



Budj Bim LRG Forum

Minutes

Date: Saturday 16th – Sunday 17th April 2016

Time: Sat 9:15am – 1:00pm

Venue: Lake Condah Mission

Attendees: John Burke, Vicki Grosser, Greg McHenry, Edwina McHenry (Geelong One Fire Reconciliation Group), Julie Werner (Banyule Rec Gp), Keith Gove, Ro Bailey (Stonnington Rec Gp), Sylvia Edgar, Gavin Edgar, Rosemary Rule, Helen Bennett (Port Phillip Rec Gp), Aileen Traynor, Phil Day, Deb Chapman (Moreland Rec Gp), Erin McKinnon (Macedon Ranges Rec Gp), Ian Chadderton, Elain Bakker (ANTaR Vic), Georgina Gartland (Concerned Australians/Whitehorse Rec Gp), Jan Aitken, Vera Herman (Nillumbik Rec Gp), Dierdre Robertson (Shepparton Rec Gp), Owen Butler (Whittlesea Rec Gp), Ian James (Yarra Ranges Rec Gp), Damian O'Keefe (Reconciliation Victoria), Fiona Hocking, Frances Di Cocco, Ben Tien, Samara Pitt (Indigenous Hospitality House), Lisa Moloney (Whitehorse Rec Gp), Jane McLachlan, Lisa Gervasoni, Clare Gervasoni.

Apologies: Terry Makin, Howard Tankey, Michelle Isles, Linley Walker, Andree L'Estrange, Jenne Perlstein, Oliver Lovell, Wally and Margaret Johnson, Bob Heaton, Tom Gay, Matt Bell, Jen Anderson, Donna Wright, Emily Rose Byrne.

- The LRG Forum was preceded by a tour of Budj Bim on Saturday 16th April. Attendees stayed overnight.
- Denis Rose from Gunditj Mirring Corporation provided a presentation on *Saturday night on the Glenelg Aboriginal Partnership Presentation* – for details on the partnership agreement, refer to http://www.glenelg.vic.gov.au/Glenelg_Aboriginal_Partnership_Agreement

Welcome & Acknowledgement

Keith Gove, RecVic Co-Chair introduced the LRG Forum portion of the weekend.

RecVic – Erin McKinnon (RecVic Statewide Coordinator)

- Staffing Update – Erin, Damian and Aileen core staff with Deb doing some strategic planning work. Emily came back from overseas to work short term and due to have a baby any day. Dan finished up with RecVic to pursue a role in health promotion with City of Port Phillip
- Reviewing and assessing organisational role in Constitutional Recognition - just released position statement on Treaty and Constitutional Reform
- Starting to focus on NRW
- Strategic Planning
- Local government engagement still major part of our work, e.g. www.maggolee.org.au - website has received lots of positive feedback. RecVic starting to do workshops with LGs on Maggolee.
- Grant submitted for partnership with VCOSS to work with community sector to understand reconciliation and develop RAPs
- Funding submission to develop strategic approach to better support LRGs
- RA's State of Reconciliation Report – very valuable framework for our work

ANTAR Update - Ian Chadderton (ANTaR Committee Member)

- Thanks to members who have assisted at festival stalls including Midsummer, Mullum Mullum festival and Survival Day in Belgrave and Treasury Gardens - feedback from the public consistently shows that there is very high energy and interest in learning about Indigenous issues and culture
- *The People of Budj Bim* is available from the ANTaR [online store](#) for \$25 (Hurry ... only 5 copies left!)
- ANTaR volunteers participated in OWeek at Swinburne, Deakin and Melb Uni - hundreds of Close the Gap pledges were collected
- The \$6K target to crowdfund initial stages of the Walking Tour App was reached - stand by for updates on this exciting project
- Talking on Tuesdays events are being organised with Yarra Library and Carlton Railway House [insert link to calendar].
- 2016 is 30th anniversary of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody - incarceration rates of Indigenous people are higher than ever - read the [Change the Record Blueprint](#)
- ANTaR brand upgrade - new look logo for communications
- Social media activity is up – members must opt in to receive info
- ANTaR will host next LRG Forum in August – venue tbc
- Jen Anderson will be in touch re completion of Public Liability Insurance questionnaire for LRGs for 2016-17.
- ANTaR Victoria celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2017
- Thanks to RecVic staff for coordinating the Budj Bim tour and forum
- RecVic and ANTaR are to meet re future priorities
- Campaign to resurrect Judith Durham/Kutcha Edwards revised version of Australia's national anthem – ANTaR looking to involve GetUp and Stan Grant (YouTube - Judith Durham, Advance Australia Fair). Some members expressed their desire for a new song to be created rather than revising the current anthem.

LRG Round Up – NRW & other key updates

Erin McKinnon from RecVic provided an update on NRW:

- Theme is Our History, Our Story, Our Future. See NRW website for details and resources - www.reconciliation.org.au/nrw
- Please add LRG event details on RecVic website Calendar of events. Link found at www.reconciliationvic.org.au/pages/reconciliation-week
- RecVic major NRW event is the Community HART Awards on MABO Day, 3rd June at Koorie Heritage Trust, preceded by Maggolee workshop.
- RecVic will also have stall at Long Walk on 28th May.
- LRG Grants – will be notified in the coming week.
- State Government hosting a forum re self-determination on 26-27 May in Melbourne.

Lisa Moloney – Whitehorse Friends of Reconciliation

- Planning for NRW
- Bunjil project with schools – engage artist to make Bunjil out of plastic milk containers and event
- Stall with Koorie Night Market successful

Owen Butler – Whittlesea Reconciliation Group

- Waiting for new CEO at Whittlesea Council to commence to progress work – Council very committed

Dierdre Robertson– Shepparton Region Reconciliation Group



- Sorry Day event
- Street Walk with lunch
- NRW planning in progress

Julie Werner – Reconciliation Banyule

- Working on reconciliation initiative with local library network

Jan and Vera – Nillumbik Reconciliation Group

- Flag Raising event with schools, Captains make statement re Reconciliation on Sorry Day with Aboriginal speaker and didgeridoo.
- Sun 29 – Shire organising event and walk around Bunjil Reserve
- Working with Banyule LRG – local area libraries to get RAP including commitment for libraries to take initiative re recognising Aboriginal events/issues

Phillippa Day – Moreland Reconciliation Initiative

- Developed strategic document highlighting aims and ways of working
- Cultural consultation with Wurundjeri Council who were very supportive
- Strategic Approach focussing on education initially

Lisa Gervasoni – works in local government - Moorabool

- Large area with 3 Registered Aboriginal Parties
- Rate capping is reducing resources at Councils so will be very important for citizens and LRGs to advocate in this area

Claire Gervasoni – works in University sector

- Have Aboriginal History and Education Unit that goes into jails to reconnect Aboriginal inmates to their identity
- NRW events as well at the University

Keith Gove & Ro Bailey – Stonnington Citizens for Reconciliation

- Participated in Stonnington Council event called Flavours – in a different location this year
- Shared article by Celeste Liddle re Australia Day
- Curriculum Project launched and now available online. Card refers people to history section on Stonnington site. Some schools using it and LRG will do a follow up
- Art exhibition – kids doing paintings on theme of Reconciliation

Indigenous Hospitality House

- Residence run by volunteers to support Indigenous people who need a place to stay while loved ones in hospital
- Trivia night Fundraiser in June
- Learning Circles once a month – talk re differences in offering hospitality to Indigenous people – ie what it means

Greg & Edwina McHenry – Geelong One Fire Reconciliation Group

- Some new members
- Reconciliation in the Park - New style poster this year, music program, more organisations approaching One Fire to connect
- www.djillong.net.au – website being upgraded in the coming week for use on smartphones and tablets. Can access from One Fire website. Includes significant Aboriginal related events timeline. Worked with Wautherung Coop
- Geelong Council is in transition

- Greg & Edwina podcast on Pulse FM focusing on local Aboriginal people
- ConRec & Treaty – having conversations to understand

Rosemary Rule – Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation

- Waiting to meet with Boon Wurrung Council to continue work in schools
- Stan Grant Talk – lots of interest from new members
- Rec Week – Sorry Day Community Lunch, working closely with Council on 2nd version of RAP, have become a resource to get speakers for schools
- Have local e-newsletter
- Relaunching writing competition in May – open for all adults and children who want to write about the land and relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people

Ian James– Yarra Ranges ANTAR Group (formerly known as Casey group)

- Display at Mooroolbark library with Aboriginal speaker

Erin McKinnon – Macedon Ranges LRG

- Working through identity, priorities and structure as a group
- Not much support or follow through from Council re their verbal commitments

Georgina Gartland – Concerned Australians

- Stronger Futures set to continue for further 10 years
- Review of SF Report – looked at methods ie income management – concern re land reform measure that states there is no obligation to consult
- Utopia crisis
- Concern re top-down policies
- March – supported Yolgnu Elder to fundraise and stand as Independent (not a typical activity however involved in support as he was nominated by his people)
- Closing the Gap

Morning Tea Break

Constitutional Recognition/Treaty Update - Erin

Constitutional Recognition (ConRec)

- Funding may be available for RecVic to continue ConRec activities however RecVic currently considering role in this area given strong message from Aboriginal Community Open Forum
- Endeavouring to stay up to date on what's happening in this space to keep our network informed
- VCRC (Victorian ConRec Coalition) meeting regularly – next meeting next week
- Referendum Council – Pat Anderson new Chair – statement that nothing will be precluded from their discussions including if Aboriginal people want Treaty
- Referendum Council looking at agreement-making powers (not previously incl in model proposed by previous groups)
- State government considering Aboriginal Advisory body
- Recognise campaign continues – uncertain funding - 6 months at a time - as Fed Government considers where campaign is heading. Ramping up youth movements. Planning to recruit state-based campaign coordinators. At this stage aiming for May-Sept 2017 referendum date. Door knocking campaign.
- More info on ConRec available at www.reconciliationvic.org.au/pages/constitutional-recognition

Refer to RecVic position statement on ConRec & Treaty -

www.reconciliationvic.org.au/news/position-statement-on-treaty-and-constitutional-recognition

Treaty

- Vic Minister for Aboriginal Affairs has put out a few statements re State Government commitment to Treaty and self-determination
- Early Feb – major Aboriginal Community meeting – first time Aboriginal community asked by government what they want in over 20 years. Details on this Community meeting available at www.reconciliationvic.org.au/user-data/Constitutional_Recognition/RecVic_ConRec_statement_Feb_2016
- Minister is holding 4-5 forums around the state in coming weeks culminating in 2 day forum in Melbourne at start of Rec Week – focus on self-determination, constitutional reform and Aboriginal representative structures – for future forums government will provide info on topics upfront. More info available at www.reconciliationvic.org.au/news/self-determination-forums-for-aboriginal-people-in-victoria
- **ACTION - LRGs are asked to promote community meetings with local Aboriginal networks**
- RV & ANTaR Treaties & Agreements (T&A) Working Group – looking at possible role and examples of local Aboriginal partnership agreements (i.e Aboriginal Justice Agreement and Glenelg Aboriginal Partnership Agreement). Additional info and working group document available at www.reconciliationvic.org.au/pages/treaties
- Recently met with Aboriginal Victoria (formerly known as AAV) and Minister – grappling with who will be involved in making decisions re Treaty. Minister welcomed T&A Working group's previous work in this space. RecVic also shared info re meeting place principles, etc
- Looking at options including framework treaty with local agreements sitting underneath
- Have to also consider who needs to be engaged in Treaty process (ie Traditional Owners and Aboriginal people living in local area)
- Harvard project – Mark McMillan – Ngarrindjeri story worth looking up <https://government.unimelb.edu.au/indigenous-nation-building>
- **ACTION: LRGs encouraged to have local discussions re Treaty to understand what Treaty might mean locally**
- Need to consider LRG role; how do LRGs support Aboriginal people in the Treaty process?
- Need to emphasize that government needs to resource Aboriginal community to be part of the conversation
- RecVic advocates for whole-of-government engagement and commitment
- Minister thinking about multi-level government engagement
- If LRGs interested in running a forum, will T&A Working group be able to recommend speakers on Treaty?
- RecVic needs to tread carefully and slowly to see how Treaty develops and not pre-empt what will happen. Working group can provide some info.
- Right People for Country Project – helping people work through systems along with Vic Traditional Owners Settlement Act - www.dpc.vic.gov.au/index.php/aboriginal-affairs/projects-and-programs/right-people-for-country-project
- Next LRG Forum may focus on Treaty
- RecVic will keep LRGs informed on progress via eNews, website, etc. and will make other Treaty documents available on website as they arise
- Our role is to be informed and in consultation with our Aboriginal stakeholders, to keep this topic on government's agenda



RecVic Strategic Planning Update – Deb & Erin

- RecVic to involve LRGs in what our strategic direction might be
- Small Group Discussion and individual reflection
- State of Reconciliation Report Summary – review of 5 dimensions. For details refer to www.reconciliationvic.org.au/news/state-of-reconciliation-in-australia-report-launched
 - We haven't had truth and justice and therefore we are repeating mistakes of the past
 - We need to reconsider our own work as reconciliation movement beyond some important symbolism
 - Government approach continues to be assimilationist and not held to account (especially Aboriginal Affairs)
 - Media has a big role to play
 - Unity – could be interpreted as assimilation. RecVic Council is trying to capture language around a new shared identity
 - Acceptance – doesn't include reparations clearly enough (have to go into detail to read it)
 - Group Discussion –
 - Engagement with key bodies to drive change and responsibility for reconciliation? I.e. churches
 - Need to have guts behind framework
 - Some content is softened from the first draft
 - Need to consider steps, key partners, timelines to measure progress
 - Stumbling block – can be acknowledging that it's very painful to understand history and what is currently happening
 - Is there talk of a Truth & Reconciliation Commission?
- Minister has committed to a reconciliation framework for Vic (Reconciliation Framework provides underlying principles for why we need a Treaty – especially so non-Aboriginal community understands need for it)
- Strategic Plan will be a values and principles based document which will guide our work (not tick and flick exercise)
- Office & Council will draft ideas re strategic plan and will circulate to LRGs for feedback.

Keith acknowledged people in attendance, their contributions and appreciation of Denis Rose's flexibility, generosity and welcoming approach.

Damian acknowledged group for pitching in and helping with cooking etc.

12.00pm

LUNCH & Networking – at Lake Condah Mission

1:00pm

Participants Departed.