

# Caracaramigen House

## The Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place

Community Yarn  
Edition Four

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Donate here:

<https://caracaramigen-house.raisely.com/>



4 Miller Street, Colac - Gulidjan Country



Give us a like and follow us on Facebook  
@colacaboriginalgatheringplace



and look for our new Instagram page Colac  
Aboriginal Gathering Place





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What a roller coaster of emotions it's been here in the second half of 2023, The referendum outcome a resounding but unsurprising NO. Nationally 60% of the population voted against us, locally that number was higher at 67%. This referendum has seen some abhorrent rhetoric that's been flying at Mob - we will not and do not stand for this narrative and behaviour in our workplaces, schools and community spaces and will continue to speak up and stand up for what is honest and just. I'd like to give a special thanks to those community members who helped sticker flyers and/or letterboxed, we covered some significant ground across the Colac Otway, Surf coast and Corangamite areas.

We did also see many Allie's step into conversations, engaging with the Yes Campaign, we acknowledge that some of this work was very uncomfortable and challenging and we thank you for stepping up and playing your part!

Not only does the notion of the Reconciliation seem more exhausting than ever before, but the broader progressive agenda has also been set back decades, this will have devastating real-world consequences for our communities. It has been heartbreaking, but we are a resilient people - it's just about rallying round and refocusing our energy - we knew we lived in a NO landscape long before the 14th of October, it's what we do from here that counts.

And what we will do is continue - continue to do the deadly work we do week in week out, continue to support and advocate in the best interests of our community. Keep creating deadly ways to connect with one another through kinship and culture, we'll continue to champion deadly mob doing deadly things; and keep pushing for a permanent home for the Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place.

The tail end of the year has been full we were able to take the Aboriginal Youth Chip Chats out on Country and also separately take Staff out on cultural strengthening and understanding with a deep dive into reflective practice training taking place including 7 nights of on Country camp, platypi scouting - glow worm hunting, weaving, painting workshops and some time for a quiet reflection in Otways, we are truly blessed to be able to work and practice in this community and in this landscape.

We hope to see you at our Christmas Gathering on December 8th and pang - ngooteekeeya weeng malangeepa - ngeeye 'remembering our future' event on January 26th; both taking place in our backyard!



Ebony Hickey—Gulidjan Woman  
Caracaramigen House Co-Ordinator + Community Development Officer  
for Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op [Ebony.Hickey@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:Ebony.Hickey@wathaurong.org.au)







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This is my Third year at the Colac Gathering place and reflecting on the journey thus far, it's been amazing. There is still a lot of things to learn and that are new to me. but to have the opportunity to be working at Caracaramigen House opens up new doors for learning every day.

This year as part of NAIDOC week we created some crew neck jumpers, although we're heading into summer now - we've got a limited number left available. Drop in to see me to get yours before they sell out.



In July, I was able to attend Tiverton alongside Eastern Maar a Quoll release was a very exciting experience, at first i was nervous that it may chew my fingers off but i was quick to realise that this kind of opportunity doesn't come up very often and i changed my mind and got to release one.



During September we had organized a week's worth of reflective cultural immersion in two component's, that included a day full of theory as a group and then off to Forrest for a Camp along with a Platypus tour, weaving with Ange Jeffery, the night was full of fun, seeing a platypus was definitely my highlight of the night, Eb's had made delicious meals of spaghetti Bolognese and Curried Sausages. It was great to be able to be on one 35 people that attended during the course of week and interesting to see 'training' in such an informal setting.

The Referendum results came in on the 15th of October and Unfortunately, the Outcome of the Referendum is one I was not hoping for. Trying to advocate the right thing and having open arms as we proudly said YES, was tough, in the Colac Otway area managed to get thousands of flyers out as we could, we delivered 25 yes cakes, that was as much as we could do, and although the stance came out as a resounding "NO" in the end. I stand loud and proud for the decisions we make within work environment here at the Gathering Place.

Over the last couple weeks, we have been extra busy getting ready for the Community Christmas party, don't forget to check out the flyer on the next page and make sure to register your kid's attendance. we would love to see you there.

Tanisha Clarke -Kirrae Whurrong  
Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place - Project Officer  
[Tanisha.Clarke@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:Tanisha.Clarke@wathaurong.org.au)



Colac Aboriginal Children & Family



**GATHERING**

Friday the 8th of December  
4pm - 5.30

Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place  
4 Miller Street, Colac.

Children MUST be registered by November 28th  
to receive a present: please register here:

<https://forms.office.com/r/jMftiwQijw>

This is a drug & alcohol free event





# SHOP LOCAL THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Pop into the Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place and have a look at what's available! Postage available!

THE COLAC ABORIGINAL  
GATHERING PLACE CANDLES \$45

5 pack cards \$15



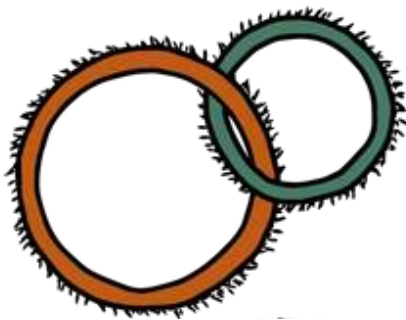
jewellery kits \$49

THE COLAC ABORIGINAL  
GATHERING PLACE CREWS \$70



earrings from \$119

COOLAMONS  
\$40 - \$110



**ANGEJEFFERY.COM**

*Mark Ferrari*

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now available at the  
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Gathering Place, 4 Miller  
Street, Colac.



*Baiyami Art*

*"Original Artworks" "Digital Artworks"*

*"Prints Available" "Corporate Design"*

*"Commissions" "Large (60cm+) projects"*

*Contact*

*Email: Baiyami.art@gmail.com Mobile: 0459973054*

*Website and Social media pages coming soon*

*Contemporary Aboriginal Art*

*Be Grand Black*





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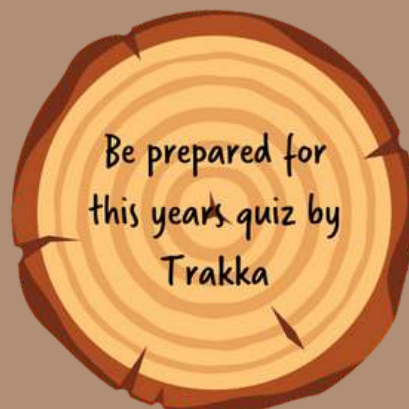
pang - ngooteekeya weeng  
malangeepa - ngeeye  
'remembering our future'

**JANUARY 26TH 2024**

11am - 1pm Caracaramigen House  
The Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place  
4 Miller Street, Gulidjan meerreeng, Colac

**Likeminded people welcome!**

**ZERO TOLERANCE FOR RACISM & VIOLENCE : DRUG & ALCOHOL FREE EVENT**







## NAIDOC Exhibition 2023

Caracaramigen In the Skies 2023 'takeover' felt like the dream or vision come true this year. The space was transformed by the brave and ambitious (visionary) curatorial/aesthetic genius of Ebony Hickey. It brought together work by local artists and makers Gerard Black, Ange Jeffery, Jay Hickey, Mark Ferrari, Nikki Whitfeild, Amanda Stanley, Ebony Hickey and children from the community. Their work was exhibited amongst a retail space dedicated to First Nations musicians, authors and creatives from the broader community and beyond.

Since opening in 2020 In the Skies has held a NAIDOC exhibition each year. The first was dedicated to the poem 'Gunditj Lorne' by Yangamatta John Clarke. This poem won the 2021 Christos Poetry Prize and as way to further engage the Lorne community in its meaning, we replicated a giant version of the poem onto the gallery wall and invited people to sit and engage (where possible amidst COVID lockdowns). With permission from its author, special printed versions of the poem were distributed to the community in exchange for a donation to Caracaramigen. Due to the socially distanced context of this time, a digital version of the poem was also created to engage people, using photographs taken by the Lorne community. This project was facilitated online via the infamous local community Facebook page - which is followed by over 10,000 people.

The following year, out of lockdown we were honoured to host locally based and raised Worimi artist Gerard Black's debut solo exhibition 'Yuwutung' (Journey). Gerard Black was introduced to us by Ebony Hickey and the exhibition included a joyous in person opening and NAIDOC community gathering hosted by Caracaramigen. Gerard Black's exhibition was extremely well received and very near sold out.







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Which brings us to this year's 'takeover'. The unjust irony of First Nations 'takeovers' on their own land is not lost on us. So to say it felt like a dream or vision come true, is to say it for two reasons: one, we know Caracaramigen is in the process of trying to secure a permanent space in Colac - a space that would include a gallery and retail shop very similar to the one created at In the Skies this year - and so in this sense the takeover was like a prototype of a literal dream and vision. The second reason is because the point of creating In the Skies in the first place was fundamentally to attempt to hold space (and literally get a hold of / occupy space in Lorne) for local decolonisation projects, and to operate in a way that respects First Nations sovereignty and struggles for rights, justice and self-determination.



This year's Caracaramigen takeover was a glimpse of this somewhat abstract/theoretical dream and vision actually being enacted. However, it is certainly the tip of the iceberg - skies are the limit (pun intended) - and we cannot wait to see where these collaborations with Caracaramigen take us.

Anna McIlldowie, founder of In the Skies Art & Music

# IN THE SKIES ART & MUSIC





## Health Response to First Nations Family Violence

Barwon Health's Aboriginal Health team and Barwon SouthWest Dhelk Dja, have created a new e-Learning module for hospital staff.

Called 'A Health Response to First Nations Family Violence' the online course helps health workers in mainstream to understand and respond to First Nations patients experiencing family violence. Through sensitive questions and knowledge about referral options, hospital staff will learn to be more aware of issues that may be impacting Community Members who use Emergency departments and other health services. Hopefully the training will help make it easier for the mob to get Family Violence services from hospitals and health services while they are there.

The course was officially launched in October by Dhelk Dja and includes lots of photos provided by Community Members.







## Service Support Team Koori Education - Barwon



We are all part of the Service Support team, working for the Department of Education, in the Barwon Area office. The Barwon Area covers three Countries, Wadawurrung Country, along with Gulidjan and Gadubanud Countries of the Eastern Maar Nation. Our team consists of nine members from the Koorie Education Workforce, each of us belonging to many different Countries across the continent. The remaining 4 members work alongside us to achieve greater outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students within the Barwon Area.

An integral piece of our professional learning involves on Country, cultural experiences where we all learn experientially together. For us, it is about deep listening to increase our knowledge and deep connection to strengthen our spirits.

On this occasion, towards the end of June, the Service Support team gathered on the beach out the front of the Mantra hotel where we were welcomed to the beautiful lands. We then walked along the coastline to the ledge above the rock pools where member of Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, Brodey, told us stories of the sea water country and surrounding forest country. We listened deeply and the learning was profound.







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Connection occurred at the deepest level when we were welcomed into the quaint little gallery beside Erskine River.

We gathered around the table at 'In the Skies Art and Music' and heard from local artist, Gerard Black. Gerard had created the initial stages of a collaborative piece of art that would represent every single one of us. We painted and we yarned, we listened, and we connected. The final piece illustrates who we are as individuals, and who we are together. The most powerful experience was sharing our personal contribution to the piece, opening our minds and hearts to one another. The connection was genuine and moving.

The next part of our professional learning occurred the next morning when we met at Lake Elizabeth. We were again welcomed to the beautiful lands by Ebony Hickey. Ebony generously shared stories from the area that had been passed down by her ancestors and elders. We listened to the story of Yal Yarra's Gadubanud before we set off in small groups to walk the track to Lake Elizabeth. Once there, we were captivated by the sheer beauty of the lake and surrounding forest, we were mesmerised by the peace and tranquility we felt, and we were entertained by the lone platypus playing in the fresh waters of Lake Elizabeth.

At the end of our very special on Country professional learning experience we were gifted with our very own copy of Yal Yarra's Gadubanud to treasure and share with the young people in our lives.

We are so grateful to Ebony Hickey and all the people involved that contributed to our experience. The feedback from all members of the Service Support team was overwhelmingly positive and is something that will stay with us. We all gained new knowledge and have strengthened our connections with one another, which in turn, has had a positive impact on the way we work with one another to support and improve outcomes for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the Barwon Area. A truly inspiring experience for all.







# TREATY FOR VICTORIA

Hello! My name is Bri Apma Hayes, I am a proud Arrernte woman born and raised on the lands of the Waddawurrung people. In my role I will engage with community around me to help all mob understand the Treaty process and why it is important for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Victoria.

I am keen to yarn with community and make a time to have a conversation about this process and how you can be involved in the Treaty journey.

<https://calendly.com/briapmahayesfpav/30min?month=2023-11>



Have a read of our latest Annual Report to check out all the incredible things mob across Victoria have been up to.

When it comes to Aboriginal communities, cultures and caring for Country, Aboriginal people are the experts. That's why Treaty is putting decision-making power back into Aboriginal hands.

It's been a big year, but you mob have made it all possible!

Have a read here:  
<https://www.firstpeoplesvic.org/news/our-2023-annual-report-is-here/>





## Winchelsea Art Show

Yorta Yorta/Baraparapa/Wiradjuri artist Aunty Dr Jenny Murray-Jones shared deeply personal reflections and insights in conversation with Arts Officer Harriet Gaffney as part of Surf Coast Shire Council's NAIDOC Week event at Winchelsea Shire Hall. The presentation accompanied the opening of Aunty Jenny's exhibition at the hall titled *For Our Elders: Beyond the Voids in Colonial History*.

The exhibition has been widely celebrated and about 60 people attended the event, with more than 80 others visiting the artist and exhibition in the days following.

Aunty Jenny's works, which had previously been shown in Anglesea, were this time accompanied by the discussion which focused on the research she has done into the experience of her paternal grandmother and father, both of whom were 'Stolen' under the Aboriginal Protection Act of 1915.



They were "trained as domestics and farm hands" before being forced into servitude with white families. Like most Aboriginal people at that time, neither was ever paid for the years of work they did - nor were they able to see their families ever again.

This significant truth telling event has sparked considerable conversation in Winchelsea and has seen the formation of a Winchelsea Votes Yes group as well. The event opened with a Welcome to Country by Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation. Aunty Jenny was in residence with the exhibition across the weekend and reported that many people who attended the In Conversation event returned, bringing family and friends.

Surf Coast Shire Council hopes this will be the first of many events at Winchelsea to acknowledge and involve the region's First Nations community.



Rochelle Smith (she/her)  
First Nations Engagement Advisor







## Barwon LAECG Update

It is with mixed emotions that we announce that after a long history in supporting within the education space in Geelong, Aunty May Owen and Kate Campbell have resigned Barwon LAECG co-chairs.

Barwon LAECG would like to extend a huge thank you to Aunty May Owen for over 15 years of service as Barwon LAECG Chair alongside Kate Campbell who has supported in the co-chair position for the last 8 years.

"We have always seen it as a privilege to represent and serve the community in the education space. All of our girls and grandchildren are in the school system. We think about it, we read about it and we talk about it. As members of the community, we won't ever step out of this system, we will now be able to attend LAECG as grandmothers."- Aunty May Owen & Kate Campbell

Introducing the new Barwon LAECG Co-Chairs; Bri Apma Hayes & Lily Edwards.

Bri is a proud Arrernte woman, born and raised on Wathaurong Country. Bri works for the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria as a community engagement officer.

Bri has worked as a Koorie Education Support Worker and is passionate about cultural safety, education and supporting young mob in the education system.

Bri is excited to begin this new role and help support the community in this space alongside co-chair Lily Edwards.

Lily is a Palawa woman who has lived in Geelong for close to 5 years. She has 3 young children, with her oldest entering prep in 2024. Lily works for Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative as the Youth Hub project officer. She is passionate about young people being supported to have every opportunity to thrive and succeed.

Lily is excited to enter the co-chair role alongside Bri who has experience in being both a student and staff member in the local school system.

"We are so excited to step into this space and continue on the amazing work of Aunty May & Kate. We have big shoes to fill but we will put our heart and soul into making sure we do it to our best potential."

Lily and Bri can be contacted via email at [geelonglaecg@gmail.com](mailto:geelonglaecg@gmail.com) and you can follow the new Facebook page: Barwon LAECG







# The Reading Corner

## Two Mates by Melanie Prewett

The true story of two young boys and their special mate ship growing up in Broome in Australia's far north.

Jack and Raf fish for salmon, hunt for barni and dress up as superhero's as they explore their coastal home and prove that friendship has no boundaries.



## My People by Eddie Betts

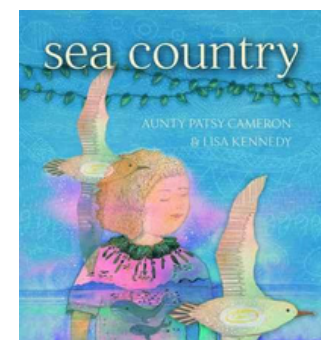
Eddie Betts is one of Australia's most well-known Aboriginal AFL players. Following the success of his first book, MY KIND.

Eddie aims to educate young Australians on Aboriginal Culture which has a unique history dating back more than 60,000 years.

## Welcome to Country by Aunty Joy Murphy and Lisa Kennedy

Welcome to the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri People. We are part of this land, and the land is part of us. This is where we come from.

Aboriginal communities across Australia have boundaries that are defined by mountain ranges and waterways.

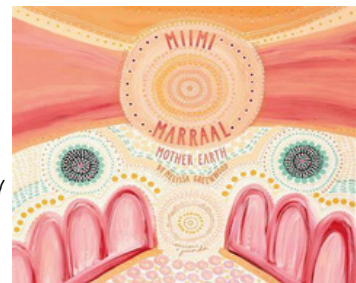


## Sea Country by Aunty Patsy Cameron and Lisa Kennedy

In this delightful children's picture book, Aunty Patsy Cameron generously shares the stories and traditions from her family's seasonal island life in Tasmania. With evocative text and stunning illustrations, Sea Country lets the reader know when to pick ripe wild cherries, when the moon (mutton) birds fly home and how the nautilus shells smell like the deepest oceans.

## Mother Earth by Melissa Greenwood

Miimi Marraal, Mother Earth is a lyrical blessing to read to your baby. One that promises them they will always be loved and that they have a place on this land among its people and animals. One that gently reminds them of their responsibilities and assures them they will never be alone.



## Sharing by Aunty Fay Muir & Sue Lawson.

A tender, thoughtful story with a gentle reminder of all the ways sharing makes us stronger. Sharing is book three in the award-winning Our Place series (Respect 2020, Family 2020) that introduces children to First Nations philosophies that are dear to Aunty Fay's heart. Each book is a powerful educational tool, with exquisite illustrations.





## Denise Charles

Aunty Denise has been helping facilitate 'Chip Chats' for Aboriginal children attending state schools in the Colac region. If you have an Aboriginal child that would like to participate please contact Aunty Denise via email at [Denise.Charles@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:Denise.Charles@education.vic.gov.au)

## ENROL YOUR CHILD TODAY, IT'S FREE!

At kindergarten, your child will make new friends, enjoy fun activities and get ready for school.

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

Kindergarten programs have a qualified teacher and run for 15 hours per week.

All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who turn 3 or 4 years old by 30 April, can attend kindergarten for 15 hours per week for free through the Early Start Kindergarten grant.

Wayipungitj (supports) is my new program name, but I am the Koorie Preschool Advisor at Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative.

My role is to support kindergarten staff with embedding Aboriginal perspectives, and well as providing culturally safe and inclusive spaces for our community. Also here to support any families with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with enrolling and engaging in kindergartens. I can be contacted by kindergartens who would like support with embedding culture, or families who would like any questions answered around the kindergarten space or would like me to contact their kindergarten and support them with cultural inclusion.

I am new to the Colac space so sing out and say hello if you think I can help.

**Hayley Boehm**  
Yorta Yorta



Mobile: 0327820750

Email:

[Hayley.Boehm@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:Hayley.Boehm@wathaurong.org.au)

## Koorie Kids Shine at Kindergarten

**15 hours a week FREE kindergarten  
is available for your child.**





## GOT UNPAID FINES?

You might be eligible for the Work and Development Permit scheme (WDP).

The Work and Development permit scheme (WDP) provides a non-financial way for people to clear their unpaid fines, with the support of a sponsor organisation.

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative is an accredited sponsor under the WDP. By engaging in eligible programs & services with Wathaurong, you could reduce or clear your fine debt.

### AM I ELIGIBLE?

You are eligible for a WDP if you:

- have a mental or intellectual disability, disorder or illness
- have an addiction to drugs, alcohol or a volatile substance
- are experiencing homelessness
- are a victim of family violence
- are experiencing acute financial hardships



### WORK OFF RATES

Activities that you can undertake as part of a WDP and the rates that you can pay off fines include:

**\$49.57  
per hour**

- unpaid work
- courses - including educational, vocational or life skills courses
- counselling, including financial counselling
- mentoring (if you are under 25 years of age)

**\$1,090.45  
per month**

- treatment by a doctor, nurse or psychologist
- drug or alcohol counselling



Currently recruiting Aboriginal volunteers to be part of the local ACJP panel in the Surf Coast and Colac Otway area.

What is ACJP? Aboriginal Community Justice Panels is a 24/7 face to face welfare service offered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that have been taken into custody throughout Victoria to ensure their welfare and safety. ACJP was established in 1988 in response to the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

We are currently looking for local community members in the Surf coast and Colac Otway region to be part of the on-call volunteers for the local ACJP Program.

Volunteer requirements

- Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander
- Current Victorian Driver's License
- Hold a current working with children's check
- are Covid 19 vaccinated.

For more information or to express your interest please contact Chris Harrison the ACJP Statewide Chairperson via email [charrison@vals.org.au](mailto:charrison@vals.org.au) or Wathaurong Co-op via email [ACJP@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:ACJP@wathaurong.org.au)



For more information on the WDP Program please contact Blake Natoli via email [Blake.Natoli@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:Blake.Natoli@wathaurong.org.au) or by phone on 0429 137 912



The Voice referendum is being held later this year.  
Get informed at [Voice.gov.au](https://voice.gov.au)



Get informed.  
[Voice.gov.au](https://voice.gov.au)



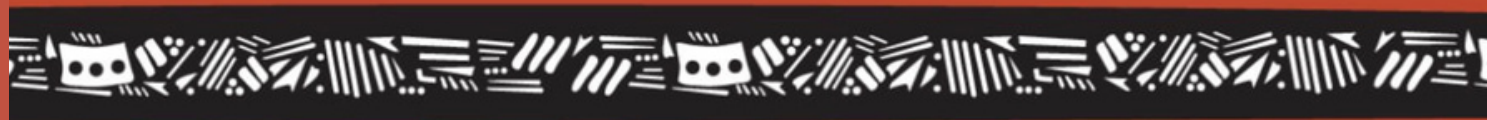




# GETTING A HEALTH (CHECK IS A DEADLY CHOICE



**SCORE A DEADLY T-SHIRT WHEN YOU GO TO YOUR HEALTH ASSESSMENT  
CALL 5277 0044 NOW!**



Wathaurong Health Service Visits Colac  
Headspace on a Monday  
to book call 5277 0044