



# WATHAURONG

## Aboriginal Co-operative

### Community Newsletter

#### October - November 2020

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#### Want to get the Community Newsletter by email?

Send an email to:  
[comms@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:comms@wathaurong.org.au)

Your details will be added  
to our email list; and you  
will be emailed each new  
issue, as soon as it is  
published.



Wathaurong has partnered with Feed Me Bellarine to provide weekly grocery boxes and pre-packaged meals to over 170 families since July.

Pictured L - R: Seth Clay, Alfie Oram, Jack Brogden, Chloe Brogden, Lily Graham and Tegan Edwards.

#### Calendar of Events

##### OCTOBER

5	Term 4 commences
21	Geelong Cup Public Holiday
23	AFL Grand Final Public Holiday

**CO-OPERATIVE CLOSED**  
**CO-OPERATIVE CLOSED**

##### NOVEMBER

3	Melbourne Cup Public Holiday
8-15	NAIDOC Week 2020
11	Remembrance Day

**CO-OPERATIVE OPEN**  
**See page 2**

#### Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative

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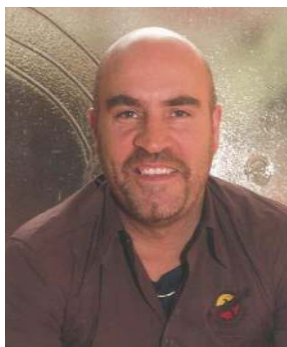
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# Chairperson



Nyoor Woorreeyn Wadda-Wurrung Dya-Nyook (Hello this is Wadda-Wurrung Country)

It has been some time since our last community newsletter, and it has been a challenging time for many of us. We have been in some form of lockdown and social distancing for 6 months now and it is tough not being

able to get the mob together. I would like to thank everyone from our staff to our community for doing their part in keeping our community safe and looking after each other through this pandemic.

We have had some changes on the Board recently, with Mick Ryan resigning as a Director in May to take up a new role with Wathaurong as the Health Services Practice Manager. We wish to thank Mick for his commitment and contributions during his time on the Board and for what he has already brought to his new role as a staff member.

We are happy to announce that we have also co-opted David Flagg as a new Board member. David is a proud Wemba Wemba man and works for Parks Victoria as a Regional Aboriginal Heritage Project Officer. He brings a fresh younger voice to our experienced Board so we welcome him as a new Director and look forward to working together to achieve great things for the Co-operative and our Community.

This year, we celebrate Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative's 40 Year anniversary. While COVID has put a hold on some of our planned celebrations, our community has adapted and embraced our online events. We will continue to connect with our mob to commemorate our 40 years of Balert Tabayl Balert Ngitj – Strong Country Strong Community.

Until we can celebrate in person together, we are being creative and have been running some online events. Check out our Facebook page for more information.

As you know, NAIDOC week was postponed and will be held from 8-15 November. We still marked the original dates in July with a virtual flag raising event that went live on Facebook and has had over 5000 views. Our November NAIDOC events will be dependent on COVID-19 restrictions, but we will still celebrate, even if it can't be face to face. We will also be presenting our NAIDOC Community awards – nomination forms are included with this newsletter and can also be filled out at [www.wathaurong.org.au](http://www.wathaurong.org.au). We have many great people in our community, please acknowledge them by nominating them for these deadly awards.

As we have not been able to get together as a community for some time now, the Board, management and staff are exploring options to have some community meetings online. More information about this will be sent out as soon as we can confirm details. We want to ensure as many of our members and community can be involved as possible.

Usually, Wathaurong's Annual General Meeting would be held on the last Sunday in November. Due to current restrictions in place for public gatherings, the Board is seeking an extension until early February 2021.

Lastly, the Board wish to thank Wathaurong's staff, especially Lisa Briggs for her leadership as CEO, and the Executive Managers—Tony McCartney, Simon Flagg, Shellee Strickland, Mark Edwards—for their tireless efforts in making sure that Community are supported, engaged and kept safe during these trying times. I would also like to personally thank my fellow Board members for the time and effort they have contributed, often after hours at short notice, to work with Lisa and the Executive team through this pandemic.

Nyatne, Gobata, Koon Gadyee (Thanks, Take Care, Goodbye)

Craig Edwards

Chairperson

## NAIDOC WEEK—8th-15th November

NAIDOC week will certainly look different this year, with the dates postponed until November and social distancing restrictions likely to still be in place. Our team is currently working hard to create a program of events and celebrations that will fit within the guidelines of gatherings, and we will keep the community updated as we confirm what these events will look like.

The NAIDOC theme this year, "Always Was, Always Will Be", recognises and celebrates that First Nations people have occupied and cared for this continent for over 65,000 years.



# Always Was, Always Will Be.

**8-15 NOV 2020**

# Chief Executive Officer



Nyooraa Woorreeyn Wadda-Wurrung Dya-Nyook (Hello this is Wadda-Wurrung Country),

2020 is a year we'll never forget, but thanks to you mob following all the rules and restrictions, our community has stayed safe and healthy. Here's some more reasons to celebrate.

## **Programs and services**

Due to Covid restrictions we all had to adapt how we delivered and accessed the Co-op's services. While many other support organisations closed their doors, we stayed open, and in fact increased our community support by assisting more people and adding new programs. The Feed Me food delivery program is one of our great success stories as we are helping many families to keep food on tables and masks on faces (see page 19 for information). Telehealth consultations, specialised clinics and strategic partnerships ensured that we kept delivering essential health services in Geelong and Colac; while regular phone and video calling became an important aspect of our support work with families—Milla Milla's family participation actually went up as playgroup was delivered online. And even in the peak of lockdown, our personal care and home maintenance workers continued visiting homes to provide essential services; and we continued to help the increasing number of families who were experiencing family violence and/or drug and alcohol problems. I would like to thank this community for your understanding for all the changes; and I would especially like to thank all our staff for their dedication and drive to keep the mob safe and supported. We have never worked harder, but it has all been worth it.

Myself and Health Service Executive Shellee Strickland have been working with Barwon Health and WVPHN on improving access for our local Aboriginal community for Mental Health and Social Emotional Wellbeing. We are also in discussion with how the new Head to Health program can be accessible for Aboriginal community members. This includes working alongside RCH and Robynne Nelson as a tripartite arrangement.

## **Improving how we work—organisation structure**

Many of you will be aware that for some time we have been working on a new structure for Wathaurong that can meet the current and future needs of our growing and diverse community. We have started implementing aspects of the new structure, most notably in May when we welcomed our new Executive Managers to Team Wathaurong. Expanding our Executive arm increases our representation and influence at high levels of department, government and other stakeholder decision-making, which improves outcomes for community because our voice and needs are heard. The Executives will also enhance our internal operations, including building better staffing and administrative structures around our service delivery and ensuring compliance to funding bodies. Meet them on page 4.

## **Currently government policy changes**

Wathaurong has written to the Commonwealth Department of Health to expand the current MBS items to include pharmacist to conduct Home Medicine Review via telehealth. Although we have received correspondence from the Hon. Greg Hunt MP Minister for

Health informing us our request has been declined we are working with local MPs to advocate on our behalf

## **CATSI Act**

A submission has been provided to the National Indigenous Australian Agency (NIAA) on the proposed changes to the CATSI Act to highlight issues of concern. All details can be found [online at our website](#).

## **Welcome to our many new staff**

In line with the organisational restructure and our expanding service delivery, we have employed 66 new staff since October last year. While we can't yet meet in person, we have been introducing these new staff over our social media platforms, and now you can meet some of them on pages 5 and 6. I am also pleased to say that including these new staff, 63% of our total employees identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. For all our latest vacancies, visit [www.wathaurong.org.au/careers-with-us](http://www.wathaurong.org.au/careers-with-us). We remain committed to providing employment opportunities for our mob.

## **Wathaurong's presentation to the Aboriginal Children's Forum**

Team Leader of our Early Years/Education programs Tahlia Dempsey presented Initiatives by our Family Services teams during the Pandemic to the Aboriginal Children's Forum including the Hon. Luke Donnellan MP, Minister for Child Protection. The presentation was very well received and has become recognised as Best Practice in the sector. Tahlia will make the same presentation at the next community meeting so all can hear about the team's great work. Well done Tahlia.

## **2020: our 40th Anniversary**

When the Co-op was founded 40 years ago, no one could have anticipated that we would be celebrating our 40th under lockdown or other restrictions. But here we are, and while we have had to lower our ambitions of a year of exciting events, we have still managed to celebrate together online and have many more activities and acknowledgements to come. We honour all staff, community and supporters who have collectively worked so hard for four decades to bring this community together and advance our health, wellbeing and circumstances. We hope to come together and celebrate our shared experiences early next year when restrictions are eased.

## **Wathaurong Glass expanding**

Wathaurong Glass & Arts is a respected and well-known business run entirely by Aboriginal people and owned by the Co-op. Despite its popularity, Glass could not grow due to lack of space. So when the factory next door came up for sale, we couldn't let this opportunity pass and we purchased the premises. Combined with a new Business Plan funded by Regional Development Victoria and prepared by PricewaterhouseCooper's Indigenous Consulting, Glass' future is bright. See page 26 for more information.

## **IT upgrade**

Those of you who have been inconvenienced by our past IT outages will be happy to hear that this is a thing of the past. We have successfully transitioned to a new IT provider, Acurus; also upgraded the wifi at Morgan Street, and installed new video conferencing facilities. Most importantly, these new facilities and upgrades will assist us to provide a more streamlined service for Community.

Bunjil Blessings to you all,  
Lisa Briggs  
Chief Executive Officer



# Executives

Over the past 12 months, Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative has been undergoing an organisational re-structure, to ensure that our team can provide the best services for our community. The new structure now sees four Executive Managers overseeing different areas. Get to know the Wathaurong Executive Managers.

## SIMON FLAGG—EXECUTIVE MANAGER, CORPORATE SERVICES



Simon is a proud descendant of the Wemba Wemba people from the Swan Hill region in Victoria and a proud Aboriginal member of the Geelong community, where he has lived his whole life. Simon has worked in the public service sector for over 19 years, implementing Key Aboriginal strategies to improve the health and wellbeing of the Victorian Aboriginal community.

Previously, Simon was the Assistant Director of Community Programs at Aboriginal Victoria. Simon has also worked across the Department of Health & Human Services as the Manager of Systems Transformation & Engagement; at Victoria Police as the Aboriginal Portfolio Manager; at the Department of Justice as the Executive Officer for the West and North Metropolitan Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee; and Manager of the Koorie Records Unit at Public Record Office Victoria. Simon is excited to work with the

Geelong Aboriginal community and will strive to ensure services address the needs of community and that we build strong culture, confident communities and engaged people.

Fun Fact: In 2008, Simon wrote a book titled *Footprints: the journey of Lucy & Percy Pepper*. A remarkable story about the strength of family in the face of adversity, *Footprints* traces the history of the Pepper family through archival records from the National Archives of Australia and Public Record Office Victoria, along with photographs and letters from private collections.

## TONY MCCARTNEY—EXECUTIVE MANAGER, FAMILY SERVICES



Tony's heritage comes from the Wotjobaluk tribe in the western part of Victoria.

Tony is the proud father of five sons and four daughters and has ten beautiful grandchildren.

He has worked in a variety of industries such as Logistics, Automotive Manufacturing, Youth Residential Services, Drug & Alcohol Services, Employment Strategies & Recruitment, Housing, Health Services, Higher Education and the VET sector.

Tony has held several Senior Leadership roles in Aboriginal Corporations including senior advocacy roles at the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO).

Tony is committed to giving back to his community and holds several Governance roles in Aboriginal Health, Healing Services, Aboriginal Theatre Company and Early Childhood Services.

## SHELLEE STRICKLAND—EXECUTIVE MANAGER, HEALTH SERVICES



Shellee is a Strong Aboriginal Woman from GunaiKurnai Country where she was born and raised in culture and a fiercely protective family. Shellee was mentored, supported and believed in by grandparents and strong Aboriginal Elders that pushed her constantly to believe in herself.

Shellee started her professional career at GEGAC (Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative) as a Dental Nurse under the leadership and love of Aunty Marion and Uncle Jumbo Pierce. It was old school black fella ways which to this day has kept her grounded and allowed her to continue her strong belief in true Self Determination.

Shellee worked at GEGAC for 13 years, during which she was able to have her three children while surrounded by family. Shellee and her family relocated to Torquay nine years ago. It was at this time she was approached by the Senior Dental Manager at VAHS (Victorian Aboriginal Health Service) to come and work with them and support them through the National Accreditation Standards – this three month contract lasted five years and saw her become the Quality and Compliance Manager, Shellee was instrumental in leading the VAHS Dental Service to be the first Aboriginal Dental Service to be accredited to the National Standards.

Shellee's passion has always been Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing and to see greater health outcomes for our people, to ensure voices of Aboriginal people are heard. It was two years ago that Shellee took the position at Wathaurong as the Health Service Manager, with a passion to see Community Engagement, Culture, Health Promotion, Health Care and Self Determination as a priority. Shellee is delighted and honoured to continue working at Wathaurong and to be given the opportunity.

## MARK EDWARDS —EXECUTIVE MANAGER, WATHAURONG GLASS



Mark is a proud Waddawurrung/Gunditjmara man who is continuing his family legacy in Aboriginal rights and advancement. His grandparents, born and raised at the Framlingham Aboriginal mission, were founding members of the Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-operative, while his father was a founding member of our own Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative. Mark has worked here for over 20 years in leadership and development roles, during which he established and grew Wathaurong Glass into a nationally successful and respected business that promotes Aboriginal culture and expertise. A fierce believer in self-determination and financial independence for the mob, Mark runs Glass as a provider of training and employment opportunities for community members, many of who got their start in the workforce thanks to Mark giving them a chance and nurturing their skills and belief in themselves. Mark also brings his experience as a Director on several Boards and from previous leadership roles in a variety of businesses in the car industry in Victoria, Northern Territory and Queensland, which combined his passion for travel and motorbikes. However, his greatest passion is for his family, especially his wife and two children, for who after 10 years away, he returned to Victoria so that they could connect with Country.

# Members Code of Conduct

## **WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE MEMBERSHIP - CODE OF CONDUCT**

A code of conduct or behaviour can be described as a set of statements that set out what we consider to be an acceptable standard of behaviour and conduct. This code explains how we expect our members to behave.

This code of conduct provides a guide and basis of expectations for our members. It encourages commitment to ethical and professional behaviour and outlines the principles on which Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative is based.

- Treat each person as an individual.
- Show respect and courtesy to all involved
- Display appropriate and responsible behaviour in all interactions.
- Display responsible behaviour in relation to alcohol and other drugs.
- Act with integrity and objectivity.
- Accept responsibility for your decisions and actions.
- Respect the rights and worth of every person, regardless of their age, race, gender, ability, cultural background, sexuality or religion.
- Encourage and support opportunities for people to learn appropriate behaviours and skills.
- Ensure your decisions and actions contribute to a safe environment.
- Ensure your decisions and actions contribute to a harassment-free environment.
- Do not tolerate abusive, bullying or threatening behaviour.
- Recognise that all members have the right to privacy and confidentiality.
- If a member acts in a way that is detrimental to a member, client, staff and/or property the Board can suspend that member immediately. They will have the right of appeal by calling a Special General Meeting.

Remember, you are not only a representative of Wathaurong but also of Aboriginal people. Behaviour, both positive and negative, casts a shadow over all of the members of Wathaurong. Think carefully about how your actions, words and behaviour will impact upon others around you.

The Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Board may apply the following sanctions to any member found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct based on the seriousness and frequency of their behaviour:

1. Caution
2. Direction to leave the organisation event
3. Attendance at a meeting with Directors to discuss the breach and appropriate sanction/s
4. Participation in personal development
5. Suspension from organisation activities
6. Expulsion from the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative (according to constitution)

Any member who is alleged to have breached the code of conduct will always be given a "right of reply". They will also be offered the opportunity to bring a support person to any official discussions regarding the alleged breach.

In the case of a dispute with Directors an independent mediator may be retained to mediate the dispute.

The Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative will at all times ensure that any person undergoing any of the above procedures will be dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner, irrespective of the alleged breach of the Rule or Code of Conduct.

# Staff Updates

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op has welcomed many new staff members this year, as well as saying farewell to a long-serving staff member.



## FAREWELL TONY

After 11 years with Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op, Tony Meagher finished up in August this year. Tony started as the Quality Assurance Officer in 2009 and moved into Operations and Human Resources and spent a few years stepping in as Family and Community Services Managers amidst a period of administration, various restructures and recruiting gaps. He was a valued member of staff and provided many with a trusting ear, informed response or a handbag full of confetti on more than one occasion. Tony spent a lot of his time ensuring that not only the wheels were turning but checking in on the wellbeing and workloads of his staff and was always someone you could turn to for advice, support or just a laugh. We know that the friendships Tony made will last a lifetime and thank him for 11 years of service to Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op.

## WELCOME NEW STAFF

### NADIA ALBERT

*Strategic Policy Officer*

I have worked as a consultant and project manager supporting and strengthening the capacity, of individuals, communities and organisations to address complex social challenges, such as gender equality and anti-racism. I have learnt a great deal working alongside education, children and families, health and mental health, youth, women's, and justice sectors both in Victoria and the Northern Territory. I love working part-time to spend the other with my four and seven-year-old kids and my partner, enjoying the coast, lakes and parklands of the inner-west of Naarm (Melbourne) where we live.



### TANIA CRAIG

*Casual Receptionist*



I am a Gadical & Walkeloa women of the Eora & Guringai Tribes. I am a descendant of King Bungaree & Queen Gooseberry— Bungaree being the first Australian to circumnavigate Australia with Matthew Flinders. Like my ancestor Bungaree I am short in stature and very much a people person who loves to make people laugh. I was born in Tamworth (Yeekaw) but raised on the NSW Central Coast; I can't decide what I love more, the ocean or the bush. My partner Kez and I have been together for almost 14 years; we have raised two beautiful strong independent women who are now almost 18 and 19.

### BEK CONDELLO

*Aboriginal Hub Practitioner*

I am from Hobart, and there I was working in lots of different areas in the community service sector. I've worked extensively with youth, and DV, in multiple shelters, I have done outreach to prisons, and worked in crisis / homelessness. Two years ago, I decided to travel, which ended up taking me to Africa to volunteer in South Africa working with Street Children. From there I then started working for a US based organisation all over Africa teaching sexual assault prevention self defense training to women in communities. I had to return back to Australia from Zambia in April due to COVID and it was my dream to work for an Indigenous organisation when I returned. So I finished up my role with the US organisation and relocated to Geelong!



### BETH DAVIS

*Communications & Media Officer*



I have worked in events and communications for over 10 years, and previously worked with the National Basketball League and the Royal Geelong Yacht Club. I'm also currently studying part time online through Deakin University completing my Masters of Business Administration. I love sport, and when we're not on lockdown I spend my weekends taking my son to all his different sporting activities! I also love a bit of karaoke, trivia quizzes and escape room puzzles.

### TEGAN EDWARDS

*Casual Driver- Feed me*

I'm 24 year old proud Gunditjmara, Aranda, Wathaurong woman. I love my netball, I've been lucky enough to represent my people and my country, lucky enough to play with my cousin for the Australian Indigenous netball and captain the team. I've previously worked at Vic Uni in Footscray doing a traineeship, Mckeller Rehabilitations centre, and Barwon Water. I love to colour and sing and dance. I love working at Wathaurong because it means that I'm in and around my mob, I love that I get to see and speak to my community on a daily basis. I love how culturally strong I feel when I'm here, I love that I get an abundance of love and support from everyone.



### TENAYA WATTS

*Workforce Development & HR Officer*



I come from a background in Performance coaching for Leaders from all departments within the Medibank head office in Melbourne. I've also worked in varying leadership roles within Medibank and several other businesses throughout my time. Once upon a time I was a personal trainer and I still have a strong passion for health and fitness with most of my weekends spent going for runs and hikes with my husband. If I'm not doing something fitness related I'll likely be catching up with friends over a few cocktails and spending time with my family.



# Staff Updates



## MICHELLE GRAY

*Social Emotional Wellbeing Worker*

I am a proud Widjabul woman from the Bundjalung Nation which is along the coastline of NSW. I am currently studying Certificate 4 in Community Services and also Certificate 4 in Mental Health. For the past nine years I have been offering peer support on a complete voluntary basis to survivors of Child abuse and Child Sexual Abuse using social media platforms, which helps me to engage with people from all over the world. Although listening to the stories are sad I find it very very rewarding. I am a mum to a 19 year old daughter who is my whole world and we have quite the laughs that's for sure. Always very entertaining when we are together.

## LYNNE LANCASTER

*Senior Medical Receptionist*

My Heritage is Welsh on my Mother's side & English on my Father's side. I love to spend time with family & Friends. We often meet at a local café, restaurant or winery and listen to live music whilst sharing a white wine or bubbles. I use to play competition tennis but not for a few years now as working full time put a stop to that. I try to walk every day with my sister, My favourite places to walk are always near water, whether it be the ocean, beach lake or river. I am a divorced mother of 7 beautiful grown up children & 11 grandchildren.



## ANNE LAST

*Youth Justice Worker*



I am a mother of 3 beautiful children & 8 gorgeous grandchildren. For almost 20yrs I worked in hospitality in Vic & WA. I then spent a few years in education where I provided services such as security & front desk operations at the WA Department of Education & Training. I entered the WA Prison Officer Academy & when I graduated, I focused on my interest of working in rehabilitation programs. I moved from WA back to Vic and was a non uniformed Assessment & Transitional Coordinator based at Middleton Prison, with a 6 month secondment at Marngoneet Correctional Centre & later at the Melbourne Assessment Prison. During my time at the MAP I was offered to join Community Corrections in Gippsland where I was involved at Wulgunggo Ngalu Learning Place & it's diversion program. I moved to gain experience as a Specialized Case Manager in Ararat. I then completed my time with DOJCS in Melbourne as an Aboriginal Case Manager before joining Wathaurong.

## NATASHA LING

*Provisional Psychologist*

I started my career as a support worker, working in both residential and community settings. For over six years, I worked alongside individuals who lived with various types of mental illness, offering psychosocial supports. After completing my Masters program in 2018, I continued working in community mental health as a provisional psychologist before joining the Wathaurong on 10<sup>th</sup> August this year.



## PATRICIA LOPEZ

*HR Business Partner*



Academic and professional experience in HR and Law working for Governmental entities and NFP organisations within the Disability, Mental Health and Volunteering sectors, providing comprehensive advice to Directorate on matters related to employment issues and investigations, performance management, interpretation of awards and enterprise agreements and the design and implementation of policies, processes and strategies to streamline activities.

## JESS MITCHELL

*Aboriginal Health Practitioner*

I have worked in the community controlled health sector for the last 8 years, previously working at NACCHO and the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service. I became a qualified Aboriginal Health Practitioner in May 2019. I love sports and spending time with my family.



## RACHEL OXFORD

*Acting Housing Manager*



With over 15 years experience working in the private rental sector I have worked for some of the best real estate agents in Victoria. I am currently studying part time online through Swinburn University completing my Bachelor in Business Administration. I have a young family and we enjoy weekends away, the beach and sport.

## NATALIE SULLIVAN

*Family Violence Accommodation and Support—Women & Children*

I'm originally from Sydney and grew up on the land of Dharawal people. I moved down to Melbourne about 5 years ago to finish my Bachelor in Social Work at Monash University. Since completing my degree, I've worked at Elizabeth Morgan House, and have just finished a contract with EDVOS as a family violence case manager. I enjoy yoga, longboarding, hiking, foraging.. (pretty much anything outdoors!)



## ANGELA WALSH

*Strategic Policy Officer*



I was born in Alloway on the west coast of Scotland and I a strong Scottish nationalist. For the last 20 years I have worked as consultant, and project manager / leader of major multi-year projects across Australia and Internationally driving intersectional systemic change for the prevention of family violence, gender equality, anti-racism and also mental health and wellbeing. Internationally I have worked with UNICEF, the United Nations, and International NGO's in Timor-Leste, Indonesia, Thailand and Central Europe. I live on Wurundjeri country with my gorgeous partner Mark, my daughters Ella and Anador, and my mum Pamela and love walking, riding my bike and normally I go to as many live music gigs as I can.

# COVID-19 Information

The latest COVID-19 information, including current restrictions, case numbers and helpful tips can be found on the State Government website [www.vic.gov.au/coronavirus](http://www.vic.gov.au/coronavirus)

At the time of printing this newsletter, the most recent Premier's announcement advises that Regional Victoria is still in STEP THREE of the roadmap to re-opening. With information changing constantly, we encourage you to visit the above website if you are unsure of restrictions.

The "Third Step" involves the following:

## ***Social***

- leave home - no restrictions on reasons to leave home or distance but stay safe
- public gatherings - up to 10 people outdoors
- visitors to the home - you may form a "social bubble" with ONE other household of up to 5 people

## ***Education and childcare***

- childcare - open
- schools in metropolitan Melbourne - remote learning with potential staged return for onsite learning for Grade 3 to Grade 10 based on public health advice
- schools in regional Victoria - onsite learning for all with safety measures in place
- adult education - restricted. Learn from home if you can, onsite for hands-on, skills-based learning

## ***Work and business***

Work from home if you can.

## ***Shopping, personal services, eating and drinking out***

- Hospitality: Indoor (group limit of 20 and seated service, with a cap of 50 patrons), outdoor dining subject to density quotient.

## ***Retail: all open***

- real estate - operating with safety measures and record-keeping

## ***Exercise and recreation***

- no exercise restrictions
- Organised outdoor non-contact sports for all ages. Limitations for spectators
- Indoor sports facilities remain closed

## ***Ceremonies and special occasions***

- weddings - allowed with 10 people (including the couple, two witnesses and celebrant)
- funerals - allowed with 20 people (infants under 12 months of age or people required to conduct the funeral not included in the limit)
- religion - public worship (not including private ceremonies (e.g. baptism, bat mitzvah) outdoors for up to 10 people

## ***Entertainment, leisure and travel***

- travel within regional Victoria - allowed (no travel to or from Metro Melbourne without permit)
- entertainment - outdoor venues open with density quotient and patron caps. Indoor venues remain closed.
- accommodation - open in regional Victoria

**PLEASE VISIT THE STATE GOVERNMENT OF VICTORIA WEBSITE FOR THE MOST UP TO DATE INFORMATION ON THE LATEST RESTRICTIONS. RULES AND RESTRICTIONS MAY HAVE CHANGED SINCE THIS NEWSLETTER WENT TO PRINT.**



# COVID-19 Information

## STAY COVID SAFE

As Regional Victoria slowly begins to re-open, it is important that we remember to stay safe and protect ourselves from community transmission of the COVID-19 virus.



### WEAR A MASK

It is mandatory to wear a mask or face covering when outside your home. Wathaurong has provided disposable and re-usable fabric masks to community members over the past 6 months. If you require additional masks, please contact us. Remember, fabric masks must be washed after EACH use. Surgical or medical masks should be discarded immediately after using.



### GET TESTED

If you have symptoms, no matter how mild, get tested, and stay home and self isolate until you receive your results. Self isolating also means separating yourself from the rest of the household. The Wathaurong Cough/Cold/Fever clinic is operating at Forster Street on Tuesday and Friday mornings - bookings are essential.

### COVID CLEAN



If you live with others, keep things clean including:

- don't leave dirty dishes lying around, instead wash them and put them away
- use household disinfectants regularly (minimum once a day) on bathroom and kitchen sinks/faucets, bench and table tops, light switches, door handles, toilet flush buttons, and anything else that is used by others in your house
- avoid sharing items like tv remotes, phones, toiletries like toothpaste tubes, etc: and if you can't avoid sharing, disinfect these items too.

### AND REMEMBER....



Wash your hands often, for at least 20 seconds!



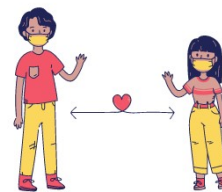
Avoid touching your face as much as possible



Cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hand



Avoid shaking hands



Keep social distance of 1.5m



If you have symptoms, get tested and stay home until you get your results

# 40 Years of Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op

## Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative 40th Anniversary



May 22nd, 2020 marked the 40th anniversary of the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative (Wathaurong). Wathaurong was formed by community in 1978 and registered on 22 May 1980 to support the social, economic, and cultural development of Aboriginal people.

During the last four decades, Wathaurong has battled through considerable challenges to continue its existence. We are immensely proud of the relationships and partnerships we have built over 40 years to ensure culturally appropriate services are advocated for and delivered to our community.

To mark the 40th anniversary milestone, Wathaurong unveiled a new 40th anniversary logo branding. We also invited community members to submit artwork to commemorate the 40 year anniversary, with first prize being awarded to Kerrie Black. You can see Kerrie's artwork on the opposite page and read her story that went into creating the artwork.

We hope to hold a community cabaret celebrations early in 2021 when COVID-19 restrictions are sufficiently lifted. Until then, we welcome anyone who would like to share a story, memory or photo of their experience at Wathaurong over the past 40 years to contact us at [comms@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:comms@wathaurong.org.au)—or join our “40 Years of Memories” Facebook page.





# 40 Years of Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op

## 40th Anniversary Artwork

LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

*By Kerrie Black*



In the beginning there was Aboriginal people living in the Wathaurong area. These people were disconnected. Some were big families like ours, the Edwards family, the Couzens to name a few. There were others children mostly living in foster homes and orphanages such as the likes of Patrick Tanner, David McLachlan, Glenn Shea, Sue Darby, Robyn Eaves, Leanne Black and Dannah Proctor and others all disconnected from each other—lost from culture and isolated from each other. In time these families and children began to reach out and find others who they connected with. They found a common need to connect so started the Co-op—a place to connect, learn, heal and a place to belong. Where common goals became one, a community to belong and to grow. Many have come, some for a short time, some who found the home and connection and they stayed. Many have gone to a higher place and watch over us leaving behind a memory. Some were young and didn't get to shine, such as Randell Charles or Lorna Crowe taken too soon. Others left knowledge that will remain for all time such as Alan Browning, Auntie Betty, Uncle Dave Tournier and my own father Greg Black.

I think back over the past—I have known five generations of the Edwards family, four generations of the Tournier family and I have watched families grow like the Frys. I remember a young Jenny and Richard moving to Geelong, Jenny being pregnant and feeling her growing belly before giving birth to Tahlia, then many years later watching that baby getting married. Our history, my history - from taking my son who is 36 now to the first playgroup at Forster Street with the Kirby girls and Vicki Couzens girls to just recently taking my own grandchild to playgroup. Looking back brings many happy memories as well as sad times funny times and busy times. I have worked in many roles at Wathaurong as a 15 year old watching phones in an office in the city before we moved to the waterfront, then to Forster Street, before finally Morgan and Mackey Street where the Co-op is presently. I look forward to the next 40 years of making memories.

The title of my artwork "Looking Forward, Looking Back" is in memory of my father, who was a Slim Dusty fan. The title was taken from one of Slim Dusty's songs. My father, who I idolised, was a proud Wemba Wemba man and a founding member of Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op.



# Children's Services

## Koorie Kids Kindergarten

### What is kindergarten?

Kindergarten is a program where your child can have fun and learn through play and activities. Your child can socialise with other children, develop confidence, and build reading, writing and maths skills to help them get ready for school. Kindergarten programs have a qualified teacher and run for 15 hours per week. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children can go to kindergarten for the two years before school through the Early Start Kindergarten grant.

### How much does kindergarten cost?

#### *Free kindergarten*

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children can go to 15 hours free kindergarten per week. When attending a long day care setting, there might be some costs for any additional hours above the 15 hours of free kindergarten. Families might also be able to receive Commonwealth Government subsidies. For information about these subsidies, please contact Centrelink.

### What happens at kindergarten?

At kindergarten, your child can:

- learn through play, art, music and dance
- learn to express themselves in a safe, inclusive and caring environment
- build skills and confidence to prepare them for school.

"I sent my children to kinder because I wanted them to be ready for school. Kinder made them smart, proud, strong and resilient. Now they're sending their children too."

Aboriginal Art and kids playing with adults Aunty Esme

### When can my child start kindergarten?

In Victoria, all children can go to kindergarten in the year before they start primary school. All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children can also go to kindergarten as a three-year-old, if they turn three years old by 30 April in the year they start.

### Where can I find a kindergarten for my child?

Kindergarten programs are offered at standalone kindergarten services, most long day care centres and some local schools.

To find a kindergarten program in your local area, visit [www.mychild.gov.au](http://www.mychild.gov.au), call your local council or speak to your local kindergarten service.

### Enrol today

To find out more about kindergarten, visit: [www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/kindergarten/pages/aboriginal.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/kindergarten/pages/aboriginal.aspx) or contact Tahlia Dempsey on 0439 930 144



# Milla Milla Playgroup

A Parent Supported  
Playgroup



**Milla Milla has moved online! While COVID-19 restrictions prevent us from getting together in person, our playgroup is still active on Facebook. Contact Kristi Watts for information on how join.**



**CONTACT KRISTI  
0419 698 264**

**[Kristi.watts@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:Kristi.watts@wathaurong.org.au)**







## KMS CORNER



KMS Midwife

Lauren Kittelty

Aboriginal Health Worker

Kiralee Hogema

KMS Phone: 0419530722



**Koori Maternity Strategy**  
VACCHO  
vaccho.org.au

Welcome to the KMS Corner 2020.

This year has certainly been different! With Covid-19, KMS have had to think of other ways to work and still make sure our mums and bubs were getting the best care possible and with technology today and a lot of patience we have made this work.



## CONGRATULATIONS

to our KMS health worker

Kiralee Hogema!!!

Kiralee completed her studies in 2020,

She is now a qualified  
Aboriginal Health Practitioner.

AND also to our very own KMS midwife  
Claire who with Luke welcomed a baby girl

"Clementine"

On 30th October 2019

We look forward to Claire's return but a big thank you to  
Lauren who has done an  
amazing job!!



## 2020 KMS BABIES



Scarlet

14/01/2020



Kyra

26/01/2020



Connor

02/02/2020



Bentley

06/02/2020



Noah

09/02/2020





## KMS CORNER



**Malakai**

11/02/2020



**London**

13/02/2020



**Iris**

21/02/2020



**Alexia**

01/04/2020



**Aylah**

07/04/2020



**Thomas**

15/04/2020



**Adalynn**

17/04/2020



**Zedakai**

26/04/2020



**Kyrán**

06/05/2020



**Dontae**

12/05/2020



**Allira**

16/05/2020



**Amari**

16/05/2020



**Tobias**

17/05/2020



**Luka**

16/05/2020



**Sheldon**

08/06/2020



**Kylan**

19/06/2020



**Chase**

08/07/2020



**Elliot**

24/07/2020

***Congratulations to all  
our families who have  
welcomed new babies  
this year!***



# Health Services

## Men's Group

The aim in this program is getting men together in culturally appropriate ways.

In the past men don't speak out about what is happening in their lives. Having this program set up for these men helps them to talk about their issues.

All community blokes are invited to join us in a series of activities, all designed with the goal to help and support every Community man.

## Men's Camp: Torquay

In November 2019 the Men's Group went to Torquay for a Men's Camp. The fellas came together over two days to connect with country and each other.

They stayed at Ocean Country Park and engaged in some cultural activities such as dancing. They also had the Co-ops Aboriginal Health Worker talk about men's health and do everyone's health checks.

In 2020 we have not been able to get together as much, but we have been doing online exercise sessions and trying to catch up over Zoom.

For more information or to join the Mens Group, call Wathaurong on 52770044.

## 2020 Men's Group Online Activities

Although we couldn't get together in person as much this year, a lot of the men have been participating in cultural activities at home. As well as this, our men have been getting together on a regular basis to take part in virtual personal training sessions. A healthy body and a healthy mind are important, especially now when we can't get together in person.



## Aboriginal Men's Referral Crisis Line

Dardi Munwarro have launched an Aboriginal Men's referral crisis line in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The **Brother to Brother** crisis line provides phone support for Aboriginal men who need someone to

talk to about relationship problems, family violence, parenting, drug and alcohol issues or who are

struggling to cope in the current COVID-19 environment. The **Brother to Brother** crisis line is staffed by Aboriginal men, including Elders, who have a lived experience in the issues that the line offers support for.





# Health Services

## 2019 Men's Group activities with Uncle Alfie and Uncle Adam

*Images: Adam Lampton-Nicholls*





# Health Services

## Wathaurong Health Clinic

### Dr Ed Poliness

Week 1 & 3 – Monday & Tuesday

Week 2 & 4 – Monday, Tuesday & Friday

### Dr David Corbett

Every Wednesday

### Dr Brigette Agostinelli

Every Monday & Thursday

### Dr Kevin Chang

Every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday

### Dr Lucy Dobson

Every Tuesday

### Dr Brendan Kite

Every Thursday, Friday

### Dr Mia West

Every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday

Mornings

### Dr Sree Sreenivasan

Every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday Mornings

### Diabetes Educator – Olga Lutzko

First Wednesday of every month

### **BY REFERRAL ONLY**

### Endocrinologist – Dr Sam Worboys

Monthly on a Thursday afternoon

### **BY REFERRAL ONLY**

### Paediatric Clinic

Three afternoon sessions a month on a Tuesday

### **BY REFERRAL ONLY**

Please note there is a two month waiting list

### Psychologist—Natasha Ling

Monday—Friday

### Psychologist Provisional—Kimina Lyall

Tuesday & Wednesday

### Step Mi Psychologist—Ben Gray

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

### Alcohol & other Drugs workers—Adrian Huddart &

### Matthew Ladner

Monday to Friday

### Dual Diagnosis Therapist—Shirley Cooper

Monday to Friday

### **Wathaurong Health Service operates:**

Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm

**To book an appointment or find out more details on services available, please phone (03) 5277 2038**

## Important Notices

Due for your Health Assessment: you can have one every 10 months. On completion of your Check you receive a \$25 gift card, a Wathaurong 40 Year anniversary scarf (three designs), a backpack or a beanie. Ask about your eligibility for the Practice Incentive Program (PIP). This will give you access to free or reduced-cost medications.

### Mental Health Nurse—Ruel Abcede

Monday to Friday

### Youth Mental Health worker—Caitlin O’Connell

Monday to Friday

### Bringing them Home—Judy Rosson

Tuesday to Friday

### Towards Home Plus—Emily McDonald

Monday to Friday

### Cultural Consultants—Gwenda Black & Alfie Oram

Gwenda—Monday to Thursday

Alfie—Monday to Friday

### SEWB Workers—Michelle Gray & Andre Kufe

Monday to Friday

### Mens Wellness/Family Violence worker—Adam Lampton-Nicholls

Monday to Friday

### BARWON HEALTH DENTAL@WATHAURONG

Each Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday

Please call BH dental and speak to Sarah to make an

Appointment on (03) 5272 2847

### Obstetric Clinic

Last Friday of every month

### BARWON CENTRE AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT (CASA)

Tuesday afternoons

### **BY REFERRAL ONLY**

### COLAC GP CLINIC — Alternating Wathaurong GP

Open every **Monday**, book appointments through

Wathaurong Health Services

### Maternal and Child Health—Larissa Martino

Monday and Tuesday—Community can book appointments by calling or texting 0438 572 088 or calling the Health Service. Visits can be at the Health Service or we are able to do home visits if getting to the Health Service is difficult.

# Health Services

## Wathaurong Food Drops

In July 2010, we partnered with Feed Me Bellarine to provide grocery boxes and pre-packaged meals to members in our community. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected many of our mob financially and this program was a welcome relief to just provide that extra bit of food security. It also allowed us to provide additional casual employment to drivers and coordinators of the program. Thanks to Feed Me Bellarine, this service is now delivered to over 170 families in our community.

The program is available to all Wathaurong community members—if you are not a part of the program and would like to sign up, please see registration details below, email [comms@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:comms@wathaurong.org.au) or call the Co-op on **5277 0044**.



SIGN UP TO RECEIVE WATHAURONG FOOD DROPS,  
THANKS TO FEED ME BELLARINE:

<https://forms.gle/1bEYBUuZXgAy3Pn59>



# Community Services

## Colac Community Update

After what has been a very different start to the year, with the current Coronavirus pandemic we have had to implement changes and place restrictions on the way Caracaramigen House operates, with varied hours and impact on service delivery and community engagement. We have continued to support community as best we can during this unprecedented process. We have been in regular communication with our auspice agency Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative and CEO Lisa Briggs, external stakeholders & support staff about pandemic planning and on the ground protective equipment, COVID screening, clinical and medication/pharmacy supports for Colac and surrounding areas.

Planning around on-call and emergency procedures for Colac and surrounds will continue for as long as it takes.

We are hopeful that the Colac Otway & Corangamite Aboriginal Community continue to stick together and support each other (from a safe distance of course) during these challenging times. Share what you have (germs excluded), give your neighbours a call, shop within reason and most importantly - keep leading by example. I know I sound like a broken record, however if goodness was a cure, I'm positive our community could bottle our heart, strength and resilience, we'd have enough to stop this bug in its tracks.

Over the last couple of months we have managed to deliver 240 rolls of toilet paper (yes, that's a currency now) and over 60 food hampers to community members. This was made possible by Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative and Wongarra Farm and I've sent thanks for the support. We have also seen Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op's Feed Me program in partnership with Feed Me Bellarine reach Colac, and are thankful for the support.

Community Events and group activities at Caracaramigen House have ceased at this stage of the virus and the office is only staffed by appointment and for support that cannot be provided over the phone or via email.

This is challenging for our community but as soon as we get the all clear and we can trust the communities health and safety is in good check, we'll throw the doors open again and be full steam ahead.

We have had news that the National and State NAIDOC celebrations have been postponed until November and in line with this announcement our celebrations will be postponed to November too.

This year has seen some exciting opportunities open up for Caracaramigen House with partnerships with Colac Otway Shire and Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation. We have been able to have more staff in the house, which ensures the doors are open more often and it's been a great complement to the house. Our first newsletter has been created and I'd like to thank Natalie Atherden from Colac Otway Shire for her support in getting it together. If you'd like to view it you can at the Wathaurong website under publications Caracaramigen House - Community Yarn and you can learn a little more about who's in the house and the roles they hold.

Stay safe and don't forget to call out if you need assistance.

I'm so proud of the work we've been able to achieve so far this year and can't wait to see you all soon.



You mob, keep preventing the Coronavirus from spreading.

Feel sick? Stay at home and call the Wathaurong Health Service on **5277 2038**

Wathaurong Health are able to do consultations via phone and organise prescriptions directly to the chemist. If you are concerned about yourself or a family member having symptoms of the Coronavirus, please call the Coronavirus hotline on **1800 675 398**

By:

Ebony Hickey  
Gulidjan Woman

Caracaramigen House

Co-ordinator + Community  
Development Officer

0449 948 475



# Community Services

## Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Youth Justice Program

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative provides a culturally supportive Youth Justice service for young people.

### Who is eligible?

- Young Aboriginal people aged 10 to 24 years
- Young people who have been involved in or are at risk of becoming involved with the criminal justice system or court system
- Clients who are on Youth Justice Orders which have been handed down from the Magistrate for criminal offending

### What does the Youth Justice worker do?

The Youth Justice worker works closely with eligible young people.

Eligible young people are provided:

- Advocacy
- Support
- Referrals to other services within the organisation or external agencies
- Transport to assist clients in attending court, school and other appointments they are required to attend as part of their Order conditions.

**It's all about supporting our youth in becoming strong, respectful, independent, healthy individuals.**

We are invested in providing a community-focused approach by:

- identifying strengths
- building positive relationships
- growing into strong young individuals that are respectful of others and themselves and becoming strong, confident, courageous and brave in making real and positive choices.

Young people, families, carers and outside agencies can contact Wathaurong's Aboriginal Youth Justice worker in relation to:

- Young people in police custody needing assistance
- Help with the court process and support with understanding what is involved
- Advocacy in accessing services within Wathaurong and external agencies
- A young person who is at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system.

If you, or a young person you know is at risk of becoming involved with police or the court process, please contact the Aboriginal Youth Worker at Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative for essential advice and assistance.

**Phone: 52 770044**

**Mobile: 0417 819 416**

**Fax: 5278 4123**

**Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm**



# Community Notices

## Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECG)

### What is LAECG?

Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups are made up of local Aboriginal community members. The LAECG works with the Koorie community and all education services to ensure that Koorie education is a top priority. There are 30 LAECGs across Victoria, with each Chair being elected by each local community.

The Geelong LAECG meets regularly and always welcomes new community members to come along and have a say about what's happening in Koorie education, from the Early Years right through to Higher Education. Please join us and have your say about your children's education. If you're interested in being part of the conversation, please email: [Shantelle.Baillie@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:Shantelle.Baillie@wathaurong.org.au)

For more information on LAECGs, visit: [www.vaeai.org.au/local-aboriginal-education-consultative-groups/](http://www.vaeai.org.au/local-aboriginal-education-consultative-groups/)

The LAECG has also created a digital newsletter to assist parents with remote learning. This newsletter will continue beyond the COVID-19 pandemic and includes Koorie focused activities and fun ways to include learning in the everyday things we do like cooking, watching TV and reading stories.

There are exercises and challenges for you to try at home, recipes and links to online and virtual activities. If you would like to sign up to receive this digital LAECG newsletter, please email [comms@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:comms@wathaurong.org.au). You can also join the Geelong LAECG Facebook group to share activities and programs with other parents.

### Here are some examples of things you can find in the LAECG newsletter



Here's a fun crafting activity you can do using things found in your backyard. Collage on bark - create an interesting piece of art from things in your garden. Watch the Indigenous Art Experiences on iView to watch the ABC CREATE episode demonstrating this fun art activity.

### Nanny Norma's Chocolate Chip Recipe

250grams butter  
Pinch of salt  
2 cups brown sugar  
2 cups all purpose white flour  
1/2 tea spoon baking soda  
1/2 tea spoon of vanilla essence (only if you have it)  
Small packet of chocolate chips  
1 egg

#### What to do:

Pre heat the oven (120 degrees for fan forced oven). Mix all ingredients together in a big bowl or an electric food processor, any order, doesn't matter - just combine them. Butter should be soft at room temperature but not melted, or else the chocolate chips will melt. Roll into small sized balls and put on a oven tray lined with baking paper. Press down lightly with a fork (but not flat, just lightly). Put in oven for 10-12 minutes at 120 degrees for fan forced oven. They will be lightly brown on top but still fudgy/ gooey soft in the middle which kids love!!  
Cool - enjoy!



Melbourne Museum are running an online dinosaur hunt! Use the clues provided to navigate the Melbourne Museum website and find the 10 tiny dinosaurs. Once you have located a dinosaur, be sure to note the letter below its name. Then unscramble these letters at the end of your search to form the code word to enter the competition. This virtual scavenger hunt is free and runs until November 8th. To start your dinosaur hunt visit:

[museums victoria.com.au](http://museums victoria.com.au)



# Community Notices

## Wathaurong Youth Hub

In July, prior to the second stage of lockdown, we conducted a number of Youth Forums online and in person to get input and feedback from our youth about the plans to create a Youth Hub at Forster Street. There were plenty of great ideas and suggestions and we look forward to continuing to have these discussions and plan what Forster Street can look like as a safe space for our youth to gather.

If you would like more information or to provide some input and suggestions for the planned Youth Hub, or to get involved with our Youth Group activities, please contact Lachlan Edwards [Lachlan.edwards@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:Lachlan.edwards@wathaurong.org.au) or Jordan Edwards [Jordan.edwards@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:Jordan.edwards@wathaurong.org.au).



## Treaty Engagement

The First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria was first established in 2017 and builds on the hard work of Aboriginal leaders of the past and aims to support Aboriginal communities through the Treaty process. It is the voice for Aboriginal communities.

The Assembly is made up of proud Aboriginal leaders. All are Victorian Traditional Owners, elected and appointed by their communities.

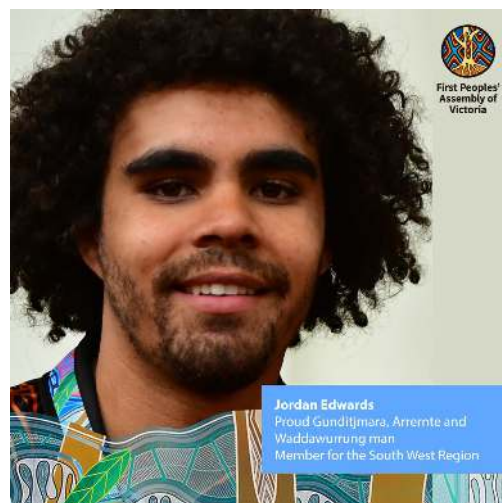
Enshrined in law, the Assembly is helping set up three important steps to lead Treaty negotiations:

**The Treaty Authority** – an independent umpire through the Treaty process;

**The Treaty Negotiating Framework** – which will set how Treaties can be agreed in Victoria;

**A Self-Determination Fund** – so Aboriginal communities can be on a level playing field with government.

The Member for the South West Region is Wathaurong Traditional Owner Jordan Edwards. An online engagement session for Wathaurong community members was held in August, and additional engagement sessions will be held in person once restrictions allow. If you have any questions about the Treaty process, feel free to reach out to Jordan at [Jordan.edwards@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:Jordan.edwards@wathaurong.org.au)



# Community Services

## Balert Care Connections: Aged and Disability Services

Hello! My name is Liz and I am the Team Leader of My Aged Care and Disability Services. Our experienced support staff assists with everyday needs, being basic support for people living at home whose capacity for independent living is at risk, or who are at risk of premature or inappropriate admission to long term care. My Aged Care is targeted to frail, vulnerable and isolated older people; while Disability Services (NDIS) is for people with permanent disabilities.

**The program provides quality support that assists people to live comfortably in their own homes for as long as they possibly can.**

**Assessment:** Before you can receive services, you must be assessed to see if you are eligible. The Coordinator will arrange to visit you (normally in your own home) and will complete assessment forms with you.

### My Aged Care

**Eligibility:** To be eligible for My Aged Care you need to be:

- At risk of premature admission to long term residential care
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- 50 years or older/PYP 18-50yrs
- NDIS up to 65 yrs
- Permanent disability loss of functional/physical capacity
- Or a younger person with a permanent disability which restricts your ability to complete daily tasks associated with independent living
- People from the My Aged Care and Disability target group are eligible for the services, regardless of gender or disability

If you have any questions regarding eligibility for Balert Care Connections services, please contact Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative to discuss with the Support Coordinator.

**Referrals:** My Aged Care referrals can be provided by contacting My Aged Care intake **1800 200 422** or getting in touch with Wathaurong Support Coordinators – Stacie Murphy, Amanda Carter or Liz Abrahams at **52770044**. Online self-referral is also available at [www.myagedcare.gov.au/make-a-referral](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au/make-a-referral). Balert Care Connections can help if you require someone to act on your behalf.

An advocacy network can also assist and work on your behalf and at your direction to represent your wishes and helps you interact with the Aged Care system. The Older Persons Advocacy Network provides free, confidential and independent support, empowering older people to make informed decisions about your care. The Older Persons Advocacy Network can be accessed by calling 1800 700 600 or visiting <https://opan.com.au>

**Elder abuse:** Elder Abuse is unfortunately a reality for many vulnerable people. If you need assistance please do not hesitate to contact myself or the Advocacy for Older Persons Network <https://opan.com.au/>, the Royal commission, the Balert Care Connections program or call police on 000.

**Meals:** Balert Care Connections also offer a meals program of good wholesome food of 2-course meals daily through working partnership with Diversitat. This is only Offered to My Aged care clients.

**Services:** Balert Care Connections provides services for the following activities under My Aged Care:

- Domestic Support
- Respite
- Unaccompanied Shopping
- Property Maintenance
- Equipment (My Aged Care)

If you are interested in a career in Disability or Aged Care at Wathaurong, we are looking for you. Just call **5277 0044** and ask for Liz to have a chat. You must have Aged Care, Disability or Community Services qualifications.



# Community Services

## Balert Care Connections: Aged and Disability Services

### Disability Services

If you think you may have a permanent Disability and need assistance with accessing NDIS, we are here to assist.

**Services:** Balert Care Connection provide service for the following in NDIS:

- Domestic Support
- Respite
- Unaccompanied Shopping
- Property Maintenance
- Equipment (My Aged Care)
- Recreational participation
- Assistance out in the community
- By referral: Allied Health Occupational Therapists, Speech and Physiotherapy

**Referrals:** Referrals can be made by contacting NDIS directly on **1800 035 544** or online self referral at [www.NDIS.com.au](http://www.NDIS.com.au). Balert Care Connections can also assist if you require someone to act on your behalf.

**NDIS support:** Advocacy for people with disabilities is through RIAC (Rights Information and Advocacy Centre). This is a free service and can be accessed online at <https://riac.org.au/> or by calling **5222 5499**. RIAC work with diverse communities including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. RIAC can assist with NDIS appeals, complaints and referrals.

**NDIS complaints:** People have the right to make a complaint about services they receive. If you have any concerns about your current NDIS supports or services, it is important you talk about it. Complaints are important: they can help providers to understand what's important to people with disabilities and improve the quality of services they provide, so your complaint can help other people too.

To make a complaint please contact

- 1800 035 544 free call from landlines or TTY 133677, interpreters can be arranged
- National relay Service and ask for 1800 035 544
- Or completing online complaint form [www.ndiscommission.gov.au/](http://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/)

### General information

**Other resources:** The City Of Greater Geelong have a hard rubbish collection, you can arrange this online and make your bookings this way. If you require assistance please contact our program coordinators or your support workers to book online. Let us know if you need assistance as our Work Crew are here to assist. Visit [www.geelongaustralia.com.au/hardwaste/task/item/8d685f3095202db.aspx](http://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/hardwaste/task/item/8d685f3095202db.aspx)

**Food, emergency, financial and personal crisis relief:**

- The Salvation Army Doorways Program 52239200
- Geelong Food Relief Centre 52786588
- Feed me program 52770044
- United Barwon 0352779753
- Please phone for an appointment

**Pandemic safety:** During the COVID-19 pandemic, Wathaurong Support Coordinators will contact all Aged Care clients on a daily basis prior to service deliveries and ask you general question on COVID-19. This is in line with Department of Health, we understand that this may cause some inconveniences to services and to our Community members, but we are working to reduce the risks to our Community. All staff follow Personal Protection Equipment government rules. Regular updates will be provided on Wathaurong's website [www.wathaurong.org.au](http://www.wathaurong.org.au)

**Contact:** If you would like further information or you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Liz Abrahams, Stacie Murphy or Amanda Carter on 52929800 or 0409726913 or 0447790490 or [liz.abrahams@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:liz.abrahams@wathaurong.org.au)

**We ensure that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their families are treated and supported culturally as part of our commitment to you.**

# Community Notices

## Wathaurong Glass & Arts

16 Rodney Road, North Geelong, Victoria, 3215 Ph: (03) 5272 2881



### Wathaurong Glass means business

Wathaurong Glass has exciting news about a BIG future. The Co-operative has purchased the building next door to the existing factory, allowing for a significant increase in Glass' potential production output, as space and power capacity has previously been a critical factor to limit growth ... but not anymore.

Excitingly, at the same time, an effective Business Plan has been produced to help Glass maximise its new opportunities. The Plan not only outlines fresh and growing markets for Glass, but gives clear direction about how to achieve its goals. The plan was funded by Regional Development Victoria (RDV), within the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, and the expertise was provided by experienced Aboriginal business developers PricewaterhouseCooper's Indigenous Consulting (PIC). We thank RDV and PIC for their invaluable help and support. The pandemic has unfortunately slowed this progress, but we are ready to roll as soon as circumstances allow.

Glass is structured to channel profits back into the Co-operative to benefit our Community, so as it grows, Glass will increasingly become a part of the Co-op's work towards self-determination.

#### School terms 2020

Term 1: 28 January—27 March  
Term 2: 14 April—26 June

Term 3: 13 July—18 September  
Term 4: 5 October—18 December

#### Koorie Education Support Officers

(KESOs) can assist you with your child's educational needs. Contact your school for more info.

We are committed to providing quality support and programs for our community and clients.  
We welcome feedback and suggestions to improve our programs.

#### How can you give us feedback ?

Complete a feedback form, fill it out and hand to reception (anonymously if you like) or write a letter and post it, marked Attention: Simon Flagg, Corporate Services Manager ... or email: [simon.flagg@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:simon.flagg@wathaurong.org.au)



# Community Notices

## Always was, Always will be

Wurdi Youang is a ceremonial place and an astronomical observatory, the stones of this very special place line up with where the sun sets on the horizon at different points in the year including the equinoxes and solstices on our property near the You Yangs and Little River.

These special alignments embed the strong and longstanding knowledge of astronomy by our Ancestors and confirm what we've always known.



*The view to the west from the eastern side of the circle, showing the solstitial alignment of the straight sections.*

Photographic and graphic © Ray Norris and John Morieson

### **Want to get your news from Wathaurong faster?**

Give us your email address and you will get all of our news hot off the press—without having to wait for us to go through printers and Australia Post. We will still send you your hardcopy, but you will be first to know what is happening in the Wathaurong Community.

### **DISCLAIMER:**

*The views, information or opinions expressed in the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd newsletter are solely those of the individuals involved and do not necessarily represent those of the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Board of Directors, management, Community members or employees. The primary purpose of the newsletter and its contents is to educate and inform. This publication does not constitute medical, legal or other advice or services. Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd recommends that readers use caution/discretion when reading this document; as it may contain images*

# Community Notices

## Assistance and Emergency Services

Service	Contact
Are you seeking emergency accommodation? Call Salvo Connect (Homeless Support Provider for over 25s) for advice on housing and welfare support	5223 9220
Barwon Youth (Homeless Support Provider for 24 and under) can help young people with accommodation and welfare support, give them a call	5246 7500
If you need help in an emergency you can contact Ambulance, Fire Brigade and Police	000
Are you struggling with finances and need some emergency relief or advice? Diversitat may be able to help you out.	5221 6044
If you require food vouchers, talk to Uniting Care or Salvo Connect	5223 5400
For medical, health and wellbeing support, contact Wathaurong Health Centre	5277 2038
In the event of a medical emergency Barwon Health Emergency Department have the facilities and expertise	4215 0000
For situations requiring police support or advice, call Geelong Police	5225 3100
If you require Family Violence & Sexual Assault Support the Orange Door Barwon Hub provides services, advice and expertise.	1800 312 820
For Drug and Alcohol advice, contact Direct Line 24 hour referral service.	1800 888 236
If you, a friend or family member need immediate advice, call the Suicide Hotline.	1300 651 251
Do you feel unsafe because of Family Violence? Support is only a phone call away. Safe Steps 1800 numbers are also available for support, referrals and refuge 24/7	5224 2903 1800 015 188 Or 1800 737 732
Family Services support including Family Violence is through The Orange Door Barwon HUB	1800 312 820
If you need legal advice or support, get in touch with the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service.	1800 064 865
After Hours Service National Home Doctor Service	13SICK ( 13 7425)

### Need to update your details?

We maintain the mailing list and this helps us to keep in contact with you. We may need to send you newsletters, update the waiting list for WAC housing, or provide members with meeting dates, community events, etc.

Members please remember to update your details. Family members if you know of someone who has moved recently — please ask them to update their details by calling the Co-operative 5277 0044.