



Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation Inc.

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2017-2018 Annual Report

Wominjeka – Welcome

Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation respectfully acknowledges the Yalukut Willam Clan of the Boon Wurrung. We pay our respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

Elections at the 2017 Annual General Meeting

At last year's AGM held on 21 November 2017, guests heard my Chair's Report followed by Fiona Olney-Fraser's Treasurer's Report; both were moved and accepted. Then, the following officers were unanimously elected to the Committee: Co-Chairs - Rosemary Rule and Dennis Fisher; Treasurer – Fiona Olney-Fraser; Secretary – Deb Stewart; Committee Members - Jo Bond and Denis Frankel. These people are the backbone of the group and their support, guidance and encouragement binds the group together.

Following this business, guest speaker Benson Saulo, Head of Community Strategy at Australian Unity and a descendent from Aboriginal nations of western Victoria and the New Ireland Province of Papua New Guinea, gave a thoughtful and inspiring talk about his life and his many achievements. It prompted Dennis Fisher to speak about his own journey and his ideas on ways to work towards Reconciliation, making it a memorable evening.

20th Anniversary Celebration

More than 150 people helped commemorate our '20 deadly years' on 23 October with a glorious celebration at the St Kilda Town Hall. Guests listened to singers from Galiamble and Winja Ulupna under the enthusiastic guidance of conductor Digby Hannah and heard BoonWurrung Elder N'arweet Carolyn Briggs give a warm and personal Welcome to Country. The MC, Leila Gurruwiwi, a NITV Marngrook Footy Show panellist, media personality and mentor, said: *'Working alongside PPCfR has been absolutely wonderful. Everyone who is part of the group is always respectful, engaging and proactive which is what you always want to see.'*

We learned about the history of the group from Mayor Cr Bernadene Voss and appreciated the compliments received from her and the Member for Albert Park, Martin Foley MP.

Special guest Richard Frankland's passionate speech about a hopeful future was a highlight. *'We need to focus on what we can build together along the way,'* he said. *'There's a light in the distance to help plant seeds for the future of a great Australia that one day will have an Aboriginal Prime Minister - and she'll be magnificent!'* Donning his musician's hat and guitar, Richard invited his Wilin Centre opera singer colleague John Wayne Parsons onto the stage, and encouraged guests to stand up and join in *'You can't be wrong if you're right.'*

My Co-Chair, Den the Fish, read his *Civilisation and Reconciliation* poems. Elder Judith 'Jacko' Jackson and COPP's Indigenous Policy Officer Todd Condie presented three door prizes to winners including an Aboriginal flag signed by designer Harold Thomas; a Boon Wurrung Womin Djeka plaque and merchandise from the Koorie Heritage Trust. We enjoyed the food provided by Sth Melbourne Market's Store 6 (seamlessly delivered by a team of young volunteers guided by Fiona Olney-Fraser), and guests stayed on to mingle for what was a wonderful celebration for a remarkable group.



Dennis Fisher, Judith 'Jacko' Jackson, Rosemary Rule, Gael Wilson, Leila Gurruwiwi, Richard Frankland and John Wayne Parsons helped celebrate our 20th Anniversary.

Reconciliation Writing Competition

It was a real pleasure to be at the Awards Ceremony for our 2018 Writing Competition in October held at Avenue Bookstore, Albert Park. Adults and students from Prep to Year 12 wrote on the theme Don't Keep History a Mystery, and the judges - Mr Bryan Andy, Professor Tony Birch and Emeritus Professor Clare Bradford - had a challenging job choosing two finalists and a winner in each of the categories.



Graeme Wilson with Jeanine Arthur, First Prize winner in the adult category.

I'm very grateful to the sponsors: Avenue Bookstore, Albert Park; Graeme Wilson of Wilson Agents who donated the \$500 First Prize for adults; Geoff Cayzer, Cayzer Real Estate; Greg Hocking; Vivienne McCutcheon, the late Andrew McCutcheon and Helen Sykes on behalf of Future Leaders who donated the \$500 First Prize for Years 10-12; Benson Saulo and Dr Kate Reid who donated the \$500 First Prize for Years 7-9, and to Provincial Events. I'd also like to thank Martin Foley MP; Elder Judith 'Jacko' Jackson; the City of Port Phillip particularly Todd Condie and Jordan Sutardy; and my fellow members of the inspiring Writing Competition committee - Deb Stewart, Gael Wilson, Fiona Olney-Fraser, Jo Bond, Janine Wilder, Sushena Krishnaswamy and Vivienne McCutcheon.

Guest Speakers

Our monthly meetings are well attended and continue to attract new people; this is most heartening. This year we heard from several guest speakers. Anne James and Ann Haddon, Books Illustrated founders, talked about initiatives promoting Indigenous children's books (September 2017); Benson Saulo spoke about his interesting life and work (November 2017); and Bryan Andy, Community Planner with Banyule Council, spoke movingly about being a writer, broadcaster, event producer and community activist (June 2018).

Sushena



(Left) Todd Condie, COPP's Indigenous Policy Officer, with Bryan Andy. (Right) Rosemary Rule, Benson Saulo, Dennis Fisher and Fiona Olney-Fraser.

2018 National Sorry Day Lunch

Between them, Master of Ceremonies Dennis Fisher and singer-storyteller Dave Arden shared their personal and moving anecdotes with the 120 guests at this year's lunch on 25 May. We were privileged to have an Acknowledgement of Country given by Elder Judith 'Jacko' Jackson and to hear from the Mayor Cr Bernadene Voss and the Member for Albert Park Martin Foley. The crowd included current and past councillors, representatives from faith groups, Optometry Australia, Star Health, Port Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre, RecStonnington and Sacred Heart Mission. Jacko and Todd presented the door prizes: tickets to *Mandiba*, the musical about Nelson Mandela's life; tickets to the *Dreamtime at the G* game from AFL's Indigenous group; and books from Books Illustrated. The lunch would not have run so smoothly without the help of my colleagues Gael Wilson, Deb Stewart, Fiona Olney-Fraser, Denis Frankel, Helen Hoffman, Jo Bond, Vivienne McCutcheon, Janine Wilder and Digby Hannah.



Dave Arden's singing and storytelling captivated guests.

Communications

Mungo, our monthly newsletter, reached over 3,500 people last year including members

of RecVic and RecStonnington via their e-networks. I'm most grateful to have Fiona Olney-Fraser's expert editorial help. Thank you also to the staff in Martin Foley's electoral office who print copies, to Jo Bond who then sends out the snail mail version, to Todd Condie who emails the online version, and to Joe Malignaggi who posts the newsletter online and maintains the ppcfr.org site with regular updates. A big thank you to Brigid Knight-Braniff who set up a PPCfR Facebook page to promote our work.

Networks

PPCFR members actively participate in Local Reconciliation Groups' forums hosted by RecVic and ANTA Vic, and attend their AGM and special events. I provide items about our activities for RecVic's e-newsletters. We continue our support for RecStonnington, the Homeless Memorial, Star Health, Sacred Heart Mission, St Kilda Baptist Church and the Boon Wurrung Foundation.

City of Port Phillip (COPP)

We strongly endorse COPP's Reconciliation initiatives and events held during Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week, and applaud the development of their second Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). I am very grateful for COPP's ongoing financial and in-kind support, particularly the help and guidance generously offered by Indigenous Policy Officer Todd Condie.

Looking Ahead

I'd like to thank all the people who so willingly help this active, vibrant group to continue their work and will look forward to our 21st year of activities.

Rosemary Rule, Co-Chair, 20 November 2018

