monthly meetings can resume.



BOOK SALES SOAR

The recent surge in demand for books about race and racism has readers seeking out titles old and new, and publishers re-printing others. Sales increases were recorded for Bruce Pascoe's *Dark Emu*, Anita Heiss's *Growing up Aboriginal in Australia*, and Jack Charles' *Born-again Blakfella*; online sales increased by 360% for titles published by Magabala Books.



Author Bruce Pascoe's award-winning book *Dark Emu: Black Seeds: Agriculture or Accident?* continues to achieve high sales since its publication in 2014.

EXHIBITIONS

Linden New Art's *My Mother's Keeper* features a film and series of photographs produced as a result of a collaboration between the artist, Karla Dickens, and writer Bruce Pascoe. Initiated by the Kandos School of Cultural Adaptation, the work focuses on the urgent need to protect and conserve the land and our environment.

Routes/Roots is by Robert Fielding, a contemporary artist of Pakistani, Afghan, Western Arrente and Yankunytjatjara descent living in Mimili Community in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY). 6 Acland Street, St Kilda, 9534 0099; galler@lindenarts.org for access arrangements.

Bunjilaka Museum is open with timed tickets on sale. Exhibitions include *Two Strong Sisters Connected* and *River of Languages*. Details: <https://museumsvictoria.com.au/bunjilaka/about-us/>.

Koorie Heritage Trust's exhibition *Affirmation* features photographers exploring notions of place, ancestral identity and culture. Visitors can take a virtual tour or download the exhibition catalogue; free; koorieheritagetrust.com.au

MUSIC

Welcome to The Drive-In is a pop-up precinct at 448 Epsom Road, Flemington. Located within the bowling lanes at Flemington racecourse, the Drive-In is hosting some of the best in Australian music on weekends, such as Baker Boy with support from Close Counters on Sunday 26 July.

Tickets are strictly limited, so register to secure your spot: <http://the-drive-in.com.au/>

MEDIA

NITV's reality-style series *Family Rules* returns for a third season. The landmark observational documentary series follows Noongar mother Daniella and her daughters and features important milestones in the Rule family. This up-close and personal series based in WA gives an exclusive insight into modern Indigenous family life through a unique family of women. NITV, Sundays, 7:30 pm.

Talented podcasting duo Miranda Tapsell and Nakkiah Lui are back with a new nine-part series talking about the history, culture, adaptation and modernisation of the debutante ball. *Debutante: Race, Resistance and Girl Power* is available now on Audible.

FASHION

Piinpi: Contemporary Indigenous Fashion is a watershed exhibition of rich contemporary culture, Indigenous storytelling reflective of today, being translated into beautifully crafted wearable art, silk scarves and fabrics and accessories. Collated by Shonae Hobson, Bendigo Art Gallery's First Nations Curator, from **Thursday 18 July**. www.bendigoregion.com.au

THE LUCKY COUNTRY by DENNIS FISHER

Who owns this country?
Where do they come from?
Are they Australians?
Are they Poms?
What did they bring here?
What do they speak?
Do they speak English?
Do they speak Greek?
They bring trouble
They bring guns
Shoot you dead
You're nothing but a bum
They say you're a no hoper
You're no good
You're just nothing
You're just a boong
Where can we go?
Where can we stay?
Stand up and fight
Kneel down and pray
We have to do something
We have to, together
We can't do it alone
We can make it better
So, come on you people
Let's come as one
Bring your family
Children, Dad and Mum
Bring all your friends
Bring all your relations
This is what we call
Reconciliation.



Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation Inc.

ABN: 444 16 152 998

P.O Box 1446, St Kilda South, Vic 3182

Phone: (03) 9699 8804

Mobile: 0418 675 734

Email: rosemary.rule@gmail.com

www.ppcfr.org

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation Inc. (PPCfR) is a voluntary community group affiliated with Reconciliation Victoria and Australians for Native Title & Reconciliation Victoria (ANTaR). We work closely with the City of Port Phillip from whom we receive a small grant, participate in Reconciliation and NAIDOC Week events, host a free lunch for Sorry Day each year, participate in local community festivals and publish an informative monthly newsletter, *Mungo*.

Meetings are held at 6.30pm on the third Tuesday each month in The Community Hub attached to the South Melbourne Town Hall and are open to anyone interested.

Please help us continue our work by joining the group – or renewing your existing membership. The rate remains unchanged and is valid until 30 June 2021.

Membership fee: \$10.00, \$5.00 concession: Amount enclosed: \$_____

Name:

Address:

.....Postcode:.....

Phone: (H)..... (W)..... Mobile:

Email:

Completed membership forms can be sent to: **PO Box 1446, St Kilda South, 3182.**

Subscribers automatically receive a free copy of *Mungo* each month. Would you prefer to receive it by email and help save postage – and trees?

*Yes..... No.....

Are you able to help with events, stalls or mailouts? *Yes..... No.....

*(Tick preferred option)

