

Mungo...

The Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we meet, and we pay our respects to their Elders; past, present and emerging.



Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation Inc.

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August 2021

FROM THE CO-CHAIR

Gifts

During recent meetings, our group decided to donate gift packs for the women clients of key service providers in the City of Port Phillip. Thanks to a contact of member Penelope Demos, Chemist Warehouse generously supplied 50 bags filled with an array of skin and hair care products and cosmetics which we topped up with basic toiletry items. The bags were hand-delivered to Access Health, Star Health, Uniting South Melbourne and Winja Ulupna Recovery Centre and very warmly received. I'm grateful to Penelope, Jo Bond, Fiona Olney-Fraser and Deb Stewart for helping with this project. As we couldn't present our Reconciliation Writing Competition this year, we decided to gift a book to every early learning centre in Port Phillip. We chose the book *Respect* written by Aunty Fay Stewart-Muir and Sue Lawson and illustrated by Lisa Kennedy as a culturally appropriate book that introduces children to important elements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. Our early childhood educators - members Fiona Darroch-Green and Victoria Edwards - compiled a resources list that was included with each book along with an explanatory letter and a copy of *Mungo*. The hard-working project team, Deb Stewart, Fiona, Victoria, Sushena Krishnaswamy, Janine Wilder and myself, again demonstrated that by pooling

our various skill sets, our group can reach out to the community, achieve meaningful outcomes and, in the process, promote Reconciliation.



Fancy Chen (right), an educator at Children's Garden Kindercare, South Melbourne, receives a copy of *Respect* from PPCfR's Fiona Darroch-Green and Judy Chow-Fairhall.

Lunch

Unfortunately, due to a snap lockdown, we had to cancel our lunch to commemorate National Sorry Day on 26 May. However, as we're still keen to have an opportunity to catch up with friends, we have chosen **Monday 9 August**, the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, to host an informal lunch. It will be held at the South Melbourne Community Centre in Ferrars Place. There will be an Acknowledgement of Country and Dennis Fisher - aka Den the Fish - will be the MC. Guests will include Elders, community members, Councillors and friends. In keeping with Covid regulations, individual lunches and refreshments will be provided; numbers are limited.

Congratulations

To Ash Barty, Wimbledon 2021 Ladies' Singles Champion; to Barkindji artist and Torch CEO, Kent Morris, commissioned for a major new digital work by UTS Gallery and Art Collection on their 2021 Broadway Screen; to actor/director Rachael Maza, Artistic Director of Ilbjerri Theatre Company, who won the 2021 Green Room Lifetime Achievement Award; to Shaun Burgoyne, the first Indigenous person to reach 400 AFL/VFL games; to the 16 Indigenous athlete members of Australia's Olympic team; and to Barranbiyan man and former AFL footballer, Tony Armstrong, confirmed as ABCTV News Breakfast sports presenter.

Vale Jude Hanley

It was a shock to hear of the passing of Jude Hanley. The popular, long-time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Access Health worker with The Salvation Army had strong associations with Grey Street Medical Centre, Veg Out and Our Rainbow Place, and is sadly missed.

Memberships

Thank you to those who have renewed your membership; it is much appreciated. If you no longer wish to receive Mungo, however, please let us know via email rosemary.rule@gmail.com or 9699 8804.

Rosemary Rule

Next Meeting: Tuesday 17 August, 6.30 pm,
South Melbourne Community Centre, Hall 3,
Ferrars Place. (off Park Street). Details: 0418 685 734.

VICTORIAN TREATY NEWS

As the state moves towards establishing Australia's first Treaty with First Nations people, the most respected members of Indigenous communities from across Victoria will be asked to advise on what should be included within such an agreement. *"We want the wisdom of the Elders to help guide us,"* says Charmaine Clarke, a Gunditjmara woman of south-west Victoria. *"This is a listening exercise,"* says Wurundjeri/Woi Wurrung Elder Andrew Gardiner of Dandenong. *"What the people from Mildura want will be different to those from Mallacoota. There are so many differences right across the state."* Auntie Charmaine and Uncle Andrew are the co-chairs of an interim Elders' Voice, announced in July. Their job over the next three months is to consult with Elders across the state to establish a permanent Voice and to ensure it reflects the wishes and priorities of all Aboriginal Elders. The permanent Voice will provide cultural and ethical advice, traditional wisdom and oversight to the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria on its work negotiating a Treaty framework with the state government. The Elders say the Voice would represent First Nations' interests on two levels – an overarching state-wide Treaty and individual local traditional owners' Treaties. The Voice would be underpinned by four cultural pillars: respect for cultural authority; connectedness of communities, clans and future generations; a knowledge base, or wisdom; and lore of the land or upholding cultural protocols. From August, Elders will be invited to gatherings across Victoria over 3 months to discuss establishing a permanent Voice.

MANNA GUMS FRONTIER WARS MEMORIAL

Manna Gums on the Malmsbury-Daylesford Road in Daylesford is the site for an Aboriginal Peoples' Memorial Avenue. At the opening, Hepburn Shire Council Mayor, Cr Lesley Hewitt, said the memorial is an opportunity to honour the loss of lives, the sacrifice and the suffering of Aboriginal people during the Frontier Wars. *"Council is taking a leading role in honouring the lives and acknowledging the suffering of Aboriginal people in our region. Acts of Reconciliation, such as this, change attitudes to settlement and show a willingness to work together for a better future."* The establishment of this Avenue of Honour is a public acknowledgement; the first of its kind in our country. Rodney Carter, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation CEO, said *"The Frontier Wars Memorial Avenue affords a greater recognition of our fallen Ancestors and helps us all heal"*. Manna Gums is a fitting acknowledgement on the traditional lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung to acknowledge and commemorate the Australian Frontier Wars, a term that has been applied by some historians to describe the violent conflicts that occurred between Aboriginal people and white settlers following the British colonisation of Australia. These conflicts occurred from January 1788 until as late as 1933, including those occurring on Dja Dja Wurrung Land. The memorial is an initiative of the Hepburn Shire Council Reconciliation Action Plan Advisory Committee.

AUSTRALIA POST ENCOURAGES USING TRADITIONAL NAMES

Australia Post's option to include First Nations country names on their packaging has been made permanent. The new initiative was launched to mark NAIDOC Week and its theme, Heal Country. The organisation has also marked the annual celebration by wrapping a number of its street letterboxes in artwork by Darwin's Marcus Lee of the Karajarri People. Australia Post's National Indigenous Manager, Noongar man Chris Heelan, said it's a simple gesture with a positive and long-term effect. *"It's just an opportunity to open up some wider dialogue and maybe encourage all Australians to consider their campaign. We're encouraging all of our customers to engage locally, speak to your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands councils and your appropriate cultural centres."* The newly designed Parcel Post and Express Post satchels, which also include an Acknowledgement of Country, have a nominated line below the recipient's name to include a Traditional Place Name above the street address and postcode. Traditional Place Names can also be used on letters, provided they appear above the street address and postcode.

SUPPORTING THE VOICE TO PARLIAMENT

Having a Voice enshrined in the Constitution will allow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to speak strongly on laws and policies that will help us Heal Country. It is important to keep spreading awareness of the Finding a Heart campaign for a referendum on a Voice enshrined in the Constitution. There are several ways to take direct action to support the campaign, such as sharing the poster and social media posts, signing The Uluru Statement Canvas, making a donation to The Uluru Statement From The Heart and lobbying local, state and federal politicians.

NOVA PERIS STATUE

A bronze statue has been unveiled in Naarm/Melbourne's Federation Square honouring Nova Peris, the first Aboriginal Australian to win an Olympic gold medal. The statue is set on a base covered in totems important to Peris; a black-headed python representing her Kimberley roots and three bush hibiscuses to honour her relatives from the Stolen Generations. Peris was 25 when she won gold as a member of the Australian Olympic Hockey team at the Atlanta Olympics in 1996. Nova Peris also became Australia's first Indigenous woman elected to Federal Parliament in 2013, and as a Senator, represented the Northern Territory for Labor. Nova now works towards Reconciliation and advocates for the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The statue was designed by Australian sculptors Gillie and Marc as part of their Statues for Equality movement; an initiative to diversify public art in order to further gender and racial equality. The statue will eventually move to Darwin where Peris grew up in a housing commission area called the Kurringal Flats.

EXHIBITIONS

A group of PPCfR members had the privilege of hearing curator Viv Parry explain the intricate details depicted in the paintings chosen for the *Corroboree: Coming Together* exhibition at the Carlisle Art Space, St Kilda, last month. The majority of the works, by artists from the Ngwala Willumbong Aboriginal Corporation, were sold.



From left: Amy Saia, Judith Jackson, Fiona Darroch-Green, Viv Parry, Rosemary Rule, Fiona Olney-Fraser and Janine Wilder visiting the *Corroboree: Coming Together* exhibition.

Maree Clarke's *Ancestral Memories* is the first major retrospective of the Melbourne-based artist and designer and Yorta Yorta/ Wamba Wamba/Mutti Mutti/ Boonwurrung woman. A pivotal figure in the reclamation of south-east Australian Aboriginal art and cultural practices, Maree has a passion for reviving and sharing elements of Aboriginal culture that were lost or lying dormant as a consequence of colonisation. Covering more than three decades of artistic output, the exhibition traverses Clarke's practice across photography, printmaking, sculpture, jewellery, video and glass. NGV, Fed Square, 10.00 am-5.00 pm daily until October.

Banj Banj/nawnta is presented at Counihan Gallery and online via The Torch website. This exhibition represents the unique friendship between Thelma and Stacey, participants in The Torch's Indigenous Arts in Prisons and Community program. Brunswick Town Hall, 233 Sydney Rd, Brunswick, Wednesday-Saturday 11.00 am-5.00 pm; Sunday 1.00 pm-5.00 pm. Artist talk by Thelma Beeton, **Saturday 7 August**, 2.00 pm. 100% of the sale price of all artworks goes directly to the artist.

REC STONNINGTON

After much delay, Stonnington Council finally held an event for NAIDOC Week. Unfortunately, it was on a Friday which meant that no RecSton members were able to

attend, although Cr Mike Scott, our Vice President, did attend in his role as councillor. Fortunately, Keith Gove and Ro Bailey managed to see some NAIDOC events in Alice Springs and Uluru between lockdowns. What struck us was the rich Indigenous heritage and how well it was integrated within the environment and community with signage. The respect for local culture was impressive. Along the road to Uluru and Kata Tjuta, there were signs saying "No Stopping for the next 3 kms" and "No Stopping on the Yellow Line". Ro wondered why and was informed by a Ranger that they were places special to the Traditional Owners (TOs) who did not want others to intrude at these spots; if only such respect was present throughout Australia. In Yulara, the town near Uluru, the promotion of local TO's, the Anangu's, culture was welcome. There were free talks every day about Bush Tucker, Use of Tools, Didge Playing and more. Ro had a chat to Kali, a young local presenter who studied at Melbourne University. She had noticed that, due to Covid and no overseas tourists, there was an increased interest in the culture from Aussie tourists, which we agreed was good news. It was great to see the number of Indigenous staff working at Yulara at a local training coffee shop, staffed by young Indigenous people, and at other cafes, gift shops and galleries. An Aboriginal tour guide in the Standley Chasm (a beautiful place about an hour's drive out of Alice) shared not only the richness of the local plants but his own history of being stolen and placed in a children's home. The country is stunning and so different from down here. All in all, this was a wonderful and manageable holiday in the time of Covid – and thoroughly recommended.

Keith Gove and Ro Bailey

BOOK REVIEW

In 1946, Aboriginal pastoral workers in Western Australia's Pilbara region withdrew their labour to demand improvements in wages and conditions. *On Red Earth Walking* is the first comprehensive study of this historic event. It describes a series of walk-offs, civil disobedience, arrests and passive, non-violent resistance as the Marrngu, the Pilbara people at the centre of this story, pursued their goals.

This work is a tour de force. Author Anne Scrimgeour combines deep archival research with irreplaceable 1990s oral testimony of Marrngu people who were involved in the strike. She weaves this valuable oral history into a nuanced account, drawing on sources from government, activists, the Communist Party of Australia, the Perth-based Committee for the Defence of Native Rights and Don McLeod, the white miner who introduced the Marrngu to Anglo-Australian understandings of industrial action. *On Red Earth Walking* is a riveting, well-written study of a battle between colonial power and the Marrngu who stand their ground and confound their former controllers. I thoroughly recommend it.

Review by Sue Taffe, PPCfR member and author of *A White Hot Flame - Mary Montgomerie Bennett; Author, Educator, Activist for Indigenous Justice*.

