

Mungo...



Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation Inc.

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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.
October, 2007

FROM THE CHAIR

The celebrations for PPCfR's 10th anniversary on 26 September at St Kilda Library were wonderful. Around 50 people crowded into the Community Room and it was good to be able to reconnect with long-time supporters, Indigenous friends, members of the Stonnington and Bayside reconciliation groups and to meet some new people.

Dennis Fisher was the MC for the evening. In a heartfelt manner, he spoke about his involvement in the reconciliation movement. Coincidentally, it started ten years ago in Port Melbourne when walking down the street, he saw a group of people and the Aboriginal flag, and on questioning, found out they were from the Port Phillip Reconciliation group: it was the first time he'd heard about reconciliation. Dennis talked about some of the changes he's been through over the years, his involvement with the reconciliation movement and his work on radio 3KnD. I'm pleased to report that Dennis has agreed to be Co-Chair of PPCfR so we're bound to have an interesting year ahead. Dennis then introduced Janet Bolitho, City of Port Phillip Mayor. An encouraging and inspiring supporter, she gave a brief summary of our work over the years. We were very pleased she could attend. There was well-deserved applause after the screening of "My Brother Vinnie," a poignant, funny and insightful short film, undoubtedly made even more memorable by the presence of the effervescent Vinnie Pedersen and his adopted mother Frances Bond, stars of the film with Vinnie's brother, the actor Aaron Pederson. (Aaron and Sarah Bond, the producer, were unfortunately unable to attend due to commitments with the performance of "Kin" at the Malthouse). Then it was Kutcha Edwards' turn to captured our attention as he talked about some of the things he's encountered and had to contend with in his life, in between singing a couple of songs superbly accompanied by guitarist Alistair McLean. Afterwards, there was a pleasant buzz about the room as people mingled and enjoyed delicious refreshments, hopefully encouraged by

what they had seen and heard to realise that by walking and working together, Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians can certainly make a difference.

The success of the event was due to the effort put in by our hard-working members, particularly Helen, who organized the eye-catching display in the library foyer; Gael, Steve, Liz, Harry, Noelleen, Val and Rachel, so many thanks to each of you. A special thank-you also to Peter Harvey from the Banyule Reconciliation Group who compiled the attention-grabbing slide show of photos taken over the past ten years, and screened the film. Several people signed up as new members, which is pleasing.

Rosemary Rule

Next meeting: Tuesday, 16 October, 6.30pm.

195 Bank Street, South Melbourne. All welcome!

Executive Committee elected

At the Annual General Meeting held before the celebrations, the following were elected to the Executive Committee: Rosemary Rule (Chair); Dennis Fisher (Co Chair) Gael Wilson (Treasurer), Liz Gallois (Secretary) Steve Pennells (Office Manager, Events Coordinator), Clare Bradford (Mungo Editor), Helen Bennett (Mailout Coordinator), Harry Ward, Noelleen Ward (Regional Groups representative). The Treasurer acknowledged the grant received from the Council as well as the need to encourage people to join the group to help with our work. The Chair's report is included below as it lists some of the group's activities and achievements of the past ten years, something surely to be proud of.

Chair's Report

First I would like to pay my respects to the Kulin Nation on whose land we meet today. 2007 is an especially significant year - the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation. It seems appropriate to mention some highlights.

First meeting: Organised by Jacki Willox and held at the electoral office of Clyde Holding, the former Federal Member for Melbourne Ports. A Minister for Aboriginal Affairs in the Hawke Government from 1983-1987, Mr. Holding had cried in Federal Parliament when the Bringing Them Home Report was tabled on May 26, 1997 and resolved to start a reconciliation group locally. Then Port Phillip mayor, Christine Haäg, attended the meeting and was an active participant.

First action: Holding a Sorry Day commemoration that attracted nearly 500 local residents to St Kilda Town Hall on August 10, 1997. The programme included keynote speaker, the then Chief Executive Officer of Mirimbiak Nations, Richard Frankland; Clyde Holding who apologised for the things he was not able to achieve during his time as minister; singer Ruby Hunter; St Kilda Park Primary School Aboriginal dance group; Footscray Multicultural Choir; local poets and singers. It culminated in Margaret Gardiner of the Wurundjeri people, and Cr Haäg, planting a river red gum nurtured from the 400 year-old Corroboree tree at St Kilda Junction.

First symposium: A native title symposium, held at Temple Beth Israel in November 1997, attracted 260 people.

Subsequent events include:

Sorry Day 2004 with keynote speaker Doris Pilkington Garimara whose book, Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence, is immortalised in the film of the same name.

Sorry Day 2006 saw a performance of 'Funny Bones – A Sit Down Comedy' directed by Pauline Whyman, with local Aboriginal elders Maria Starcevic and Judy "Jacko" Jackson and Maori Mabel Enoka entertaining the crowds.

Competitions: Two themed writing competitions for different age groups. The National Indigenous Times was so impressed with entrant Graham Ring's contribution that it asked him to be a regular columnist; he still is.

Forums: July 1998: Forum at St Kilda Town Hall with Sir Ronald Wilson, the former High Court Judge who conducted the Bringing Them Home hearings. June 2004: Indigenous Health and Education forum at St Kilda Bowling Club, compered by Richard Frankland with Professor Ian Anderson and Dr Gregory Phillips, The University of Melbourne, and Joel Wright, National Tertiary Education Union.

Talks: Include Noel Tovey, author/playwright; John Harding, playwright, actor; Tony Birch, academic and author; Cora Thomas, historian; Mikael Smith, formerly City of Port Phillip's Indigenous Policy & Programs Coordinator; Marjorie Button, teacher.

Walks: PPCfR's banner has been carried by members at three Long Walks organized by footballer Michael Long.

Films: Several 'free, family friendly' film nights showcasing Australian Indigenous films at St Kilda Library.

Festivals: We have put on boomerang painting for children and hosted information stalls at a multitude of community events such as Jackson Street Fair, Blessington Street Festival, Once Upon a Time, Yalukit Wilam Ngargee, NAIDOC and Reconciliation Week activities.

Newsletters: Mungo, mailed to members and friends each month, is a key communication tool and an important resource in the reconciliation movement.

Networks: PPCfR helped with the formation of the Stonnington Reconciliation group and initiated a partnership between ourselves, Stonnington and Bayside Reconciliation groups and is actively involved with Australians for Native Title & Reconciliation and Reconciliation Victoria. We value the support of the City of Port Phillip from whom we receive an annual grant, and acknowledge the support received from the office of the former Member for Albert Park, John Thwaites. Forming relationships with local Aboriginals and Indigenous groups is always looked forward to and we have been able to help in various ways, including assisting Koori students at Northcote High School."

Member's letter

"Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation have been extremely lucky to have had outstanding leadership over the past ten years. Jacki Willox and Rosemary Rule have been not only untiring and committed but very effective in their leadership. As a result PPCfR has become recognised in our community as a group making a difference and worthy of support. I am very sorry to miss the 10th anniversary event."

Beverley Broadbent.

News from Stonnington Reconciliation Group (SCR)

Stonnington Council, at its meeting on 17 September, approved a revised Reconciliation Action Plan and the negotiation of a memorandum of understanding with World Vision for council's sponsorship of the Leadership & Governance Project. Action Plan Revision & Partnership Project. (The Reconciliation Plan is much broader than this; these are revised/new sections).

Vision: "To provide a platform for Council & community to learn, appreciate & understand the value of true reconciliation to the whole community & its importance in sustainable development."

Themes: The review of the Reconciliation Action Plan supported four themes on which to base future action:-1. Recognition, Communication & Cultural Awareness; 2. Contact & Participation, 3. Partnerships, 4. Environment & Open Spaces. Partnerships: Undertake sponsorship of World Vision's Leadership & Governance Project for the community of Wettengerr (Epenarra), with a population of 300, in the Northern Territory

The project aims to develop strong, function & community legitimised governance structures through a community-based transformational development process. It is proposed that Council commits \$25,000 per year for three years. Since 2003 World Vision has been working with the indigenous leaders, mentoring, giving basic governance training & facilitating the election of a Community Council for Wettengerr. It aims to enhance the community's capacity to establish interdependent & empowering relationships with various stakeholders in the region to address those matters that affect their quality of life. The documented governance process has been

translated into the local language of Alyawarr & the work continues to develop and refine it. It is a patient, considered process of listening, learning & working together to achieve the goal.

SCR members, Councillors and officers alike, are excited about the possibilities for improved outcomes for indigenous Australians and greater awareness of indigenous issues in the broader community resulting from this project. It is hoped that it will be a model for other communities and for future Local Government sponsorship. SCR looks forward to sharing our understanding of this project.

Tom Moloney (Vice President, SCR)

Women for Wik

Ten years ago, Women For Wik supported Native Title in Australia. Concerned about the government's present emergency action in the Northern Territory and the legislation which has removed people's land rights, they want to do something about it and have decided to get Women for Wik up and running again. A web site (www.womenforwik.org) will monitor action.

Thousands of women, both nationally and internationally, have pledged their support. 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. The Organizing Committee Monitoring the Intervention is: Eileen Cummings, Bulman and Ngkurr Communities, Former Policy Advisor to the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory on Aboriginal and Women's Affairs, Eileen.cummings@hotmail.com, 0412 463218; Olga Havnen, Coordinator, Combined Aboriginal Organisations of the Northern Territory, olga.havnen@gmail.com; Christine Olsen, writer and producer, olsenlevy@telpacific.com.au; Raylene Rosas, Bulman Community, rosas@bigpond.com.au; Rosie Scott, writer, rosie@amaze.net.au; Claire Smith, President, World Archaeological Congress, claire.smith@flinders.edu.au, 0424388925.

Exhibitions:

'Martu Painting Together First Time' a gloriously vibrant showing of emerging artists, mostly women, from the Great & Little Sandy Desert, WA, at William Mora Galleries, Richmond until 19 October. Details: 9429 1199.

Talk:

The Centre for Dialogue annual lecture: Patrick Dodson, Reconciliation: Two Centuries On, Is Dialogue Enough? Hear a lecture by the "Father of the Reconciliation Movement", Patrick Dodson, 10 October, 7.30pm, Brunswick Town Hall, 233 Sydney Road Brunswick. Details, contact: dialogue@latrobe.edu.au

Films:

Reconciliation Banyule, October 1, "Marn Grook: an Aboriginal perspective on Australian Rules Football", "Dance" with Steven Page. Free for information, contact Wally or Margaret Johnson, 9499 4404, or Peter or Aaltje Harvey, 9499 2005.

Message Sticks Indigenous Film Festival, 1-3 November, ACMI, Federation Square. Includes 'Footprints in the Sand', 'Nigger Lovers' and 'Destiny in Alice'. For screenings and details contact: www.afc.gov.au/blackscreen

Book launch:

'Coercive Reconciliation – Stabilise, Normalise, Exit Aboriginal Australia' by Jon Altman and Melinda Hinkson, published by Arena Publications to be launched by Muriel Bamblett, Chair of the Secretariat for National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care, and Ron Merkel, QC. Muriel will

also launch 'Listen Up', a campaign intended to reignite the reconciliation agenda, sponsored by Reconciliation Victoria and ANTaR Vic. Thursday, 4 October, 6.30pm at Readings, Carlton.

Sport:

2007 VAYSAR State-wide Senior Football and Netball Carnival, October 5-7. The Victorian Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation Co-operative present the largest annual gathering of Aboriginal people across Victoria. Come and see the real grand final and be a volunteer! Plenty of activities for kids. Contact ANTaR Victoria, 9419 3613 or Geraldine Atkinson, 5831 5479. The Long Walk 2007 Women's Luncheon, October 10 is an invitation to spend time with Indigenous and non Indigenous women from across Australia. For information, phone 9596 7341.

Music:

Lou Bennett and the Sweet Cheeks with a musical performance that celebrates diversity and embraces reconciliation, cultural exchange and respect at The Famous Spiegeltent, Arts Centre Forecourt, 12 & 13 October, 7pm. Tickets \$30/22.50. Bookings: 1300 136 166 or via www.melbournefestival.com.au. Also watch out for Mark Atkins Grungada's show – 'A journey of music and song'. This is a rare chance to see and hear Australia's finest didgeridoo player performing solo at The Famous Spiegeltent, 14-16 October, 9.30pm. Ticket details as above.

Local Reconciliation Groups conference

"Ten year dreaming: reclaiming reconciliation" on 10 November, Aborigines Advancement League, Thornbury, from 10:00am. For information about guest speakers and registration details, contact ANTaR or Reconciliation Victoria, www.antarvictoria.org.au or www.reconciliationvic.org.au