

THE BULDAU YIOOHGEN PROGRAM PRESENTS

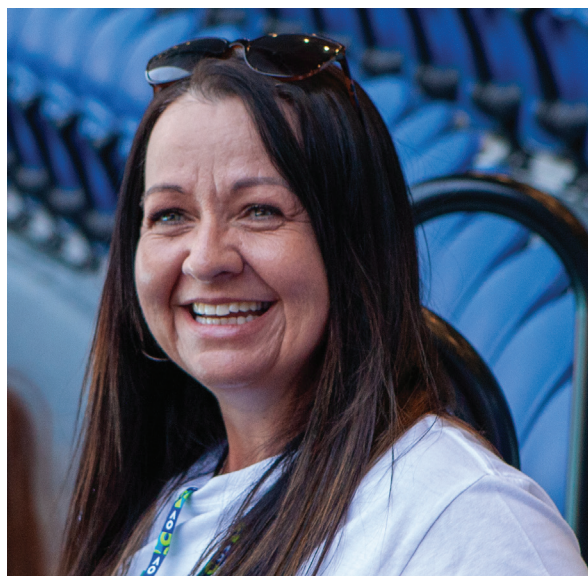
BIG DREAMS

EMBRACING CULTURE AT ANGLICARE VICTORIA

BULDAU YIOOHGEN NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2022

WOMINJEKA CABBE MELEMUNGIL NARRIN IK KELLIE



Welcome to the Buldau Yioohgen newsletter

Firstly, a warm welcome to Wiradjuri man Les Corlett, our new Cultural Aboriginal Engagement Advisor for Buldau Yioohgen.

It's been another impactful few months for the BY program and our Aboriginal young people from Anglicare Victoria. Buldau Yioohgen ran our Lake Mungo Cultural Experience in May, then the Narrm Southern Experience and on to Darwin in August for the National Indigenous Tennis Carnival. We have been very fortunate to have Uncle Ron Murray, a Wemba Wemba man, join us with our "On Country Camps" this year sharing and teaching his cultural knowledge with our young people.

Culture on Court ran again in November, this time in Castlemaine on the Jarra Country of the Dja Dja Wurrung People. Everyone that participated had a Deadly time having a hit of tennis and coming together as a community sharing a feed and a yarn. Big thanks to the Bendigo District Aboriginal Cooperative (BDAC) and Tennis Victoria, who teamed up with BY to run the day.

Thank you to the friends and family of Buldau Yioohgen for your support and we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.

See you all in 2023!

Ngoon Godgin

Kellie Hunter

Senior Cultural Operations Lead

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“CULTURE, CONNECTION, RESPECT”

During August, 12 young people journeyed with BY to Darwin for the National Indigenous Tennis Carnival (NITC). Bringing together 230 young people from every state and territory in Australia, the NITC is the country's largest gathering of up and coming Indigenous tennis players, as they serve, volley and slice their way around the courts during a jam-packed program of activities.

Along with the tennis matches, there was an opening concert with Indigenous music duo Electric Fields, the opportunity to meet Grand Slam champions Ash Barty and Evonne Goolagong Cawley, and a variety of culturally immersive experiences with the BY mob.

Aunty Kellie was pleased to hear feedback from the other states about how respectful and welcoming Team Victoria was across the event.

“We came second out of all the states and two of our kids were in the grand final and had to play each other. They loved it, and were all out playing, even though the temperature was sometimes up to thirty-four degrees”
– Aunty Kellie

To round off the trip, the BY mob were Welcomed by Larrakia man, Kim Mulholland for a cultural workshop at the Litchfield National Park. It was part of an unforgettable trip to the waterholes and termite mounds, fostering a deeper connection with their Indigenous heritage and culture.

Congratulations to everyone who went – with such an epic show of teamwork and respect, they did themselves proud.



“We had a Smoking Ceremony down on the beach and then Kim took us out to the ocean for a Sea Cleansing. The Cleansing is when you get your sweat and put it in the water, letting the ancestors know that you're here on Country” – Aunty Kellie



THE ART OF CULTURAL CONNECTION

When Buldau Yioohgen's new Cultural Engagement Officer, Uncle Les Corlett, went on a trip to Walhalla in Gippsland with Aunty Kellie recently, he was surprised to see a familiar face painting under a bridge.

Uncle Les has known leading Aboriginal artist Uncle Ray Thomas for years, and even commissioned him to do a huge painting for the Children's Court of Victoria. Uncle Ray is a proud Gunnai man. He is a highly acclaimed, self taught Victorian Aboriginal artist. Uncle Ray has won numerous awards as a painter with his works of art incorporating traditional Gunnai designs and imagery.



Even Aunty Kellie, who claimed not to be very good at art, did a Deadly painting of Bunjil the Eagle Creator with Uncle Ray's help.

"All the young people and staff had a lot of fun exploring their artistic skills. Uncle Ray was amazing, inspiring those who came along and helping them to paint different totems. It was fantastic to see everyone connecting and exploring their culture through his painting and his teaching, so hopefully this will be the first of many workshops," Aunty Kellie said.

Chelsea (pictured) enjoyed the painting so much she asked if she could get a photo with Uncle Ray and the BY mob at the end of the day.



His work includes large murals at the Northcote Town Hall, VAHS and several wall murals behind the Aboriginal Advancement League. Last year his work was even featured on an art tram for Melbourne's RISING festival.

In Walhalla, Uncle Les asked Uncle Ray whether he would run BY's first ever painting workshop for Aboriginal young people from Anglicare Victoria. He didn't hesitate to accept.

In November a keen group of young people gathered at the Darrango yan-dhan Cultural Centre in East Melbourne, with Uncle Ray guiding them to paint animal totems.



WELCOME TO BULDAU YIOOHGEN, UNCLE LES CORLETT!



Buldau Yioohgen's new Cultural Engagement Officer, Uncle Les Corlett, was thrown straight in the deep end when he started in his role earlier this year. Uncle Les and the Buldau Yioohgen mob travelled to Darwin to take part in the National Indigenous Tennis Carnival (NITC) and then on to Litchfield National Park to meet with local Elders to experience a deeper connection to culture and heritage. (see story earlier in this newsletter).

"The young people were very interested in listening to Elders speaking about their culture and they were so respectful to them, which was great to see," Uncle Les said.

He also helped to organise BY's first ever Aboriginal art workshop with Uncle Ray Thomas in November. It was a strong start for the proud Gunditjmara and Wiradjuri man, who has dedicated his career to working with Indigenous young people to overcome challenges within their family and communities.

Growing up, Uncle Les felt a disconnection from his cultural heritage, coming through his teenage years without a full sense of his identity or cultural story. Driven by lived experience, Uncle Les now strives for positive change and outcomes for Buldau Yioohgen's young people.

Uncle Les previously worked across a range of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), including the Aboriginal Advancement League, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA), and most recently as a Conciliation Conference Convenor with the Children's Court of Victoria. In his career, he has seen the positive impact of culture on the lives of young people.

Les is looking forward to bringing a therapeutic side to Buldau Yioohgen in 2023, supporting young people to build mental health resilience and leadership skills as they foster their connection to culture.

He believes in supporting Indigenous youth through cultural immersion, and that BY offers a "one-of-a-kind" program which gives its participants access to a range of career pathways, rich cultural connection and an immersive leadership experience. Buldau Yioohgen is excited to welcome Uncle Les as part of the team, and the cultural engagement and knowledge he will provide to young people on their journey.



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**