



Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation Inc.

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2020-2021 Annual Report

Wominjeka – Welcome

Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we meet and pays our respect to their Elders; past, present and emerging.

Annual General Meeting

Due to Covid restrictions, our last AGM on Tuesday 20 October 2020 was held via zoom with some 25 attendees. Elder Judith 'Jacko' Jackson set the tone with her warm Acknowledgement of Country. My Chair's Report and Fiona Olney-Fraser's Treasurer's Report were read, moved and accepted. Each of our officer bearers agreed to stand for re-election and, I'm pleased to report, were unanimously elected as follows: Co-Chairs - Dennis Fisher and myself; Treasurer - Fiona Olney-Fraser; Secretary - Deb Stewart; and Committee Members - Jo Bond & Denis Frankel. Their support is never taken for granted and is very much appreciated.

Respected Elder Fay Stewart-Muir, a cultural educator, language specialist and author, was an engaging Guest Speaker. She's spent 15 years learning and teaching the language of her Wemba Wemba father and stressed the need for protocols to be observed when using words, checking with the relevant Traditional Owners. Fay's willingness to share her knowledge and her love of teaching and talking to groups, schools or children in libraries shone through, and she kindly read from her book *Family*, one of the three children's books she's written. Deb suggested we buy Fay's books for the winners of our 2022 Reconciliation Writing Competition and asked Fay if she'll present a workshop for the group next year; she said 'Yes'!

Activities

Covid put a dampener on all the planned events but one: our traditional end-of-year barbecue gathering in Gasworks Park, South Melbourne, held on 15 December. It was great to see Jacko and Dennis Fisher and to meet some new members and catch up with others.



Members and friends get together for an end-of-year barbecue at Gasworks Park, South Melbourne.

We had to cancel our Sorry Day Lunch on 26 May 2021, our 2020 Reconciliation Writing Competition, a community lunch to celebrate the World Day of Indigenous Peoples on 9 August and a proposed Treaty-related forum. On the plus side, our regular monthly meetings were via zoom and attracted newcomers. I'm grateful to Deb for arranging and managing the meetings so efficiently.

Children's books: We gifted a copy of Fay Stewart-Muir's book *Respect* to each of the 43 Early Learning Centres within the City of Port Phillip, along with a useful teachers' resource list compiled by members Fiona Darroch-Green and Victoria Edwards. Feedback has been very positive, and several centres have contacted us.

Supporting artists: At the request of Linden Gallery, St Kilda, we sponsored a \$500 cash prize for 'Best Artwork by an Indigenous Artist' and provided funds and support for several Indigenous artists to enter the Linden Postcard Exhibition. Jacko and I presented the PPCfR prize virtually to the winner, Kent Morris. Fiona Olney-Fraser did a really wonderful job overseeing every aspect of this rather complex project.

Networking

Holy Trinity Church, Port Melbourne
Dennis Fisher and I were invited to address the congregation on Sunday 20 June and speak about what Reconciliation means to each of us and were warmly received. Member Jim Richardson arranged the invitation.



Dennis Fisher, Reverend Noel Whale and Rosemary Rule.

Ngwala Willumbong, St Kilda

A group of members were privileged to hear Viv Parry talk about the exhibition she'd curated at the Carlisle Arts Space by residents of Galiamble and Winja Ulupna rehabilitation centres. Her insightful, personal and detailed comments about the paintings were a wonderful education.

Children's Garden Kindercare, South Melbourne
PPCfR member and early childhood educator Fiona Darroch-Green invited Elder Judith Jackson to meet staff and children at the kinder and has plans for future visits.



Fiona Darroch-Green, Judy Chow-Fairhall and Fancy Chen with a copy of *Respect at Children's Garden Kindercare, South Melbourne.*

Reconciliation Groups

We maintain strong links with our nearest neighbour, RecStonnington, and include their reports in *Mungo*. Elsewhere, I was personally invited to participate in RecVic's members' questionnaire and have attended forums organised by RecVic and ANTaR Victoria, sharing news of our activities, and like to hear what other groups are focusing on - issues such as racism, racial literacy, white privilege, cultural humility, deep listening and initiatives to engage with the broader community. It is encouraging to learn that strong and significant links are being made through the groups, whose members are mostly white, connecting with First Nations people in communities throughout Victoria.

Local service providers

Being unable to host events, our members decided to reach out to some local organisations, particularly those that help women. Thanks to Penelope Demos, Chemist Warehouse donated 50 bags of toiletry and cosmetic items which we topped up with some basic items, gifting them to Winja Ulupna, Star Health's Indigenous Access Program, Grey Street Medical Centre and Uniting Vic/Tas's South Melbourne Centre. The packs were all gratefully received.

People

Two long-time friends have passed away. Jude Hanley, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Access Health Worker with the Salvation Army who had a strong association with Grey Street Medical Centre in St Kilda, died unexpectedly mid-year. Dr Henry (Harry) Ward, a long-time and highly respected member, died in September, aged 95.

Communications

Mungo, our monthly newsletter, provides news about relevant events large and small. Electronically and via snail mail, it reaches over 3,500 people including RecVic and RecStonnington members. I acknowledge the help received from the staff in Martin Foley's electoral office who print out copies and warmly thank Jo Bond who does the collating and mailouts. I'm grateful to Todd Condie, the City of Port Phillip's Indigenous Policy Officer, who emails *Mungo* out to members each month on our behalf.

Website: I want to thank Joe Malignaggi who so ably managed the ppcfr.org website for many years and to pass on my gratitude to Nick Margiolakis who has taken on the role, refreshing the design.

City of Port Phillip (COPP)

In spite of rain, over 450 people - our members among them - turned out at 6.00 am for the second We-Akon Dilinja, Morning of Mourning Reflection, event hosted by COPP on 26 January in St Kilda's Alfred Square. Speakers included Boonwurrung Elder Parbin-ata Dr Carolyn Briggs AM, Josh Burns MP, Father Turi Hollis, Rabbi Yaakov Glassman and COPP Mayor, Cr Louise Crawford. Congratulations to the Council for presenting this significant and moving ceremony.



We Akon Dilinja, Morning of Mourning Reflection, held for the second time on 26 January in St Kilda.

PPCfR is a founding member of COPP's Reconciliation Action Plan working group, engaged on their third RAP. I value our ongoing relationship with Todd Condie and with Jordan Sutardy, Aboriginal Health and Reconciliation Officer, and appreciate their advice and support. I am also grateful to the Council for supporting the group via an annual grant enabling us to continue our work within the community.

So, Looking Ahead

Hopefully, in 2022, we can present a Reconciliation Writing Competition for adults and students, host a National Sorry Day lunch and a public forum, invite special guest speakers to meetings and reach out to and welcome newcomers.

I work alongside a wonderful group of people whose support and enthusiasm provides a really strong foundation for everything we undertake. A big thank you to Jacko, Todd, Jordan, Fiona, Deb, Sushena, Jo, Gael, Moira, Joy, Janine, Fiona, Helen, Judy, Maureen, Vicki, Iain, Mary Anne, Tom, Kirsten, Penelope, David, Jim, Desleigh and Denis, as well as to the new people I've connected with over the past year.

Rosemary Rule, Co-Chair, 19 October 2021



