

Newsletter

ISSUE 1, JUNE 2017



Message from the CEO Marcus Stewart

Dear TCAC Members and
other interested persons,

It's been a while since the last TCAC newsletter – indeed, too long – but I want to keep you all informed about what is happening and it is my intention to get newsletters out periodically in future.

Actually, they will be e-newsletters, posted on the TCAC website and sent by email – but not generally mailed in hard copy unless requested.

It is now nearly a year since I commenced in the role of TCAC CEO and I am greatly enjoying the challenge of building the capacity of the organization in order to build a strong foundation for the future for all our mob.

TCAC only exists for the benefit of the people of the Taungurung nation and all our efforts are designed to serve their interests, create opportunities and celebrate our language and culture.

Many things have been achieved or are underway. Late last year we launched the new TCAC Strategic Plan.

There's only one page of it, but it is the blueprint for everything we do – Supporting Our Mob, Progressing Our Interests, Growing Our Business and Implementing Our Agreement.

Examples of what we're doing in relation to each of those four objectives are as follows:

We've got the first in a series of language and culture camps happening at Camp Jungai the first weekend in July and it will be a great way to support our mob.

We're doing important work managing our cultural heritage and caring for our Country, as well as undertaking effective advocacy with government – all of which progresses our interests.

We're working with Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) to develop an Economic Development Plan, involving some exciting business initiatives – growing our business. (Watch this space)

We're involved in supporting the negotiations with the State Government that will hopefully produce a Recognition and Settlement Agreement before Christmas. The implementation of that Agreement will open some great new opportunities for our mob.

This newsletter provides a snapshot of some of the TCAC activities and you will see that our little TCAC staff team is punching above its weight!

NRM news from Shane Monk

Cool Burn – May 2017

In mid-May, I was part of a cool burn that took place at Euroa Arboretum where they have been practicing cool burns as a weed management technique for the past few years.

Cool burning is a practice that when done in the appropriate conditions ensures flames are low and burn slowly, preventing heat damage to smaller native shrubs and plants. It is a sustainable practice that should be used more regularly in land management. The cool burn was a success and approximately forty people from around the community were a part of it and also expressed how relaxing and easy the burn was to manage.

Yea Wetlands Native Garden

Over the past six months or so, Angela ten Buuren (TCAC), Gaye Sutherland (GBCMA), Karen Sutherland (Edible Eden Design), Yea Wetlands staff and I have been working on the design of the native garden at Yea Wetlands.

The garden is almost complete, with only a grassed area to be seeded. Twenty signs have been made and erected around the garden to provide descriptions of the various plants as well as their respective traditional uses.

While we were in the older section of the Yea Wetlands Native Garden, we discovered some tall tussocks grasses that looked like they were dying. I burnt them off and within two weeks there was 20cm of growth. Karen Sutherland has had many years' experience working with tussocks and has not seen burning to promote regrowth successfully before this time.

The garden has come up a real treat and will be used to as an educational tool, passing on knowledge about traditional uses of plants and

why they were important. Angela Ten Buuren will be talking about the garden during a Walk in the Wetlands on July 1st, 2017.



Above is a photo of a Coolamon taken from a River Red Gum in Lions Park, Seymour. I made it about two months before we did the Canoe tree. Since then I have put four Scars back into Taungurung Country.

If we do not continue this practice of putting culture back into the environment, we risk losing a big part of our culture. Once the trees I have scarred have died, this part of Taungurung culture will be lost forever.

Taungurung Ngula Mungan

Aunty Lee Healy



Taungurung Language Program has its own logo, 'Ganalina Ngula Dhumnji' which translates 'Guardian of Language and Education'. Huge thanks to Mick Harding for a beautiful piece of artwork.

Taungurung language program has been busy this year starting with the Taungurung Grammar Book finalised and is in publication and will be ready in the next couple weeks. The Early Years Learning kits that the Murrindindi Shire has produced for the schools on Taungurung country have been finalised and ready for the launch on the 4th July in NAIDOC week.

These kits consist of a resource book, cards with artwork and language plus a USB for the filming of language words and artwork. I would like to thank Mick Harding for the beautiful artwork and Murrindindi Shire's Sue Porter for bringing the kit together and allowing our language and culture to be heard and read in schools on country. We will continue to involve all other Shires within Taungurung country to do the same for the schools.

The Taungurung flora dictionary is coming along nicely, with photos, language names and cultural uses. The Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL) is publishing the Yarn Up booklet which holds Taungurung and English words. It will be only a couple of weeks away before the community can start learning everyday language words. Huge thanks to VACL for providing Taungurung community with this booklet.

There have also been a few projects including Kilmore art and signage walk trail with information on history, food and resources, tools and weapons. Kyneton Welcome to Country signage. Toolangi Sculpture Trail with artwork from various artists and the Toolangi Primary School performed one of our creation stories, The First Taungurung Women. It was a magical experience telling the story while the children with costumes performed a magnificent play. I am also building a resource area here at the office. The Taungwurrung Yulendj Centre.

This Centre will assist community in researching material, whether it be language or culture. The upcoming camp at Jungai at the start of NAIDOC Week is going to be a great weekend with lots of activities for adults and children. Cannot wait to see the mob who sent back RSVP, you will not be disappointed.

I would also like to thank the teachers and children at Buxton Primary School for allowing myself and Emma from VACL to attend the school.

The children had fun in drawing some pictures of different animals and recording some of the language words specific for our App. Our children will also have this opportunity at the language and cultural heritage camp in July.



Photo: Aunty Lee Healy teaching language to students from Alexandra Bush Kinder, 2017.



Taungurung Engagement Project

In 2016, TCAC submitted an expression of interest to Right People for Country (RPfC) for the Taungurung Engagement Project. The project will engage with Taungurung people in meetings to gain a rounded understanding of community aspirations not only for TCAC, but for Taungurung people as whole.

The project aims to develop strategies for TCAC to be more inclusive of Taungurung people – a key component of TCAC's Strategic Plan. RPfC's involvement ensures that the process will be independent of TCAC, guaranteeing confidentiality and accountability.

The reason for the project comes from discussions with Taungurung Traditional Owners, who believe that increasing engagement and communication with the broader Taungurung community is a necessary step in 'bringing the mob back'.

A series of Taungurung family meetings will take place and out of these consultations will be a report, prepared by RPfC. TCAC will develop a plan with RPfC that will work through issues raised by Taungurung people during consultations. The implementation of the plan will be carefully monitored to ensure that it properly reflects the desires of Taungurung people. It is hoped that the implementation of the plan will be in the first half of 2018.

Update your membership details

Have your contact details recently changed? If so, please email: membership@taugurung.com.au to make sure they are up to date!

Decision Making Guide

In March this year, TCAC began gathering project partners for a Taungurung Decision Making Guide (DMG) for all levels of governance within TCAC. The guide will be developed throughout the rest of 2017 and into 2018. The output of the project will be a DMG that is brief and user-friendly.

It could be seen as like a job description for various key players in corporate governance, but specifically related in the scope of their respective decision-making responsibilities. The DMG will consist of four documents: a guide for members, a guide for the Board members, a guide for the CEO, and a guide for the Chair.

The DMG will be designed to be an accessible resource that can be used for corporations/organisations like TCAC. The need for the DMG is based on issues of confusion about decision making within Aboriginal corporations and the necessity of guidelines to prevent future governance problems.

These guides will be presented in different media – not only a printed document, but also with audio-visual and mobile applications. In addition, there will be documentation of the process of the DMG's development for the possible benefit of other organisations/corporations.

The development of the DMG will incorporate a consultation process with Taungurung families, ensuring open communication and engagement with TCAC as a corporation that exists for the benefit of the Taungurung people. The consultations will be a part of the developing Taungurung Engagement Project (TEP) (see separate report in this newsletter).

New staff

Francisco Almeida



Francisco began his career as a professional archaeologist in 1992, in Lisbon, Portugal. He practiced archaeology in Portugal for many years before arriving in Australia in 2011 to work as the Manager of the Hume Heritage Programs – Aboriginal Victoria. In his own words:

‘I thus still consider myself a newcomer and, for that matter, a baby in what concerns knowledge about Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Traditions. I am a fast and passionate learner, though, and I can honestly say that during the last six years I have learned more about archaeology and anthropology directly from Traditional Owner groups and Elders from several parts of Victoria, than in those 19 years of academia, books, publications, and other “scientific” jargon.

My main tasks as Cultural Heritage Projects Manager are to ensure that TCAC fulfils its responsibilities under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, and to develop Capacity Building Training Workshops open to all Taungurung members, where I can share some of my knowledge, bring people to share theirs, and learn, learn, and learn from Taungurung People who are willing to guide me in my job.’

NAIDOC Week (2-9 July 2017)

Angela ten Buuren

This year’s theme for NAIDOC Week is *“Language Matters”*.

Goulburn Broken (GBMCA) are supporting me in a “Walk & Talk” in the Wetlands, and Cassie Leatham will be doing two children’s workshops for the School Holiday program, for NAIDOC Week.

On the walk, I will discuss the Native Plants within a certain area of the Wetlands and their uses for Taungurung. There is also the new garden, Badji Baanang pronounced ba-dji-baa-nang, which means “Oasis” in Taungurung language.

Within the new garden our Linguist Lee Healy has provided the Taungurung word for each plant. The new signs have the Indigenous use written on them. In time, and with more money, the Wetlands hope to have the whole gardens with signs on each plant.

This new garden area is an amazing addition to the Wetlands, it is so worth a Sunday drive to check it out. This area was the first stage of the project. In the near future, a timber fence will be erected and the story of Bundjil and Waang will be put onto the fence, in the form of art work and signage. Exciting times ahead.

In the shop area, I will do a display of many cultural objects, tools, baskets, fish trap, our dictionary and so much more. Cassie Leatham and Shane have contributed things for the display that I will set up, each item will be labelled with the Taungurung word for it (where possible). I have tried to use just Taungurung artefacts, but it was impossible. Hopefully in time we will have more Taungurung artefacts.

The afternoon walk will conclude with a “Taste of Taungurung” afternoon tea, where I will use Bush Tucker ingredients to make biscuits and cakes and a Lemon Myrtle tea.

On Wednesday 5th July Cassie Leatham will hold two School holiday workshops, in which the children will make bush animals from natural materials found and collected within the Wetlands.

You do need to book into these sessions look on the Y Water site (YWDC) for details.



Woven eel trap made by Aunty Lee Healy and her mother, Aunty Joyce Moate (Patterson).



*Tanderrum 2016
(Photo: James Henry).*

2017 Tanderrum

Angela ten Buuren

Once again plans are underway for Tanderrum, 2017.

Tanderrum is a ceremony by the five Kulin nations to open the Melbourne Festival. Local and International artists are welcomed and given permission to perform on country in a shared celebration of our rich cultural traditions.

We have eight singers, six male dancers and ten female dancers, two elders and myself. A total of 27 Taungurung members. There are many new faces this year, but some have been a part of Tanderrum for four years and some longer than that.

This year has seen the singers produce a new song. Mick Harding is our head song person this year, and with the help from our linguist Lee Healy, and Lou Bennett a song women from Dja Dja Wurrung, who helps fine tune the song with us. Lou also shares her culture with us.

Our Totem song will be the Bundjil Creation Story. Next Weekend will be the first time we will be putting the song and dance together at a weekend Camp at Common Ground in Seymour.

Cassie Leatham Fisher Patterson is our female dance lead and Mark ten Buuren is our male dance lead. They will choreograph the dance for us, so it should be a great weekend.

This event, Tanderrum is a very long process, from the first meeting until performance night is a 6-month period for the performers, and a slightly longer process for me.

It takes a lot of commitment from our mob. We not only produce a song and dance, but also make our own adornments, (skirts, belts, necklaces, arm bands) all from natural materials, it is an amazing process, where we not only learn culture we help each other, and we grow in strength for our culture along the way.

This year's performance date has not been confirmed yet, but it will be during the first week of October. The Tanderrum is held at Federation Square, it is a truly wonderful event, between the five Kulin nations. I would urge all our mob to come and support the Singers and Dancers and your own Mob.

Danderrum is Taungurung's word for Tanderrum. Exact date to follow later in year. Watch this space.

Update on Settlement Negotiations - Native Title Services Victoria (NTSV)

The negotiating team has continued to work with NTSV and TCAC to develop Taungurung's settlement position. A comprehensive offer was presented to the State in November 2016 seeking a financial settlement package. In April 2017, a further assessment of the compensation payable to Taungurung for extinguishment of native title rights was submitted to the State. This was the result of work undertaken by economic experts, SLM Corporate, advisors in the important recent decision of *Griffiths v Northern Territory of Australia* (No 3) [2016] FCA 900.

The negotiating team continues to work with NTSV and TCAC in developing Taungurung's position. While the State have yet to respond to Taungurung's offer, we will hold a full group update on 30 July and a full group meeting on 20 August to discuss the negotiation process since the last full group meeting. Meeting details will be mailed to Taungurung native title full group members in the next few weeks.



Taungurung Negotiation Team: (left to right) Dan Kelly (NTSV lawyer), Mick Harding, Angela ten Buuren, Bernadette Franklin (observer), Brad Letman, Patsy Smith (Marcus Stewart absent).

Wumindjika (Welcome) Weekend – Save the Date!

Angela ten Buuren invites you to the Wumindjika (Welcome) Weekend at the Yea Wetlands, November 11-12, 2017.

“On the Saturday night, there will be a Danderrum around the fire. One of our young ones, Zoe Cockerell, will to honour the Stolen Generations. Then our dancers and singers for Tanderrum this year will dance. I am hoping to get someone to tell a story that everyone could do some actions to after that as well.”

Calling all those who wish to contribute their time or culture over the weekend. Please email angela@tenbuuren.com.au or phone 0428 294 177 to get involved.

Achievements of Our Mob

Congratulations Kaely Kennedy

Congratulations to Kaely Kennedy, who has just completed a double undergraduate degree, a Bachelor in Emergency Health (Paramedics) and Nursing. On Graduation Day, Kaely proudly wore her Aboriginal sash. She was also very honoured to receive an award from the Paramedics Association of Australasia for the top student that completed the double degree in 2016 at all Monash Universities.

Congratulations Mick Harding

Congratulations to Mick Harding, who has recently graduated a Masters of Fine Arts from Federation University.

Congratulations Zoe Cockerell

Congratulations to Zoe Cockerell who won first place in the Acro Section of the Australian Dance Competition.

Thank you!

TCAC would like to thank Angela ten Buuren for her ongoing support in the creation of this e-newsletter and for her work in promoting Taungurung culture.

Got a good news story you want to share with the mob? Let us know at admin@taungurung.com.au