

THE BULDAU YIOOHGEN PROGRAM PRESENTS

BIG DREAMS

EMBRACING CULTURE AT ANGLICARE VICTORIA

BULDAU YIOOHGEN NEWSLETTER

MAY 2022



WELCOME

Wominjeka Cabbe Melemungil

Narrin ik Kellie

Welcome to our newsletter, how great these last few months have been for Buldau Yioohgen (BY) to be back out running our On Country camps and events with our Anglicare Aboriginal young people and their families.

COVID-19 permitting, we have been very fortunate to be able to run our Culture on Court events and our first ever exclusive Aboriginal Hike to Higher Education camp.

We have been very fortunate to have met some amazing young people who have been able to start their Cultural Journey experiencing new activities and meeting up with other Aboriginal young people from all over Victoria.

The Buldau Yioohgen crew are here to support every Aboriginal young person that is part of Anglicare Victoria. Come be part of the BY mob in creating a community that is supportive, safe and immersed in culture.

Ngoon Godgin

Kellie Hunter

Senior Cultural Operations Lead

FOUNDED BY ANGLICARE VICTORIA





AV'S FIRST ALL ABORIGINAL MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

25th Hike to Higher Education a voyage of discovery

"I've grown up with not much culture in my life. I've started to come in and learn all about it, and it's special," said 15-year-old Rhys. Rhys was one of the all-First Nations mob of young people who went on the 25th Hike to Higher Education with Buldau Yioohgen in March.

The group travelled to beautiful Maria Island off the east coast of Tasmania with AV staff and mentors from places like SBS, RMIT, the University of Melbourne and Victoria Police.

There they hiked, climbed and yarned with local Aboriginal Elder Uncle Linton Burgess from the Tassie Parks and Wildlife Service, who welcomed them to Country with a Smoking Ceremony. And for the first time the group travelled to an ochre site on the island, where they broke up into men's and women's business.

Like Rhys, most of the young people hadn't had much connection to their culture growing up. So they were excited to discover their heritage, as well as being inspired towards further education after they finish school.

"There is no shame in coming along and not knowing who your mob is or what your totem is or anything like that. This is where you can start learning and becoming confident and empowered in who you are as an Aboriginal person," said Aunty Kellie, AV's Senior Cultural Operations Lead.

"It's an amazing place here and it's nice when it comes around dark and you just sit down, listen to the waves, look at the stars – beautiful," Rhys said.

"During the trip I heard Aunty Kellie say that, "Culture will find us" and I can say undoubtedly that I witnessed everyone allowing Culture to find them and that they embraced these moments as they came." –David G, Aboriginal mentor, University of Melbourne

"The weight off my shoulders was lifted when the medicinal smoke of the palawa gums touched my face. I've come from a place of stress and anxiety at large, but the smoke reminds me of a warm compress from my ancestors, and the Palawa ancestors welcoming me into sovereign land." – Jasper, AV Intern, Media team.



"This trip was an unbelievable experience, I've learned so much and met some amazing people. This has been an experience that I will carry with me for the rest of my life. I loved the heavily cultural aspect and the opportunity to meet new mob and make new friendships." – Participant

CULTURE ON COURT AND COUNTRY

In November last year, Tennis Australia's "AO on the Road" tour partnered with the Buldau Yioohgen program to bring more community and culture to regional courts across north-east Victoria.

Over four days, the tour saw the Australian Open's Norman Brookes Challenge Cup (men's singles) and Daphne Akhurst Memorial Cup (woman's singles) trophies travel by boat on the Dungala River (the Murray for white fellas!). The trophies journeyed across traditional lands and made stops at tennis courts in Echuca, Koondrook, Pental Island, and Swan Hill. Each stop featured a community event celebrating culture and tennis for everyone.



Country, and the imparting of cultural values from Elders to Indigenous young people.

"Our young ones being on Country is the start of their own personal healing process. The Dungala trip along the river is a fantastic change for our Aboriginal young people to immerse themselves in culture and connection to Country, and feel empowered and proud of who they are. After a tough couple of years, we are looking forward to working with Tennis Victoria and Tennis Australia ahead of the Australian Open this year." –Uncle Ian, Cultural Ambassador, AV



The culture-led partnership between Anglicare Victoria, Tennis Victoria, Tennis Australia, and Buldau Yioohgen aims to provide a unique experience for a group of young people to make a connection to Country, and develop a sense of pride and belonging in their community.

Elders Aunty Pam from Yorta Yorta, Uncle Dixie from Barkunji and Uncle Ron Murray from Wemba-Wemba each welcomed the entourage onto their respective Traditional Lands as the tour progressed. Camping along the river provided profound benefits for the entire mob: being together again after a long two years of social restrictions, opportunities to observe artefacts and cultural landmarks across



FIRST NATIONS DAY AO

BULDAU YIOOHGEN AT AUSTRALIAN OPEN'S FIRST NATIONS DAY

Thirty-five Indigenous children and their families from across Victoria participated in a world-class experience at the first-ever First Nations Day held at the Australian Open 2022.

Rhys and Lewis from Buldau Yioohgen worked as ball kids, while the rest of the children and their families were treated to painting, live music, tennis lessons and even a meeting with local champ, Ash Barty!

On being one of 360 ball kids selected from more than 2500+ applications for the Australian Open, Lewis said, "It's really fun when you get out on court, I wasn't as nervous as I thought I'd be!"

David Law, Program Manager of Buldau Yioohgen said, "the tennis world is not just for elite players, it's a game for all. The aim for us is for these kids to leave with confidence and know that they can participate in any event, challenge and sport they love.



First Nations elders and First Nations children take part in the Kids on Court, ANZ Hot Shots event. Photo credit Tracey Nearmy/Tennis Australia



Felix Auger Aliassime (CAN) had a hit with 12 year old Angus in between the pillars painted by Indigenous artist Maggie Jean Douglas. Photo credit Fiona Hamilton/Tennis Australia



Ash Barty (AUS) poses for photos during First Nations Day at Melbourne Park in Melbourne on Wednesday, January 19, 2022. Photo credit Rob Prezioso/Tennis Australia

“This couldn’t have happened without Tennis Australia and Tennis Victoria – these kids and families wouldn’t normally have these sorts of opportunities. Hopefully in a few years, we’ll see some more Ash Bartys running around on the courts!”

- Kellie Hunter

“We hope everyone involved gained a sense of pride in their own culture, and that their culture will go with them everywhere they go, walking in both worlds,” he said.

Kellie Hunter, Senior Cultural Operations Lead, said that “everyone was buzzing” on the day.

“I got a call from the mum of three of the little ones who participated on the day. She asked me if I could help get them into tennis because they just loved it that much,” Kellie said.



First Nations Elder Uncle Ron Murray plays tennis and music with the didgeridoo as First Nations children take part in the Kids on Court. Photo credit Tracey Nearmy/Tennis Australia



Uncle Ian Goolagong, Cultural Ambassador for Buldau Yioohgen, with young participants.

STAFF HIGHLIGHT

SHAWANA ANDREWS, AV'S FIRST INDIGENOUS BOARD MEMBER

At the end of 2021, AV welcomed Dr Shawana Andrews as its first Indigenous Board Member. Shawana is a Palawa Trawlwoolway woman with a strong connection to her culture, community and country in Tasmania.

As Director and Associate Professor at the Poche Centre for Indigenous Health at the University of Melbourne, and Associate Professor at the Department of Social Work, Shawana is an excellent fit for the agency. With a professional background in paediatric health social work and public health, she brings deep knowledge of the social welfare system.

“Through my voice, I want to reflect community needs, wants and desires, which is really all around family.”

Shawana innately understands the journey to strengthen identity and connection to culture that young Aboriginal people embark on with Buldau Yioohgen. Shawana grew up knowing her identity but had to forge new relationships and connections to country. She has done this and is now strong in her identity as a member of Melythina Tiakana Warrana Aboriginal Corporation. One highlight that continues today is their annual family trip to Tebrakunna, north-east Tasmania, where Shawana's children now learn cultural practice and language and celebrate their ancestors on Country.



Shawana is passionate about amplifying the Aboriginal voice and cultural safety across AV's agency and supports Buldau Yioohgen's work to change the "deficit narrative" about Aboriginal people and raise our expectations for our young Indigenous people.

“You can be well educated, have a well-paid job and drive a fancy car—and you can be strong in your culture as well; you are not somehow a lesser Aboriginal person. The two can sit together.”

If you are interested in hearing more about anything you've read in this season's newsletter, please contact the BY program via **email: by@anglicarevic.org.au**

anglicarevic.org.au



OUR FOCUS IS ON TRANSFORMING THE FUTURES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE, FAMILIES AND ADULTS. OUR WORK IS BASED ON THREE GUIDING PILLARS, PREVENT, PROTECT, EMPOWER.

**BETTER
TOMORROWS**