

HIGHLIGHTS OF ISSUE 33

- Women of GLaWAC
- Historic water win
- Bogong moth find a first
- Valley arts



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Joint update from the GLaWAC Board Chair and CEO

Dear Members and Friends,

We pay our respects to all that have been dealing with Sorry Business; our thoughts are with you.

Given that 2021 has just kicked off, I would like to emphasise as Chair that one of our goals is to continue to build authentic relationships with our community through long term positive engagement. The Board and Executive will not lose sight of the goals laid down by our Elders in the Whole of Country Plan. As such, we will continue to positively progress the collective aspirations against this plan to strengthen our voice, culture and natural resource management obligations and practice.

In this issue of the GLaWAC News, we have taken the opportunity to profile the women of GLaWAC. It is with enormous pride that we want to personally thank them for their leadership and influence whether they are our Elders Council, Board Directors, or staff. We look forward to more women being involved in GLaWAC and welcome you to join our Subcommittees or events throughout the year.

GLaWAC's membership database is always evolving. The Board receives requests for membership at most meetings, and thus our numbers are growing. Due diligence is ongoing as we review and update our membership list. We have found duplications and children listed on the database and really need your input to ensure your details are accurate and up to date. We will report up to date Membership numbers in our next GLaWAC news.

It is wonderful to see Gunaikurnai people getting more involved in the organisation at all levels; Board, Elders and as employees. Leadership skills that develop and nurture, cultural lore, corporate governance, and diversity of views and styles are critical for your organisation's long-term success. We encourage people to participate in leadership training and get involved at a board level, subcommittee level or apply for roles at GLaWAC when available.

GLaWAC has developed a strong engagement plan for 2021. This guides us on how who and what we engage in throughout the year. It involves you, our members, the broader community, and our partners to get community yarning together as we work towards self-determination and economic independence. We understand there are many matters that our Mob want to yarn about, and we will do our best in this Covid environment. We will also continue to use our social media and webpage to communicate matters with you.

COVID has presented some struggles for everyone and we are doing our best to look after our staff. We are proud that GLaWAC continues to successfully recruit new staff during Covid times.

The organisation is also working hard to develop a footprint in the Latrobe Valley. We understand that this is important to our members and is a strong strategic focus for 2021. We have plans for up to 20 employees from the Valley for this facility. We have also adjusted our corporate structure to enhance our Economic Development team and support Corporate Services in our growing organisation.

We look forward to community involvement in thinking and planning cultural fire and water management. We have gained funding to support this journey of raising Traditional Owner/custodians voice into how your Country is managed and how jobs for community can be developed to support this work.

The welcome rain is bringing life back to our Country, the bush is looking good, and we are finding wildlife re-emerging. The Bushfire Recovery crew have spotted potoroo and platypus amongst the images captured in their project work. The potoroo is an important species eating fungi from the base of eucalypt trees.

The research and building of knowledge our RAP team are leading is outstanding. It is available for community to continue to learn about and teach your rich history. The recent story regarding the Bogong moth research at Clogs Cave near Buchan is an outstanding example.

The Bush Café has been terrific in providing meals to our vulnerable community, and we thank them for their efforts. The funding for this project is winding up, but we will continue to work with the local health orgs to find ways to support our community.

We are also working hard to partner with other Aboriginal organisations to build strong, trusting and respectful relationships to project a formidable Aboriginal presence in Gippsland and statewide.

In closing, we are really proud of the stability and direction of the organisation and thank everyone for their efforts. We welcome ongoing healing and yarning regarding Native Title matters, Treaty and how to be more involved in managing your Country and cultural heritage. We welcome community feedback and look forward to your ongoing support of your organisation.

Warm regards, **TROY MCDONALD & ROGER FENWICK**

GKTOLMB Update

The Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board (GKTOLMB) continues to support GLaWAC, Parks Victoria and The Knob Reserve Committee of Management in their management of the 10 jointly managed parks and reserves within the Gunaikurnai RSA area. The Board has a majority of GLaWAC nominated members to ensure that Gunaikurnai voices are clearly heard in all Board discussions.

The Board was saddened but understanding when its Executive Officer, Damian Britnell, tendered his resignation for personal reasons late last year. Many GLaWAC members and staff would have met and worked with Damian over his six year term with the Board, and would have seen first hand his passion for recognition of Aboriginal culture and Aboriginal self-determination. The Board is in the process of recruiting a new Executive Officer and we hope to be able to make an announcement in the near future. In the meantime, our Project Officer, Rob Willersdorf, has accepted the Board's invitation to be its Acting Executive Officer.

The Board is about to renew its Corporate Plan for the next three years, an important task for any organisation. The Corporate Plan will refresh the Board's objectives and guide its activities to support joint management now that the Gunaikurnai Joint Management Plan is in an implementation phase.

Members of the Board were very pleased to hear at its last meeting that the GLaWAC Joint Management Ranger team is back at full strength, with a number of new Rangers joining their more experienced colleagues at GLaWAC. The Board welcomed the news that the Ranger team has two Gunaikurnai women members, and congratulates Cath Thomas' appointment as Ranger Team Leader.

We look forward to hearing about the successes of the entire JM Ranger team as they continue to work with their Parks Victoria partners in Caring for Country on the joint managed parks and further afield.

GLENYS WATTS

2021 Elders Council

GLaWAC would like to introduce your 2021 Elders Council, which includes four new members this year. Due to the 3rd Covid lockdown we've had to reschedule the first Elders Council meeting of the year. That also means we don't yet have a picture of the new-look Council so we'll be sure to include one in the next issue of GLAWAC News.

Aunty Lena Morris – Chair

Aunty Beryl Booth

Aunty Charmaine Singleton

Aunty Deanna Campbell

Aunty Diann Hurren

Aunty Fay Voss

Aunty Glenda Thorpe

Aunty Glenys Watts

Aunty Gwen Atkinson

Aunty Gwendoline McGregor

Aunty Julie Mongta

Aunty Lee-Anne Eddington

Aunty Marg Donnelly

Aunty Maria Harrison

Aunty Marianne Atkinson

Aunty Marjorie Thorpe

Aunty Noretta Knight

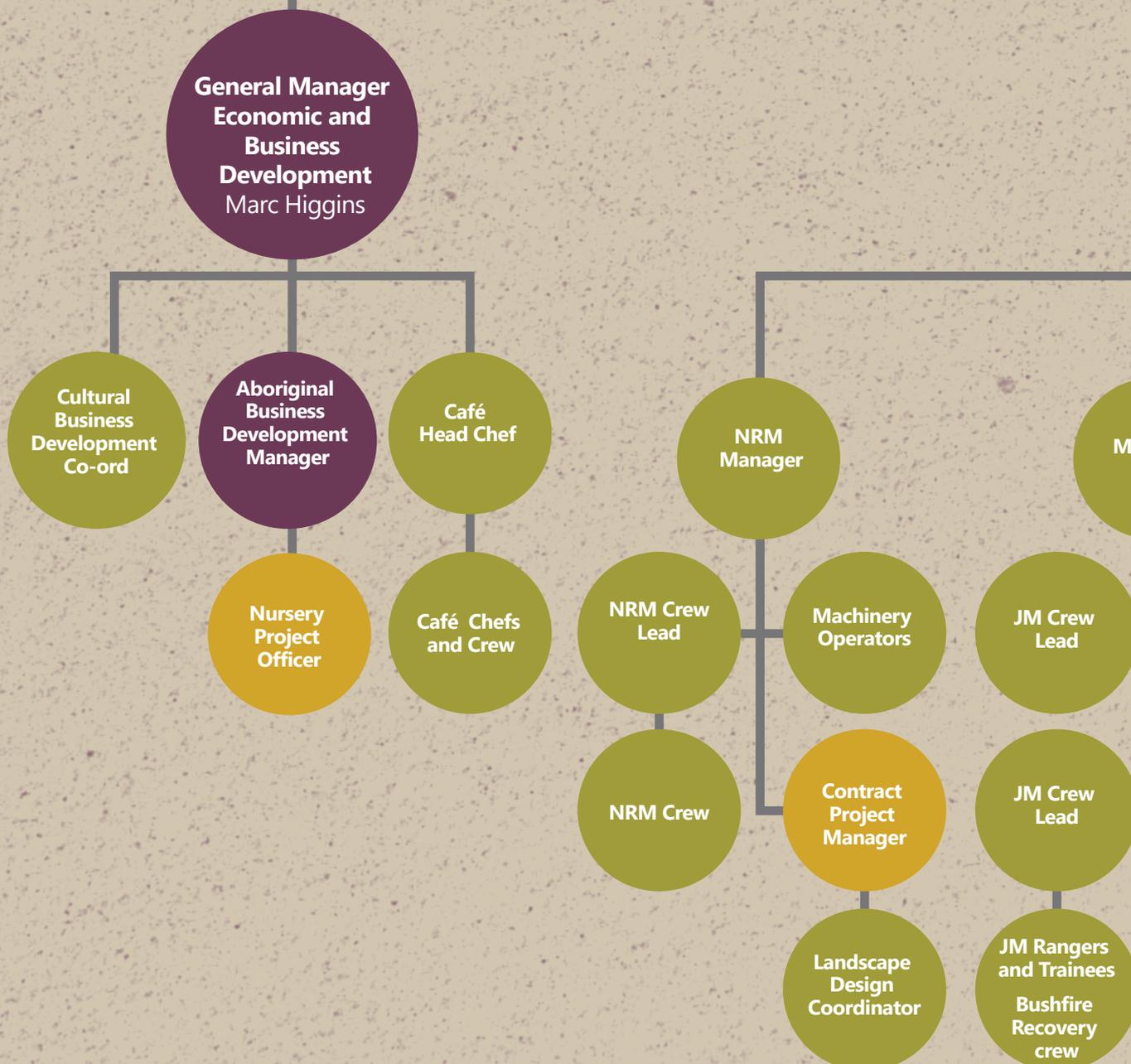
Aunty Olive Stevens

Aunty Shirley Foster

Uncle Russell Mullett

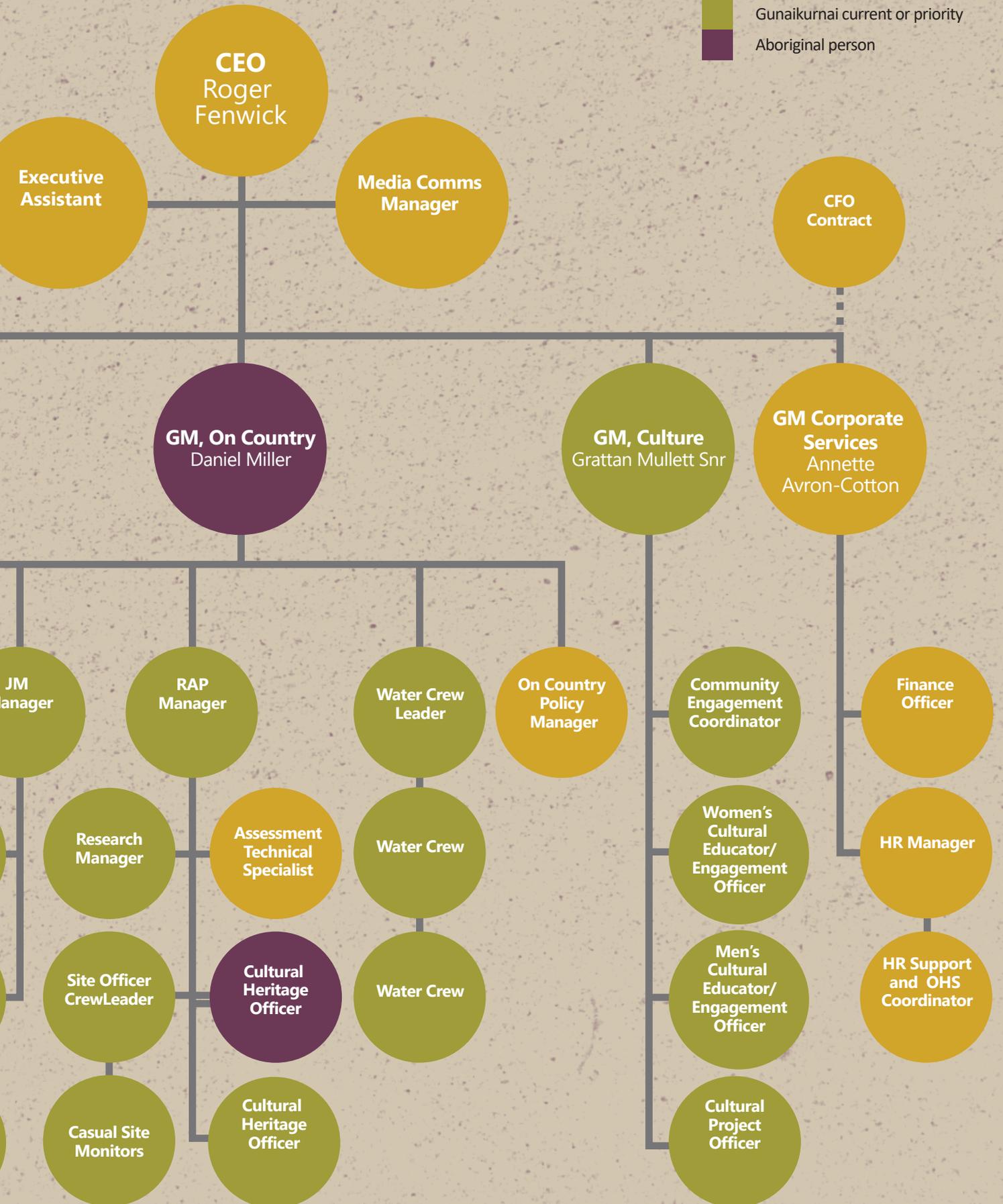
**On Country
Program Administrator**

Reception Admin



GLaWAC Organisational Chart

- Non Aboriginal person
- Gunaikurnai current or priority
- Aboriginal person



Our Community

Calendar of Events

GLaWAC is organising and/or supporting events during the year. Note these dates in your diary and keep checking out the website – www.gunaikurnai.org.au – and like our Facebook page for all the latest details.

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
MARCH		
Elders Council meeting	10-12 March	Forestec
Elders Council Treaty	10 March	Bairnsdale
Elders Council On Country outing	11 March	Buchan Caves
Archie Roach	12 March	Forge Theatre
NTCHSC	24 March	Forestec
EDSC	30 March	Forestec
APRIL		
School holidays	2-19 April	
ARFSC	6 April	Forestec
OCSC	13 April	Forestec
Board Meeting	20 April	Forestec
RSA/Community/Full Group Yarns	TBC	Forestec
GLaWAC Celebration	TBC	Latrobe Valley
MAY		
ARFSC	18 May	Forestec
EDSC	25 May	Forestec
NTCHSC	26 May	Forestec
National Sorry Day	26 May	
Anniversary of 1967 Referendum	27 May	
RSA Yarns	TBC	TBC
JUNE		
Mabo Day	3 June	
OCSC	8 June	Forestec
Board meeting	15 June	Forestec
Community / Full Group	TBC	TBC

NATIVE TITLE CULTURAL HERITAGE (NTCHSC)

Support the Board in a timely manner with recommendations and/or resolutions for Native Title and Cultural Heritage matters.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (EDSC)

Support the Board and management in the development and planning of economic opportunities.

AUDIT RISK & FINANCE (ARFSC)

Support the Board and management in the development, planning and implementation of financial and risk audits, policies and procedures.

OUR COUNTRY (OCSC)

Advise the board for on Country/ environmental policy development. (Note the GKTOLM Board deals with Joint Management matters.)

Bush Tucker recipe

Uncle Kevin's EASY LEMON MYRTLE BISCUITS

Ingredients:

- 125g Butter
- ½ cup white sugar
- ½ cup brown sugar lightly packed
- ½ teaspoon vanilla essence
- 1 egg
- 1 & ¾ cup self raising flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 flat tablespoon lemon myrtle flakes

Method:

1. Cream together the butter, sugar and salt
2. Slowly add in the egg and vanilla essence and mix thoroughly
3. Add in flour and lemon myrtle flakes
4. Once all ingredients are mixed through, empty out onto a lightly floured surface and roll into a log using glad wrap then refrigerate for approx. 15 minutes before rolling into small balls then placing them straight onto an oven tray.
5. Cook in oven @ 180 degrees till they're golden brown (but not burnt)

Biscuits will come out of the oven soft and will harden up once left to cool

If you would like to be a member of one of GLaWAC's subcommittees, please contact Kyla Di Fiore by emailing Kyla.DiFiore@glawac.com.au or phoning (03) 5152 5100.

Our Community

TAKING CARE OF CULTURE

- What is Cultural Heritage?
- What rights do Aboriginal People want regarding Cultural Heritage?
- How are Aboriginal People able to exercise these rights regarding Cultural Heritage currently?
- What stops Aboriginal People from exercising their rights?
- How well does the wider Victorian community understand Aboriginal Cultures?
- What is the vision for the future?

These are some of the questions that the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council are reflecting on as they prepare the "Taking Care of Culture" Discussion Paper which will then inform the State of Victoria's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Report 2016-2021.

The VAHC want to hear what you have to say, either by filling out their quick online survey or attending one of their online consultation sessions in March or April. For more information, visit www.aboriginalheritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/taking-care-culture or call GLAWAC reception on 5152 5100.



Who we are

"We are Gunaikurnai, the first people first people of our country. We have survived for tens of thousands of years, often against great adversity. We have looked after our Country and passed on stories and traditions through countless generations. We continue to survive and thrive, maintaining connection to our Country and to our ancestors"

- Gunaikurnai Whole of Country Plan.

GLaWAC respects the families and clans of the Gunaikurnai and your diverse views and knowledge regarding language; we represent everyone from all of these viewpoints.

We continue to yarn with families and support all who are the Traditional Owners of a large part of Gippsland - the Gunaikurnai. We will vigorously defend all of our mob in protecting your culture in a respectful and collaborative way.

If you align to one of the Gunaikurnai apical ancestors, we welcome and encourage you to join GLaWAC.



Check out this deadly flathead, caught by Albert Baxter out at Bung Yarnda. Thanks for sharing your pic, Albert.

Our Community

NAIDOC Week

The NAIDOC theme for this year was announced in January by the National NAIDOC Committee- Healing Country. It's the perfect theme for 2021 and our NAIDOC Committee has already started to plan events that can get community back out, connecting with Country.

Shout out to everyone right across Gippsland that contributed to the digital NAIDOC events that GLaWAC held last year. With the restrictions of Covid we had to think outside the square a bit and so the online Digital March was born. Deadly effort from Community sending in hundreds of photos and memories of past years NAIDOC celebrations, making it a great time to reflect on the strength of our communities in challenging times. We also teamed up with The Wedge Theatre in Sale who held an online concert featuring a Welcome to Country by Uncle Colin Thomas, a digital performance by "The Boorun Boys" & an amazing performance by Gippsland's very own Black Satin.



HEAL COUNTRY!

4-11 JULY 2021





Our Culture

Cultural Hub update

On behalf of the Cultural Hub team we wish all our members and readers a Happy New Year and hope 2021 will be a better year.

The Cultural Hub team continue to support and work towards advancing GLaWAC's annual engagement plan with more community events in the education, arts and tourism space.

Through this work, we are supporting a number of community projects, including the Krauatungalung Boardwalk circuit being developed west of the footbridge at Lakes Entrance.

We are currently recruiting for positions in the Cultural Hub team to fill the vacancies left by Cathy Thomas who has gone over to the Gunaikurnai Ranger program as Team Leader, and we wish her well in her new role.

The layout for the timeline of the Journey Wall has begun. It features the history, photos and stories of our community and our journey towards gaining our Native Title rights and recognition and settlement agreement. It's going to look deadly when it's installed at Forestec.

Prior to Christmas, we delivered cultural induction sessions with the incoming Councillors from Wellington Shire and Latrobe City Council. In mid-January we also delivered an induction to the new Councillors of the East Gippsland Shire. The outcomes of these sessions is the willingness of Local Government to build mutual and respectful relationships with the Gunaikurnai and broader Aboriginal communities.

GLaWAC has continued to deliver the services of Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremonies for public and community events and functions over the past few months. We have been appreciative of community members we have engaged to support the delivery of these services.

The team is continually working on finalising the Cultural Competency Framework to deliver training modules for the cultural awareness and induction programs. Once finalised, these modules will be rolled out to Government and community organisations.

We all look forward to working together to progress the aspirations and priorities that are part of the core business functions of GLaWAC in 2021.

GRATTAN MULLETT

Valley gets arty

The newly built Latrobe Valley GovHub office in Morwell is almost ready to open and we're excited to give you a sneak peek of the deadly artwork that's up inside the building.

Five new canvases and an interpretive panel welcoming people into the new office space are the result of a partnership between GLaWAC and CastleRock Properties, the company involved in delivering the building.

The project has provided employment opportunities for Gunaikurnai artists and the support to create new art that showcases local creation stories. We reckon it gives the place a more welcoming, cultural feel too.

We would like to say congratulations and thank you to all the artists involved in this project - Aunty Eileen Harrison, Lionel Rose Jnr, Ronald Pepper, Ian Harrison & Casey Pepper – for your amazing creations.

The interpretive panel was designed and delivered by Dixon Patten from Bayila Designs who did an amazing piece of work which includes the creation story of Borun & Tuk and depicts elements of our connection to the land & waters across Gunaikurnai Country.

The new GovHub building is set to open in Feb/March 2021 and will house a number of government agencies including Parks Victoria, Earth Resources Regulation and Solar Victoria.



Eileen Harrison – Djeetgung & Yeerung Story

Our Culture



Ian Harrison – The Kurnai People Hunting for food & searching for water



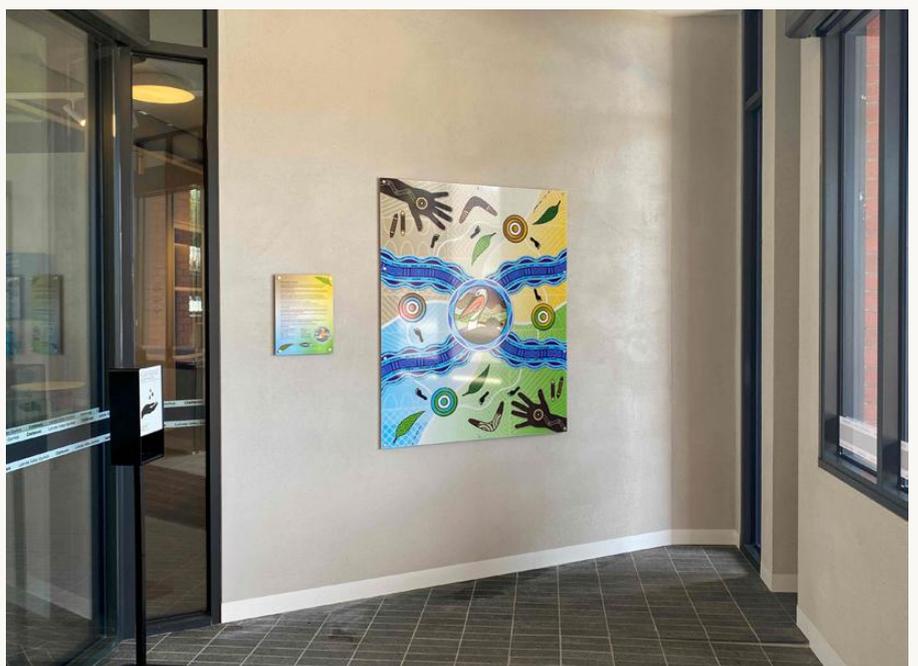
Casey Pepper – Yeerung Story



Lionel Rose – Walkabout through Country



Ronald Pepper – Borun & Tuk Creation Story



Dixon Patten – Creation of Country

Our Culture

Dixon Patten – Creation of Country

Visitors to the new GovHub building in Morwell will be welcomed by artwork acknowledging our father (Borun) and our mother (Tuk) created by Dixon Patten.

The circle in the middle represents Brayukaulung Country where you are situated today.

The other 4 circles represent the other clans of the Gunaikurnai nation; Brabralung, Brataualung, Tatungalung and Krauatungalung.

The feet represent Gunaikurnai people, depicting our connection to one another and our unbroken connection, from time immemorial, to Country. Gunaikurnai moved with the seasons, to replenish Country, allowing flora and fauna to flourish; only taking what they needed.

Gunaikurnai Country has an abundant and diverse landscape. The colours represent the oceans, beaches, lakes, rivers, plains, hills and mountains. The gum leaves represent 'welcome'.



The outstretched hands represent our ancestors, and the clapsticks and boomerangs represent Aboriginal culture being practised today still. It

acknowledges that we aren't just an ancient culture; we are here still practising our culture and continue to be guided by our cultural values.

Are you a Gunaikurnai artist?

**Do you paint, weave or dance?
Maybe you carve wood, play
music or tell jokes?**

Our Cultural Hub team are developing a "Community Artist Register" for Gunaikurnai artists & specialists to make the most of opportunities to engage in local projects & activities.

This register will help promote and profile active artists and engage you in future employment & commission opportunities that arise across Gippsland through our Projects, Annual Art Exhibitions, Cultural Festivals, Workshops & Events.

We want to hear from people from a wide range of areas, with skills in the following areas:

Traditional & contemporary dance, film making, photography, drone photography, animation, graphic design, illustration, Emu egg carving, basket weaving, woodcrafts, cloak making, musicians, DJ's, didj players, clothing brands & designs, poets, art galleries, visual arts, jewellery making, facilitators to run bushtucker/ native plants workshops & stand-up comedy.

If you want to add your name to the confidential register, or find out more about it, call Alice Pepper, Community Engagement Coordinator on 5152 5200.

Our Culture

Stories and songlines

As part of our Cultural Connections Initiative, the Cultural Hub are developing a book of selected dreaming stories to share with our members, and we need your input.

Over the past 250 years, there have been many changes that have prevented our people learning our cultural language, songs, stories, and dance. With this book we begin the journey of restoring our cultural education.

The chosen stories tell the history of the Gunaikurnai and demonstrate our connection to Country and the cultural

manner of recording behaviours and natural changes in the landscape. Once finalised, they will help to form the basis of GLaWAC's cultural education

program and inform public signage across Gunaikurnai Country.

These stories need input from our membership. We invite you to treat each as a starting point so you can provide your knowledge and we can create a fuller version of our Gunaikurnai culture. If you have any more information and want to share it, please contact Paula Harrison at the GLaWAC Cultural Hub on 5152 0100.

Tidaluk tells of the natural history of the area and the flood records the period of natural change. It shows the location of Lurtbit Yauung Bratauraloong clan group who recorded this story. It shows the natural history of the country going through a turbulent time of great natural change, which shaped the landscape as we know it today.

Boorun and Tuk tells of the movement of the first Gunaikurnai who came down from the mountains in Victoria's northwest carrying his canoe on his head. He was Borun, the pelican. He crossed over the river at what is now Sale, and walked on alone to Tarra Warackel (Port Albert) in the west. As he walked, he heard a constant tapping sound but could not identify it. When he reached the deep water of the inlets, Borun put down his canoe and, much to his surprise, there was a woman in it. She was Tuk, the musk duck.

He was very happy to see her and she became his wife and the mother of the Gunaikurnai people – they are the parents of the five Gunaikurnai clans.

Boondjil Noorrook

demonstrates the use of smoke signals and fires. As the people along the east coast watched the ship sailing pass their tribal countries, they communicated with smoke signals and then fires to warn off the ship.

And since the 1840's the use of fires and smoke signals have represented the communication and small burns for ceremony grounds, burning after camping, pathways and regeneration of food to name a few uses of fire. Many mobs along the east coast used fires to warn the ship away.

We need to have regular gatherings during 19th-20th April to celebrate the achievements of our Ancestor Boondjil Noorrook for sending smoke signals and singing a song of message to forewarn the mobs along the east coast.

Buchan Caves

These are the caves where the medicine men hid their bag of medicines and things for when he needed them. Aboriginal people traditionally did not venture inside the caves as they were thought to be a place occupied by spirits and creatures like Nargun and Nyols.

While people may not have lived in Buchan Caves themselves, the stone from here was a valuable resource for tool making, and was traded over long distances.

Nargun is a women's story. She has many caves; and if any blackfulla's cautiously approaches one of these, that man is dragged into the cave by Nargun and he is seen no more. If a fulla throws a spear at Nargun, the spear returns to the thrower and wounds him. Nargun cannot be killed by anyone.

Legend Rock

One day, some fisherman who had hauled in many fish with their nets, ate their catch around their campfire. The women, guardians of the social law, saw that the men had eaten more than enough but had not fed their dogs. The men took no notice of the dingoes, and kept feasting, when suddenly one of the dogs began to speak. "You greedy fullas, why don't you share the fish?" and they all heard it. The whole camp was turned into stone, and stands as a red rock on that spot by the shores of Lake King to this day. Ever after this rock was referred to as Wallung, "The Rock", and was pointed out to the children of the Gunaikurnai as an example of what happens when you are greedy and thoughtless, and when you don't share.

Our Culture



TELLING THE STORY OF THE OLD PEOPLE AT CLOGGS CAVE

Cloggs Cave near Buchan has been known to Gunaikurnai people for thousands of years but recently our RAP crew have been trying to understand how long ago the Old People visited the site and what they did there.

Working in partnership with the Monash Indigenous Studies Centre at Monash University, the crew discovered a small sandstone grindstone in the cave, with research showing that it was put there sometime between 1600 and 2100 years ago.

The team recently published their findings in the prestigious journal *Scientific Reports*.

What's really special is that the grindstone had microscopic remains of ground and cooked Bogong moths on it, providing the first conclusive archaeological evidence of insects as a food source in Australia.

Oral histories of our ancestors eating Bogong moths have been shared for generations but no scientific evidence has

been discovered before now, signalling a major gap in the archaeological history of Traditional Custodians.

Bogong moths are thought to be a good food source due to their large numbers and high fat content. The researchers said this find indicates that Bogong moths would have been harvested, prepared and cooked by up to 65 generations of Gunaikurnai families.

Russell Mullett, head of the RAP team, says that historical records are witness to our people going to the mountains for the Bogong moths but that this project tells us that it also happened in the deeper past. "Because our people no longer travel to the mountains for Bogong moth festivals, the oral histories aren't shared anymore, it's a lost tradition."

"The world has become a different place, but for 2,000 years this grindstone has been sitting idle with a story to tell. A single artefact has sparked the rebirth of knowledge that helps to tell the story of our people."

BOGONG MOTHS

Each spring (September), Bogong moths migrate south over 1000 km from Queensland. Travelling at night, the moths' journey lasts many days, arriving in the mountains to the north of Buchan where, over the spring and summer months of late September–March, they lie resting ('aestivate') in the hundreds of thousands among the protected rocky outcrops. It is during these times that the Old People gathered the moths for food.

These findings represent the first archaeological remains of Bogong moths in Australia, and, as far as we know, of the remains of insect foods on stone artefacts anywhere in the world.

They provide insights into a cultural practice that has until now remained archaeologically invisible. The method used on the Cloggs Cave grindstone also shows a new way to better understand the story of the foods eaten by the Old People thousands of years ago.

A PORTABLE FOOD GRINDER

The grindstone is small, light and portable. Under the microscope, specialists studied the marks left on the grindstone when it was used. The repeated mechanical action of grinding pushed residues into the microscopic holes in the grindstone's surfaces, where they became trapped. Large amounts of animal and plant residues were found on the Cloggs Cave grindstone, as well as some minerals.



Treaty update



The momentum towards a Truth-telling process is building. The First Peoples Assembly of Victoria continues to hold online events and community consultation around the state to progress the Elders' Voice sample model and find alternative pathways for Reserved Seat Membership on the Assembly for Traditional Owner groups. These ongoing conversations are pivotal in shaping and developing the framework for Treaty negotiations.

The Engagement team, together with your regional assembly members, have been busy planning regional Treaty yarning sessions right across the state. The yarning sessions are a chance to ask questions, provide input, find out how you can be involved and hear updates on the progress so far across all streams of the Treaty Framework:

Elders' Voice which will provide guidance, wisdom and cultural oversight to the Assembly's work.

Treaty Authority will provide independent oversight of the Treaty process and negotiating parties.

Interim Dispute Resolution Process will embed Aboriginal lore and ways of doing business, and provide a process to resolve disputes in progressing towards.

Treaty. Self-Determination Fund will be a financial resource designed to empower Traditional Owners and Aboriginal people in Victoria in Treaty-making processes.

Treaty Negotiation Framework will set the rules for Treaty negotiations. This includes what should be included in Treaties, and who negotiates and is represented by Treaties.

Truth-telling will be a process of openly sharing historical truths, acknowledging past wrongs, ensuring an accurate historical record and setting a common understanding of our shared history.

Cultural Governance will empower the Assembly's work to ensure that it is culturally robust, culturally safe, and driven by cultural protocols of doing business.



As the GLaWAC appointed representative to the Assembly, I have been representing our organisation and its members interests in the development of the Treaty Architecture as we move towards 2022. Troy has been busy shaping detailed work to pull together a Truth and Justice Commission which has involved complex negotiations and planning so that this Chamber led resolution can be progressed. The culmination of this work will be realised soon, and it will be a first for Australia when its ratified. As your reserved seat representative, I encourage you to reach in if you have any questions about the work which is underway. Alice Pepper and I are looking forward to Covid restrictions being relaxed so that we can share what is happening across the First People Assembly of Victoria.

TROY MCDONALD

Our Country

Water for Gunaikurnai Country

Did you hear the news? GLaWAC, on behalf of our members, will receive two gigalitres of unallocated water in the Mitchell River- that's about the same amount of water that Bairnsdale uses in a year. It's the first time in Victoria's history that the state government has handed back water to traditional custodians; and it gives our members rights to a river system that the Gunaikurnai have managed sustainably for thousands of years.

This is a momentous outcome for our community, one that recognises the importance of gaining rights to water to restore customary practices, protect cultural values and uses, gain economic independence, and heal Country.

We see this as a huge first step to achieving the water objectives of the Gunaikurnai, and we thank the Victorian Government who we have been working closely with since it released the 'Water for Victoria' policy. Securing water rights for the Gunaikurnai puts the 'Water' into our Land

and Waters Aboriginal Corporation for the first time, and we thank all our partners in Government and the local community for their support.

For the moment, the water will be staying in the river. We look forward to yarning with community more about this in the coming months and being able to self-determine how and where the water can help achieve priorities for healthy Country and healthy mob.

Victorian Marine & Coastal Award

The Gippsland Lakes Outer Barrier has always been an important place for Gunaikurnai. Alongside the cultural heritage there's plenty of plants and animals that make the area a highly significant place for our community.

In November, GLaWAC was pleased to receive the Traditional Owner Custodianship Award at the 2020 Victorian Marine and Coastal Awards, recognising our work to protect the Gippsland Lakes and in particular the Outer Barrier.

GLaWAC has been working hard to register sites, to excavate sites and to understand sites; investigating which areas are at

the greatest risk and mapping where ancestral remains and cultural heritage have been significantly impacted by weather events and erosion over the years.

This award recognises the work of the GLaWAC On Country team involved in the meaningful job of protecting heritage, culture, and biodiversity. It's a job that has provided them an opportunity to learn new skills, see the positive outcomes of their hard work, and visit with their family and friends with a sense of pride that community is actively working to care for their own Country.

GLaWAC is working with government and other partners on the Victorian Marine and Coastal Strategy and we look forward to the draft being released shortly.

Our Country

Reading & healing country

Meet the Bushfire Recovery Crew helping to heal Country in the wake of last years fires. Jirra, Paula, Wayne, Mahlciem and Mary have been busy monitoring totem plants and animals across the fire footprint to see what's returning and what might threaten their recovery.

Country heals us and connects us to our ancestors, our culture and our history. But our mob cannot be healthy when Country is sick which is why it's been so important to get community out and involved in bushfire recovery - reading and healing, connecting and sharing knowledge.

Being able to get out on Country on a daily basis and do this kind of work in the bush is a unique opportunity to interact with and understand the landscape and the animals that live on it. Just ask Paula! This is her first time working on Country but it's fair to say she enjoys it. "I love the way it makes me feel. When I'm out here I just feel really culturally connected."

Special shout out to Bushfire Recovery Team Leader, Cathy Thomas, and Russell Mullett, Paul Harrison and Stevie Hood, together with our partners at DELWP Gippsland and Parks Victoria for their support and knowledge as we continue to shape land management practises that will benefit Country as a whole.

Shoreline Drive Precinct Plan

The Shoreline Drive Precinct area is located between Paradise Beach and Seaspray in the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park, one of ten joint managed parks GLaWAC manages with Parks Victoria.

In line with the Joint Management Plan, GLaWAC is completing a Precinct Plan for the area which takes in twenty camping areas, each comprising between 5 – 12 camping sites, and four day visitor sites. We want to protect important cultural and environmental values and want to ensure that the area continues to be a place to enjoy camping, fishing, walking and other activities on Country.

GLaWAC is currently completing a cultural mapping project across the Gippsland Lakes, to identify archaeological sites and help guide the development of the precinct plan.

We also invite feedback from interested community members who want to share knowledge of the area. To have input into what you think the area might need and to guide the future offer of the area please contact Project Manager Matt Holland at matt.holland@glawac.com.au



Our Country

JM Rangers

We have employed a new crew of rangers who started on the 11th January.

Say hello to Harley Finn, Terylene Hood, Harley Wanganeen, Bryce Baxter and Kevin Hood who will work alongside our existing rangers under new JM Team Leader Cath Thomas.

Russell Dow is doing a great job representing in the west, working out of the Parks Victoria office in Traralgon, while Mick Farnham & Shay Terrick are working well with the new crew and sharing knowledge.

The crew have settled in and have been getting around to all the JM parks and are keen to start working alongside Parks Victoria staff.

ROBBIE FARNHAM



Buchan Caves Reserves

The Buchan Caves Reserve was heavily impacted during the summer bushfires of 2020. The fires destroyed accommodation and toilet facilities, and heavily impacted biodiversity and cultural values. As joint managers, GLaWAC now has a unique chance to enhance opportunities for our mob within the Buchan Caves Reserve.

Working with Parks Victoria, we've identified the need to develop a site plan to guide what the reserve might look like in the future - how locals and visitors want to use it, what buildings should be reinstated and how we can meet the aspirations our community as joint land managers.

The focus for the site plan will be on reviewing the site layout, facilities, features and access so that we can improve the way things work within the main visitor areas. It will provide the future strategic direction for the visitor precinct of the Reserve, helping us to identify the preferred layout for accommodation, services and road management, while celebrating and protecting Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage.

GLaWAC is looking for your input; what do you think the reserve should look like? If you have ideas or would like more info, please contact Robbie Farnham on 5152 5100.





NRM UPDATE

Happy new year from your NRM team! The crew has grown in the last 6 months to keep up with the demand of new projects, with plenty more lined up for 2021. We've kicked off the year with a bang with another big couple of months ahead for us.

Over summer, the team spent time at MacLeod Morass with Greening Australia and Parks Victoria; installing exclusion fencing to protect the endangered Green and Golden Bell frogs from becoming food for carp. With so much equipment to move, the team had to get creative, floating the fencing into the middle of the wetlands with the assistance of a couple of kayaks. All part of a days work! And the frogs didn't seem to

mind, with a few popping out to say hi while the crew worked.

There's been plenty of activity in and around the fire footprint, working with DELWP, Parks Victoria and Landcare to control weeds; and we're continuing with our fox baiting program across Lake Tyers and the Mitchell River National Park.

Exciting news, in partnership with Cranes Asphaltting, we successfully tendered for a 5 year contract slashing roadsides across the East Gippsland Shire. GLaWAC NRM now has two wicked big assets – namely two new tractors – a late Christmas present which we are all excited about. They've kept us busy, working to make sure they're fully equipped and that we recruit the right people to operate them.

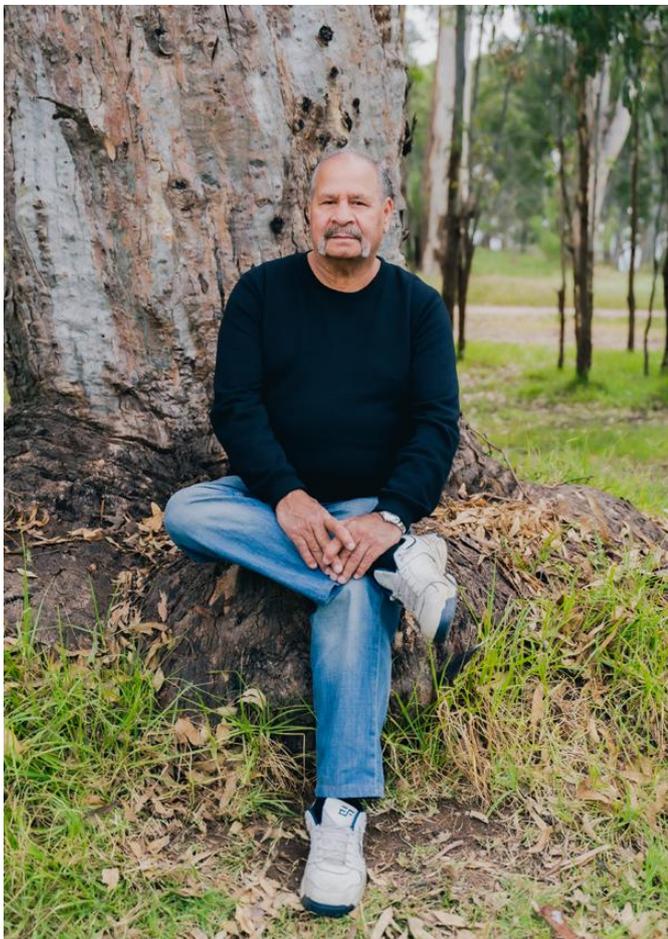
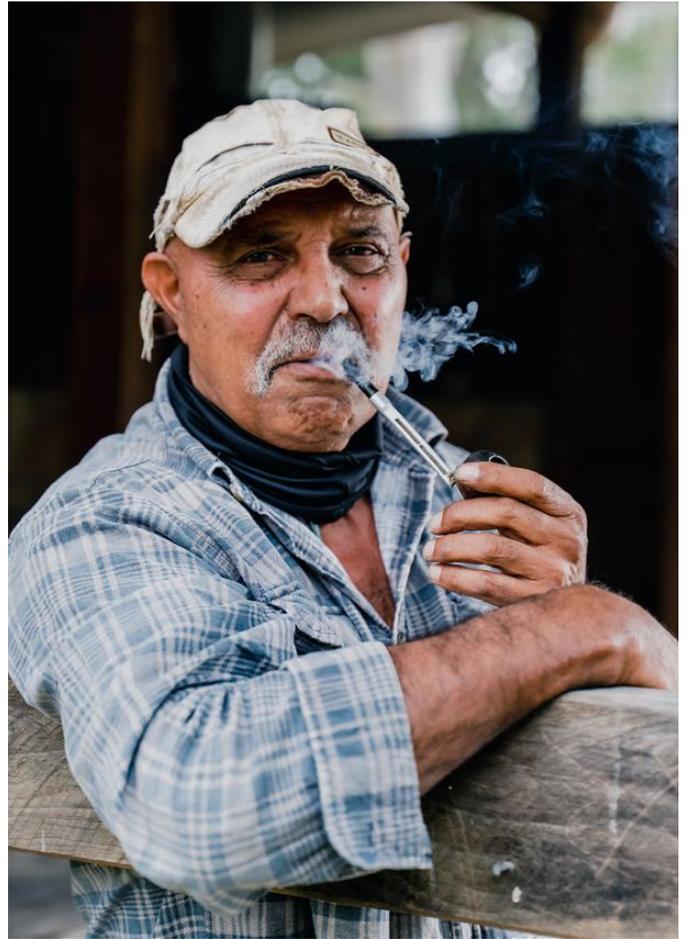
NIGEL PEARCE



Our Country

Beyond The Fire

In late 2020, GLaWAC was approached to take part in a 7-part documentary series called Beyond The Fire, which aired on Channel 10 in January. Did you get to watch it? Each episode followed the journey of fire affected communities across Gippsland with Episode 4 celebrating the knowledge and wisdom of the Gunaikurnai. Cath Thomas, Mick Farnham, Uncle Russell Mullett and Uncle Lloyd Hood reflected on the events of the black summer bushfires, the benefits of cultural fire and the need for traditional custodian voices to be heard so that community and Country can begin to heal together. All four spoke loudly and proudly, with passion and with conviction on behalf of the mob. If you missed it the first time around, you can visit 10play.com.au/beyond-the-fire to catch up.



Our Country

CHEEKYMAC PRODUCTIONS
PRESENTS
A 7-PART DOCUMENTARY SERIES

BEYOND THE FIRE

A SERIES PRODUCED BY CHEEKYMAC PRODUCTIONS IN ASSOCIATION WITH CHANNEL 10 AND CONNECT WELL AND VICTORIAN FARMERS FEDERATION
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY DANIELLE MCALPINE JOHNSON EXECUTIVE PRODUCER SUE MEDSON DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY AARON HARVEY ASSOCIATE PRODUCER LACHLAN CAMPBELL
ORIGINAL MUSIC BY CHICO JOHNSON & VINGI FLAMEZ CAMERA OPS SAMUEL KWONG & ACAUA DOHERTY CAFFER STEPHEN LOATS COLOURIST JACOB DYER
HAIR & MAKEUP TANIA DE ROSS WARDROBE DESIGN BECKY BRANCA PRODUCTION COORDINATOR ALICE TOOMER PRODUCTION ASSISTANT CHERIE COOPER STILLS PHOTOGRAPHY ADAM MCKAY



Our Organisation



Women of GLaWAC

The women of GLaWAC share a strong voice. Led by our Elders Council, we provide strong leadership and take pride in our skills and knowledge; and the opportunities we create for the next generation of strong women to follow their passion.

Women make up 25% of GLaWAC staff, a number which continues to grow every year. We represent every department and are a key part of ensuring that Country and Culture stays healthy and your voice is heard.

Our On Country team includes six Aboriginal women working across the Joint Management, Bushfire Recovery and RAP teams, areas that some have seen as men's work in the past. We are proud to contribute our knowledge and skills to managing and healing Country, uncovering the stories of our old people and protecting women's business, as our ancestors would want us to.

"Small things, like a noise in a tree, remind you that the spirits are watching."
– Terrylene Hood, JM Ranger

"I love working on Country and how connected it makes me feel."
– Paula Harrison, Bushfire Recovery Crew

"Without healthy Country, we don't have a healthy mob"
– Cathy Thomas, JM Ranger Team Leader

Women also work in the Corporate Services and Economic Development teams. We support the Board, Elders, staff and the GLaWAC business in human resources, finance, payroll and all things admin. We prepare meals and serve you in the Bush Cafe; and we work to keep you informed and make sure that your rights are heard loud and clear by government, our partners and the wider community.

In the Cultural Hub, we engage with community to hear your voice as we develop a place of learning and embed culture in everything that GLaWAC does.

"It's good to see the number of women working at GLaWAC growing. Women's business must be just as well represented as Men's business."
– Alice pepper, Community Engagement Co-ordinator

GLaWAC is always looking for strong female voices to join our staff and encourage those female members who are interested in joining one of our sub-committees to get involved by getting in touch on 5152 5100.

Our Economy



Recipe for success

James Mullett has always been interested in cooking. Growing up, mum Lizzy was always in the kitchen cooking up a roast and James was never far away, just hanging around, watching, and learning the ropes.

"Even when I was too young to be allowed to touch anything, I'd just be watching," he says. "Then I asked her if I could have a go one day and I've been putting on the roast (or helping at least) ever since."

And now James has taken another leap forward in the kitchen, taking on a cooking apprenticeship in the Bush Café at Forestec, working and learning under head chef, Kevin Murray.

James first started working in the cafe in late 2019 and was keen to get back into the kitchen once the bushfire and COVID situation was safe enough to do so. His enthusiasm didn't go unnoticed and a few months later Kevin had formed a plan to support James through an apprenticeship while keeping up his work commitments at Forestec.

With a little help from Jo Brunt, the

Employment Co-ordinator at Latrobe City Council and the VTEC program, James was quickly kitted out with a new uniform and all the tools of the trade that a young chef could want.

"The Bush Café is the one place I've worked in hospitality that I feel most comfortable. I know I have Uncle Kevin's full support and I feel like I can do anything that I really want, I can try new things and my views and input are respected."

For his part, Kevin reckons James' apprenticeship has been the best thing to happen to the Bush Café recently. "To be able to train a young Gunaikurnai person to how to run this place has been brilliant. He's not just learning how to cook, James is learning how to run the kitchen, how to plan the menu, all the ordering, and how to work in a team."

James agrees, "I know I need to get experience but I would love to think that one day I could be running this place and giving people the same opportunities as the Bush Café has given me."

Charles means business

My name is Charles Jnr (CJ) Solomon. I'm a proud Ngarigo Gooreng Gooreng man and grew up in East Gippsland and Melbourne. I've recently started at GLaWAC as the Aboriginal Business Development Manager. My background is in Environmental Science, Land Management and Landscape Design.

I have been running my own landscape design business for 6 years and decided to move back to East Gippsland to share some of my business learnings and help GLaWAC and the community in the business space. My role consists of 3 key areas: The first part is to assist GLaWAC in both current business and future business opportunities; the second is to assist community members to start their own businesses; and the third part is to work with key stakeholders to develop a Regional Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy.

If you are a community member interested in starting your own business, please give me a call on 5152 5100 or send me an email. I would love to have a yarn about your idea and help guide you in the right direction.



Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC)

Under the guidance of the Board of Directors and Elders Council, GLaWAC is the Registered Aboriginal Party that represents the Gunaikurnai people and their aspirations for Native Title, cultural heritage, land, water and natural resource management.

GLaWAC News content disclaimer

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GLaWAC News