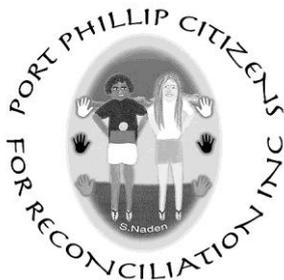


Mungo...



Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation Inc.

ABN: 444 16 152 998

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

195 Bank Street, South Melbourne, 3205

Phone: (03) 9530 3245

Mobile: 0401 716 448

Email: rule@comcen.com.au

This newsletter is supported by a Community Grant from the City of Port Phillip and printed with the assistance of the Member for Albert Park, Martin Foley, MP.

November, 2007

FROM THE CHAIR

What an announcement! In a speech on October 11, the Prime Minister admitted his failure to deliver on reconciliation, promised to make a new start - but not to say 'sorry' - and said he'd hold a referendum to recognize Indigenous Australians in the constitution, if re-elected. In doing so, he put Indigenous affairs back on the map, generated heaps of media coverage and (mixed) reactions from many Indigenous leaders and prominent non-Indigenous Australians. I'm sure there is a positive in all of this. Several spring to mind. The way has been opened for concerned individuals and/or group representatives to take advantage of the publicity and push harder for the sort of changes that need to be made, to encourage better relations, improve living conditions, and promote recognition of our first nation's people. Others ideas might be take the form of lobbying politicians, talking to councils and faith groups, supporting relevant initiatives like LISTEN Up, Get Up, ACOSS Action Network, writing letters to the media, contacting local Indigenous people and organizations and finding out what help they might need, sharing information, passing on good news, talking with people, encouraging inter-community consultations. As Patrick Dodson, one of our most inspiring of Indigenous leaders said: "Seize the opportunity for a national dialogue" (about reconciliation). Let's not disappoint him.

Martin Foley, the newly elected Member for Albert Park, invited our group to meet him in his office. Helen, Steve, Gael and I attended, coincidentally on the day after the PM's announcement. Martin spoke about his interest in and commitment to the aims and values of reconciliation, among other matters, and offered to help the group as and when required. He asked if we'd be interested in taking a community stall at the farmer's markets held monthly in St Kilda and Albert Park, something we're interested in following up. PPCfR is most appreciative of the ongoing support the Minister offered and particularly grateful for the

help that Manfred Hacker continues to give us with the printing of Mungo each month.

Please come to our November meeting when we'll have a guest speaker, the historian Sue Taffe, Honorary Research Fellow, Centre for Australian Indigenous Studies at Monash University. Sue will talk about "Fighting Friendships: activists for Aboriginal justice across racial/cultural divides in the 1950s-1980's," based on the book "Black and White Together" she wrote for the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI). Sue will focus on the relationships between Victorian activities such as Pastor Doug Nicholls and Stan Davey, Joe McGinness and Barry Christophers, some of the former FCAATSI executive members she says have shaped her life since she met them. We'll meet on Tuesday, 20th November at the Emerald Hill Library, Bank Street, South Melbourne, at 6.30pm, starting with a short meeting followed by Sue's talk around 7.00pm. This is free and open to all interested people. Refreshments provided. If you'd like to know more, please contact the office.

PPCfR's work has been recognised by the City of Port Phillip. Mayor Janet Bolitho presented the group with a Certificate of Achievement "in recognition of ten years of unwavering commitment to reconciliation." Many thanks to all those involved over the past decade.

Rosemary Rule

Next meeting

Tuesday, 20th November, Emerald Hill Library, Bank Street, South Melbourne, 6.30pm, with talk from historian Sue Taffe. Gold coin donation. All welcome. Refreshments provided.

NT Intervention – get involved

Unimpressed, outraged or even concerned by the government's 'emergency response' and intervention into the lives of Aboriginal Australians living in the Northern Territory? Don't just complain, **do** something! There are plenty of ways individuals and groups can have their say. **Talk to** Aboriginal people and organisations, politicians. **Join a campaign. LISTEN Up!** Is a coalition established in response to the Federal Government's intervention in the Northern Territory and includes ANTaR Victoria, The Victorian Council of Social Service, the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, Your Voice, Reconciliation Victoria. They are calling on individuals, organisations and particularly federal election candidates, to sign up to a pledge to LISTEN Up! to Aboriginal and Islander voices in the lead up to the Australian federal election.

<http://www.listenupaustalia.org> for full details. **Get UP** has a campaign underway to say 'sorry' and often gets media coverage for their activities. Visit their website and add your name. Go to:

www.getup.org.au/campaign/TheFirstActIsSayingSorry.

Women for Wik, recently reactivated, monitors the government's action. WfW intends to be a powerful force in support of Aboriginal communities and their land rights and invites people to help by endorsing us on the website and by asking your members to endorse us.

www.womenforwik.org. Monitor radio and TV, write letters, make comments for example, to the ABC TV's Difference of Opinion programme that had a compelling panel discussion on the intervention on 18 October - www.abc.net.au/tv/differenceofopinion.

Read "Coercive Reconciliation – Stabilise, Normalise, Exit Aboriginal Australia" edited by Jon Altman and Melinda Hinkson with impressive list of contributors; recently published by Arena; the Koori Times and/or National Indigenous Times newspapers; keep up to date through ANTaR, Reconciliation Victoria and related networks.

Lobby politicians, faith and other relevant community groups.

Network: If you have other ideas or suggestions, let PPCfR know. Rosemary Rule

Local Reconciliation Groups conference

"Ten year dreaming: reclaiming reconciliation" is the theme for this year's Local Reconciliation Groups' Conference on 10 November, Aborigines Advancement League, Thornbury, 10:00am-5.30pm. This is an important event for people involved in the reconciliation movement to come together and discuss issues and ways to move forward effectively. Speakers include the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, The Hon Richard Wynne, Jirra Harvey, Centre for Indigenous Education, University of Melbourne and former NAIDOC Artists of the Year, the CEO's of Reconciliation Victoria and ANTaR Victoria discussing the role of local groups as well as some break-out workshops on topics of

relevance. Mikael Smith, consultant (and former City of Port Phillip Indigenous Policy Officer) will be the MC and sum up the workshop discussions. After all the talk, entertainment, provided by singer/songwriter James Henry, the talented grandson of Jimmy Little. Cost: \$10 or \$20, lunch included. For information/registration details, contact ANTaR or Reconciliation Victoria, www.antarvictoria.org.au or www.reconciliationvic.org.au. Following the conference, Reconciliation Victoria will hold their Annual General Meeting.

ANTaR fundraiser dinner

ANTaR's 2007 fundraiser dinner is on 13 November, 2007, Sun Vietnamese Restaurant, Lygon St, East Brunswick. Enjoy a 3 course meal, with guest speaker to be announced and a silent auction. All new members who join on the night go into a drawer for a prize. Donations for the silent auction are needed e.g.: books, cds, homewares or a service - gardening, hairdressing. Items can be dropped off at the ANTaR office anytime up to 13 November. For more information contact Julie Kun, 0419 506 178.

Long Walk Women's Lunch

Janet Bolitho, City of Port Phillip Mayor, kindly invited PPCfR members Rosemary Rule, Gael Wilson and Helen Bennett to the 2007 'Long Walk' Women's fundraising luncheon on 10 October. We joined councillors Karen Sait, Janet Cribbes, Judith Klepner, Aunty Maria Starcevic, Judith 'Jacko' Jackson, representatives from Sacred Heart Mission and a local primary school. Actor/singer Deborah Cheetham was the MC (and told us she's writing an opera), Christine Anu sang and ABC TV's 'Lateline' presenter Kathy Bowlen conducted a Q&A with a three woman-panel. Funds raised from the raffle and auction will be used to support Indigenous leadership initiatives.

Exhibitions

Outback Aboriginal Art exhibition at Gasworks, Port Melbourne, 10-21 November. Details: 9699 3253 or www.gasworks.org.au. 'Tracks in the Desert, Tracks in the Urban Landscape', contemporary art by Arburnna artists from South Australia, November 15-December 2, Contemporary Arts Venue, 8 Martin Street, S Kilda. Victorian Aboriginal art Exhibition features work from the Healesville Indigenous Arts Enterprise Cooperative, November 1-6, Chapel off Chapel, Malvern Road, Prahran. Ten percent of the sales support The Artists for Forests.

2007 Yan Yean Gathering

30 November 10am - 3pm, a day to celebrate and showcase Indigenous youth through dance, art, song. Performances by young Indigenous artists including Katherine Clarke, Illana Atkinson, Casey Atkinson, dance workshop by Nikki Ashby, giveaways, face painting, free lunch, didgeridoo playing, interactive workshops, stalls, a great way to see all the great services, pathways, programs and organisations that are available to all. The organizers are also looking for Performers for the day in song, dance, comedy etc, and for cultural interactive activities, so please spread the word! For

more information, visit www.viyac.org.au, The Aborigines Advancement League, 2 Watt St Thornbury.

Patrick Dodson's talk

Pat Dodson, Chairman of the Lingiari Foundation and former Chairman of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 1991-97, the man often referred to as 'the father of reconciliation' gave an impressive talk titled 'Reconciliation Two Centuries On' at Brunswick Town Hall last month. Hundreds turned up for the event organised by the Centre for Dialogue, LaTrobe University. No one was disappointed in his wide-ranging, informed speech, nor his optimistic manner and bipartisan outlook. Pat outlined four key initiatives he wants to focus on:

Native title, indigenous governance, importance of country negotiation and consultation and international best practice as a framework to support moving forward and rebuilding indigenous communities. Other speakers included Anglican Archbishop Phillip Freier, Joseph Camilleri, Director, Centre for Dialogue and Elizabeth Proust from the Centre, and a passionate Moreland City Councillor.

Liyarn Ngarn DVD

Liyarn Ngarn – it means "Coming Together of the Spirit" in the Yawuru language of the West Kimberly around Broome, is a compelling documentary about "the devastation and inhumanity brought upon indigenous people in every aspect of their daily lives." Personal stories of injustice are narrated by English actor Pete Postlethwaite as told to him, by Patrick Dodson and Bill Johnson, an old English school friend of Pete's. Archie Roach adds his lyrics and voice. Liyarn Ngarn DVD, \$30, available from ANTaR, 9419 3616 or (02) 9555 6138.

Unfinished Business & NT Intervention

Unfinished Business was the theme of ABCTV's 'Difference of Opinion' programme on 18 October. The panelists were Dr Sue Gordon, Chair of the National Indigenous Council and the NT Taskforce; Tom Calma, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, Professor Lowitja O'Donoghue, AM, Aboriginal health advocate, and Olga Havnen, Coordinator, Combined Aboriginal Organisations of the NT and a robust discussion looking at issues relating to the government's 'emergency response' resulted. Sue maintained an unflinching stance, often at odds with the others, and unapologetic for what has and will happen. Rosemary and Helen were among the 60 members of the studio audience but as usual in such events, there was not enough time for questions. For anyone wanting to know more, read the transcript or post comments, visit:

http://www.abc.net.au/tv/differenceofopinion/content/archives/doo_20071018.htm

Book review

"Jackson's Track – Memoir of a Dreamtime Place" by Daryl Tonkin and Carolyn Landon, is an account of Daryl's life as a white man who settles in Gippsland in 1930s. What

happens to his extended Aboriginal family is unfortunately, terribly reminiscent of what is happening in the Northern Territory in 2007. Daryl talks about his work in the timber industry, life on Jackson's Track, marriage to an Aboriginal woman, his nine children and extended Aboriginal community, many of whom he employed and supported, committed to his way of life despite the bitter divisions it caused within his own (white) family. Times changed, commercial opportunities arose, 'the welfare' moves in, bulldozing the camps and removing families into Drouin "to bring up children in a better life away from Jackson's Track." It was not a well thought out plan. Most of the removed families were given tents, not houses, without the toilets, electricity or job prospects they'd been promised. All too quickly, their lives and health began to disintegrate. Reading about this special community, Daryl's views about what happens when local authorities, churches and do-gooders impose their white values onto the Aboriginal community, result in a fascinating local and cultural history. It also makes you think about the past repeating itself as 2007, political expediency and haste, rather than consultations and collaborative initiatives are today overriding the needs of Aboriginal Australian communities in the NT. "Jackson's Track," Penguin Books 1999; available from libraries.

Rosemary Rule.

"Indigenous Australia -- is top-down intervention the way forward?"

This was the title of the October "Breakfast Conversation" with Anglican Archbishop Dr. Philip Freier at BMW Edge, Federation Square. Dr. Freier, who worked with many Indigenous communities as Bishop of the Northern Territory, was conversing with Professor Ian Anderson, who is Koori, and is the Director of the Centre for Health and Society at the University of Melbourne, and of the VicHealth Koori Health Research and Community Development Unit.

Among the points made in presentations and in response to questions were:- We need to think in a more complex manner regarding Indigenous issues than to think simply in the terms of "western" societies. Policies tend to be talked about from official sources in a depersonalized manner. Improvements from the past (such as improvements in health in Queensland some 30 years ago) tend to be forgotten, not reviewed and/or learned from. Policy has been largely developed by non-Indigenous people from their stereotypic views of Indigenous people. For example, recent Commonwealth proposals have not been based on discussion with the Indigenous people, or non-Indigenous persons with relevant background. Why has the Federal Government considered only two of the ninety-seven recommendations of the Anderson-Wild "Little Children are Sacred" report? There had been a desire among Northern Territory Indigenous people for appropriate services and assistance but the intervention has come with very short-term investigation and consultation. An example was given by a health worker of initial fear of health teams

taking children away, but with careful approach and explanation this fear was allayed and the health team was accepted. Doubt was expressed by this health worker about the effectiveness of "one-off" visits. In Maningrida, women have taken an initiative regarding care for children; a grass-roots approach regarding sexuality is helpful in a continuing way. It was stated that sexual abuse is the smallest of all abuse problems, as for Australia generally. Child abuse certainly requires attention but in discussing it there is a need to keep considerations and comment in proportion to the actual extent of the problem. It is important to relate to problems in a community working from the experience of the elders, in local cultural ways, with understanding. The men have to take a stand against violence. In fact there are examples of men taking a leadership role but this is not widely known. Archbishop Freier said from his experience that many Indigenous people have respect for Christian people. He also considered it important to choose appropriate non-Indigenous people generally for contact and interaction.

The session was a valuable contribution to understanding of this vitally important issue from people of different backgrounds with much relevant knowledge and experience.

Harry Ward

From ANTaR

Help realise the dream of Victoria's first Indigenous owned National Park

Yorta Yorta land extends from near Echuca to just west of Albury-Wodonga along Dhungalla (the Murray river). Included in this land are the Barmah and Millewa state forests (one forest separated by the state border). As well as its cultural significance to the Yorta Yorta, this forest is of significant value for its wealth of biodiversity.

Barmah-Millewa is the largest River Red Gum forest in the world, in the heart of Yorta Yorta Country. It is predominantly State Forest, which means that it is threatened by unsustainable logging and grazing practices, but also means that it is possible for the State government to recognise Traditional Owner interests through handback or agreements over its use and management. Hence the Barmah-Millewa Collective developed with the Yorta Yorta the proposal of an Aboriginal owned (or 'jointly managed') National Park.

Lobbying of the Victorian government for Victoria's first Indigenous owned National Park was led by the Yorta Yorta and the Barmah-Millewa Collective, and resulted in the government investigating the possibility of new river red gum national parks along the Murray with some form of Aboriginal Management through the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) River Red Gum Investigation. For the first time ever VEAC was instructed to investigate "possible opportunities for Indigenous management involvement." Premier Bracks made a pre election promise last year to deliver on VEAC's

recommendations, and so a lot now rests on the outcomes of the investigation.

VEAC's draft recommendations was released on 19 July 2007. There is now a two month public submission period until September 21 September.

What you can do to support land justice for the Yorta Yorta:

Write a submission

Write a letter to the editor of the Weekly Times, Shepparton News, Riverine Herald, Bendigo Advertiser.

Contact the Barmah-Millewa collective or ANTaR Victoria if you are interesting in supporting the campaign.

For more information visit:

<http://www.antarvictoria.org.au/Barmah-Millewaforest.htm>

Indigenous Health Success Stories

ANTaR's new booklet of Success Stories in Indigenous Health shows that Indigenous-led health care initiatives often get the best results. The stories demonstrate that progress in improving Indigenous health is achieved when there is significant engagement with the Indigenous communities concerned and appropriate funding and support provided. Take a look at some of the success stories on www.antar.org.au and download a copy of the booklet.

Sovereignty Forum Coming Soon

A public forum on Indigenous sovereignty will be held on December 10. This public forum will be an opportunity for people to participate in a discussion on Indigenous Sovereignty both within Australia and in an international context. For more details go to the ANTaR Vic website or register your interest at antar@antarvictoria.org.au or 03 9419 3613.

Reconciliation Victoria Update

JOIN UP and keep informed

The active engagement of a broad range of Australians in the Indigenous rights and reconciliation movements is crucial in the current climate. You can keep informed of key news and local events in Victoria by becoming a member of Reconciliation Victoria. Membership is FREE and ensures you receive regular updates, newsletter, invites and the right to vote at our AGM to elect Council members and direct our work. Download a form from our website at: www.reconciliationvic.org.au

DVD on Referendum

Rec Vic and the Department of Education have produced a 10 minute DVD entitled: 'Remembering '67: The Struggle for Justice', featuring interviews with elders involved in the Referendum and perspectives from young Indigenous people. For more information contact Julie Warren on 03 9662 1645 or email Julie.warren@reconciliationvic.org.au.