

Mungo...

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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FROM THE CO-CHAIR

International Year of Indigenous Languages

To celebrate this significant year, I'd like to introduce a BoonWurrung word or phrase each month. First off: Boonwurrung Nairm derp bordupren uther weelam - Our beautiful home - Boonwurrung bay country, sourced from *The Journey Cycles of the Boonwurrung, Stories with Boonwurrung Language* by Arweet Carolyn Briggs. Also see the item about BlackWords below.

City of Port Phillip Council

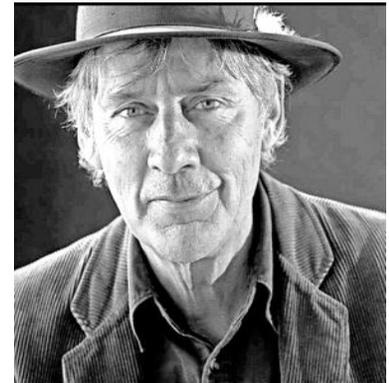
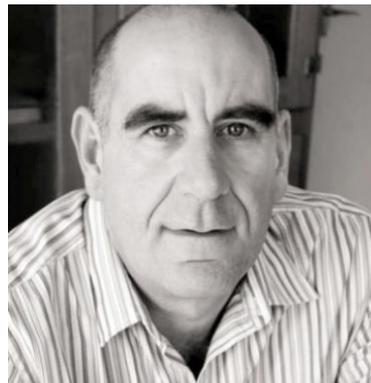
Having hosted the Yalukit Weelam Ngargee Festival in early February, the City of Port Phillip is finalising and endorsing its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment policy which aims to boost the number of its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. The policy will focus on recruitment processes, cultural support in the workplace, training and personal development, retention and career development. As well as a commitment to showcasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musical and artistic culture, Council has a focus on improving the relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. They also conducted a *Have Your Say* survey for residents designed to gain a better understanding of local attitudes to Reconciliation.

Indigenous Recognition

Hopefully momentum will shift and positive action will actually happen following the call by two of Australia's corporate giants for the government to endorse the Uluru Statement from the Heart and deliver constitutional recognition for Indigenous Australians. More inside.

Special Event

Details below about this event with award-winning author James Boyce and one of Australia's finest singer songwriters, Shane Howard, at St Kilda Town Hall on **Sunday 24 March**, presented by St Kilda Baptist Church with all proceeds going to their Community Kitchen program.



Acclaimed author James Boyce (left) and entertainer Shane Howard will be at St Kilda Town Hall on Sunday 24 March.

Awards

I was heartened to read news of recent awards to Indigenous Australians. Too many to mention but recipients include Kim Scott for his novel *Taboo* which received the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards Prize for Indigenous Writing, Danzal Baker, aka Baker Boy, honoured as the 2019 Young Australian of The Year, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders receiving Australia Day honours.

Confined 10

Congratulations to Kent Morris and The Torch team for an amazing exhibition last month attended by over 500 people at the opening. More than one hundred paintings were sold with all funds going directly to the artist, and lives changed in the process.

Rosemary Rule

Next Meeting: Tuesday 19 March, 6.30 pm

Guest Speaker: Alison Craigie-Parsons, Coordinator, Indigenous Access & Equity, Star Health. Liardet Community Centre (aka Port Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre), 154 Liardet Street, Port Melb. Enter via door corner Lalor & Farrell Streets, opposite Coles car park.

All Welcome and Refreshments served afterwards.

CLOSING THE GAP

So what has changed? The government's recently released Closing the Gap report revealed that progress was lacking and that only two of the seven targets were on track. Handing down his report in February, Prime Minister Scott Morrison indicated a shift in the approach to addressing the disparities between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians. This shift has been the result of Closing the Gap Refresh, a review of the original goals set out in the more formally known National Indigenous Reform Agreement. The PM also looked to embed some of the recommendations made by Special Envoy of Indigenous Affairs, Tony Abbott. Morrison and Abbott have focused specifically on education as a means to address inequities, but there's little reason to think this will affect real change. The three new targets in the Closing the Gap Refresh that will act as drivers in education are:

- to increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the top two bands of NAPLAN reading and numeracy for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 by an average of 6% by 2028;

- to decrease the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the bottom two bands of NAPLAN reading and numeracy for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 by an average of 6% by 2028;

- to have 47% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (aged 20-64 years) complete a Certificate III or above by 2028.

The original target set in 2008 to halve the gap in attainment of Year 12 or equivalent qualifications between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous 20-24 year olds by 2020 has been maintained. Presumably, this is because this target, unlike the others, has not expired yet. The first two targets are ambitious, but also selective in their focus. NAPLAN testing only looks at reading, writing, language conventions and numeracy. The 2019 Closing the Gap Report indicates there have been significant gains made in reading and numeracy in certain year levels in the national data. The focus may be placed on these two areas because progress has already been seen, so they're not 'doomed to fail'. There seems to be an expectation that education will improve health, reduce incarcerations and minimise welfare dependency. Another significant change is the approach in policy-making and decision-making by addressing the top-down approach and providing space for Indigenous voice. The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has made a commitment to form a partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives through the formation of a Ministerial Council on Closing the Gap.

Source: Melitta Hogarth, Lecturer, University of Southern Queensland, as reported in The Conversation.

APOLOGY: 11 YEARS ON

February 13 is an important date to acknowledge because the effects of past policies on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities has been profound and continues today. 2019 marks the 11th Anniversary of the National Apology for the Members of the Stolen Generations. Much remains unresolved, such as the proposed targets in the Closing the Gap scheme still not being achieved and redress schemes stalling. See Kevin Rudd's speech: www.youtube.com/watch?v=RThkO3XBThs and SBS NITV's *10 things you should know about the National Apology*.

INDIGENOUS RECOGNITION ENDORSED

Mining giant Rio Tinto, one of the biggest employees of Indigenous people in the country, recently released a joint statement with another mining giant, BHP, calling for the government to endorse the Uluru Statement from the Heart, which calls for the establishment of a First Nations' voice to be enshrined in the Constitution, as a way of delivering constitutional recognition for Indigenous Australians. The two miners are the first companies to publicly endorse the Uluru Statement. It comes after discussions between about ten companies and Reconciliation Australia over several months, with the two miners then releasing their joint statement. Tom Calma, Co-chair of Reconciliation Australia, said he believed the BHP/Rio Tinto move sent a positive signal to other companies and would have a flow-on effect.

HONOURS AND AWARDS

Danzal Baker, aka Baker Boy, was named the 2019 Young Australian of the Year. The NT Indigenous rapper and dancer achieved mainstream success in the Yolngu Matha language, coming 17th in Triple J's 2017 Hottest 100, a notable follow-up from his debut single *Cloud 9* winning Triple J's Unearthed competition, and winning Breakthrough Independent Artist Of The Year at the 2018 AIRAs. Four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders - Ruth Hennings, Diana Travis, Alfred Neal and Dulcie Flower - were honoured for services to their communities and their role in the 1967 Referendum, receiving the Order of Australia in the 2019 Australia Day Honours. Diana, granddaughter of Sir Douglas Nicholls, is now involved in native title work as a Dja Dja Wurrung claimant, is a member of the Dhuudora native title group, and is an active participant in the Victorian Treaty process. Other Award winners included Wiradjuri woman Evonne Goolagong-Cawley who was appointed a Companion of the Order of Australia. Reconciliation Australia's Australian of the Year award winners included their own CEO Karen Mundine and Co-Chair Professor Tom Calma, and Victorian Australian of the Year, Mark Sullivan.

BALIT NARRUN (SHARE THE SPIRIT) FESTIVAL

Held in Treasury Gardens on 26 January, the Festival was a terrific showcase of Aboriginal culture and solidarity. A handmade T-shirt said it all: *'You can keep the day – give us back our land'*. For me it was a reminder that while there are different views about the

date, it is unquestionable that whatever is held whenever, truth and justice has to be the centrepiece. We are diminished as a country until we acknowledge the truths of our history. There were thousands of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people celebrating, and remembering, what this wide, brown land has to offer. Young and old, many nationalities and cultures. The large number of Aboriginal people was a reminder of what this area might have been like before white settlement. There might not have been any Taco Trucks back in the day, but possum and kangaroo take away would have been on the menu. From events such as this



I get a sense of growing pride in Aboriginal culture. May it continue.
*Keith Gove,
Secretary, RecVic
and Chair,
RecStonnington*

Sharing the spirit.
Photo courtesy of
Keith Gove.

BLACKWORDS

This program is a vitally important part of the work the AustLit team does in delivering information and carefully curated content about storytelling in Australia. It is said to be the most comprehensive record of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander words. BlackWords records information about the lives, careers and works of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers and storytellers, and the literary cultures and traditions that formed and influenced them. This is an invaluable resource for educators - and anyone else interested in learning more about Australia's Indigenous culture. In BlackWords, 'Black' refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers and storytellers. While this word has historically been used negatively against the Indigenous peoples of Australia, in recent times it has been reclaimed by Indigenous communities and used in preference to terms such as Aboriginal and Indigenous, which are viewed as colonisers' terms. Further information via E: info-austlit@austlit.edu.au or www.austlit.edu.au/specialistDatasets/BlackWords

JAMES BOYCE AND SHANE HOWARD

Award-winning author James Boyce and one of Australia's finest singer songwriters, Shane Howard, join together for an event presented by St Kilda Baptist Church. James, a Tasmanian author, will explore issues in his latest book *1835: The Founding of Melbourne and the Conquest of Australia*, and Shane will sing songs that complement the book's themes. The Reverend Tim Costello will introduce the speakers and Ngardarb Francine Riches, an Indigenous artist from the Kimberley and a sculptor, art therapist and Melbourne church pastoral care worker, will give a response. **Sunday 24 March**, 3:00 pm (doors open 2.30 pm), St Kilda Town Hall. Refreshments afterwards. Tickets \$20. Bookings: <https://www.trybooking.com/464373>.

Note: All proceeds from the event will go to the church's Community Kitchen, an outreach program of St Kilda Baptist which provides a free weekly evening meal to around 70 people who are at risk of homelessness, isolation, mental illness and others living on the margins of society. This weekly gathering in the church hall is also a source of support and connection to any support services needed. It has become an important part of the lives of the participants and for the volunteers as well. There is also a monthly gathering, Matters of the Heart, where stories are shared after a BBQ and music. The chance to be heard and validated has been extremely empowering for many participants.

BARBARA AND THE CAMP DOGS

Malthouse Theatre's Merlyn stage is made over into a sticky-carpet band venue, a transformation that will see some lucky audience members seated up-close and a part of the action with Barbara and the band for this highly acclaimed play. Ursula Yovich and Elaine Crombie rock out, their powerful vocals accompanied by a live, all-female three-piece outfit. Malthouse Theatre until **Sunday 3 March**. Bookings: <https://malthousetheatre.com.au/>

A NIGHT WITH UNCLE JACK

Spend a night with national treasure, award-winning actor, Aboriginal Elder and activist Uncle Jack Charles, annotating his colourful life and brilliant career in words and music. Hosted by respected broadcaster Namila Benson plus special guests, the night offers the chance to hear the extraordinary tale of this actor, musician, potter, member of the Stolen Generation and gifted performer. **March 15-16**, 7.00-10.00 pm, The Melba Spiegel tent, 35 Johnston Street, Collingwood. \$25 concession, \$40 adults.

RADIO 3KND

Radio 3 Kool 'N' Deadly's Top 100 for 2019 kicked off on 26 January with the latest hits and anthems. The national award-winning program is like no other, playing only Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music in a wide range of genres. 3KND's Top100 celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music, artists and culture by putting together a deadly playlist - 100 of the best Indigenous tracks for everyone to enjoy!
PS: PPCfR's Co-Chair Dennis Fisher, aka Den the Fish, presents regular programs on 3KND.

NITV

National Indigenous Television (NITV), a channel made by, for and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, is an excellent source of information including daily national news stories, documentaries, features, educational programs and much more. On free-to-air television Channel 34, it reaches over two million unique viewers a month as well as additional platforms, including SBS On Demand and Foxtel.
Note: NITV is looking for proposals from independent filmmakers to create unique stories that lead to a greater understanding of Indigenous people and culture. Contact Email: comments@sbs.com.au or call 1800 500 727.

