

## HIGHLIGHTS OF ISSUE 35

- Meet the new Valley crew
- Conserving Gunaikurnai collections
- Getting Oysters back in the Gippy Lakes
- RSA Re-negotiation Update





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# Board and Elders Council Updates

Welcome to our new and returning directors of the GLaWAC Board.

The Board was elected at the GLaWAC Annual General Meeting held at Forestec in February, having been postponed due to Covid restrictions in November.

At the AGM, GLaWAC members voted in Troy McDonald, and new board members Lynette Bishop and Lois Whelan.

Lynette is a Gunaikurnai woman who lives in Stratford. She's been a big advocate of Aboriginal rights; always educating with respect and looking at ways to improve things to give our children a better future.

Living in Swan Reach, Lois holds a Cert IV in Teaching an Endangered Aboriginal Language and a desire to be more involved in protecting Country and all of the beautiful qualities that it holds.

They GLAWAC Board includes Troy McDonald Chair, Glenys Watts, Paula Morgan, Lynette Bishop, Lois Whelan and Nick Johnson, together with Independent Directors Ewan Waller and Libby Drummett.

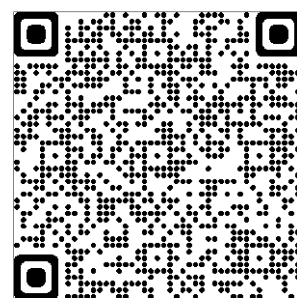
The AGM also confirmed the GLaWAC Elders Council for 2022. A big welcome to the Aunties and Uncles - Marion Flo Hood and Kevin Murray; and our big thanks to retiring members Aunty Marg Donnelly, Uncle Russell Mullett, Aunty Olive Stevens, Aunty Glenda Thorpe and Aunty Fay Voss.

## GLaWAC Board

Director	Term Remaining
Troy McDonald	2 yrs
Glenys Watts	1 yr
Paula Morgan	1 yr
Nick Johnson	1 yr
Lynette Bishop	2 yrs
Lois Whelan	2 yrs
Ewan Waller (Independent Director)	1 yr
Libby Dummett (Independent Director)	1 yr

## GLaWAC ELDERS COUNCIL

Aunty Lena Morris (Chair)  
Aunty Beryl Booth  
Aunty Charmaine Singleton  
Aunty Deanna Campbell  
Aunty Di Hurren  
Aunty Glenys Watts  
Aunty Gwen Atkinson  
Aunty Gwen Hudson  
Aunty Julie Mongta  
Uncle Kevin Murray  
Aunty Lee-Anne Eddington  
Aunty Maria Harrison  
Aunty Marion Flo Hood  
Aunty Marianne Atkinson  
Aunty Marjorie Thorpe  
Aunty Noretta Knight  
Aunty Raelene Young  
Aunty Shirley Foster



The 2020-2021 Annual Report has been mailed out to all members, and is available to download at [gunaikurnai.org](http://gunaikurnai.org) or by scanning this QR code.

# Joint Update from the GLaWAC Board Chair and CEO

Dear Members and Friends,

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2022, it's certainly been a busy start to 2022 with GLaWAC continuing to grow and do amazing work across the Settlement Area.

Our staff are leading the way in many areas, developing projects and delivering on contracts that showcase the culture, strength, and capability of the Gunaikurnai. Like all things there is still opportunity for reflection and to grow and learn; this is paramount to our sustainability. We need to be able to look at and assess our achievements to continue moving positively into the future.

We are currently recruiting two new General Manager positions – GM On Country and GM Economic Development, and we look forward to these roles being filled and complimenting the existing workforce. See page 20 for more staff updates.

The RSA re-negotiations are well underway. Input and feedback to the re-negotiations has been coming in

since 2018 – so thank you for your contributions so far. We are planning to update you in May or June with a Full Group meeting. As a reminder, whether you identify as Gunai or Kurnai, the Agreement is for everyone. Working together, respecting differing opinions can only build a stronger mob with benefits for all. See page 6 for a snapshot of where things are at.

Planning for NAIDOC week has commenced, and we are looking forward to another deadly event. GLaWAC will again have a day at the Knob Reserve, Thursday, 7 July 2022. Local organisations are meeting to discuss their respective events and its looking to be a great week for Community – let's hope the weather holds out as it did last year.

**TROY MCDONALD and DANIEL MILLER**

## Meet the new CEO

GLaWAC Chair Troy McDonald is pleased to introduce Daniel Miller as your new Chief Executive Officer, taking the reins from former CEO, Roger Fenwick.

Daniel was chosen after a broad and highly competitive national selection process.

A Yuin man, Daniel has extensive leadership experience and has been the General Manager of GLaWAC's On Country team since 2017, creating employment for mob across Gippsland to connect with and heal Country. His previous experience includes leadership positions at the Wellington Shire and the Department of Primary Industries.

Daniel brings a wealth of knowledge and experience and has all the qualities to support innovation, partnerships and opportunities to progress the legacy of our Elders.

We would like to thank Roger for his commitment to progress the foundations laid down by our Elders in the Gunaikurnai Whole of Country Plan.





# GKTOLMB Update

Despite lockdowns and other COVID challenges, the past year has been a very busy time for the TOLM Board.

Our main work has been to create the strategy that will guide us for the next five years. In this process, the Board recognised that current laws separate the management of land, water, fire, coast and so on, and we know this is not the way to healthy Country or Mob.

After consulting with GLaWAC and other partners, the Board agreed that for Gunaikurnai people to reach self-determination, we have to bring all the elements back together so we can care for Country as a whole. This is why the Board's new vision is **Gunaikurnai people leading the care of their country every day.**

To achieve this, the Board's work for the next 5 years will be about working with and supporting GLaWAC to increase our number of rangers, to start a Sea Country operation, to increase Gunaikurnai leadership in parks and other Country and to ensure Country is cared for as a whole using our traditional knowledge and practices.

The Board has already started this work. We supported GLaWAC by hosting a cultural visit along the Mitchell River, yarning about how traditional knowledge can improve how the river is managed and used today.

We will keep this conversation going and support GLaWAC to produce a Cultural Water Management Plan for the care of the river and the use of the GLaWAC water allocation.

The Board also hosted an annual reflection of Joint Management where GLaWAC Rangers and other staff got together with Parks Victoria and other agencies and

yarned about how Joint Management is going and what improvements can be made.

We were very pleased that the Secretary of DELWP came and spent time at the workshop to listen to the different experiences and to give his perspective on future possibilities. Everyone agreed we are in a better place than we were 10 years ago thanks to Joint Management and that with some improvements we are on the path to Self-determination.

The group thought the biggest achievements over the year included:

- The Cultural Interpretations and Mapping strategy. This has led to significant cultural heritage work and will direct how Cultural Heritage and storytelling happens in the Parks, starting at Buchan Munji before rolling out to all the Parks over time.
- The Camping and Access Strategy at Lake Tyers where camping and other activity will only be allowed to occur in places that are culturally safe. A similar project is also looking at Angusvale.
- That Traditional Fire Burning in the Joint Management Parks gives Gunaikurnai rangers control over how Country is cared for.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the Board members who were re-appointed for another 2 years starting from January. The only change is that Katherine Mullett has decided to not continue with the Board as she continues to take on more and bigger responsibilities. I, and the whole Board, appreciated Katherine's contribution during her term and wish her the very best for the future.



# Our Community

## YOUR RSA NEGOTIATIONS

The RSA Re-negotiations with the State are continuing, with GLaWAC currently waiting on offers from the Victorian Government.

These offers will advise us what the State is prepared to give Gunaikurnai Traditional Owners as part of the revised Recognition Settlement Agreement.

This table shows our journey from our first RSA negotiation, the priorities moving toward this new one and where negotiations sit within each pillar.

We thank you members for your input so far. Once received, GLaWAC will present the State offers to the full group so that you can make your voice heard as we continue the path toward self-determination.

### What each area does

#### FUNDING & LAND AGREEMENT

Provides funding for:

- Economic development
- Placed in trust to support core operations of TOGE

Transfers land to TOGE:

- Freehold Title; Aboriginal Title to parks & reserves

#### TRADITIONAL OWNER LAND MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

Provides for:

- Joint Management of parks & reserves held under Aboriginal Title;
- Requires Traditional Owner Land Management Board to be established

#### PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT

Some of the settlement funds are required to be held in the Victorian Traditional Owner Trust

This agreement sets out the basis on which the funds are held

### 2010 – What we got

McLeod Street – \$5M to set-up GLaWAC

Joint Management of 10 Parks & Reserves

\$10 in Trust – (now \$14M)

### What we've asked for

- \$70M
  - \$30M in Trust
  - \$40M for capital expansion and healing of Country, Culture and people
- \$6M annual corporation funding
- Additional staff to support GLaWAC business
- Funding to implement 2018 JM Plan
- Forestec
- Traralgon office
- Kurnai Park
- Alpine National Park
- Baw Baw National Park
- Avon Wilderness Area
- Nooramunga Marine and Coastal Park

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- Committee of Management for Corringale Foreshore Reserve

- Agreement between GLaWAC, Trust fund and Attorney General
- Minimal Annual Funding Amount (MAFA) is currently \$175,000

### Where we are at

The State is

- building a business case in an effort to reflect what GLaWAC is asking for
- seeking in-principle approval from the Minister about the land to be included as freehold and as Aboriginal title grants

Gunaikurnai and the State to

- agree on new grants of Aboriginal title
- The State to
- build case for ongoing funding to implement 2018 JM Plan and future JMP's, and additional ongoing employment in joint management
- provide options for on-ground management of Corringale Foreshore Reserve Aboriginal title land by GLaWAC

Gunaikurnai and the State to

- consider agreeing on a new MAFA



# Our Community

## YOUR RSA TEAM IS:

Aunty Lena Morris  
Aunty Julie Mongta  
Aunty Glenys Watts

Troy McDonald  
Grattan Mullett  
Patrick Mullett

If you have a questions for the RSA team, please contact GLaWAC on 5152 5100, and we will put you in touch.

### TRADITIONAL OWNER LAND NATURAL RESOURCE AGREEMENT

Provides for:

- Traditional Owners having access to natural resources on public land and freehold land owned by Traditional Owners (may be personal or commercial);
- Contains strategies for increased participation in resources management

### LAND USED ACTIVITY AGREEMENT

Governs activities to take place on Crown land, going forward (replaces the Future Act regime). Allows for:

- Procedural rights
- Right to comment;
- Entitlement to Community Benefits; or
- Right of veto

### OTHER MATTERS NOT COVERED BY RSA OR TREATY

Examples may include things like:

- Housing
- Justice
- Education
- Wholistic healing centre's

### NEW – wasn't in the first agreement

Things like:

- forestry
- hunting
- fishing
- commercial fishing and nursery opportunities

### NEW – wasn't in the first agreement

- Leases and Licence control over all public land categories will apply, replacing the Future Act regime
- Specifically, a Public Land Authorisation is a lease, licence, permit or authority under various Acts
- Also includes a tour operator licence, a consent for use or development of coastal land under and a Carbon Sequestration Agreement under various Acts

### Not covered by RSA

- Education
  - cultural curriculum / learning centre's
  - School cultural program/holidays
- Strengthen language and implementation into school curriculum
- Affordable housing
- Exemption from land taxes
- Healing Centres
- Plantations – designated areas for the future eg Carbon on Crown Land
- Cabins on Country
- Fire Task Force
- Black Cole Café in Morwell
- Taking Logs for use cultural use

Gunaikurnai and the State to

- further consider a GLaWAC led partnership forum to ensure Gunaikurnai participation in NRM priorities

The State to

- provide written proposals for the new clauses on fire preparedness and roads
- provide its proposals for clauses on exclusions and 'planned future uses' of land
- confirm the Government's decision on the proposed Interim Community Benefits formulae of the LUAA
- provide written proposals for the new clauses in the ILUA to manage the risk that the new 'Body Corporate' ILUA is not registered
- provide a proposed valuation methodology and valuation of public lands for which it seeks Gunaikurnai consent to sell or alienate.

# Our Community

## Basketball Tournament

What a huge weekend it was at the Traralgon Basketball Tournament in mid-March, with 8 BRUS teams competing amongst 100 others.

From the gorgeous, cheeky little under 10's to under 19's – they all played so well, with some deadly skills and moves that captivated us all.

It was a great family weekend with a deadly atmosphere that could not have happened without the community coming together and the players commitment to training and playing.

Big congrats to all of the coaches, parents and volunteers helping the BRUS players and committee to make it happen. And a special shout out to the BRUS Board who went above and beyond in planning, organising and coordinating such a big and successful gathering for community.

Here's just a couple of pictures from the big weekend.





## Our Community

Check out that style!!! What better way to cool down after a long day mustering than to head for the water. We're loving that Taylah Morgan was rockin' her deady HEAL COUNTRY tee out near Suggan Buggan earlier in the year, and stoked that she's happy to share the pic with all of you, too. Love your work, Taylah!

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

There's plenty of ways to get involved at GLaWAC and plenty of events coming up. Note these dates in your diary and keep an eye on our Facebook page and the events page of [gunaikurnai.org](http://gunaikurnai.org) for all of the latest details.

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
<b>JUNE</b>		
<b>Mabo Day</b>	3 June	
<b>Audit Risk Finance sub-committee</b>	7 June	Forestec
<b>Our Country sub-committee</b>	14 June	Forestec
<b>Board Meeting</b>	21 June	Forestec
<b>JULY</b>		
<b>NAIDOC Week</b>	3-10 July	
<b>NAIDOC March</b>	6 July	Bairnsdale
<b>GLaWAC NAIDOC Community Day</b>	7 July	Knob Reserve
<b>Our Country sub-committee</b>	12 July	Forestec
<b>Eco Dev sub-committee</b>	26 July	Forestec

\*While we always prefer to yarn together in person, we may need to hold some events online pending COVID restrictions.

## Clontarf providing new opportunities

Congratulations to Bairnsdale Academy members Noah Rutherford and Riley Hood who have dipped their toes in the civil industry as part of a brand new partnership with Cranes in Bairnsdale.

Cranes has been established since 1975 in East Gippsland and works all over Gippsland, currently providing jobs for over 90 people across the region.

In late 2021, the Clontarf Academy was approached by Cranes about creating some opportunities in the civil industry for academy members to see if a potential career in that line of work would be of interest.

Both Noah and Riley were involved in separate projects, enjoying the opportunity to work with heavy machinery and learn all the safety aspects of the business on their two days a week work placement while continuing their school studies the rest of the week.

Such was the success of the program, that Noah and Riley have both started school based apprenticeships in Civil Construction (Cert III) in 2022.

The Bairnsdale Academy looks forward to building a strong working relationship with Cranes to ensure continued opportunities for Academy members in the civil space, and positive outcomes created in our community.



# Our Community

## Yoorrook Commission

The Yoorrook Justice Commission is the first formal truth-telling process into injustices experienced by First Peoples in Victoria.

### What will it do?

Yoorrook will look into past and ongoing injustices experienced by Traditional Owners and First Peoples in Victoria in all areas of life since colonisation.

### How to have your say?

We encourage all First Peoples to participate in Yoorrook's work. All ways of telling your truth are of equal importance. All contribute to Yoorrook's work.

Yoorrook will begin by hearing from Elders first. Yoorrook is grounded in and will be guided by the cultural authority of our Elders, who have long advocated for truth-telling. Therefore, we are starting our truth telling by listening to them and hearing their experiences. Nuther-mooyoop (submissions) from Elders will open on 26 April 2022.

An initial group of Elders will also provide their truth at a wurrek tyerrang (public hearings) also commencing on 26 April 2022. Yoorrook will invite all other First Peoples to tell their truth in the second half of 2022. The broader Victorian community will also be invited to participate.

You can tell your truth in the best way for you, including:

- Making a nuther-mooyoop (submission). This can be in any form, such as writing, an audio or video recording, or through a truth-telling object such as an artwork, cultural artefact, or photo. You can make a nuther-mooyoop as an individual, family, community or Traditional Owner group. You can find out more information about making a nuther-mooyoop further down this page.

- Joining a truth-telling forum, such as a yarnning circle or workshop, round table, cultural site and community visits or cultural activity. Yoorrook will advertise these forums as its work progresses.
- Being a witness in a wurrek tyerrang (public hearing). Witnesses will be invited by Yoorrook based on their direct experiences and perspectives on matters within Yoorrook's Terms of Reference and preparedness and readiness to engage in truth-telling in a public setting. Broad representation across families, communities, regions, gender and other characteristics will also be taken into account.

### What can I express in my nuther-mooyoop?

You can express anything you like about your (or your family and community's) past or current experiences of systemic injustice. You can make your nuther-mooyoop as an individual or as a group.

Nuther-mooyoop can take any form you choose. It can be:

- a written account
- a photo
- a video or audio recording
- a story or poem
- a recording of a dance or song
- a submission or letter you sent to a complaints body, other agency or previous inquiry
- a truth telling object, such as an artwork, cultural artefact, or something that you have made
- any other form of expression you wish to share

You can make your nuther-mooyoop electronically. You can also give or loan Yoorrook a physical truth telling object, like an artwork or cultural artefact.

### What will Yoorrook do with my nuther-mooyoop?

Yoorrook will use the information in your nuther-mooyoop to tell the story of how colonisation has impacted First Peoples, the strength and resilience of First Peoples, and the survival of cultures, knowledge and traditions. Your truth-telling will also help us make recommendations for healing, system reform and practical changes to laws, policy and education.

Yoorrook protects the information rights of First Peoples through our Indigenous data sovereignty protocols. You can choose whether all or only parts of your nuther-mooyoop are used by Yoorrook on the website, in publications, or displayed at events.

You can also choose whether the parts that can be used are used with your name or anonymously. You will be asked to decide how you want your nuther-mooyoop to be treated by Yoorrook.

**GLaWAC will be supporting members to get ready for truth telling by sharing skills and knowledge to make your own video's and audio recordings. For one day a week over the course of 4-6 weeks, we'll be discussing how to make oral history recordings and give you all of the technical know-how to record your own story. Keep an eye on our Facebook page and website for more information.**





# Our Community

## Supporting our members

Do you need a little support with school uniforms, camp costs or tools for your trade? Maybe you're looking to get your small business idea off the ground?

GLaWAC provides business support, together with a range of sponsorship and education scholarship opportunities for members and community initiatives.

GLaWAC can also provide assistance towards the funeral costs of a Gunaikurnai person to help alleviate the financial burden placed on families of the deceased as a result of funeral expenses.

To find out more, call GLaWAC on 5152 5100 or head to the elders and members section at [www.gunaikurnai.org/our-community](http://www.gunaikurnai.org/our-community)



# Our Culture

## Cultural Hub Update

We wish to begin by acknowledging and paying respect to those families who have lost loved ones in recent times. We send them our love and best wishes in their journey of healing.

The Cultural Hub team have been kept busy during the past months working on partnerships with a variety of different groups to provide opportunities for Gunaikurnai artists to get involved in public art projects throughout the settlement area. We are starting to see the profile of GLaWAC being recognised through these collaborations with key community groups and stakeholders.

There has been a high demand in Cultural Awareness training within all sectors of the community and the continuing rise in requests for Welcome & Smoking ceremonies. We appreciate the support from the community presenters who we engage to deliver these important services. Recently we mailed out to

members an Expression of Interest letter offering opportunities for members to sign up and register to become involved with this program. We welcome your support.

We continue to support a range of community activities and initiatives that help promote and support Gunaikurnai culture, history, and identity. We will also keep working on planned community gatherings as part of our annual GLaWAC calendar of events and work closely with other community Aboriginal organisations to coordinate a big week of activities during NAIDOC Week.

**GRATTAN MULLETT,**  
General Manager Culture

## Rail trail gets arty

East Gippsland is set to welcome a public art experience which will transform objects, tunnels and structures housed along the East Gippsland Rail Trail, running from Bairnsdale to Orbost. The project is a collaboration between Collingwood-based creative studio, The Social Crew, and local Aboriginal artists focussed on drawing awareness to the stories of the landscape and community.

Throughout the project, visiting artists will learn from the local artist collective and community through a cultural awareness program which includes artists sharing the methods in their practice, storytelling, introduction to

the local environment and an understanding of land management and preservation. In turn, visiting artists will share learned practices with locals, encouraging confidence in presenting works at a larger scale, with connection to story. The result being shared storytelling through public art.

Five local artists have been engaged to start working on concepts designs, and we encourage any interested Aboriginal artist to contact the Cultural Hub and join us if you want to learn about stories on Country and developing your artistic talents on larger scale.

"Having artists come together on Country in a collaboration like this, to learn about the Traditional Custodians and the history of the landscapes, will really give the artists inspiration and understanding of the stories that will be depicted in the artwork. When travelling through that part of Country, experiencing sensory elements of touch, see, hear and smell, the artists are contributing to the connection and honouring local stories through art."

**ALICE PEPPER,**  
Community Engagement Coordinator





# Our Culture



## Gippsland Performing Arts Centre

The Cultural Hub liaised closely with Latrobe City Council in the lead up to the grand opening of the new Gippsland Performing Arts Centre (GPAC) in early March. The event was a huge success and featured Elders engaged in cultural services and storytelling, and a number of Aboriginal artists and groups from across Gippsland performing over the four-day opening festival.

We look forward to building on our partnership with GPAC who are keen to work with Gunaikurnai artists through GLaWAC's Artists Register on other creative opportunities in the future.



## Conserving Gunaikurnai Collections

The Culture Hub collections are growing, and our team continue to build better knowledge around managing cultural heritage collections such as books, photographs, maps, language and artworks.

Staff members Angela Solomon and Sue Wesson recently visited the Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV) which has been looking after the records created by Victorian government agencies from 1836 to the present day. They also visited the State Library of Victoria and the Melbourne Museum.

At PROV, they saw some of the 105 kms of records, found out about the most important thing to do with paper records - put them in a cardboard box - and were shown great hospitality by the Koori Unit staff and the other collections managers.

At the State Library of Victoria, Maxine Briggs shared priceless photographs taken at Coranderrk Aboriginal Mission

Station in the 1860s, which included many Gippsland people. Maxine pointed out that both the Bringing Them Home Report and the Deaths in Custody Report speak of the importance of being able to access cultural heritage on Country as part of restoring connections; and she was able to recommend digital solutions to archive Gunaikurnai records, and film and sound recordings.

At the Melbourne Museum, Angela and Sue met with First People's Collections staff including Shannon, Didi, Nancy and Melanie and were shown around the Birrarung Gallery. At the next visit, our team will learn more about the process of conserving, recording, and archiving of a variety of items from the GLaWAC collection.

All the organisations and their staff were really enthusiastic about GLaWAC's journey in collections management and are keen to provide support and follow our progress.





# Our Country

## NRM Update

The NRM Crew are keeping busy and keeping growing, with plenty of projects on the go and plenty more lined up for 2022.

We've got 25 people, working across three teams – natural resources, roadside maintenance and major projects - based in Kalimna West and our new Morwell depot.

Up in the hills, we've been controlling weeds on the Wonnangatta and Buchan Rivers, and along Firestone Creek in Briagalong, where teams of four walk downstream spraying weeds to protect the health of the waterways by making sure they don't crowd out the native plants.

We've also been working to monitor fox control efforts across Lake Tyers State Park, Mitchell River National Park, and Holy Plains State Park to protect native animals and their habitats in partnership with Parks Victoria.

Shout out if you've seen the roadside maintenance crew as you've been driving through East Gippsland? They've been getting around the place, working at Lake Tyers, Nungurner, Raymond Island and Newlands Arm over the summer as part of our contracts with the Shire, DELWP and Cranes.

The Landscaping crews have been working right across Country. They've installed a small culture garden at Warragul Hospital and supported the team at Wulgunggo Ngalu to upgrade their nursery facilities. Partnering with the JM team, they've been busy creating 'Clan Culture Gardens' at Tarra Bulga National Park, the Knob Reserve, Raymond Island and Buchan Caves.

**NIGEL PEARCE, NRM Manager**





# Our Country Valley Expansion

We're stoked to introduce the newest members of the Latrobe Valley crew – the Morwell-based NRM Team Annie Carter, Rhys Djukich, Sandra Fenton, Zac Gorrie and Blake Hood- who join Uncle Lloyd Hood, Tim Paton and Lisa Hocking working from Brayakaulung Country.

It has been an amazing start for the crew, who have spent the last couple of months improving the health of Traralgon Creek and the Warragul River – mowing, mulching, and working to get the waterways back to their best possible state.

Rhys admits he wasn't quite sure what to expect when he went for the job.

"I knew GLAWAC but didn't really know what I'd be doing, but I've been really enjoying it. There's been a lot of people that spot us, and lots of comments on how well the creeks and stuff are looking. It's been really good to show them what we're up to."

There's plenty of work on and plenty of learning too, with each crew member soon to start their Certificate III in Conservation Land Management.

With so much potential, we hope to be offering more positions in the Valley in months to come to make sure the right people to speak for Country are also the people working on Country.



"I can't wait for the next crew to come down, and we'll be there with them. We'll guide them, help them, show them the ropes, the same way we learned, and yeah, just look after them."

**BLAKE HOOD**

"I think it's really good for us to be able to heal the country and learn about our culture, especially about our ancestors and the land that we're living on and who owns the land, and I think it's good for us to be able to tell our stories."

**RHYS DJUKICH**

"Growing up, I didn't really know much about my country and culture and all that stuff. So learning for me, learning things as I go is one of the big, big things that I really like."

**SANDRA FENTON**





# Our Country - water

## CULTURAL WATER

What does Country need along the Mitchell River? What do you want to see happen with the water Government has returned to the Gunaikurnai?

GLaWAC has started meeting with community on Country, yarning about what this Gunaikurnai cultural water might mean for Country, and mean for you.

We will need a plan – a cultural water plan– for this water.

Finally, through owning water, Gunaikurnai members can make decisions about how, when, if and for what purpose that water could be used. A Water Plan for the Mitchell will be prepared as the voice of the Gunaikurnai about how cultural water on the Mitchell River will be managed.

GLaWAC's water team have already had some meetings on Country with the GKTOLMB, and with Gunaikurnai Community members along the Mitchell, and there will be more.

Anyone who wants to have a say can contact Nicky Moffatt, Tim Paton or Alice Pepper at GLaWAC on 5152 5100.

Also, Alice Pepper and Cath Thomas have been talking about going on Country on the Mitchell to talk about women's business. Again, if you're keen to be involved, sing out.

**In 2020, the Victorian Government handed back water to Traditional Owners for the first time when it returned two billion litres of water to GLaWAC on the Mitchell River.**





# Our Country - water

## Leading the way on the Gippsland Lakes

Congratulations to Glenys Watts, the first Gunaikurnai woman to be appointed Chair of the Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee (GLCC) by the Victorian Government.

It's the first time that a Traditional Owner has been appointed to chair the committee and highlights our deep connection and strong leadership on the management of traditional lands and waters.

Never heard of the Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee before? You're not alone. The GLCC was formed in 2015 by the Victorian Government to help coordinate community and agency efforts to maintain or improve the health of the lakes system; it works to identify where investment is needed and oversees a variety of on-ground programs.

The committee is guided by the Gippsland Lakes Priorities Plan, Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site Management Plan, Gunaikurnai Whole of Country Plan and the East and West Gippsland Regional Waterway strategies.

Over the next three years, the committee will oversee a budget of \$7.5 million in state funding to continue improving the health of the lakes through on-ground management projects and community engagement.

Congratulations also to Katherine Mullett on her appointment to the Board, together with Dr Jessica Reeves and Christine Wrench. They join Glenys, Arthur Allen, and representatives from GLaWAC and the East and West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority's to ensure that the precious lakes system is protected for future generations.





# Our Country

## Cultural Heritage Research

The JM Rangers have had an opportunity to work beside Professor Bruno David and Dr Jeremy Ash from Monash University recently, undertaking archaeological works within the Mitchell River National Park. This has been a great experience for the team to work alongside those guys who are sharing their western scientific knowledge to discover more about our old people and the ways they used and moved through Country.



## JM Update

### BUSHFIRE RECOVERY CREW

Using trail cameras around Lake Tyers State Park helps us monitor the variety of animals that are nearby and lets us identify what pest species are around so we can determine the best ways to manage them. It's always exciting to see what comes up on the infrared cameras but equally frustrating when we see Sambar deer or feral cats show up, knowing the damage they're doing to the land.



### TRAINING

In January, JM Rangers Kevin Hood and Mick Farnham, attended a 2-day workshop with the CSIRO Oceans & Atmosphere unit. Working with two juvenile white sharks, that had previously been found washed up on a stretch of 90-mile beach and been stored in a large freezer in Phillip Island, the Rangers helped to examine the animals, complete necropsies on them and sharing knowledge with the team from CSIRO.

### FIVE CLAN CULTURE GARDENS

The JM Ranger team have been very busy making upgrades to our parks and reserves right across the settlement area.

Together with the NRM landscaping crew, we've created a number of Five Clan Cultural Gardens – at Corringlie, Knob Reserve and Tarra Bulga, so far - with more planned for 2022. Once new signage is installed, the gardens will help visitors to Country learn more about the history and stories of our people.



# Our Country

## JM Update

### GLASSHOUSE LANDSCAPE DESIGN PLAN

The JM Rangers are helping guide the development of the Landscape Design Plan for the Glasshouse Campground at Lake Tyers State Park. The plan builds on the goals of the Lake Tyers Camping and Access Strategy to ensure that cultural and environmental values are protected and recreational opportunities and facilities for visitors to the campground are improved. The plan is due for completion in the early part of 2022.



### SHORELINE DRIVE LANDSCAPE PLAN

Within the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park, the number of visitors to the Shoreline Drive area continues to grow and the damaging impacts to the physical and cultural landscape are becoming unsustainable. The Shoreline Drive Landscape Plan has been developed to ensure that visitors can enjoy a sustainable beach camping experience, while significantly reducing the harmful impacts on the cultural heritage, local ecology and visitor experiences.

To guide the development of the Landscape Plan, the GLaWAC JM Ranger Team undertook archaeological surveys throughout the Shoreline Drive camping areas to ensure cultural values are protected. The team have recorded a number of new midden sites and following advice from the RAP team, some of the areas previously used for camping have now been closed to protect these sites into the future. Although some areas will have had camp sites reduced, others areas have seen an increase in camp site numbers, this means there will be minimal reduction in campsite availability overall.

### BUCHAN CAVES RESERVE SITE CONCEPT PLAN

Working together, GLaWAC and Parks Victoria are continuing to develop the Buchan Caves Site Concept Plan.

Through engagement with Gunaikurnai Elders, and guided by GLaWAC staff, the plan looks to create a presence and feel to the caves reserve by improving the cultural interpretation throughout the joint managed area. This will ensure that the broader community understands that the caves reserve is on Gunaikurnai Country and a part of the joint managed estate which GLaWAC manage on behalf of the community. It will also mean the caves reserve will become a great place for our community to get out on Country to relax and camp or experience a cave tour.

The plan expected to be finalised over the next few months and for those interested to be able to access from the JM section of [www.gunaikurnai.org](http://www.gunaikurnai.org).



The goal of visitor experiences at Shoreline Drive is to provide accessible, sustainable beach camping experiences including fishing and beach walks.



# Our Organisation

## Who's who

With your organisation growing so rapidly we thought it would be helpful to put some faces to the names. Some you'll recognise, some you won't. These are the women and men, working across four locations and five different departments, to connect community to Country and culture.

### But wait there's more

Not everyone loves having their photo taken but that doesn't mean we're not gonna give them a shout out anyway! These are the GLaWAC staff who know best how to avoid a camera:

Thomas Dalrymple  
Derek Hayes  
Dylan Siely  
Jessica Shapiro

Reginald Saunders  
Lisa Hocking  
Malcolm Siely  
Mark Kenny

Zach Gorrie  
Patrick Mullett  
Vu Nguyen  
Steve Hood

Aaron Hanuera



Alfie Hudson



Alice Pepper



Angela Solomon



Annette Avron-Cotton



Annie Carter



Blake Hood



Brendan Pearce



Bronson Ritchie



Cade Brickler-Krizanac



Cath Thomas



Cl Solomon



Corey Jack



Daniel Miller



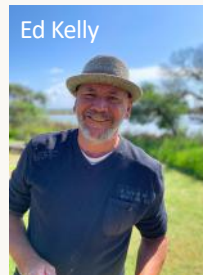
Daryl Carter



Doug Hood



Ed Kelly



Grattan Mullett Snr



Harley Finn



Harley Wanganeen



James Mullett



Trey Parsons



Jason Wilson



Jordan Harrison









# Our Economy

## Oysters anyone?

Victorian grown Sydney rock oysters could be back on the menu for shellfish lovers thanks to a new aquaculture partnership between GLaWAC and the Victorian Fisheries Authority.

Together, we've begun a three-year trial of Sydney rock and Angasi oysters in the Gippsland Lakes to assess the viability, growth rates and eating qualities of the two species.

Despite the name, Sydney rock oysters are native to the Gippsland coast and grow wild in the Gippsland Lakes where they are the dominant oyster species.

Also native to the lakes, Angasi are a premium species, almost identical to the French Belon, which is regarded as one of the finest eating oysters in the world.

Shellfish have been a staple of coastal people's lives for thousands of years. This native oyster trial forms another chapter in the story of Gunaikurnai procuring a traditional source of food. It helps support our community to reconnect to culture, and it brings the prospect of much needed local and long-term jobs.

It's never going to be like it was 200 years ago. But the act of doing it – maintaining that meaningful connection to land and water - that is the key part.









## 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