



## Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation Inc.

ABN: 444 16 152 998

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

Phone: (03) 9699 8804

Mobile: 0418 675 734

Email: rosemary.rule@gmail.com

[www.ppcfr.org](http://www.ppcfr.org)

# 2018-2019 Annual Report

## Wominjeka – Welcome

*Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation respectfully acknowledges the Yaluk-ut Weelam Clan of the Boon Wurrung. We pay our respects to their Elders, both past, present and emerging, and acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.*

### Elections

At the Annual General Meeting on 20 November 2018, I read my Chair's Report, which was moved and accepted, as was Fiona Olney-Fraser's Treasurer's Report. The following officers were unanimously elected to the PPCfR Committee: Co-Chairs - Rosemary Rule and Dennis Fisher; Treasurer - Fiona Olney-Fraser; Secretary – Deb Stewart; Committee Members - Jo Bond and Denis Frankel. I value and appreciate your continued support that keeps our group strong and vibrant.

Afterwards, special guest Morris Stewart, conductor of the Central Australian Aboriginal Women's Choir, spoke of the journey he and his wife Barbara had taken since visiting Alice Springs in 2006 on a painting expedition and accepting an invitation to get a choir to sing some African freedom songs. This led to their involvement with the Central Australian Aboriginal Women's Choir, concerts at the Sydney Opera House and Melbourne Recital Centre, performances in Germany, a documentary, and television appearances. It was encouraging to hear that the choir's achievements help change the social architecture of how Aboriginal people are perceived by the broader community.

### Activities

PPCfR's 2018 Reconciliation Writing Competition was a resounding success, culminating in a wonderful awards presentation at the Avenue Bookstore, Albert Park, on 16 October, attended by many of the finalists, their families, teachers and friends. While entries came in from around Victoria, the bulk were from St Mary's Primary, Albert Park Primary and Albert Park College. The judges - Bryan Andy, Tony Birch and Clare Bradford, selected the 18 finalists who were presented with a certificate, a cash prize and a complimentary copy of the booklet containing all the winning entries. The hard work of my colleagues Deb Stewart, Fiona Olney-Fraser, Gael Wilson, Jo Bond,

Sushena Krishnaswamy, Janine Wilder and Vivienne McCutcheon, was well rewarded. We had a lot of support from Martin Foley, MP; Elder Judith 'Jacko' Jackson; the City of Port Phillip - particularly Todd Condie and Jordan Sutardy; sponsors Graeme Wilson of Wilson Agents, who donated the \$500 First Prize for adults; Geoff Cayzer of Cayzer Real Estate; Greg Hocking; Vivienne McCutcheon, the late Andrew McCutcheon and Helen Sykes on behalf of Future Leaders; Benson Saulo and Dr Kate Reid; Provincial Events; and the Avenue Bookstore's Chris Redfern, Scott MacNeil and staff.

Another successful event the group hosted was our Treaty - A Community Conversation forum at the St Kilda Town Hall on 22 August, attracting 140 people. Boon Wurrung Elder Janet Galpin's insightful and personal Welcome to Country set the tone for an informative evening and the audience was very engaged as they listened to the inspiring speakers - Diana David, RecVic CEO, and Richard Frankland, academic, author and songwriter. My thanks to the wonderful team whose hard work ensured the event ran so smoothly.

### Guest Speakers

We were privileged to hear from some interesting speakers at our monthly meetings. Last August, Todd Condie treated us to a fascinating insight into the workings of a North Queensland Aboriginal Corporation of which he is a board member, Dreamtime stories, and his career path which has led to him to being engaged as COPP's Indigenous Policy Officer. In March this year we heard a frank and fascinating talk from Alison Craigie-Parsons about her cultural



Guest Speaker Alison Craigie-Parsons (right) with PPCfR member Fiona Olney-Fraser.

heritage, life and current work as Coordinator, Indigenous Access & Equity at Star Health, St Kilda. In May, historian Sue Taffe spoke about her book *A White Hot Flame* which details the life of visionary campaigner for justice for First Australians, Mary Montgomerie Bennett. In July, Wiradjuri woman Michelle Griffiths from the Australian Dingo Foundation, spoke about our native dingoes and shared her poetry.

### National Sorry Day Lunch

Around 110 guests squeezed into the South Melbourne Community Centre on 24 May (two days ahead of the official date) to commemorate this significant day. They included Boon Wurrung Foundation Elder David Tournier who performed a Welcome to Country; COPP Mayor Dick Gross; Councillors Tim Baxter and David Brand; Martin Foley, Member for Albert Park; Sue Pennicuik; Serge Thomann; Elder Judith Jackson, RecVic's CEO Diana David; Father Turi Hollis; teachers and students from St Michael's Grammar; and groups from DOXA Youth Foundation's Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group, Gowrie Victoria, Star Health and Galiamble Men's Alcohol and Drug Recovery Centre. Todd Condie invited guests to observe a minute's silence to reflect on the Stolen Generations commemorated on Sorry Day, and on the unacceptably high rates of suicide among Indigenous youth. PPCfR Co-Chair Dennis Fisher, aka Den the Fish, performed as MC, reading poems and interacting with the audience in a most engaging way. In between songs, Pirritu Brett Lee yarned about his background. Aunty Jacko and Todd presented the door prizes, including tickets from AFL's Indigenous group to the Dreamtime at the G game. It was another very special day that drew positive feedback from guests and subsequent invitations for other speaking engagements.



(Left to right) Pirritu Brett Lee, Dennis Fisher, Elder Judith Jackson and Diana David at our Sorry Day lunch. (Below) COPP's Jordan Sutardy (left) and Todd Condie with St Michael's Grammar students.



### Networks

PPCfR members continue to connect with and support several community groups, attending the Local Reconciliation Groups' forums hosted by RecVic

and ANTA Victoria, and the BlakWiz celebration for Reconciliation Stonnington's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. (Our team came a close second.) We've also supported and promoted the work of the Homeless Memorial, Sacred Heart Mission, St Kilda Baptist Church and the Boon Wurrung Foundation, amongst others.

As a follow up to the Sorry Day lunch, PPCfR Co-Chair Dennis Fisher was invited to speak to a whole-school assembly at St Michael's Grammar in July. Todd Condie and Jordan Sutardy went along with him for what they later described as a particularly meaningful event. Later, Elder Judith 'Jacko' Jackson and I were invited by Children's Garden Kindercare in South Melbourne to be their special guests at a fundraiser to support Steiner Education and the Miriam Rose Foundation.

### People

I'd like pass on my condolences to the family of Ian Spalding, a founding member of the group, who passed away in April, and to another dedicated member, Jane Tombs, who died in October. I'd like to congratulate Parbin-ata Carolyn Briggs AM of the Boon Wurrung on her election as one of the 21 members of Victoria's First Peoples Treaty Assembly.

### Communications

*Mungo*, our monthly newsletter, continues to be a good news source for events, circulating annually to over 3,500 as well as members of RecVic and Rec Stonnington via their e-networks. I'm very appreciative of Fiona Olney-Fraser's expert editorial and design help; the staff in Martin Foley's electoral office who print copies; Jo Bond who then sends out the snail mail version; Todd Condie who emails the online version; and Joe Malignaggi who posts the newsletter on our [ppcfr.org](http://ppcfr.org) website no matter where in the world he is.

### City of Port Phillip (COPP)

We acknowledge the many initiatives generated by the Council under the guidance of Todd Condie and we're proud to be a member of their Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) working group and attend and support their well-organised events during Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. We also acknowledge the appointment of Jordan Sutardy as Aboriginal Health and Reconciliation Officer, and Jarra Karalinar Steel as Indigenous Arts Officer.

I am grateful for the ongoing financial and personal support our group receives from councillors and staff.

### Looking Ahead

We plan to present another Writing Competition for adults and students next year, a lunch to commemorate National Sorry Day and another Treaty-focused forum. We also welcome ideas and suggestions for guest speakers and other activities in 2020. In the meantime, I'd especially like to thank the core group of people who willingly give up their time and who work hard to maintain PPCfR's profile as an important and active community group; one that makes a difference.

**Rosemary Rule, Co-Chair, 26 November 2019**

