

## HIGHLIGHTS OF ISSUE 40

- Welcome to Wangun
- 500 generation ritual practice
- NAIDOC Wrap Up
- Pathways to Partnerships





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# Joint Update from the GLaWAC Board Chair and CEO

Dear Members and Friends,

I want to start by acknowledging the Sorry Business that our community is enduring – the Cultural burden is massive. On behalf of the GLaWAC Board and myself our thoughts are with you all.

We hope you enjoyed the recent Wangun Amphitheatre opening (p15) and this year's NAIDOC Family Day (p6). Both events were a tremendous success. We always value your ideas on how these events come together, so if you'd like to contribute to the planning committees, please don't hesitate to reach out.

GLaWAC was represented by Troy McDonald, Katherine Mullett and myself at the AIATSIS Summit 2024, which was held in Naarm (Melbourne). The Program theme 'Celebrating Indigenous Brilliance: Then and Now' provided some great topics and insights.

GLaWAC contributed directly to sessions on:

- First Nations Peoples' participation in the clean energy transition – practical consideration or agreement making and associated opportunities
- Sea Country and offshore energy
- The Victorian Traditional Owner cultural landscape strategy

We should all be extremely proud of this work and with how we are respected among other Prescribed Body Corporates (PBC's).

Conferences like this offer a great insight to learn from other First Peoples' organisation, build relationships, and explore new possibilities. Recently, GLaWAC has also participated in and presented at several key forums, including:

- Australia Wind Industry Summit
- Gippsland New Energy Conference
- First Nations Clean Energy Symposium
- First Nations Land and Water Management Forum
- Australian Sea Country Conference

We continue to progress the RSA Re-Negotiations having taken a stance with the State to progress matters with more rigor and absolution. The negotiation team has provided the State with clear aspirations, we are now awaiting the State's response. Once we have further updates, we will share them with you.

A lot of work is going into GLaWAC's strategic direction, the long-term picture. We are working hard to ensure the sustainability of the organisation, building a future where self-determination and the prosperity of the Gunaikurnai people are supported for generations to come.

As always, we welcome your thoughts and encourage you to get involved. Please keep an eye on our Facebook page and website for job opportunities or come in for a yarn at the Cultural Hub in Kalimna West or Morwell.

**TROY MCDONALD and DANIEL MILLER**





# GKTOLMB Update

The TOLMB plays a big role in supporting GLaWAC's aspirations and Cultural Heritage work.

One of the really important projects we help fund is research at New Guinea II Cave, near the Snowy River. This is where GLaWAC and scientists have found proof of the Old Ancestors living there for countless generations. One exciting discovery was the finger fluting rock art on the cave walls, which has attracted attention from all over Australia and beyond. The TOLMB is paying for testing of materials from the cave, which will take about six months and help us learn more about how the caves were used and how the environment has changed.

The Board is also funding aerial photography along the coast at Nooramunga in South Gippsland. This helps GLaWAC Rangers and the RAP (Registered Aboriginal Party) team figure out where important cultural sites are and which areas are at risk from storms and rising sea levels. They're also funding the RAP team to do on-ground work to find, record, and protect sites that have significant heritage.

Another project the Board is helping with is the cultural work at Buchan Munji. This includes the work of GLaWAC Rangers and the Natural Resource Management crew. The Board is also supporting the planning for a new visitor centre that will teach people more

about Gunaikurnai history. Over the next few years, this centre will tell the story of our long connection to Country.

On top of these projects, the TOLMB is working with other partners to write new Joint Management Plans (JMPs) for the parks. Recently, Glenys, Lena, Lisa, and Marianne went to the First Nations Land and Water Management Forum in Darwin to learn what other mobs are doing with their plans. They met with other Traditional Owners, Elders, and rangers to share knowledge on keeping old ways alive while using new technology to care for Country. The work being done here on Gunaikurnai Country is setting a great example, and some new ideas from the forum will make the next JMPs even better. The forum also gave them a chance to connect with community members living in Darwin.

The TOLMB currently has a spot open for a Gunaikurnai person to come on board. We meet 6 to 8 times a year, often on Country, to monitor the JMP and look for ways to bring more Country under Gunaikurnai care. If you're interested in joining the TOLMB, contact Daniel Miller.

## Gunaikurnai TOLMB



GKTOLMB members, GLaWAC rangers, and Parks Victoria rangers visiting Buchan Munji after flood damage was cleared.







# Our Community

## BLAK, LOUD AND PROUD!

What an amazing NAIDOC Community Day we had at the Knob Reserve!

Thank you to everyone that made the day so amazing - from the performers to the suppliers to all you mob that could join us.

In no particular order, and with apologies to anyone we've missed, huge shout out to:

Kelvin Moffatt, Shay Terrick and Taylor Dow for your Welcome to Country, Uncle Wayne Thorpe for the Smoking, the Gadhu Dancers, Cultural Connections, and the Boorun Boys Dance Group for dancing up a storm, Harley Finn, Fonzie Patten, and Matt Walker for keeping our toes tapping, Black Snake Productions and Wacky Wombat Entertainment for bringing the fun for young and old, and Da MOB 3875, Gail Mounsey, Ringo Morgan, and Susan & Kylie Martin for sharing culture.

And how deadly were the t-shirts designed by Doug Hood?! Kindly handed out by the awesome crew of Lizzy, Margie, Dotty, Joanne, Nancy, Derek, Robyn, Fiona and Grattan.

Finally, to all the GLaWAC crew who contributed their everything in the weeks and months leading up to NAIDOC, you've simply outdone yourselves and we couldn't be more thankful or any prouder!

**It really does take a village, and we can't wait to do it all again next year!**





# Our Community





# Our Community





# Our Community





# Our Community





# Our Community





# Our Community



## An Update on the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria

Hey South East mob,

Since 2019, the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria has been having the yarns and conversations with communities right across the state – gathering ideas and feedback about the shared journey to Treaty.

Now, we're getting ready to finally sit with Government to start the first round of Treaty Negotiations!

So there's never been a more important time to have your say and show your support by enrolling!

Here's a quick overview of who we are and how we got here:

The Assembly is a group of 33 democratically elected First Peoples who are all Traditional Owners of Victoria tasked with getting Treaty done.

Self-determination is at the heart of everything we fight for, and everything we do.

We have a strong culture of leadership in our mobs, and when we say we stand on the shoulders of giants, we mean it. And we are very proud of that fact.

We want communities to have the power and freedom to make the decisions that affect them.

This could be everything from using local knowledge to care for land and keeping culture strong to improving the way services like health and education are delivered.

### So how does Treaty work?

There will be multiple Treaties in Victoria.

Traditional Owner Treaties are between Traditional Owners and the State.

They are designed to reflect the specific needs and wants of communities. For example, Gunaikurnai could be part of a Treaty that reflects their own needs and aspirations.

That's because Treaty won't take a 'one size fits all' approach, different communities will have different priorities.

**Traditional Owner Treaties** across Victoria will make sure local knowledge can inform decision-making at a community level, but those negotiations will unfold over the coming years at different paces.

So at the moment, the Assembly is focusing on the second type of Treaty – the Statewide Treaty.

The Statewide Treaty will focus on strengthening the Assembly so it can drive positive structural change to improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

### Those negotiations are getting underway now!

There are some things we already know that we are going to push for in the Treaty negotiations – based on the many discussions to date and all the feedback we've received from mob across the state. But there are many topics and asks that we are still working on and we want your feedback!



# Our Community



## So, what are the next steps?

We're running a series of gathering across the state, and will continue to hold yarning events. We do this because know Treaty must be strong, robust and inclusive. If you want to attend those events, make sure to sign up to our newsletter, or check out our website.

In a nutshell, for a long time, we have seen government after government make decisions about us. Now we are entering into the era where that will no longer be the case. It will be mob making decisions for mob.

So, if that sounds deadly to you mob and you want to get more involved, make sure you are enrolled with us!

It's the best way to show your support, and of course makes it easier to have your say and you can vote in our elections.

You can enrol at: <http://firstpeoplesvic.org/enrol>

**PS – you really want to be on our email list, because we have a big deadly event in store for the Gippsland area in early 2025 which you won't want to miss!**





# Our Culture

## Cultural Hub Update

The Cultural Hub team, made up of myself, Paula Morrison, Shay Terrick, and Paula Harrison, has had an incredibly busy and productive few months.

Unfortunately, we've also seen a lot of Sorry Business across community, so we want to acknowledge and pay 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 Culture Hub continues to provide cultural advice and guidance, building strong connections with schools, stakeholders, and the wider community, as well as delivering cultural programs and site visits on Country.

A key highlight has been our work with schools in the region, where we're collaborating on the planning and design of cultural elements in several key locations. This project will extend into 2025, with continued input from our community leaders and members.

We're also excited to see a growing demand for cultural awareness and on-Country visits from mainstream service providers. Many are incorporating these initiatives into their Reconciliation Action Plans, recognising the importance of building respectful relationships with our community and increasing cultural awareness in their organisations.

This not only strengthens ties with Gunaikurnai people but helps them better support and employ Aboriginal community members.

On the community side, we continue to work closely with our presenters and staff to manage service requests for Welcomes, Smoking ceremonies, and cultural awareness training. Our dedication to delivering these services with pride and respect remains a cornerstone of our work.

Looking ahead, we are collaborating with East Gippsland and Latrobe City Councils to plan events for the Seniors Festival in October. We'll be holding two events, one at Forestec and another in Morwell, and invite all Elders from our communities to participate. Details will be shared when available to ensure everyone can attend.

The Cultural Hub team is committed to supporting community led activities, and we'll continue to keep you updated on upcoming events and workshops in the months ahead.

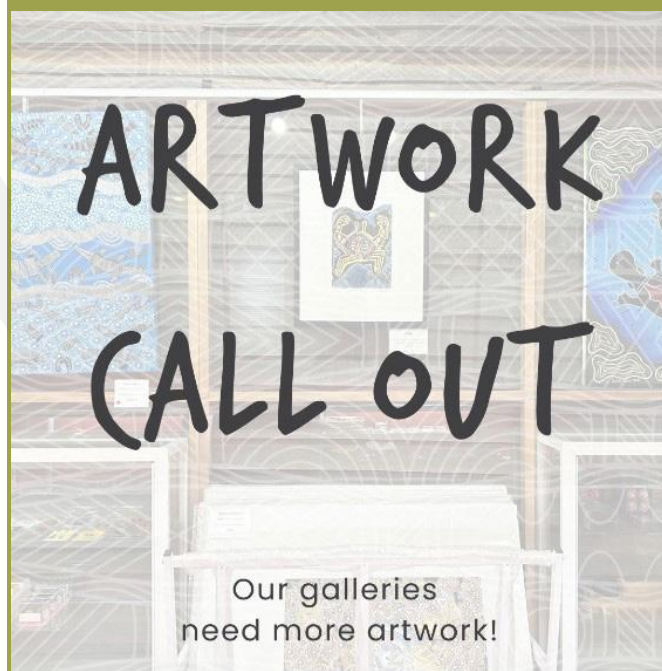
**GRATTAN MULLETT**

## CALLING ALL ARTISTS

**Would you like to sell your artwork through our Aboriginal Art Gallery at Kalimna or Morwell?**

We have lots of visitors who are keen to support our local artists and we can barely keep up with demand! Please let us know if you would like to feature your artwork in either of our two galleries.

**Give Sidney Murray a call on 5152 5100 to find out how to get involved.**





# Our Culture

## Wangun welcome

So great to welcome everyone to the Wangun Amphitheatre opening in June.

Such a deadly chance for us to get together and celebrate this beautiful new community space.

The rain had us a little nervous but cleared in perfect time to enjoy a full ceremony in the round before a big feed and cultural workshops back in the warmth of the building!

As with all these things, it takes a village so now to the shout outs...

Kelvin Moffatt, you were incredible kicking off the day, Uncle Wayne Thorpe, thank you for the Welcome and Smoking and to all of the amazing dancers from Boorun Boys and Gadhu Dancers, and the incredible women from the Djaadjawan Dancers, we were captivated!

Thanks to the Bush Cafe for the delicious lunch and Big Bear Donuts for the coffee and treats.

Firing up the culture indoors, thanks to Fonzie Patten and Monica Jasmine for your musical stylings, and Bradley Brown and Alfie Hudson busy with your paint brushes!

Thanks to the Victorian Government's Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program and the Regional Infrastructure Fund for helping us bring the dream of this amazing space for community to gather and share culture to reality.

And finally, thank you to everyone who came along.







# Our Country

## Unearthing rituals at Cloggs

In a landmark partnership, the GunaiKurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) and Monash University researchers have unearthed evidence of rituals dating back 500 generations at Cloggs Cave near Buchan on Krauatungalung Country.

The findings, published in the scientific journal *Nature Human Behaviour*, uncovers profound insights into our rich heritage as one of the world's oldest living cultures.

The archaeological excavations revealed two small fireplaces, each with a shaped single stick embedded within. The upper fireplace was the size of the palm of a human hand, with a trimmed *Casuarina* stem partially burned amidst the ashes. The second fireplace, buried deeper in the deposit, also contained a single trimmed *Casuarina* stem, this one shaped with an angled-back end like on a throwing stick.

In a remarkable find, chemical analyses revealed that both sticks had been smeared with animal or human fat, and date back to 11,000 and 12,000 years ago respectively, marking the end of the Last Ice Age.

Alfred Howitt, a government geologist and pioneer ethnographer from the 1800's provided detailed descriptions of such fireplaces, used during ritual practices of Mulla-mullung, powerful GunaiKurnai medicine men and women.

The ritual involved fastening something belonging to the sick person to the end of a throwing stick smeared in human or kangaroo fat. The throwing stick was then stuck slanting in the ground before a fire was lit underneath it. The Mulla-mullung would then sing a ritual chant, and once the stick fell, the charm was complete.

Importantly because of the powers associated with that tree, Howitt noted that the stick was made of *Casuarina* and that "the practice still exists".



# Our Country



RAP Manager and GunaiKurnai Elder, Uncle Russell Mullett said the findings, representing cultural knowledge passed down through 500 generations, is remarkable.

"For these artefacts to survive is just amazing. They're telling us a story. They've been waiting here all this time for us to learn from them. A reminder that we are a living culture still connected to our ancient past. It's a unique opportunity to be able to read the memoirs of our Ancestors and share that with our community."

Professor Bruno David from the Monash Indigenous Studies Centre at Monash University, said the findings are a testament to the endurance of GunaiKurnai cultural practices and oral traditions.

"The connection of these archaeological finds with recent GunaiKurnai practices demonstrates 12,000 years of knowledge-transfer," Professor David said. "Nowhere else on Earth has archaeological evidence of a very specific cultural practice whose performance is known from Elders and ethnography previously been tracked so far back in time."

An earlier excavation at Cloggs Cave was undertaken in the 1970s, at a time when Traditional Owners were not consulted about excavations on Country.

Uncle Russell Mullett believes it's time for GunaiKurnai to reclaim the stories and better understand the ways of the Old Ancestors.

"Today, GLaWAC and Monash University are showing what a true Traditional Owner-led partnership should look like. It's only when you combine the Western scientific techniques with our traditional knowledge that the whole story can start to unfold."

The findings demonstrate that despite millennia of cultural innovations, GunaiKurnai also passed down cultural knowledge for countless generations, and have done so since the Last Ice Age and beyond.



# Our Country

## Journey through time

In May, students across Country embarked on an extraordinary journey, thanks to GLaWAC's cultural heritage research team and an immersive planetarium show.

**"The Earth Above: A Deep Time View of Australia's Epic History"** transported students through 140,000 years of Australia's past, blending Indigenous knowledge with scientific insights. Featuring the story of Mulla-mullung (Gunaikurnai medicine men and women) from Cloggs Cave near Buchan, the experience made history come alive in a way textbooks never could.

Primary and secondary students from Orbost, Bairnsdale, Sale, Churchill, and Warragul were captivated as they learned about Country inside a huge inflatable dome. One class was so impressed they gave the show a "lying down ovation"—a testament to how engaging the experience was.

Produced in partnership with the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for Australian Biodiversity and Heritage (CABAH), Deakin Motion Lab, and three other First Nations communities, the show featured four significant locations:

- Girraween Lagoon on Larrakia and Wulna Country, NT
- Lake Mungo on Barkandji/Paakantyi, Ngylmpaa, and Mutthi Mutthi Country, NSW
- Jigurrurru (Lizard Island) on the Great Barrier Reef
- Cloggs Cave on Gunaikurnai Country

The public also flocked to Bairnsdale West Primary for a chance to experience the planetarium, showing a deep interest in learning about the rich history of our living culture.

For Uncle Russell Mullett, GLaWAC RAP Manager, sharing Gunaikurnai culture with the younger generation is crucial:

"Our people have always been storytellers. The Dome gives us a unique way to share the stories of our Old Ancestors and honour our vast cultural landscape."

Shay Terrick, GLaWAC JM Ranger and Cultural Education Officer, who travelled with the planetarium to several schools, reflected:

"You don't usually get the opportunity to see something like that. Seeing the kids eyes light up afterwards. It was awesome."

A huge thank you to Orbost Community College, Bairnsdale West Primary, Gippsland Grammar, Kurnai College, Warragul North Primary, and all the schools who participated.

What a magical way to inspire future generations to appreciate and respect Australia's deep cultural heritage!





# Our Country

## A sign of the times

Our JM Rangers have been hard at work installing brand-new bush tucker signs on Gragin (Raymond Island) in the Gippsland Lakes Reserve. These signs, placed along the nature walk created by our Business Enterprise team, sit proudly next to the plants they represent.

This project, part of our Joint Management Plan with Parks Victoria, is all about Gunaikurnai leading the way in caring for Country and sharing knowledge with those visiting our 14 joint-managed parks and reserves.

These new signs aren't just informative—they're a deadly way to put our language and culture back on Country.

Big shout-out to Cath Thomas, who has driven this project from the beginning, connecting community to culture and Country in a powerful way!

"As a Gunaikurnai Ranger, you play a crucial role in preserving and sharing your rich cultural heritage and the natural beauty of the lands you manage. Your work not only helps protect the environment but also educates visitors and fosters a deeper appreciation for the Gunaikurnai culture."

## Preserving Sea Country's Past

We're proud to be protecting our cultural sites across Katungal (Sea Country), combining traditional knowledge with modern approaches.

Now, we're continuing this vital work by using innovative tools to monitor and map the places that hold the stories of our Ancestors. With the support of Professor Bruno David, who's been awarded the prestigious Australian Research Council Industry Laureate Fellowship, we're stepping up our efforts to safeguard these coastal treasures from the risks of rising seas and erosion.

This is about more than just research — it's about strengthening our skills, deepening our knowledge, and ensuring that Gunaikurnai voices lead the way in caring for Country in new and innovative ways.

Together, we're making sure the next generation can stay connected to these sacred sites, just as we have for thousands of generations.





# Our Country

## Working with purpose

We're not just about work—we're about caring for Country and creating real opportunities for our mob. Our Business Enterprise team puts in the hard yards, restoring land and waterways right across Country.

In Buchan, we've planted over 2,000 native shrubs, grasses, and trees to combat erosion and bring back natural habitats. At Fairy Dell, our civil crew has revamped the roads and carparks to improve visitor experiences, while across the Gippsland Lakes, we're protecting native vegetation and removing invasive species.

It's not just about the land. The Wangun Amphitheatre surrounds got a deadly new garden and glass water feature

designed by Doug Hood, thanks to our landscaping team.

As crew member Corey says,  
"Getting paid to keep fit and look after Country doesn't feel like work when you enjoy it."

It's this spirit that fuels our efforts and commitment to caring for Country—and we want you to be part of it! Whether you're into





# Our Country

civil works, landscaping, or environmental care, we've got loads of opportunities and the training to help you build your skills.

As Willow Carter, Manager of the Business Enterprise team puts it,

"You'll be working alongside family here. We have an experienced crew who will help you learn and support you along the way."

## Interested?

Call Willow on 5152 5100 to find out more.



## Sharing knowledge

Our team recently spent two incredible days on Country, training with DEECA's Southern Ark program, who have been working to suppress fox numbers in East Gippsland for 21 years now.

Their work to reduce fox numbers is instrumental in supporting the resurgence of small mammals in Victoria, helping them bounce back from the brink of extinction, especially after the devastating 2019/2020 bushfires.

At GLaWAC, we reckon it's crucial to support the recovery of native species on Country, so it's great to be able to see how other programs are tackling the problem, and to learn more about the ways of the small mammals, birds and reptiles we're working to protect.

The Southern Ark crew were keen to share their knowledge of the interconnectedness of our bushlands.

Small mammals play a crucial role in the ecosystem, digging up underground fungi and spreading spores. When fire sweeps through, new fungi spread beneath the nutrient-rich ash layer, sparking a cycle of regeneration and growth.

Plants, including grasses, shrubs, and trees, have a unique association with fungi, which grow in their roots, helping with nutrient uptake. This symbiotic relationship is vital; without it, seedlings are weak and prone to disease.

Both, our Valley and Kalimna crews participated in the workshop, sharing their own diverse experiences about pest management in Lake Tyers State Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park.

This program is part of a partnership agreement between GLaWAC and DEECA, aimed at building the capacity of our Natural Resource Management (NRM) crew as we continue to care for Country.





# Our Country

## Talking Towera

Jack Smith Lake on Brayakaulung Country is an ancient Gunaikurnai hunting ground, now managed by Parks Victoria and the Game Management Authority. At GLaWAC, we've been uncovering how the Old Ancestors used this place before Europeans arrived, and a pretty deadly story is emerging!

At the same time, the landscape is now helping to empower our young ones to reconnect with culture. Recently, our Towera (fire) crews from East and Central Gippsland came together to put fire on Country at this place, many for the first time!

Towera has been used to care for Country for countless generations, and now it's helping to heal our mob. You can be sure we'll be watching to see how the cultural landscape reacts over time, and we'll always honour our intrinsic responsibilities to Country, culture and community.



## Following in the Footsteps

Our Elders have worked hard, and fought for so long, for recognition, and they're still fighting for a self-determining future.

It feels so good that we are able to show them what we can do now - practice our Culture, on our Country.

To our Elders, we value and appreciate the work you do all day every day to guide us.





# Our Organisation

## WELCOME NEW STAFF

As GLaWAC continues to grow, we're excited to introduce several new team members who are ready to help shape our future success!

We're thrilled to have **Ronan Hudson**, **Shadow Alderton**, and **Jade Hewat** join our RAP team to help protect our cultural heritage under the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006. We're excited to see the positive impact they'll bring to upcoming projects.

In September, **Heather Hood** joined us as the **Economic Development Support Officer** at the Morwell Business and Community Hub. Heather's role is all about connecting our community and your aspirations to the projects and services GLaWAC provides.

At Forestec, **Fiona Hammond** stepped into the new role of **General Manager Business Services**, bringing strategic financial leadership to support the growth of our organisation. Fiona was joined by **Michelle Khoo**, our new **Finance Officer** since July, who brings sharp attention to detail and a wealth of knowledge to support our financial operations.

We're also excited to welcome **Mick Stephenson** as our new **OHS Coordinator**, ensuring the safety and well-being of our staff, and **Callum Morton** as the **Facilities and Assets Manager**, overseeing the care of our physical assets.

**Michael Woods**, our new **In-house Lawyer**, brings a wealth of experience in commercial, corporate, and environmental law. He'll focus on key areas like RSA Re-negotiations, offshore wind developments, and protecting GLaWAC's legal rights and interests.

Please join us in welcoming these new team members as we continue to support the aspirations of our Elders and community toward self-determination!

## It's that time of year again!

We're inviting all members to the **GLaWAC Annual General Meeting**, and we'd love to see you there.

**DATE:** Friday 22nd November

**TIME:** 11am-1pm

**PLACE:** GLaWAC at Forestec

It will be a great opportunity to catch up with everyone, hear about the important work that's been happening, and be part of shaping our future as Gunaikurnai people.

Plus, it's always nice to see familiar faces and connect with community.

Come and celebrate the success stories and make your voice heard. We look forward to seeing you on the 22nd!

## Welcome back, Cath!

Cath Thomas has returned to GLaWAC after a 2.5-year secondment with Parks Victoria, where she built a strong partnership between GLaWAC and the Parks team. Her time away opened doors for other JM Rangers to step up into leadership roles and gain valuable experience.

Reflecting on her time at Parks Victoria, Cath says, "I'm grateful for the chance to work with a team that quickly became like family. Together, we completed projects I'm really proud of, like installing cultural gardens in JM parks, placing bush tucker signs along the Koala Loop Trail, and designing new park entry signs."

Now, back at GLaWAC, Cath is focused on cultural tourism. With her experience as a tour guide and cultural educator, she's keen to help the Gunaikurnai community build businesses and create job opportunities that tie into GLaWAC's tourism plans.

"I'm so excited about what's ahead for cultural tourism, and I'm committed to creating opportunities that will benefit our community for generations to come," says Cath.





# Our Economy

## Healing Wurruk after coal

It's a pivotal few years for Wurruk (Country) as the long-term plans for life after coal mining are being developed.

This is a critical time to ensure that Wurruk is healed and a vision for a better future is realised. We want your voice to be heard by government and mine operators. But it's hard to understand the scope of challenges Wurruk faces in remediation when the mine lands have been locked behind fences and gates for generations.

That's why we're getting mob back onto this Country, to see it in person and understand the scale of the remediation actions required. In August we ran two bus trips to Yallourn mine for mob which meant around 30 community members, from Elders to teenagers, got to see it for themselves.

In partnership with Federation University, GLaWAC will be hosting discussion forums for mob to share their views on potential future land uses for mine lands. If you're interested in those discussions, or future mine tours, get in touch with the Eco Dev team to register your interest.





# Our Economy

## Empowering First Nations Entrepreneurs

Supporting First Nations entrepreneurs and business owners to dream big and grow stronger – that's what the Aboriginal Entrepreneurs Workshops are all about!

In partnership with StartUp Gippsland, and led by the inspiring Hollie Johnson and Shaun Mallia, the day was filled with passion, knowledge-sharing, and genuine connections. Yarning together in a safe, supportive space, we exchanged business ideas, networked, and left with new skills and motivation to take our businesses to the next level.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined us. Together, we're creating a brighter future for Aboriginal businesses across Gippsland!



## Join Us for the Final Cuppa and Yarns of 2024!

Ever wondered what it's like to work on a wind farm out at sea? At our August Cuppa and Yarns, we got a taste of it through virtual reality! From boat rides to scaling ladders and elevators, all the way to standing atop the turbines, we saw what the future of Gunaikurnai Sea Country could look like from a whole new perspective.

Our last Cuppa and Yarns for the year is on Wednesday, November 20th at the Community Hub (235-237 Princes Drive, Morwell). No need to register—just come along, grab a cuppa, and have a yarn with us about the energy projects you're curious about.

Let's share stories and shape the future together—see you there!



## Oil and Gas decommissioning

ESSO Australia is working on plans to decommission some of their offshore oil and gas assets and GLaWAC is building our understanding of what this means for Katungal and Wurruk. If you want to know more, or want to share your thoughts on decommissioning, we want to hear from you. Get in touch with the Eco Dev team or the Katungal team for a yarn.



# Our Economy

## Pathways to Partnership

GLaWAC recently launched **Pathways to Partnership: Gunaikurnai and Major Projects**, at the Gippsland New Energy Conference.

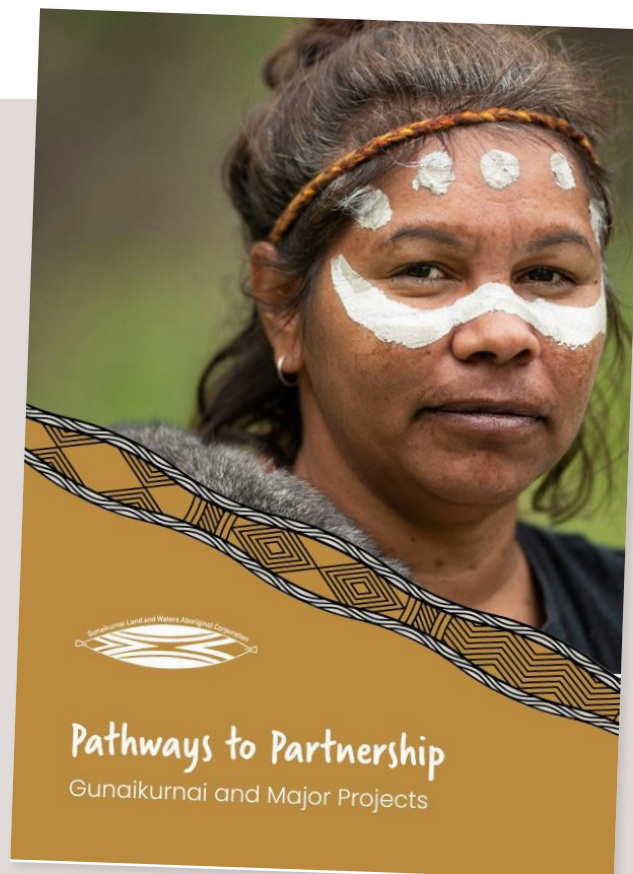
We know what you're thinking, what good is another strategy, isn't it just a waste of time?

Well, not this time!

Truth is that in the past our community has been excluded from energy and other major projects that have been developed on Country.

What we're interested in is a transition from exclusion to collaboration, a pathway that integrates our mob into project planning right from the start.

Pathways to Partnerships identifies the steps for project proponents to take to work with GLaWAC - start with showing respect, develop trust, agree on shared values of protecting Country and cultural heritage, develop partnerships, and finally, deliver best-practice agreements to lock in the positive outcomes for everyone involved.



You can find a copy of Pathways to Partnership on our website – [www.gunaikurnai.org](http://www.gunaikurnai.org)



## FUTURE ENERGY MAKERS IN THE MAKING!

As more renewable energy projects are proposed on Gunaikurnai Country, we want our kids to imagine how this could shape their future. During NAIDOC Week, we had the little ones building wind turbines and electric cars—there were plenty of focused faces, followed by big, proud smiles once they finished! Who knows, we might just have some future wind blade technicians or engineers in our midst.



# Our Economy

## A new energy for a better future

Gunaikurnai should be at the table for all decisions about our Country. It's crucial for government and industry to recognise our intrinsic connection to land and waters. As Traditional Owners, our voice and perspective are essential in shaping the future of major projects that impact our Country.

To emphasise this, GLaWAC hosted a private dinner with offshore wind farm industry leaders ahead of the Gippsland New Energy Conference held in the Valley last month.

The take home message? Partnering with Traditional Owners is not only a matter of social justice, it's part of being a responsible corporate citizen. Strong partnerships with Gunaikurnai are key to ensuring that these developments benefit all community and protect our cultural heritage.

At the conference, CEO Daniel Miller addressed industry, government, and community members about the importance of forming genuine partnerships that respect Gunaikurnai values. He was joined by Minister Lily D'Ambrosio and Paul Johnson from Star of the South, who both echoed the need for collaboration with GLaWAC in the energy transition.



GLaWAC also contributed to key discussions throughout the conference. Katherine Mullett spoke on the importance of cultural heritage in major projects, while Tanya Taylor joined a panel discussing the need for diverse and inclusive workforces. These contributions reinforced the message that when it comes to decisions on our Country, Gunaikurnai should always have a voice at the table.





## 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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