



Local Reconciliation Group Reflections and Updates from National Reconciliation Week

2014

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Reconciliation Banyule

Banyule had Reconciliation Week poster presentations in Banyule City Council offices and Yarra Plenty Libraries.

Monday 26 - Members of the group attended Banyule City Council (BCC) flag raising and smoking ceremony at Council Chambers. Afterwards BCC and Reconciliation Banyule screened the "Utopia" film. About 20 people attended.

Tuesday 27 - Reconciliation Banyule attended Simpson Army Barracks plaque unveiling and smoking ceremony. ADF acknowledged the role played by ATSI people in the armed forces in past wars and also several ATSI soldiers in the present group.

Wednesday 28 - BCC and Reconciliation Banyule presented another screening of "Utopia" on Wednesday evening. This was attended by more than 20 people. An animated discussion about the issues arose afterwards.

Thursday 29 & 28 - BCC ran "Walking the Birrarung River Walk Tour" with Dean Stewart.

Monday June 2 - Reconciliation Banyule' monthly film was "Nobody's Children". This film documents several Stolen Children's stories who grew up in Whitehorse Childrens Homes.

The Bass Coast South Gippsland Reconciliation Group

"SOME 100 children and adults gathered at the Wonthaggi Community Garden last week for a local Reconciliation Week celebration. The informal gathering attracted a diverse group of people of all ages from across Bass Coast and South Gippsland. South Gippsland Aboriginal Health Service's Sonia Weston said it was great to see so many young people and children involved in Reconciliation Week activities. "This gathering is awesome, just seeing everyone here together like this." Children from Bass Coast Children's Centre and Family Day Care got busy planting veggies, playing drums, cooking and tasting damper, and enjoying hot, home-made soup and toasted marshmallows. Local indigenous artist Patrice Mahoney enlightened everyone, sharing stories, singing songs and painting the children's faces. Tom Murray-White and a group of VCAL students kept the rhythm going with their drums and Anna Gebhardt from the West Gippsland Regional Library enthralled everybody with a lively Storytime. Ailsa Drent, a founding member of the Bass Coast and South Gippsland Reconciliation Group, said the garden was the perfect setting for a Reconciliation event. "What better place than a garden to represent us, growing in understanding. Here we are getting together and sharing food, taking significant steps," she said. Ms Weston said a Learning Stone space, in progress within the community garden, would be a place where anyone could come to learn about indigenous culture. She said the indigenous cultural education available to young children and students now was very different from what she experienced growing up. Event organiser Katherine Cousins, from the Bass Coast South Gippsland Reconciliation Group, was thrilled with the attendance. She said she appreciated the support of the many local individuals and groups; Bass Coast South Gippsland Reconciliation Group, Wonthaggi Community Garden, Aboriginal Health Service, VCAL staff and students, Bass Coast Adult Education Centre ESL and CGEA, Wonthaggi U3A, Wonthaggi Woodcrafters, Mitchell House Harvest Centre, Bass Coast Regional Health, Bass Coast and South Gippsland Shire Councils, Bass Coast Children's Centre and Family Day Care, 3mFM, GippSport and many other local health services."

Article written by Linda Gordon, " Friendships bloom amid the kale and cabbages" June 7 2014 in the [Bass Coast Post](#)



Caroline Hamilton, Sonia Weston and Felicia Di Stefano

Geelong One Fire

Geelong Reconciliation in the Park 2014

Around 500 people attended the event this year - according to our BBQ count! Mel King (Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op member) did a great job as Co-ordinator supported by a strong Working Group plus many volunteers on the day. Local schools provided reconciliation themed art at Geelong Gallery over NRW. Local Aboriginal musicians sang throughout the day, and everyone enjoyed the activities, learning and strengthening of friendships together.

Politicians spoke about Constitutional Recognition and the recently adopted Geelong City Council 'Karreenga Aboriginal Action Plan'. We appreciated support from Rec Vic with Emily providing discussion about Constitutional Recognition throughout the day. Geelong Regional Library Service provided tablets for all ages to listen to the podcast: Johnstone Park Dreaming (available on Geelong One Fire website). The new 'Djillong' timeline was enthusiastically viewed - our local history:

www.djillong.net.au

Some comments from participants included:

Great event, Fantastic to see the involvement of local high schools. Also great to see Mick Ryan from Barwon Medicare Local performing.

Great Djillong time line and website, learnt a lot!

Information on The Storyteller was fantastic. Thanks for a great event.

Great work Mel. Well put together. Lots of information. Great to see so many people coming together.

I felt very welcome - it's a great family day.

More comments were contributed to the 2014 participant's banner, which is featured on the Geelong One Fire in the photo gallery: <http://geelongonefire.org.au/index.php/whats-happening/rec-in-the-park-2014>

GetUp Out West

GetUp Out West had an information table at the Williamstown Literary Festival which had a good amount of interest, and we are booked to present our 'What is the proposed referendum about' in a couple of weeks to a local discussion group.

Nillumbik Reconciliation Group

Nillumbik Reconciliation Group (NRG) shared a flag raising with the Shire on Thursday 29 May. The great thing this year is that we had a very warm and enthusiastic response from schools so that six Primary Schools attended and 2 secondary ones. Representatives from the schools gave a short presentation of the importance of Reconciliation, one group sang a song in Wurundjeri, and another had a fine Reconciliation Poster which was displayed. Aunty Di Kerr gave a Welcome to Country and Reconciliation address. NRG will be building up the schools participation in Reconciliation Week flag raising and will be encouraging individual schools to hold their own events.

Reconciliation Manningham

Reconciliation Manningham and Manningham City Council had another extremely busy Reconciliation Week in 2014. Activities began with a Sorry Day event and flag raising at the municipal offices on Monday 26th May, and there were also a couple of storytelling sessions at local libraries. A public lecture by Uncle Dave Wandin and Jim Poulter on the decimation caused by the smallpox plagues of 1789 and 1828 was also held on May 29th. This lecture and PowerPoint presentation by Dave and Jim is available to be repeated to any reconciliation group interested, just contact Jim. On both Thursday 29th and again on the Saturday 31st, in conjunction with the Richmond Football Club, clinics were held at the Punt Road oval on the tribal football game of Marngrook. These events were also part of the AFL's Indigenous Round in Reconciliation Week. Along with other east metropolitan reconciliation groups, Manningham also attended the trivia night held by Mullum-Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place on Friday 30th. On Tuesday June 3rd Uncle Bill Nicholson and Jim

Poulter conducted an interpretive walk and talk at Pound Bend in Warrandyte, the site of the last Kulin Nation corroboree in 1852, and where an interpretive trail is being developed in conjunction with the Wurundjeri Tribe Council. Over the Reconciliation Week period seven talks were also given to schools and community groups on local Aboriginal History, so all-in-all it was a hectic but fruitful period.

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Maroondah Movement for Reconciliation

Various institutions such as Aquinas College, Heathmont Uniting Church organised their own celebrations. Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place, located within the Council area, conducted its own program for the region, including Reconciliation Week Morning Tea on Wed 27 May and a Fundraising Trivia Night on Friday 29 May at Knox Civic Centre.

Maroondah City Council, in line with their Reconciliation Policy and following years observance, organised a substantial and meaningful program, led by Cultural Events Officer Renee Herps, in cooperation with Lisa Byrne, Curator of Maroondah Gallery and staff of Croydon Library and Warranwood Primary School. Renee also met with two Maroondah Movement for Reconciliation representatives during planning.

Tuesday 27 May: Indigenous Dreamtime for Pre-Schoolers:

Held at Croydon Library with Cultural Infusion staff involved 44 children and 46 adults in a varied, well-planned, enjoyable program.

Wednesday 28 May: Launch Of Council's Reconciliation Week at Ringwood Federation Estate:

Welcome To Country And Smoking Ceremony: Wurundjeri Elder Uncle Perry Wandin.

Mayor Les Willmott welcomed audience, thanked and expressed appreciation of Council and community for the many Indigenous participants, especially Elders present and artist Vicki Couzens. He announced Council's acquisition of two works from Vicki's Marooka Exhibition in Maroondah Gallery. (No mention was made of the Reconciliation Movement as such.) Kutcha Edwards involved the three school groups present in interactive story and songs of the Stolen experience.

Professor Aunty Joy Wandin-Murphy launched the Marooka (to take care of) exhibition in Maroondah Gallery. Victorian Corporation of Aboriginal Languages CEO Paul Paton spoke of the links between language and culture and invited people to see the display of story books in language and handouts.

Vicki Couzens responded with thanks to Aboriginal Elders and Maroondah Council, speaking partly in Gunditjmara language and showing how valuable was the experience of showing her art, expressive of culture and history, in the large room of the Gallery.

Djirri Djirri Dancers, led by Mandy, with introduction in language, performed dances inspired by Aboriginal lifestyle. Dancers led the whole gathering into the Gallery. After viewing, refreshments were served. Maroondah Movement for Reconciliation provided a display: NRW poster and leaflets.

A workshop on Aboriginal language and art at Warranwood Primary School was organised by Maroondah Council with Cultural Infusion. A free public lecture on their links through language and art will be given on Saturday 12 July at 2 pm by artist Vicki Couzens community linguist Christina Eira at Ringwood Federation Estate.

Monash Reconciliation Group

Well the year has started with a bang and we are almost half way through.

The Committee has been very fortunate in attracting some lovely young people who have taken up the challenges of Reconciliation. We have applied for a number of grants this year and we are still waiting to hear the results on some of the applications.

Events:

Mullum Mullum Community Day: We participated in the Mullum Mullum Gathering on Sunday 2nd March. We have been actively involved in this project for two years and it is a great day out for our members.

Reconciliation Week: We were lucky enough to get a small grant for our Reconciliation Week Event from Reconciliation Victoria. You will see items further in the Newsletter about this very successful evening.

The Indigenous Honour Roll: I was also fortunate enough to be invited by the City of Greater Dandenong to the launch of the Travelling Exhibition of the Indigenous Honour Roll at the new Dandenong Library.

Marngrook: Francis Ellis has met with various Football identities and has been instrumental in arranging a Marngrook clinic/exhibition match with possum skin balls at half time at a VFL match at Punt Road Oval on Sat 31st May. See photos.

ANTaR & RecVic: The Winter LRG Forum was held in Shepparton on Sat 14th June. This is the first Regional meeting for Reconciliation Groups in Victoria.

NAIDOC Week in Monash: Creative Dreaming Exhibition - A contemporary art exhibition of the work of five Victorian based Aboriginal women will be held at The Highway Gallery, Mt Waverley July 5 to 27. The Exhibition Opening at 2pm Saturday July 5 with Doug Lawrence officiating. Doug was a very popular and well known former Director of The Highway Gallery.

Port Philip Citizens for Reconciliation

Sorry Day Lunch, South Melbourne Community Centre, Friday 23 May.

A good turnout –over 70 people this year, got under way with an Acknowledgement to Country from local Elder Aunty Judith ‘Jacko’ Jackson, with speeches from COPP Cr Bernadene Voss, Sue Pennicuik MLC, State Member for Southern Metropolitan Region and the Greens Parliamentary Whip and Martin Foley, Labor Member for Albert. Dennis Fisher – PPCfR’s Co-Chair, was a fantastic MC. He recited some of his poetry and had the audience in stitches with his off the cuff humour. Musical entertainment was performed by singer/guitarist Fred Gesha and was warmly received. Terrific food was provided by HEAT catering, an initiative of St Kilda Youth Services. An unexpected highlight of the day was the sale of several paintings by Uncle Les Stanley on the day.



Fred Gesha – Sorry Day Lunch.

Reconciliation Week Flag raising, St Kilda Town Hall, 26 May.

Another great turnout (around 100 Council staff and residents), good weather, speeches by Mayor Cr Amanda Stevens, Welcome to Country by Aunty Carolyn Briggs, a smoking ceremony conducted

by Marbee Williams (Aunty Carolyn's grandson). Aunty Jacko and Fred Gesha participated in the flagraising, which was followed by community lunch in St Kilda Town Hall.

Note: A display of Indigenous material was mounted in the foyer of the St Kilda Library during RW.

Constitutional Reform: what next forum, Port Melbourne Town Hall, 29 May.

Over 100 people came out on a Thursday night for this forum and heard from an impressive panel of speakers moderated by Richard Frankland. They were Daphne Yarram, Ian Hamm and Melinda Cilento, who answered a range of questions from the MC and the floor. The tone was set at the start with the harmonic singing of the Solstice choir from the St Kilda/Elsternwick Baptist Church. The event exemplifies what can be achieved by groups coming together for a common cause, in this case, PPCfR, City of Port Phillip, Sacred Heart Mission, St Kilda/Elsternwick Baptist Church and Reconciliation Victoria.



Daphne Yarram, Richard Frankland, Melida Cilento and Ian Hamm.

Indigenous Film Forum - in a hall opposite the Astor Theatre, St Kilda, 30 May

A small group witnessed a fascinating panel discussion surrounding Aboriginal filmmaking and constitutional recognition. The high-quality panel - Richard Frankland, Uncle Jack Charles, Lisa Maza, Genevieve Grieves and moderator Bryan Andy, raised many interesting points. The event was part of the St Kilda Film Festival.

Mabo Day (St Kilda)

Around 30 community members celebrated the pioneering work of Eddie 'Koiki' Mabo at Peanut Farm where Torres Strait Islanders, the Maza Sisters and Fred Gesha, performed.

Queenscliff Reconciliation Mob

On Saturday 31st May we held a cultural activity afternoon at the Point Lonsdale Primary School hall. This was a great success with about 80 children enjoying a variety of activities. After the smoking ceremony and Welcome to Country, Tandop David Tournier was kept busy the whole time painting traditional designs with ochre on the faces and hands of a steady stream of children. Many boys and girls flocked around the boomerang tables where they sanded and then painted their own boomerangs. Norm Stanley provided a great atmosphere with his didge playing along with his daughter Megan on the clap sticks. The sun shone and the boomerangs flew through the air and all in all it was an afternoon enjoyed by everyone. A big thank you to everyone who made the afternoon such a success.

Shepparton Region Reconciliation

Sorry Day

Shepparton Region Reconciliation Group (SRRG) in collaboration with Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative and Greater Shepparton Council joined with students from local secondary schools and the Academy of Sport and Education (ASHE) and members of our local community at Monash Park in Shepparton to commemorate Sorry Day on Monday, May 26. Speaking to a crowd of approximately 200, SRRG co-convenor Bobby Nicholls welcomed everyone to country and invited local students to lead the commemoration. It was wonderful to see our young people taking on this role as they lead the gathering with an 'Expression of Sorrow', laid the wreath and raised the flags. Young Lillie Walker added a poignant moment with her singing of 'Bura Fera' in Yorta Yorta language and 'Do You Know Me'. This involvement of young people in this event was acknowledged as an important way to continue the work of reconciliation into the future.

Following the commemoration a group walked along Fryers Street carrying our SRRG banner to La Trobe University to join elders and others for a lunch and the release of balloons to acknowledge and commemorate all the individuals, families and communities who experienced the pain and suffering of separation. It was also a chance to sit down and chat with elders as they generously shared some of their stories.

Utopia Film Night - May 28 at Rumbalara Football Netball Club Social Room

SRRG joined with Rumbalara Football Netball Club to show John Pilger's movie 'Utopia' - a confronting catalogue of the impact of governmental policy that continues to violate human rights in the top end. The film was followed by the local launch by Alex Adam from the group 'concerned Australians' of the book 'In the Absence of Treaty' and discussion of the film. A successful, thought-provoking evening. Group

Whitehorse Friends for Reconciliation

Whitehorse Council conducted a flag raising at the Nangnak Garden. Uncle Ron Jones welcomed people and offered a smoking ceremony experience. Tom Harrison talked about his journey as a young, proud Aboriginal man. The ceremony was followed by a terrific morning tea including several foods with bush ingredients. It was attended by a wide range of people including several school groups.

The Box Hill Community Art Centre presented the exhibition, courtesy of the Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV), called Footprints – ‘The Journey of Lucy and Percy Pepper’. The exhibition traces the lives of an Aboriginal family in the first half of the 20th century. Their story is a remarkable parable about the strength of family in the face of adversity.

MMIGP, TEAR Australia and Reconciliation Eastern Metro are partnering in conducting two Constitutional Recognition events – the first on Sunday 27 July. One feature of this project is that people from many community groups will be invited in the hope that some will be prepared to start up conversations around Constitutional Recognition within their own groups.

(Note: WFFR didn’t have any major task in either of the NRW events but as members of the Council Advisory Committee we are connected to the projects)

Whittlesea Reconciliation Group?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HwjxdYP12HM&feature=youtu.be>



2014 City of Whittlesea Sorry Day

Yarra Ranges ANTaR (formerly Casey ANTaR)

During National Reconciliation Week our group arranged for a display of books about Aboriginal issues in the local library. They were in an enclosed case. The books on display included The Greatest Estate by Bill Gammage and a summary of its contents. The idea was to encourage reading of those books. Group members also participated in the Reconciliation Lunch which was put on by the Shire of Yarra Ranges.