



WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE

Community Newsletter

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Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative

62 Morgan Street, North Geelong

PO Box 402, North Geelong, 3215

Phone: 03 5277 0044

Fax: 03 5278 4123

Email: admin@wathaurong.org.au

www.wathaurong.org.au



Our Wathaurong NAIDOC Community Award Winners
From left to right, Vaughn Gray, Jay Hickey, Aunty Sandra Manning & Layla Boseley. Inset - Nicole Kirby
Read more on Page XX

Calendar of upcoming events

AUGUST 2023

3rd - All4Kids Children's Day Activity

4th - National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Children's Day

8th - Wathaurong AusKick starts

9th - International Day of Indigenous Peoples

25th - Wear It Purple Day

SEPTEMBER 2023

6th - Indigenous Literacy Day

18th-29th - School Holidays

18th-20th - Billabong Ranch Camp

29th - Grand Final Public Holiday - Co-op Closed

OCTOBER 2023

7th-8th - VACSAL Senior Football & Netball Carnival

25th - Geelong Cup Public Holiday - Co-op Closed



Join our socials!
[@wathaurong](https://www.facebook.com/wathaurong)



CEO UPDATE

We acknowledge the Country that we work and live on is and has always been Wathaurong Country. Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative (Wathaurong) provides supports to our Community living on Wathaurong, Gulidjan and Gadabanud country. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and to all Aboriginal people on Country who have contributed to the diverse Aboriginal Cultural Society we have today.

There has been a lot of exciting things happening over the past few months, including a huge range of activities and celebrations for NAIDOC Week. It is great to see our celebrations get bigger and better every year, and see more and more people involved. I would like to thank and acknowledge the staff at VIVA Energy, who volunteered for our Flag Raising event to take on the roles that would normally be done by our Wathaurong Community members, allowing them to relax and participate in the event instead.

We have also recently started our Community Possum Skin Cloak project with Aunty Lisa Couzens, with several workshops already taking place to start the process of making a total of 10 cloaks. 6 of these cloaks were designated for Board Members and



the CEO, and it was very special during our NAIDOC Flag Raising event to be able to smoke these cloaks and present them to the Board. These cloaks will be passed on from Board member to Board member, as new members are elected, creating a tradition that is linked to our culture.

2 of the remaining possum cloaks that are being created will be designated as "Community Cloaks" – the intention is that these will be able to be borrowed by Community members to use for special occasions, such as weddings, graduations or other significant events.

WESTERN DISTRICT ACCO COLLECTIVE (WDAC)

Another exciting development is the launch of the Western District ACCO Collective, or WDAC – which is the coming together of the 8 ACCOs in the west to advocate for the self-determination of our rural and regional western Victoria communities.

The WDAC membership includes Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative, Budja Budja Aboriginal Co-operative,

CEO UPDATE

Dhauwurd Wurrung Elderly & Community Health Service, Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative, Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-operative, Kirrae Health Service, Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative, and Winda-Mara Aboriginal Co-operative. You can read more about this initiative on page 30 of this newsletter.

WATHAURONG WAY

Over the past year, our staff have been engaging in workshops to create slogans, messages and values to be embedded through the way that we work with Community, external organisations, and within our own organisation. On June 14th, the campaign was launched at Morgan Street, where we held a panel discussion to talk about what Wathaurong means, and where we see it going in the future. Along with the campaign launch were some merchandise giveaways, and we have plenty more for our Community to pick up – check out page 13 of this newsletter to learn more.

FORSTER STREET REDEVELOPMENT

The redevelopment of Forster Street into our Healing Spirit Youth Health Hub has begun, with the much-anticipated outdoor basketball court already taking shape! We hope to be able to re-open the space for

Community early 2024. You can check out some photos of the work so far on page 22 of this newsletter.

VACSAL SENIOR FOOTBALL/NETBALL CARNIVAL

We are very excited to be partnering with VACSAL to host the 2023 Senior Football/Netball Carnival in Torquay on 7 and 8 October 2023. There will be plenty of opportunities for Community to get involved – whether playing in one of our Wathaurong football or netball teams or volunteering to help out across the weekend. If you're keen to get involved as a player, check out page 25 of this newsletter for the registration link. More information on volunteering and the weekend overall will be provided soon.

Nyatne (thanks)

Simon Flagg

CEO

STAFF UPDATES

WELCOME NEW STAFF

Welcome to some of our newest staff members who have joined us over the past few months:

- Andrea Tournier - Business Support Officer
- Joniemaree Marty - Family Services Case Worker
- Taige Crossman - Receptionist
- Alyssa Wilson - Case Worker, Kinship
- Brook Keating - Social & Community Services
- Brooke Williams - Social & Community Services
- Charles Matete - Disability Support Worker
- Elijah Satala - Social & Community Services
- Freya Taylor - Case Worker, Kinship
- Jessica McCoach - Social & Community Services
- Josephine Bolitho - Business Support Officer
- Kelly McLachlan - Balert Care Manager
- Lily Graham - Youth Hub Project Officer
- Mapendo Naabwe - Disability Support Worker
- Michelle Polidarno - Aboriginal Health Worker
- Paul Pitt - Family Day Care Worker
- Phillip King - Social & Community Services
- Rachelle Allen - Learning & Development Business Partner
- Sophie Hamann - Social & Community Services
- SueRiddell - Family Violence Support Worker
- Theresa Sailor - Disability Support Worker

FAREWELLS

Sending our best wishes to staff who have left Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative in the past few months to take up other opportunities, including:

- Lucy Dobson - GP
- Denise Sweet - BTH worker
- Elanor Brinkworth - Quality Administration Officer
- Louise Warner - Team Leader, Out of Home Care
- Mariah Stanley - Foster Care Worker
- Miranda Watson - Case Worker, Kinship
- Nayuka Hood - The Orange Door Cultural Safety Practice Lead
- Nicole Asker - Senior Case Worker, Kinship
- Osei Owusu Banahene - Disability Support Worker
- Stacey Mercer - Disability Support Worker

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Are you or someone you know looking for a job? We have a number of job vacancies at Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative, ranging from casual to full time.

We offer generous and attractive employment packages, including:

- Generous leave provisions (five weeks of annual leave)
- Gifted Christmas/New Year leave
- Not for profit salary packaging, reducing your taxable salary



Check out our available jobs on our website now by scanning the QR code!

AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

WATHAURONG COMMUNITY NAIDOC AWARDS

The winners of the 2023 Wathaurong Community NAIDOC Awards were announced at the Flag Raising & Community Day held at Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative on Monday 3rd July, 2023. Congratulations to all of the 2023 Wathaurong Community NAIDOC Award Winners.

Nedok Yoongga (Elder/Respected Person)

Winner - Aunty Sandra Manning

AUNTY SANDRA MANNING was nominated for going above and beyond for the Wathaurong community, in her role as a Community Strengthening Facilitator and local justice liaison. Aunty Sandy never stops, her heart and soul are all for community. She is described as “young at heart”, respects everyone no matter their age, a positive influence and a hard worker.



Ngarrwa Ngitj (Community Person)

Joint Winners - Jay Hickey & Nicole Kirby

JAY HICKEY was nominated for his outstanding support for community and his engagement with people of all ages and from all walks of life. Jay goes above and beyond lending a hand to people. Jay shares his passion and skills such as art or skating with community, and has a positive influence on those around him.

NICOLE KIRBY was nominated for her dedication and support in being actively involved in the running of the Wathaurong Women's Group. As well as being a regular attendee and volunteer for Women's Group, Nicole and her family are always involved in Wathaurong community events and willing to put up a hand to help out with whatever is needed.

Koolay Goopma (Young Male Achiever)

Winner - Vaughan Gray

VAUGHAN GRAY was nominated for His passion and dedication to his work with the Wathaurong youth. Vaughan goes above and beyond for community, outside of what is required in his Youth Justice role, and connects with the young mob. Vaughan is described as a caring and loving person.



Moordeemoondeek Goopma (Young Female achiever)

Winner - Layla Boseley

LAYLA BOSELEY was nominated for her outstanding work in organising and participating in community events. Her hard work has been recognised and appreciated by many community members, and she was honoured earlier this year by winning the Victorian First Nations Trainee of the Year Award. Many staff and community members have watched Layla grow in various aspects over the past year and her work and commitment has been rewarded. Layla is such a positive influence on community and her happy smiling face is always a joy to see at community events and activities.

FIRST NATIONS TRAINEE OF THE YEAR

We are so incredibly proud of our Communications & Events Co-ordinator, Layla Boseley, who was named as the AFL SportsReady First Nations Trainee of the Year for the 2023 Victorian graduating class.

Layla joined Wathaurong in March 2022 as the Communications and Events Trainee and has done such a deadly job working with and for our community over the past 12 months during her traineeship, that she has now secured full time employment.

We would also like to congratulate Rochelle Anderson on graduating from her traineeship with AFL SportsReady. Rochelle was also a nominee for the First Nations Trainee of the Year award, and we are thrilled that Rochelle has also been offered a full time position to stay at Wathaurong in the role of Fleet Admin & Support.

Congratulations to both Layla and Rochelle on their graduation, and to Layla for being awarded First Nations Trainee of the Year!



YOUNG SPORTS STARS

A big congrats to two of our young sports stars in the community, Keiran and Andrea Wellington.

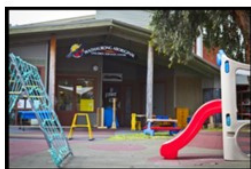
After a fantastic first half of the football season with Bannockburn, Andrea has been invited to train the Geelong Falcons program, while Keiran recently represented Victoria in a rugby tournament held in Queensland - his team winning the minor premiership!

Well done to both Keiran and Andrea for their outstanding achievements!



CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Wathaurong Playgroups



At Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-Op
Children Services building
62 Morgan Street, North Geelong

Kitjarra Booboop

Playgroup for babies 0 - 12 months
Every Tuesday 10.30am till 12pm



Milla Milla Playgroup
Every Thursday and Friday
11am till 1pm



Lunch provided and transport available for Milla Milla Playgroup



Why come to Playgroup:

Children learn and develop through
play and social interaction.

Playgroup also provide an opportunity for
children to interact with other children and families
in the community.



Playgroup provides a culturally safe space where
children have the opportunity to
strengthen their identity through play
and other cultural activities.



Playgroup is a great way for adults to
meet other families in the community.



For more information on our Playgroup Sessions
please call or e-mail **Kristi Watts**
52770372 - 0419698264
Kristi.Watts@wathaurong.org.au



CHILDREN'S SERVICES



Wayipungitj (supports)

Bupup balak wayipungang
(helping/supporting the young kids)

The Koorie Preschool Advisor Program has had a change of name (in Dja Dja Wurrung) and new branding. So be ready to see the word Wayipungitj all over your community, as well as our new branded artwork called "Life" – by Victorian artist Emily Bell.

Kindergarten Enrolment

- If your child has turned 3 or is turning 3 this year, the time to enroll is now.
- Kinder tours can still be booked if you are still wanting to check them out.
- Your local Wayipungitj can support with kindergarten tours and enrolment, whether your child be 2, 3 or 4 years old!



Wayipungitj (KPSA):

Hayley Boehm

Mob: Yorta Yorta

Phone: 0427820750

Email: hayley.boehm@wathaurong.org.au



Reminders

- Every child can access 2 years of 15 hours of funded kinder a week.
- You can start enrolment at age 2
- Wayipungitj can work with your kinders in providing culturally safe and inclusive spaces, as well as providing fun activities. Just call and ask!



HEALTH SERVICES

WATHAURONG HEALTH SERVICES ACHIEVES AGPAL ACCREDITATION

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative increased its community health credentials earlier this year when our health service received a national award of accreditation, demonstrating its commitment to quality and safety within its practice.

Wathaurong received this important recognition from Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited (AGPAL), the leading not-for-profit provider of general practice accreditation services within Australia.

AGPAL Chair, Dr Richard Choong, said accreditation shows that the practice makes a significant investment and commitment to quality on a day-to-day basis, across all levels of the practice team.

"Achieving accreditation is a major achievement for any practice and a clear demonstration that Wathaurong is striving to improve their level of care to both patients and the community," he said.

"Practices seek accreditation because they want to do their best and view this as another step towards excellence in patient care."

To achieve accreditation, a practice team works over a 12-month period to implement the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Standards for general practices. The RACGP Standards provide a recognised national benchmark for general practices and services, and a template for quality care and risk management.

Areas of focus during an on-site assessment for accreditation include: ensuring vaccines are within their use-by-date and stored at the correct temperatures, that the practice's equipment is clean and sterile, practice staff are up-to-date with their training, and the practice has emergency care available.

Dr Choong said accreditation is attainable only through cooperation and communication between staff members.

"Everyone at the practice plays a valuable role in working to meet the RACGP Standards. It gives staff a real sense of pride to work in an AGPAL accredited practice," added Dr Choong.



**Proudly AGPAL
Accredited**

Our commitment to
your safety and care

HEALTH SERVICES



COLAC OTWAY YOUR HEALTH IS IN YOUR HANDS

KEEP YOUR MIND AND BODY HEALTHY AND STRONG WITH A
VISIT TO WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL CO-OP'S
MONDAY COLAC OUTREACH CLINIC

BULK BILLING GP & FREE ANNUAL 715 HEALTH CHECK!

All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are eligible for an annual health check. It's a good way to look after your health and wellbeing to keep your mind and body healthy and strong. 715 health checks are free at Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op's Colac Outreach Clinic at Headspace Colac (the old Youth Health Hub).

CALL 52770044 TO MAKE A BOOKING FOR THE MONDAY CLINICS IN COLAC.

Find out more:

Visit www.health.gov.au/715-health-check



Australian Government
Department of Health

BALERT CARE CONNECTIONS

"NDIS has
changed my
life."
- Josh

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative NDIS client

<https://www.ndis.gov.au>

**Contact us today to find
out how the NDIS could
help support you.**

bcc@wathaurong.org.au

Wathaurong Balert Care Connections: 52929800
NDIS Quality and Safeguard Commission: 1800 035 544
NDIS: 1800 800 110
Rights, Information & Advocacy Centre: 5222 5499
Complaints and feedback: 1800 800 110



BALERT CARE CONNECTIONS



Help at home for older people



"My Aged Care allows me
to continue to connect
with my peers."

-Joylene

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative My Aged Care client

Contact us today to find out how My Aged Care can help support you

bcc@wathaurong.org.au

Wathaurong Balert Care Connections: 52929800

My Aged Care Quality and Safeguard Commission: 1800 951 822

My Aged Care: 1800 200 422

Elder Abuse Number: 4324 5611

OPAN Advocacy: 1800 700 600 or www.opan.org.au



COMMUNITY EVENTS

SISTAS SELF CARE DAY

What an amazing afternoon at the Sista's Self Care day!

So deadly to share space and yarn with so many incredible women in our community. A huge thank you to all of our volunteers who came along to provide services - Hannah and Kristen from our Family Services team who did our mini-facials, Lidia Cerna who did amazing nails, and Thaedora for the Wyapa sessions and Auntie Helen for the weaving.

Also a shout out to the University of Melbourne research team who helped put this day on and provided a safe space to yarn about women's business.

And one more thank you going to all the deadly businesses who provided donations for our pamper packs! ❤️💛❤️



KOORIE ASPIRATIONS DAY

What an incredible experience our high school students had at Koorie Aspirations Day in May!

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from years 7-12 gathered together at Geelong Technical School over two days for STEM focused workshops, learning from other First Nations people in the industry, connecting to culture, and with each other.

Organised by the Geelong Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECG), the Koorie Aspirations Day is a great opportunity to engage with our kids and help them find new interests and opportunities to think about beyond high school.

Following on from this day, a Careers Expo for high school students will be held at Deakin Nikeri Institute on Thursday 31st August.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

SORRY DAY

Nyatne (thank you) to everyone who came out to our National Sorry Day event at Morgan Street on Friday May 26th.

The morning began with a Welcome to Country and Smoking & Cleansing from Auntie Naomi and Kristi, followed by a powerful performance and speech from Uncle Glenn.

One of the activities that we invited people to participate in was to add different coloured sands to a jar, blending them to show that people from all cultures and backgrounds are coming together to acknowledge and recognise the impacts of the Stolen Generation, and committing to walking together to for healing and reconciliation.

On Sorry Day, and every day, we wrap our arms around our mob who have been and to this day still are affected by the Stolen Generation, and acknowledge their ongoing strength and resilience.



REC IN THE PARK

On Sunday May 28th, our Community Strengthening Team joined with One Fire Reconciliation Group to participate in the annual 'Rec In The Park' event, sharing culture and activities with the wider Geelong community. It was great to connect with a lot of people and share more information about the services that Wathaurong provides!



WATHAURONG WAY

A huge thank you to everyone that came to launch of the #Wathaurongway Campaign. It was an incredible turn out. Over the next few months, we will share our staff led #Wathaurongway Campaign across all our social media platforms.

The campaign is a celebration of our Elders, our community, and our organisation. And YES – there is more #Wathaurongway merchandise to be given away each month for the next 12 months. So keep an eye on our socials and come in pick up your merch from our Morgan Street, Mackey Street and Albert Street offices. There will be hats, stickers, postcards, tees, mugs and jumpers – all sizes til stock runs out!

The first merchandise drop will be the GOBOTA beanies, tees, and jumpers on the 25th of July 2023!



COMMUNITY EVENTS

NAIDOC BALL

Everyone looked so deadly at the NAIDOC Ball, our MC Uncle Glenn Shea was the host with the most, Aunty Judy Dalton-Walsh led us off with a beautiful Welcome to Country, CEO Simon Flagg spoke with passion and fire, the tunes from Deans of Soul and DJ Troy were on point, of course there was a special guest performance from Renee Howell, and we crowned our Matron (Gina Chapman), Patron (Norm Stanley), Beau (Jack Woolford) and Belle (Jasmine-Skye Marinos) of the ball!



FLAG RAISING

An amazing day at our annual Flag Raising event to start off 2023 NAIDOC Week at the Co-op. Made even more special with the ceremony of smoking possum skin cloaks for our Board Members and CEO. These cloaks will be etched with the stories of the Board and CEO of their journey with the organisation, and then handed down to the next person stepping into their position. A beautiful new tradition bringing our culture into everything that we do from the top down.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

ELDERS LUNCH

A very special event, given this year's NAIDOC theme is "For Our Elders" - we held a lovely lunch for our Aunties and Uncles. It was so deadly to see some of our young ones put their hand up to volunteer at this event as well, greeting our Elders as they arrived, serving them lunch, and making cups of tea though the day! Thank you to Aunty Sandra Manning for organising the amazing raffle prizes, and to all of our staff and community who helped put this event together.

A big thank you also goes out to everyone who made a donation through our Raiseley online fundraising campaign to Buy Lunch for an Elder this year - we were able to put on a big feed and everyone had such a deadly day!



YOUTH BALL

Another amazing event, this time it was our first ever NAIDOC Youth Ball! We had a beautiful Welcome to Country from the deadly Natalie, accompanied on the ridge by Jordan. We crowned our Beau of the ball, Izayah, and our Belle of the ball, Mia, had an epic candy bar, a fun Photo Booth, and gave out prizes for the best dance moves from the tunes spun up by DJ Troy!! All the kids looked so deadly all dressed up - hope you all had fun, and ready to do it all again next year!



COLLINGWOOD CHILDRENS FARM

Wathaurong had some buses head up to the Collingwood Children's farm on the Wednesday. It was a great day full of fun and memories, there was food, craft activities and animals for the whole family to enjoy!



COMMUNITY EVENTS

BUSH CRAFT WORKSHOP

The Bush Craft workshop was hosted by Jasmine-Skye at the National Wool Museum, Geelong as a part of the Wathaurong's NAIDOC school holiday program and "We the Maker's" Sustainable Fashion Prize 2023.

The children that participated in this workshop created mini Bunjil's. Bunjil in Wada wurrung language means Wedge-Tailed Eagle and is the creator on the land we live.

This hands-on workshop gave the kid's a chance to explore and play with hand gathered materials from nature including feathers, leaves, bark, gumnuts and shells. Connection to the land and the stories of Wada wurrung culture, builds resilience and keeps culture strong in our little ones.

Free entry to the museum and the "We the Maker's" exhibition was included as a part of this workshop. Jasmine-Skye Marinos, who has been selected as a finalist for the Sustainable Fashion Prize, designed a dress using traditional Aboriginal weaving and Emu feathers.

To vote for Jas's dress to win the people's choice award visit: www.wethemakers.com.au/vote
You can vote once a day until the end of the exhibition (October 2023) and go in the draw to win a 12 month subscription to Peppermint Magazine.



KIDS DISCO

Plenty of deadly moves on the dance floor, some fun face painting, and of course the photo booth! Always a great night when our kids can get together and have some fun!



MELBOURNE MARCH

Great to see so many of our Wathaurong staff enjoying the NAIDOC celebrations yesterday alongside community members. One of the commitments of our organisation from the Board and Executive for the past two years has been to gift all Wathaurong staff a day off on the Friday of NAIDOC Week, so that they can attend the march in Melbourne, or connect to culture and celebration in their own way.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

FIRST NATIONS SUPERCATS ROUND

We love seeing First Nations culture embedded into activities during NAIDOC Week, but it's also deadly seeing Geelong United embracing culture all year long, with their Indigenous jerseys designed by David Flagg not just worn for one round, but worn every game by players from the top level right down to the juniors.



MOB RUN THIS

The final event for NAIDOC Week 2023 Thanks to everyone from the Wathaurong community who joined us at the NAIDOC Running Festival in Wyndham. It was a windy day but the rain held off, and some of our runners smashed their personal best times! It was great to see everyone out there getting active and getting involved.



A MASSIVE THANKYOU to everyone who supported, volunteered and participated in our NAIDOC week celebrations. It was our biggest NAIDOC week yet, and we can't wait for next year. It was so deadly seeing our community and Allies coming together, connecting, to celebrate our culture. Bring on NAIDOC 2024!

COMMUNITY EVENTS

WOMEN'S GROUP

Women's Groups has been hosting lots of fun activities over the past few months, including a Karaoke day, and a High Tea for our Elders during NAIDOC Week in collaboration with Killara Foundation.

The Women's Group also participated in one of our Community Possum Skin Cloak Workshops with Aunty Lisa Couzens, which was so interesting to see how all the skins come together to make a cloak.

Womens group always loves to welcome new women into our little family and into a safe place where they can have a yarn, have a feed and do culturally based activities.

If you're keen to get involved, reach out to Michelle Gray via email - Michelle.gray@wathaurong.org.au



DEADLY GAMES

A big thank you and congratulations to those who participated in Wathaurong's Deadly games over the months of May and June - if you missed out, don't worry - we will be running another one in September as the weather gets a bit warmer!

To get ourselves warmed up for the Wathaurong Deadly Games each week, what we did was based on the Yulunga Traditional Indigenous Games, it was so much fun.

As part of the program, we experienced not only fun traditional, local activities but also games that originated in WA, QLD, NT, N.S.W. & Tassie.

The Deadly Athlete award for these games went to Kevin. This fella typified what the games were about. He had fun, was very helpful, brought his family along to join in and got himself a little fitter and stronger as well.

This award could have gone to a number of the participants who all put in a gret effort each week. A special mention to the Tanners and McFadyens!

The next edition of 'Strong Wathaurong - Deadly Games 2' will start on September 4th, if you're keen to get involved contact Ben Silva -



COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING ACTIVITIES THROUGH VICHEALTH

Thanks to some funding support from VicHealth, our Community Strengthening Team have been able to deliver a number of activities this year, Our school holliday program in April included skateboarding, art sessions, cultural games and more, and we were also able to take a group of aspiring leaders away for an immersive cultural camp to Budj Bim. Keep an eye out for our September school holiday program coming soon!



BABA RRANG TANDOP NGITJ

AUNTIES AND UNCLES TOGETHER

**Our Aunties and Uncles group catch up
regularly each month!**

*Contact Aunty Sandy Manning for more
information and to register for activities:*

0488 991 388 or

sandra.manning@wathaurong.org.au

from 9am-2pm, Mon - Thurs.

COLAC UPDATE



Caracaramigen House The Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place

Community Yarn Edition Three online now:

https://wathaurong.org.au/publications/#caracaramigen_house_community_yarn

follow us on Facebook : Caracaramigen The Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place



Campfire Conversations

Following on from the Campfire Conversations that have taken place in schools, recently. The Department of Education and Training Barwon Area Office held an additional workshop to bring students from different schools in the Colac-Otway region together. The aim for this day to be an opportunity for students to connect and discuss what matters to them. The purpose of the workshops was to understand the aspirations and current experiences of Koorie young people in Colac, as well as identifying opportunities for changes in schools.

These workshops will ensure that the voices of Koorie students and young people will be included in the co-design of reforms that will strengthen Aboriginal self-determination in schools in the region. This is what our deadly young ones came up with - well done!

Reconciliation Week

Thank you to everyone who joined the Colac Otway Shire Council at Copacc, Gunditjmara Kirrae Whurrong musician Lee Morgan started the event off on a fantastic note with an original song that he wrote to Welcome people to Country. We all joined in for some crowd participation. Lee followed with a smoking ceremony which included taking the cleansing smoke through the COPACC venue.

We then moved into the Civic Hall to officially unveil a colouring competition featuring the work of Worimi artist Gerard Black. Hundreds of local children entered the colouring competition, with the winning entries being from Leah Kirkman, Ela Masangcay, Rubi Turner, Ollie Hickey and Hank Meade. Each winning entrant received a prize plus the honour of having their artwork printed on flags displayed in Murray Street, and stickers displayed throughout Council buildings. Congratulations to everyone who participated.

ART SESSION



Treaty voting days in Colac



TREATY FOR VICTORIA



Caracaramigen House - The Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place 4 Miller Street, Colac

COLAC UPDATE

NAIDOC with Caracaramigen
House -
The Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place
x In The Skies Art & Music



Annual Caracaramigen x In The Skies NAIDOC Exhibition 2023

We are excited to share with you some photos from the NAIDOC Exhibition in Lorne. With an incredible array of art from a range of local artists including Gez Black, Nikki Whitfield, Mark Ferrari, Jay Hickey, Amanda Stanley, Ange Jeffery and Eb Hickey.

If you would like a catalogue photos, videos or info about any of the works, please do not hesitate to get in touch with Anna at intheskies.art.music@gmail.com

This amazing exhibition wouldn't be possible without the support of our generous sponsors, Wathaurong and Barwon South West Dhek Dja and I'd really like to acknowledge Anna, Simon and Marion at In The Skies Gallery for allowing us to use the gallery, and your considerable time and care in ensuring the success year in and year out!



Ocean Spirit Soy Candle - Candles that support the Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place

We are so excited to finally share this amazing collaboration, by Surf Coast Candles. This stunning new design was created by Gerard Black, a proud Worimi Artist living in Colac. The artwork represents the surf, the sun and stars. There is an elder sitting on the beach looking out over the ocean to the sun and the ancestors in the stars in the sky.

A donation from the sale of each candle comes to The Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place, you can buy yours here : <https://www.surfcoastcandles.com.au>



FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK : CARACARAMIGEN THE COLAC ABORIGINAL GATHERING PLACE

ONLINE STORE

Looking for some deadly merch to rock? We have a range of exclusive items for sale at our online store.

The artwork on our coffee mugs, drink bottles and keep ups was designed by the deadly Bri Apma-Hayes from Ntulye Art . You can read the story of the artwork on the product pages.

All items for sale in our store are mob and ally friendly, and all profits from sales of our merchandise go directly back into providing programs, events, activities and cultural connections for our Community.

Check it out today, let us know what you think, and thank you in advance for supporting Wathaurong!

www.wathaurong.org.au/shop



FORSTER STREET UPDATES

Have you driven past Forster Street recently and seen the works underway for our new Healing Spirit Youth Health Hub? Site preparation began in May, with construction starting in late June.

A lot of work has already been done in the past month, including:

- Internal stripping of walls and ceilings
- The pouring of the brand new basketball court!
- Construction of seating
- Garden edging and crushed rock

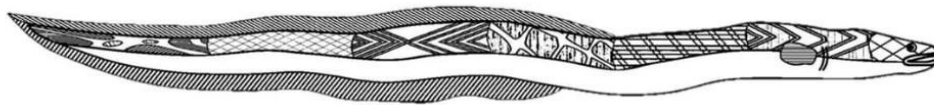
More updates will be provided as works are completed, we are hopeful of a completion date in late 2023!



UPCOMING EVENTS



WEST VIC EELS



Expression of Interest

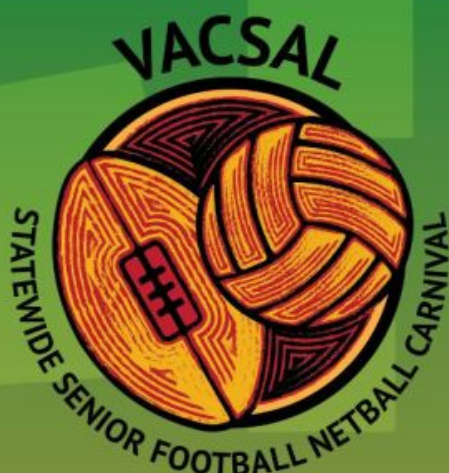
Do you have a child aged between 9 and 17 (born
the year's from 2006 - 2014)
who would be interested in playing in the
Upcoming VACSASL Junior Netball Football
Carnival.

September 26th - 27th 2023
Darebin Community Sports Stadium
Plenty Road, Reservoir

Scan the QR Code to fill out the Expression of Interest form



UPCOMING EVENTS



2023

**Saturday 7th & Sunday 8th
October 2023**

**Banyul Warri Sporting Precinct
Surfcoast Highway, Torquay
(Corner of Merrijig Drive)**

NETBALL

A Grade

B Grade

C Grade

D Grade

FOOTBALL

Div 1

Div 2

*Hosted in partnership with
Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative*



For more information, please contact June Bamblett:
M: 0488 701 713 E: june.bamblett@vacsal.org.au



UPCOMING EVENTS

VACSAL SENIOR FOOTBALL AND NETBALL CARNIVAL

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FOR NETBALL
AND FOOTBALL NOW OPEN!

WHEN: Sat 7th and Sun 8th October

WHERE: Banyul Warri Precinct
(Torquay, Surfcoast highway)

REGISTRATIONS CLOSE FRIDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER



BE A PART OF THIS DEADLY TEAM



UPCOMING EVENTS

Use the code below
when signing up to
get free registration!

DAADC0D7

JOIN THE FUN!

Wathaurong After School Auskick

Northern Bay Peacock Campus
6 Weeks of Fun Auskick Activities

Starting Tuesday 8th of August

4pm to 5pm



BUY BLAK

Bagoorrk Nigtj - (Women together)

Natalie Murphy, a proud Wadawurrung and Gunditjmara woman living on Wadawurrung country, shares her business with her nan Aunty Naomi Surtees, and her mum Kristi Watts. Bagoorrk Nigtj aims to share culture with community and showcases the knowledge and practices that have been passed down. Bagoorrk Nigtj create and sell woven items, earrings, emu skirts and clap sticks. Follow their instagram [@bagoorrk_nigtj](#)



Ntulye Art

Bri Pengarte Apma Hayes, a proud Arrernte woman living and working on Wadawurrung country. Bri has a strong passion for sharing culture with those around her and art is just one way to tell many stories. Creating artwork on canvas, prints, trinket trays, key rings, boxes and custom pieces. You can check out Bri's art on her instagram [@ntulye.art](#)



Galarra Creations

Milla, the young, creative lead behind Galarra Creations is a proud Taungurung woman, living on Wadawurrung country. Galarra means Spark in Taungurung language. Mila uses her love for Culture and passion for art to create beautiful cards for all occasions. She has also added reuseable wipes, wall hangings and scarfs to her business! Check out her page:

[@Galarra_creations](#)



WANT To SHOWCASE YOUR BLAK BUSINESS?

email us at comms@wathaurong.org.au with your details so we can support you!



Yes.

**Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative
supports the Voice to Parliament Referendum.**



WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE SUPPORTS FIRST NATIONS VOICE TO PARLIAMENT

We would like to first acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land, the Wadda Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging and their continuing connection to land, water, Spirit, and Country.

The Voice to Parliament Referendum came from the Uluru Statement from the Heart, which was an invitation to the Australian People. It was an invitation to walk with First Nations in a movement for a better future for all Australians.

Towards the end of this year, all Australians will have their say by voting in a referendum to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia through an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice enshrined in our Constitution.

All Australians have the right to vote on this matter in the referendum. We encourage everyone in the Community to be informed to make their own choice, and to have respect for different viewpoints and opinions from their own.

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative has spent time considering all the information available, held numerous Community consultations, and conducted a survey to gain an understanding of what Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Community members think about the Voice to Parliament. Through all our consultations, we have found that many of our Community members are in favour of the Voice to Parliament.

On behalf of the organisation and based on the feedback we have received from our Community, the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Board support the YES position in the Voice to Parliament Referendum. The Board believe that the Voice to Parliament will give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Communities a say in the laws and policies that affect us in our daily lives.

The Voice to Parliament enshrined in the Australian Constitution is not the end point for us – it is another step in the long journey that First Nations peoples have taken to be acknowledged, counted, and heard.

The referendum that was held in 1967 saw more than 90% of the population vote “Yes” to having Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people counted as part of the Australian population.

In 1967, we were counted. In 2023, we want our Voice to be heard.



COMMUNITY NOTICES

LAUNCH OF WESTERN DISTRICT ACCO COLLECTIVE (WDAC)

It is with great excitement that we launch Western District ACCO Collective (WDAC). WDAC formalises the long-standing solidarity and partnership of our Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), coming together to advocate for the self-determination of our rural and regional western Victoria Communities.

Our membership includes Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative, Budja Budja Aboriginal Co-operative, Dhauwurd Wurrung Elderly & Community Health Service, Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative, Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-operative, Kirrae Health Service, Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative, and Winda-Mara Aboriginal Co-operative. WDAC represents the largest regional Victorian Aboriginal population of 28% of Victoria's Aboriginal people, who live on 38% of Victoria's beautiful Country.

ACCOs are critical for Community and cultural strengthening. Our ACCOs all run specialist wraparound health and wellbeing support services for our families and Communities from pregnancy through to the Dreaming. Our services are run by Community, for Community. Our services include cultural and Community engagement, primary and allied health, social and emotional wellbeing and recovery, maternity services, early childhood, youth programs, family services, homelessness and housing, NDIS, and aged care services.

WDAC will be accountable to the self-determined needs and aspirations of our Western Districts' families, Communities and ACCOs, with the backing of and funding from our government and regional partners. WDAC will:

- Be a powerful voice advocating at regional, state and national forums for our families, Communities and ACCOs.
- Use Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing to lead, design and facilitate the solutions to achieve equity and beyond for our Communities.
- Hold government and partners to account at local and regional levels, to ensure that all Aboriginal funding is self determined and led by Aboriginal families, Communities and ACCOs.
- Support whole of Community approaches to address the ongoing harm of systemic racism that disproportionately impacts Aboriginal Communities.
- Achieve ongoing, equitable and significant funding for our ACCO's infrastructure, workforce, Community strengthening, and services that we deliver 'our way'.

To contact the WDAC, please reach out to our current WDAC Chair, Simon Flagg, CEO Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative CEO (Simon.Flagg@wathaurong.org.au)

Quotes from the CEO's of WDAC's Member Organisations

WDAC is our western division's self-determination in action, changing the way we do business. We will call others to us and work on our own terms.

WDAC is a united group of Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations from across Victoria's Western District that advocate as a strong voice at the highest levels for our Communities' needs and aspirations.

WDAC will be a strong voice, advocating together for every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person in our region. We will test and push the government's obligation and agenda of self-determination.

We are an ACCO collective working together to give Community a voice to all levels of government and to support each other with one goal – to better serve Community by addressing, advocating and reforming current systems.

We want to lead the systems changes so that we can again be places of cultural and Community connection, with solutions that are led by us, for us.



L-R: Jason Walker (CEO, Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation), Karen Heap (CEO, Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative), Simon Flagg (Chair WDAC, CEO Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative), Tony Craig (CEO, Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative), Tamika Amos (CEO, Dhauwurd-Wurrung Elderly & Community Health Service).

Absent: Tim Chatfield (CEO, Budja Budja Aboriginal Cooperative), Danny Chatfield (Acting CEO, Gunditjmara Aboriginal Cooperative), Nonnie Harradine (CEO, Kirrae Health Service Inc).



COMMUNITY NOTICES

Geelong Indigenous Women's Hub



Managed by proud Palawa woman
Kylie from The Killara Foundation, it
is a one stop Hub to assist Indigenous
women of Djilang/Geelong.

Contact Kylie for more info
0499 286 221

A safe space to have a
cuppa, a yarn and put
yourself first!



Level 1, Suite 14
Corio Village Shopping
Centre

Monthly Yarning Circle & Cultural Workshops!

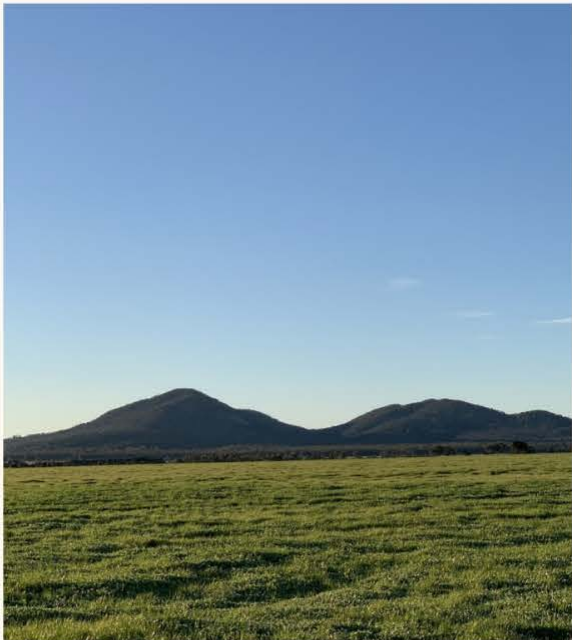
- Service Linking
- Wellbeing Focussed
- Computer Access
- Interview Skills
- Employment Pathways
- Resume Writing
- Career Planning
- Education Pathways
- Document Support
- Quiet Study Space
- Printing Facilities
- & MUCH MORE!!!!

COMMUNITY NOTICES



Our Sovereignty, Our Healing Project

Would you like to be involved in a project that aims to explore and develop the principles of co-design you consider important for the Wadawurrung community?



WHAT WOULD IT INVOLVE?

You would be asked engage in an interview lasting approximately 30 minutes with one of our researchers, Renee Fiolet

Interviews can be held at a place that suits you, or over the phone or online!



Scan this code to find out more about the project

Alternatively, you can email Renee at renee.fiolet@deakin.edu.au

Following the completion of the interview, you will be provided with a \$40 supermarket gift card

This study has received Deakin University ethics approval. Reference number: 2023-088

WURDI YOUANG

SAVING THE PLAINS-WANDERER FROM EXTINCTION

Wathaurong has teamed up with Werribee Zoo to help save the critically endangered Plains-wanderer (*Pedionomus torquatus*), a small ground-dwelling bird that was once common in southwest Victoria. Genetically, it is one of the most important birds in the world, with its ancestry likely dating back 60 million years to when Australia was joined to South America via the Antarctic land bridge. Unfortunately, despite surviving for that phenomenal time, just 200 years of European agricultural expansion, grazing, and urbanisation have devastated its habitat, leaving only about 500 remaining in the wild.

Werribee Zoo's critical repopulation efforts have involved releasing eight Plains-wanderers from their controlled breeding program to an undisclosed natural habitat in northern Victoria. Now, together with Wathaurong staff, the Zoo has strategically and discreetly positioned song meters at Wurdi Youang, our conservation restoration property in Little River, to record the acoustic landscape and potentially identify the Plains-wanderer's call. This proud collaboration aims to secure the future of this ancient and incredible bird.

MEET THE PLAINS-WANDERER

Ideal habitat



The Plains-Wanderer's preferred habitat is native grasslands and open plains with low vegetation, providing easy foraging and hiding places from predators. These specific conditions have earned it the affectionate nickname "Goldilocks", as it thrives in habitats that are not too dense or too sparse, but are "just right". They forage for seeds and insects, and surprisingly can co-exist with light livestock grazing because this keeps the grasses and plants from becoming too dense.

Female Plains-wanderers



Noticeably larger and more vibrant than males, the female Plains-wanderer boasts chestnut-brown plumage with intricate black and white markings, aiding her camouflage in the grassy environment. Unconventionally, she may mate with more than one

male during mating season, leaving males to incubate and care for eggs and chicks while she seeks other mates.

Male Plains-wanderers



Smaller and less vibrant than his female counterpart, the male Plains-wanderer's sandy browns, greys, and whites blend

Lifecycle

Plains-wanderers may breed several times in a season and lay 1 to 5 eggs per clutch. They hatch within 23 days, reach independence within 2 months, and live up to 2 to 3 years, though survival in the wild depends on factors like habitat quality, food availability, and threats from predators such as eagles, hawks, owls, foxes and feral cats, especially during nesting and chick rearing



seamlessly into the environment. Like females, he has long legs that help him effectively navigate open plains. During breeding season, he plays a paramount role in parental duties by incubating eggs and caring for young chicks, teaching them survival skills for their nomadic lifestyle.

© All photos have been provided courtesy of Zoos Victoria

CHILD SAFE POLICY

Over the past eight years there have been a number of enquiries into the historical abuse of children whilst in the care of institutions. What these enquiries found was that the abuse of children was widespread throughout different types of institutions and all across the country. This abuse was particularly the case for vulnerable children, including Aboriginal children - who may have been separated from family and kin.

In order to stop abuse occurring, it is now an obligation for most agency's across Victoria to become Child SAFE, including Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative. This means having a more diligent approach in recruitment and management practices, reporting and investigating incidences of child abuse perpetrated by the agency's staff or volunteers, listening to clients and community more if they have a concern about their safety when receiving a service, and having a strong culture of zero tolerance of abuse of children and young people. Each and every Wathaurong staff member or volunteer, including Foster Carers, is expected to manage themselves in a way that is consistent with keeping children safe from harm. See below Wathaurong's formal Statement of Commitment and how community members or clients can express concerns for children's safety.

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative is committed to providing a safe and friendly environment for children and young people, and Wathaurong has zero tolerance for any form of abuse of children and young people, including sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, cultural abuse, and neglect.

Wathaurong is committed to ensuring all children engaged with its services are culturally safe, including children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with disabilities. Wathaurong believes in the right of a child to safety in their physical and online environments.

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative understands its obligations under the Commission for Children and Young People's Child Safe and Reportable Conduct schemes, as well as Victorian laws such as the Failure to Disclose offence and mandatory reporting obligations under the Children Youth and Families Act. Wathaurong will uphold these obligations in the best interest of Aboriginal children.

Wathaurong will make sure we include children and families in the decisions that affect them, and we understand how children's active participation in their care arrangements helps to prevent abuse – we will listen to children and young people and take their concerns seriously.

For more information about Wathaurong's obligations to keep children safe:

- <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/being-a-child-safe-organisation/the-child-safe-standards/>
- <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/>
- <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/failure-to-disclose-offence>
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (legislation.vic.gov.au)

All Wathaurong staff, office holders, contractors and volunteers are required to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with a Child Safe organisation, and failure to uphold these obligations may result in disciplinary action.

To make a confidential complaint, please contact Wathaurong's Complaints Officer at 52770044 or feedback@wathaurong.org.au.

CHILD SAFE POLICY



We are a safe organisation for children and young people. All children and young people have a right to be safe and feel safe all of the time.

If you don't feel safe, speak up, by talking to someone you trust, or making a complaint to us at feedback@wathaurong.org.au



**Wathaurong
Aboriginal
Co-operative is
committed to
providing a**

**CHILD
SAFE**
environment.

We have zero tolerance of any abuse or maltreatment of children. We are committed to ensuring children and young people are able to actively participate in decisions that affect their lives.

We understand our legal and moral obligations to treat any child safety concerns seriously. We report any allegations and wellbeing concerns to authorities.

Visit www.wathaurong.org.au/child-safety-commitment/ to learn more, or lodge a complaint by emailing feedback@wathaurong.org.au

ASSISTANCE & EMERGENCY SERVICES

SERVICE	CONTACT
Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative is open from Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm for support with a range of services.	(03) 5277 0044
If you need help in an emergency, contact Ambulance, Police, Fire Brigade	000
The After Hours National Home Doctor Service provides non-emergency medical assistance.	13 SICK (13 7425)
If you need legal advice or support, get in touch with the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service .	1800 064 865
The Orange Door can provide family violence support from 9am-5pm Monday to Friday. Outside these hours, contact Safe Steps for support, referrals and refuge 24/7.	1800 312 820 1800 015 188
For Drug & Alcohol advice, call the DirectLine 24 Hour referral service.	1800 888 236
For situations requiring police support or advice, call Geelong Police .	(03) 5225 3100
Are you seeking emergency accommodation? Call Salvo Connect (Homeless support provider for over 25s) for advice on housing and welfare support.	(03) 5223 9220
Barwon Youth (Homeless support provider for 24 and under) can help young people with accommodation and welfare support	(03) 5246 7500
Feed Me Geelong/Bellarine can provide support with free essential grocery deliveries.	0422 798 791
Uniting Care and Salvo Connect can help with providing food vouchers.	(03) 4210 1110 (03) 5223 5400
Yarning Safe N Strong is a culturally safe 24/7 confidential crisis line managed by VAHS.	1800 959 563
Brother to Brother is a 24/7 confidential support service specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men run by Dardi Munwarro .	1800 435 799
Lifeline is a 24/7 crisis support service. Calls to Lifeline from a mobile phone (whether pre-paid or plan) are free. Calls from a landline or home phone are charged as a local call	13 11 14
The Suicide Call Back Line is a 24/7 service that provides free telephone, video and online counselling for anyone 15 years and older affected by suicide	1300 659 467
Beyond Blue offers a 24/7 service providing mental health advice and support via phone,web chat or email.	1300 094 187
Kids Helpline offers 24/7 mental health support for young people aged 5-25.	1800 55 1800
Barwon Health Mental Health Triage offers 24/7 support for phone advice, referrals and intake.	1300 094 187