

# 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](mailto:rosemary.rule@gmail.com)  
[www.ppcfrr.org](http://www.ppcfrr.org)

The Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation respectfully acknowledges the Yalukit Wilum clan of the Boon Wurrung Nation who are the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land.

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**March 2017**

## FROM THE CO-CHAIR

### First Meeting

It was a pleasure to welcome a newcomer to our first meeting for the year on 21 February. Business items discussed included plans for a lunch to commemorate Sorry Day on **Friday 26 May**; an awareness-raising forum about issues relating to a Treaty, and later in the year, celebrations to commemorate our 20<sup>th</sup> birthday - an impressive milestone for a small, community-based group whose work is done entirely by volunteers. We will continue to support the Council and contribute to the draft of their second Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) currently underway. If you are interested in helping with any of our activities, please do get in touch with me.

### Reconciliation Writing Competition

In light of this being a potentially busy year and the amount of organisation required, it was decided at the meeting that the Writing Competition be held every second year. We will advise the main people involved including the sponsors, schools and the Council. Copies of the booklet containing all the excellent winning entries are available by contacting the office.

### Community HART Awards

I'm going to look into COPP's Daniel Carter's suggestion that PPCfR put in a nomination for these awards that "*recognise local government and community organisations that are advancing Reconciliation in Victoria,*" based around the work of the group, particularly our Writing Competition, and will let members know if it is appropriate.

### Close the Gap

Indigenous Australians don't live as long as other Australians. Indigenous children are more likely to die as infants and their health, education and employment



outcomes are worse than non-Indigenous people. Australia has promised to close this gap on health, education and employment. But a [new report card finds we are failing on six out of seven key measures](#). The news is not good, however, I urge people to find out more and perhaps also seek ways to help reduce the 'gap'.

### Bunjilaka Tour

Ro Bailey, Hon Secretary, Reconciliation Stonnington, is a Museum Victoria guide and is offering to host a guided tour of Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Museum at 10.30 am on either **Sunday 5 March, Sunday 26 March or Wednesday 29 March**. Several people have expressed their interest, so please contact Ro so the tour can be arranged: [ro.celebrant@ozemail.com.au](mailto:ro.celebrant@ozemail.com.au)

### Port Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre Carnival

The Carnival's theme in 2017 is Port Melbourne Unmasked – Uncovering the Heart of Port Melbourne. It aims to explore and celebrate the essence of this resilient community. We will engage Elder Judith Jackson to do an Acknowledgement of Country. To be held in Liardet St near Nott St on **Saturday 18 March**.

### Rosemary Rule

**Next Meeting: Tuesday 21 March, 6.30 pm,**  
South Melbourne Community Hub, Fishley Street,  
South Melbourne. **All Welcome.**

## CLOSE THE GAP REPORT

The 2017 Close the Gap report showed that at a national level progress needs to accelerate. Over the long term there are improvements across a number of the targets, however, these improvements are not enough to meet the majority of the outcomes set by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). The Closing the Gap targets address the areas of health, education and employment, and provide an important snapshot of where progress is being made and where further efforts are needed. Despite the efforts of successive federal and state governments and the efforts of everyday Australians the country is not doing enough to curb Indigenous disadvantage, PM Malcolm Turnbull told parliament on 14 February. Only one of seven targets set down to improve Indigenous outcomes is on track to be met.

*'We have come a long way since the 1967 referendum, but we have not come far enough. Incarceration rates, domestic violence and rates of child protection among Indigenous Australians are all far too high.'* the PM said. Mr Turnbull announced an Indigenous commissioner would be appointed to the Productivity Commission to evaluate programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. *'We must have a rigorous evaluation of programs so we know what is working and what is not,'* he said in making the announcement.

The federal government will pump \$50 million into policy research and implementation, in partnership with the Indigenous Advisory Council. *'The data and the research we have will be made available to Indigenous communities to empower leadership and support community-led programs,'* the PM said. *'It will assist government in its next phase of closing the gap, which must focus on regional action and outcomes.'*

Opposition Leader Bill Shorten said closing the disadvantage gap demanded a new approach. *'Australia must forget the insulting fiction that the first Australians are a problem to be solved.'* Indigenous Labor senator Patrick Dodson has told Sky News the Close the Gap report shows that victims of the stolen generations should be awarded compensation. *'The Commonwealth should do something to fix up the compensation for the stolen generations,'* he said. *'Some of the states are doing that, but the federal government also has a responsibility.'*

About the report, Jackie Huggins, co-chair of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples, said: *'I think it's because we're not working together, and I think that there certainly needs to be a partnership between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, through our peak organisations who've been doing this work for three, four decades now, and the policymakers, with the bureaucracy and the Government.'* She said working together was very difficult. *'Because I think that you have a whole moving on of bureaucrats, of people who are dedicated to those positions, and they move on all the time. Unfortunately, when you lose that corporate knowledge then it is a problem. I must say that, with*

*our people, the situation is still the same. It's getting worse, really, and that's a sad reflection on Australia as a very rich nation. In terms of Aboriginal people - we are the sickest and the poorest, and the least housed. Every social statistic in our country is, with Aboriginal people, at the lowest ebb. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull hasn't made enough of a priority of Indigenous Affairs and shown enough leadership in that area. There was no engagement last year, no relationship with Government. It's only been within the last six months that the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples has now engaged with the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, through his department, and we've started a dialogue of engagement and really working out between us what needs to be done. We're still at the discussion stage. However, we have the Redfern Statement now, which is the blueprint, we believe, and the road map, for having solutions to the issues which present in our communities.'*

## RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA

For the latest on the state of relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, read the recently released 2016 Australian Reconciliation Barometer report produced by Reconciliation Australia by visiting [www:reconciliation.org.au](http://www.reconciliation.org.au) - a very insightful document.

## ABORIGINAL HOUSING

The Victorian Government has announced that over the next three years they will hand over 1448 properties worth \$500M to Aboriginal Housing Victoria. This is the largest tranche of housing to be transferred to an Aboriginal organisation nationwide, and means the 4000 Victorians on its books will now live in properties owned and managed by an Aboriginal organisation. In Melbourne, 511 homes have been transferred to the agency. Victoria's Indigenous population is estimated to be over 530,000.

## NEW SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMISSIONER

Indigenous activist June Oscar has been appointed as the new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, replacing outgoing commissioner Mick Gooda. A long-time anti-alcohol campaigner, Ms Oscar has advised a range of business, health and cultural organisations and is the CEO of the Marninwarnitkura Women's Resource Centre in Fitzroy Crossing. In 2013, she was made an office of the Order of Australia.

## PM'S INDIGENOUS ADVISORY COUNCIL

Malcolm Turnbull has overhauled the Prime Minister's Indigenous Advisory Council, appointing six highly respected Aboriginal members. They are: Chris Sarra, education guru from the Stronger Smarter Institute; Professor Ngiare Brown, one of the first Aboriginal doctors in Australia; Northern Territory's Australian of the Year finalist, Andrea Mason; Traditional Owner, Djambawa Marawilli; community development worker, Susan Murphy; and Roy Ah See from the NSW Aboriginal Land Council. Mr Turnbull is set to make further appointments after consulting with the new council members. Former PM Tony Abbott appointed the original council which was chaired by Indigenous leader Warren Mundine.

'The refreshed council reflects the government's deep commitment to doing things with Indigenous Australians in a genuine partnership,' Mr Turnbull said in a statement in February. The council will continue to focus on education, community safety and justice, and employment.

### RECONCILIATION ART EXHIBITION UPDATE

Our recent Reconciliation Art Exhibition showcasing art by Meg Davoren-Honey OAM at Liz Gallois's Gurutzia Gallery, St Kilda, returned \$500. Meg has consulted widely with Aunty Jacko, Mark Williams, Mauriel Spearim and Dr Joy Murphy and has suggested this amount could be put towards Inner South's Indigenous youth program, specifically the purchase of T-shirts for program participants to make designs on and sell at St Kilda markets.

### NEWS FROM STONNINGTON

Reconciliation Stonnington will have an information stall at Flavours Festival on **Saturday 18 March**. This will take place in Grattan Gardens, between Izzett and Grattan Streets, Prahran, from 11.00 am until 4.00 pm. Brianna, the daughter of Peter Judda Mackay, has been engaged to carry out free Aboriginal face painting at our stall. Come along and say hello and get painted up before heading out to the Saturday night disco or whatever else you have in mind for the evening.

We have heard exciting news from Stonnington Council that an event at Prahran Market is being planned for this year's Reconciliation Week. In honour of the anniversaries of both the 1967 referendum and the Mabo decision, it is hoped that activities can be held over the Thursday, Friday and Saturday of Reconciliation Week. More details will be announced as they come to hand.

*Ro Bailey, Secretary, Reconciliation Stonnington.*

### PORT FAIRY FOLK FESTIVAL

There's an impressive line-up of artists at this year's Festival being held **10-13 March**. They include the Kutcha Edwards Trio, Gawurru, Yirrmal, Karma Country, and Buried Country – the Story of Aboriginal Country Music - a live concert. For program details contact [admin@portfairyfolkfestival.org](mailto:admin@portfairyfolkfestival.org) or call 03 5568 2227.

### BOOK LAUNCH

Rachel Maza, Artistic Director, Ilbjerri Theatre Company - and a good friend of author Noel Tovey - will be launching Noel's latest book *And Then I Found Me* on **Monday 6 March** at Readings bookstore, Lygon Street, Carlton at 6.00 pm. Free event.

### HYLLUS MARIS MEMORIAL LECTURE

La Trobe University has its 50th anniversary in 2017 and will celebrate its past by re-establishing the Hyllus Maris Memorial Lecture. It was first held in 1999 and was co-hosted by La Trobe University's Women's Studies Department and Aboriginal Liaison Unit with Koori Women Mean Business and the ATSIC Binjirru Regional Council. It was the first memorial lecture in honour of an Aboriginal woman hosted by an

Australian University, and was last held in 2007. The Lecture honours the visionary work of Aunty Hyllus Maris in Aboriginal education and the contribution and participation of Indigenous people in higher education generally. Hyllus was an activist, artist, cultural leader and philosopher, and was the founder of Victoria's only Aboriginal school, Worawa College. Hyllus was instrumental in the establishment of a number of Victorian Aboriginal organisations including the Aboriginal Legal Service, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and similar services in Queensland. She was appointed by the Victorian Government as Chair of the Victorian Council for Aboriginal Culture. Hyllus also left a significant artistic legacy including poems, plays and her well-known script for the television series *Women of the Sun* which won the AWGIE award and the United Nations Media Peace Prize. Indigenous author Dr Anita Heiss will be the guest speaker on **Wednesday 8 March**, 6.00 pm at Union Hall, La Trobe University, Bundoora. Free but register your attendance. Information: Tanya Peeler, Executive Officer, Office of Indigenous Strategy and Education, La Trobe University. Email: [t.peeler@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:t.peeler@latrobe.edu.au)

### MISSION SONGS PROJECT

Curated by Jessie Lloyd, the Mission Songs Project is an initiative to revive and present a rare collection of early Australian Indigenous contemporary songs that were composed and performed between 1900- 1999. It faithfully explores the musical journey of Indigenous music as Jessie Lloyd connects the traditional with contemporary and reveals the continuation of cultural practice and oral traditions into the twenty-first century. These songs, largely hidden from the outside world, offer a unique window to life on the Christian missions, native settlements and the fringes of townships where Aboriginal and Islander people were displaced. The collection consists of rare and almost forgotten songs that now shed light on the history of our Indigenous communities, their stories and their resilience in a harsh, changing world. Concert at La Boite, **Friday 24 March**, 7.00 pm. Information: 9417 1983 or [admin@boite.com.au](mailto:admin@boite.com.au)

### WHO'S AFRAID OF COLOUR?

An unprecedented compilation of Indigenous Australian women's art from the NGV Collection, *Who's Afraid of Colour?* brings together over two hundred works by 118 artists, including the late Emily Kam Kngwarray. Exhibition on until **17 April**. Free entry. NGV, Level 3, Federation Square.

### STOLEN GENERATIONS MARKER

Yarra City Council is working with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop a Stolen Generations Marker and garden in Fitzroy. Yarra Mayor, Councillor Amanda Stone, said the Marker, to be installed twenty years after the release of the Australian Human Rights Commission's *Bringing Them Home* report, will be a tribute to the struggles of the Stolen Generations and their families.

*'The Stolen Generations Marker is intended to honour and acknowledge the resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, communities, clans and groups who seek to heal from past hurt and injustices.'*

Cr Stone said. *'The idea for the Marker came about through Council's ongoing work and engagement with the Aboriginal community over many years. Now we're proud to be collaborating with Aboriginal community leaders and organisations to create a tribute that will be sensitive and meaningful. Fitzroy has long been a significant area for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Many Aboriginal people came here to find and reconnect with their family. When the Marker and gardens are completed, hopefully by the end of this year, we expect that they will become a place for quiet reflection, remembering and healing,'* Cr Stone said.

Bev Murray from the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency is on the steering group for the project. *'The Stolen Generations Marker acknowledges a time in the not-too-distant history of this country when our people were slowly being wiped out, when we had no rights and when we were treated by successive governments as less than human,'* she said. *'The Stolen Generations Marker should be seen as belonging to all of us. Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people need to be equal partners in working together to heal from the past and move into the future to build an inclusive and caring society that respects all cultures, from the cultures of the First Peoples to the new ones being welcomed into Australia today,'* she said.

The Aboriginal artist who will create the Stolen Generations Marker and the exact location of the marker and garden will be announced soon. The project is an action in Yarra Council's Aboriginal

Partnerships Plan 2015-18. Project partners are the Wurundjeri Tribe Council, Link-Up Victoria, Connecting Home, and Brotherhood of St Lawrence.

*Note: Yarra City Council partnered with Malthouse Theatre to present the Reconciliation Comedy Gala held on 26 January to raise funds towards the project. Rosemary Rule, PPCfR's Co-Chair, was among those in the jam-packed theatre and commented: 'It was a happy and hilarious afternoon. Hosts Uncle Jack Charles and Judith Lucy introduced a star-studded cast of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal comedians and all funds raised went towards the Stolen Generations Marker project.'*

#### **LEAH PURCELL'S LITERATURE PRIZE WIN**

Indigenous playwright and actor, Leah Purcell, won the Victorian prize for literature for her acclaimed reimagining of Henry Lawson's *The Drover's Wife*, with a \$100,000 prize which amounts to Australia's richest single literary award. Purcell was also awarded the \$25,000 prize for drama for the same play which premiered as part of the 2016 season for Belvoir St [Theatre](#) in Sydney, and which the panel of judges described as a piece of theatre that *'explodes out of the blocks with a moment of stark brutality and never lets up'*. *'I just wanted to write a good story, but with the Black Lives Matter movement it's so relevant it's ridiculous,'* Purcell said, [according to The Age](#) report. *After the Carnage* by Tara June Winch was Highly Commended in the fiction section. Victoria's Minister for Creative Industries, Martin Foley, presented the awards.