

THE BULDAU YIOOHGEN PROGRAM PRESENTS

BIG DREAMS

EMBRACING CULTURE AT ANGLICARE VICTORIA

BULDAU YIOOHGEN NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2024



WOMINJEKA

Come with purpose.

Cabbe melemung'il narrin-ik Kellie.

Hello, my name is Kellie.

Since 2022, we've been travelling the state to support Anglicare Victoria (AV) staff to set up cultural spaces in their offices. We've now created cultural spaces in Bendigo, Echuca, Morwell, Box Hill, Lilydale, Preston and Broadmeadows for staff and clients to use that are culturally appropriate and safe. Every month we visit the cultural spaces to see staff and drop in for a yarn.

In May, young people in the leadership academy took part in a guard of honour for the North Melbourne Football Club during this year's Sir Doug Nicholls Round at Marvel Stadium.

In June, Uncle Ray Thomas (Gunnai) facilitated an art workshop and Aunty Trina Dalton-Oogjes (Wadawurrung) taught a basket weaving workshop in Bendigo. At Darrango yan-dhan we held a resume writing workshop with guidance from the AV recruitment team.

Ngoon Godgin (thank you) to our partner organisations for your commitment in supporting our young people and their future careers.

If you'd like a cultural space set up in your AV office, please reach out to by@anglicarevic.org.au.

Kellie Hunter
Senior Cultural Operations Lead
Buldau Yioohgen

FOUNDED BY ANGLICARE VICTORIA





CAMPING, FISHING, AND BOOMERANG THROWING ON THIS YEAR'S LAKE MUNGO CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

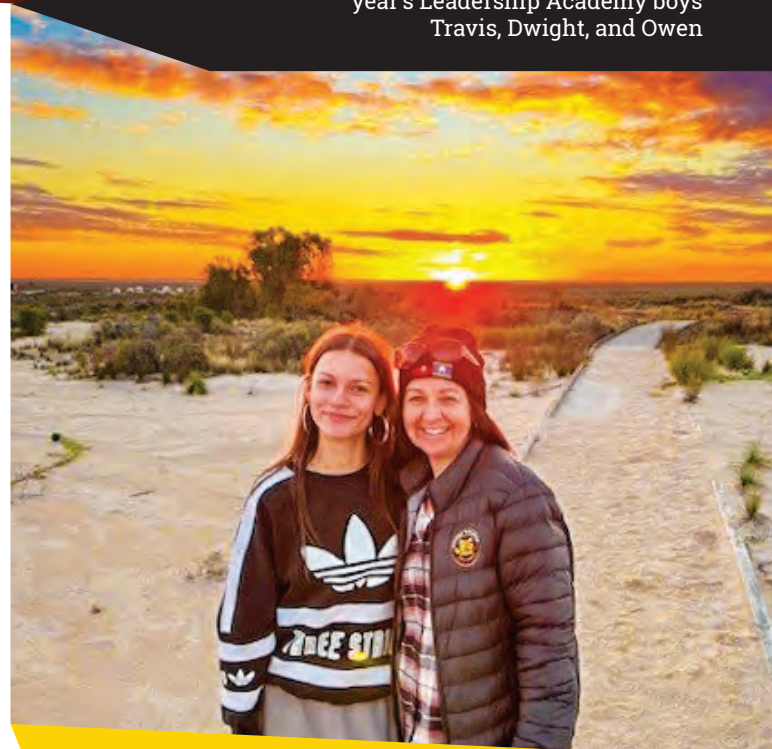


Tyrese, Buldau Yioohgen alumni, enjoying the sunset with this year's Leadership Academy boys Travis, Dwight, and Owen

Lake Mungo National Park is a historic site of First Peoples archaeological remains that set the record straight on Indigenous peoples and their custodianship of this continent dating back 42,000 years. On the homelands of the Barkandji, Mutthi Mutthi and Ngiyampaa people, the Buldau Yioohgen Leadership Academy trip marks an important milestone on the journey of each young person.

Starting the trip camping and fishing on the river side of Moulamein on Wamba Wamba country, the Leadership Academy were joined by Uncle Ron Murray, a Wamba Wamba True Custodian and a craftsman in Yidaki and boomerang making. Uncle Ron took the young people out to the local footy oval in Moulamein for a boomerang throwing session, with hand-crafted left- and right-handed boomerangs for the young people to have a go. Everyone had a crack at throwing the boomerangs and some even came back!

The cherry on top of the trip to Lake Mungo was a gorgeous sunset walk to the Walls of China, one of the most memorable sites in the ancient dry lake.



Aunty Kellie and Savanah on the boardwalk at Lake Mungo National Park

SIR DOUGLAS NICHOLLS MATCH

The Buldau Yioohgen Leadership Academy and alumni were invited to participate in a guard of honour at the Sir Doug Nicholls Round, welcoming in North Melbourne Football Club! Each young person held gum leaves in their hands after a smoking ceremony on the side of the oval at Marvel Stadium. The Buldau Yioohgen Mob wore the special guernsey for this year's Indigenous round - 'Kangaroo Way', designed by Wemba Wemba, Gunditjmara, Ngadjonji and Taungurung artist Emma Bamblett.



UNCLE RAY VISITS THE MOB IN BENDIGO AND GETS CREATIVE!

Uncle Ray Thomas is an award-winning Gunnai artist specialising in cultural designs and imagery. Uncle Ray has painted murals in the Gippsland region sharing stories and designs of the Gunnai people and their Country. His work has been seen on the Snowy River bridge at Orbost to Marlo, as well as the Stratford train bridge.

Recently Buldau Yioohgen hosted an art workshop with Uncle Ray in Bendigo for young people in Anglicare Victoria's programs.

During the workshop, Uncle Ray talked about his unique art practice and how he brings his work to life. He always comes along with a big folder of his amazing artworks displaying proud Gunnai culture.

The workshop took place in one of the many cultural centres established by the Buldau Yioohgen team across the state. Participants had the chance to paint their totem, such as the long neck turtle or the goanna, or any animal they would like.

SEEDS OF INTERNSHIPS, EMPLOYMENT AND WORK EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES PLANTED IN NARRM

The Narrm Experience, made possible by Buldau Yioohgen's corporate partnerships, is an amazing program for career development and leadership building. This year, young people in the Leadership Academy visited North Melbourne Football Club, Godolphin's Carbine Lodge, Victoria Police Academy, Eastern Hill Fire Station (Fire Rescue Victoria), Tennis Australia and the Racing.com studios.

Following last year's Narrm Experience program, Leadership Academy alumni secured internships and employment with a range of corporate partners such as Complete Office Supplies (COS), Tennis Australia for the Australian Open, and Anglicare Victoria.

The one-week experience gives the young people a chance to see the action behind the scenes at a range of organisations, from elite sporting and banking to media and emergency services.

One of AV's staff members, Tim Beissmann, volunteered with Buldau Yioohgen for the Narrm Experience this year. Tim works as a Family Support Practitioner in Bendigo and reflected on his visit to the Victoria Police Academy: "For one young participant, a tour of the Police Academy is a dream come true".

"She has her sights set on joining the force, and delighted in the opportunity to be behind the scenes and get a small taste of what life as a police officer may one day look like."

Narrm week offers the young people in the Leadership Academy a foot in the door at these organisations, with some looking for Year 10 work experience opportunities, future university internships, or full-time employment after graduation.

The week wrapped up with a visit to Tennis Australia to prepare for the National Indigenous Tennis Carnival, which will be held in the heart of Darwin. Each young person will travel to the Top End for a sporting and cultural experience on the lands of the Larrakia people.





THE NEXT YOUNG MOB COMPLETE THEIR JOURNEY TO THE SUMMIT



Flying the Aboriginal flag at the top of the Bishop and Clerk summit.

When Tyrese (Taungurung and Kurnai) came along to the Hike to the Maria Island on-Country experience with the Buldau Yioohgen Leadership Academy in 2023, he didn't expect that he'd be returning the following year to mentor the next young Mob beginning their journeys.

The annual camp is packed with hiking, bushwalks and Cultural business. Across four days of activities the young people are surrounded by the beautiful scenic views of fossil cliffs, wombats, and wallabies.

In 2024, the Buldau Yioohgen program has begun bringing alumni along to the on-Country experiences as part of the ongoing Nyarrn-gak-go ngulu-ik (Hear My Voice) stage of the leadership academy, helping them build their volunteering and leadership experience for the future.

"I only realised this year why they do it for us, to get us out of our comfort zones," Tyrese said, reflecting on the hike to Bishop and Clerk, a 10km round trip to the summit of the island.

One of the participants, Mia, was pleasantly surprised by her own endurance. "I didn't think I could do it, but I did it!" she said.

Many of the young people expressed how much they enjoyed the experience, and how beginning their Buldau Yioohgen journey by overcoming a great physical challenge as a team really set the tone for the year.

This is the third consecutive year that the Maria Island trip has been run as an Indigenous leadership camp, integrating Cultural activities throughout the trip such as visiting sacred sites and practicing Cultural business with the guidance of palawa Elders.

BIG DREAMS

EMBRACING CULTURE AT ANGLICARE VICTORIA



WOMINJEKA

Welcome.

Cabbe melemung'il narrin-ik Kellie.

Hello my name is Kellie.

Welcome to another full year of adventures with the Buldau Yioohgen Mob! We opened 2024 with the amazing First Nations Day and Kids on Court at the Australia Open. We're very proud that one of our own Buldau Yioohgen leadership alumni from 2023 successfully secured a role at the AO, working in client services.

Our first on-Country Camp on Maria Island took place in March. The young people came together as a family, supporting and building strong friendships while conquering over 40 kilometres of hiking!

Culture on Court at Melbourne Park was a great day with our partner organisations Tennis Australia, Tennis Victoria, Fire Rescue Victoria, and North Melbourne Football Club. It's great to see the numbers increasing every year at this event!

As always, a very big thank you to our partner organisations for your commitment in supporting our young people and their career opportunities for 2024. Our team are looking forward to working with you all throughout the year, building stronger partnership but creating further opportunities for our Mob.

We will see more events happening across the state this year, and we're looking forward to seeing you there!

Kellie Hunter
Senior Cultural Operations Lead



CULTURE ON COURT A REAL HIT IN NARRM



Culture Evolves and Brothers in Arms Dance Crew warm up the crowd.

Each year those in the Buldau Yioohgen program gather in the heart of Narrm for a unique opportunity – a chance to play tennis wrapped with Aboriginal Culture at the iconic Melbourne Park.

This year we were joined by Wurundjeri senior Elder Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin and her son Craig Murphy-Wandin, who opened the event with a welcoming and smoking ceremony. This was followed by traditional and contemporary dance performances by Culture Evolves and Brothers in Arms Dance Crew.

Culture Evolves hosted traditional dance workshops with the young people, teaching the emu, kangaroo and Bunjil dances to the next generation. Fire Rescue Victoria put on a great barbeque for the crowd, and the young people enjoyed taking turns to operate the sirens on the truck. And of course, there was tennis, tennis, and more tennis.

Thank you to Fire Rescue Victoria, Tennis Australia, Tennis Victoria, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, North Melbourne Football Club and City of Melbourne, who came along to this deadly event.

Look out for more Culture on Court events happening in regional Victoria throughout 2024.

Senior Elder of the Wurundjeri, Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin, welcomes the crowd to Culture on Court at Melbourne Park.



Wurundjeri man Craig Murphy-Wandin shows off a tennis racquet designed with traditional materials and possum skin ball.



BRIGHT FUTURES ON THE HORIZON AT THE AUSTRALIAN OPEN 2024

For Yorta Yorta brothers Travis, 16, and Dwight, 13, joining Buldau Yioohgen in 2024 meant a chance to further connect to their culture – together.

“We’re excited and looking forward to getting into it as soon as possible. It’s a good opportunity to go on Country and it’ll be good to have someone I’m close to there,” Dwight said, looking to his older brother.

“It’ll be fun to get out of our boundaries and learn, just having that experience together,” he said.

Travis said he hoped to expand the leadership skills he had gained at his previous football club, where he won awards for his role as team captain.

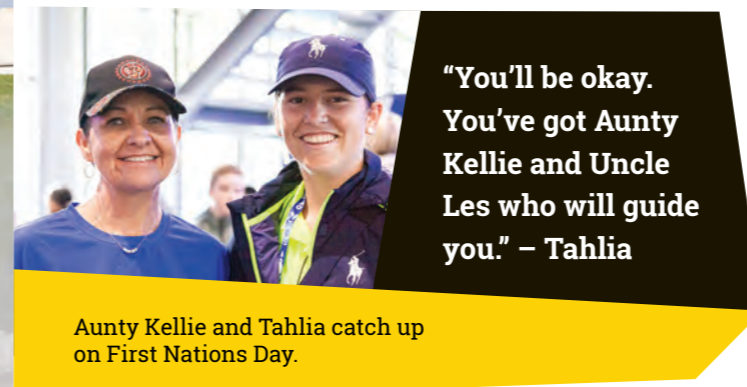
“I’d give talks to the boys, make sure they were in their positions, make sure they were following plans we’d made before the game, and make sure everyone was in a good headspace,” he said.



The hot shots have a crack at playing tennis on the courts.



Yorta Yorta brothers Travis and Dwight, joining Buldau Yioohgen in 2024.



“You’ll be okay. You’ve got Aunty Kellie and Uncle Les who will guide you.” – Tahlia

Aunty Kellie and Tahlia catch up on First Nations Day.

“My strategy was to be a good role model, show the team it’s not just individual effort, it’s about everyone chipping in and going hard in the game,” said Travis.

It’s an approach that will serve the brothers well at the Buldau Yioohgen academy. In fact, 2023 graduate Tahlia, 18, had some advice for new participants: “Jump in the deep end.”

“At first, it’s hard going away from home. I struggled a little bit, but it’s a once in lifetime opportunity. I was just so grateful to be able to join the program. So take every chance,” she said.

Thanks to the connections she made through Buldau Yioohgen, the Yorta Yorta teenager has secured ongoing employment with Tennis Australia after graduation.

Other community, cultural and sporting partners of the academy include Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative (BDAC), ANZ Bank, Seven West Media, Fire Rescue Victoria, Tennis Victoria, Victoria Police, Darley/Godolphin, North Melbourne Football Club, and Complete Office Supplies (COS).

For Tahlia, the most meaningful part of the experience comes back to the deepened understanding of Country and Culture she gained.

“It means a lot going through the Buldau Yioohgen program. At first, I wasn’t very culturally connected, but I’ve learned so much and I can take that now and share it with others,” she said.

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DECEMBER 2023



WOMINJEKA

Come with purpose.

Cabbe melemung'il narrin-ik Kellie.

Hello my name is Kellie.

What a year Buldau Yioohgen has had! It's been another amazing year filled with Cultural workshops and Culture on Court programs to build relationships with the Mob state-wide.

Our 2023 Leadership Academy participants were an absolute pleasure to walk alongside while they built on their Cultural knowledge throughout the year. They have set the expectations of what the Buldau Yioohgen program can and will deliver in 2024 and into the future.

Seeing the nine young people participate in our first graduation ceremony was a very proud moment for everyone involved. We want to say a very big thank you to our partner organisations for your commitment in supporting our young people and their career opportunities. Our team are looking forward to working with you all in the new year to create further opportunities for our Mob.

Thank you to everyone who has played a part in supporting Buldau Yioohgen, from the CEO to the directors, regional managers, team leaders, case workers, and community.

Buldau Yioohgen is about creating opportunities for everyone to dream big! See you all in 2024, stay safe and have a Deadly Christmas and a happy New Year.

Ngoon Godgin

Kellie Hunter

Senior Cultural Operations Lead

FOUNDED BY ANGLICARE VICTORIA





YALINGUTH, YALINGBU, YIIRAMBOI - BULDAU YIOOHGEN'S INAUGURAL PARTNER CONFERENCE

In October, Buldau Yioohgen hosted our first ever Partner Conference. The theme of the two-day conference was Yalinguth, Yalingbu, Yiiramboi, which means Yesterday,

Today, Tomorrow in the Woiwurrung language.

The event was hosted by Darley/Godolphin at their historic Northwood Park facility and began with Welcome to Country from Taungurung Elder Aunty Jo Honeysett and a Smoking Ceremony. Uncle Kim Mulholland (Larrakia and Yanyuwa) came along to discuss the science of Aboriginal Culture and spiritual well-being, and Tyrese Walsh (Taungurung and Kurnai) spoke about how participating in the leadership academy had changed his life.



It was fantastic to catch up with our partner organisations, including Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative (BDAC), Tennis Australia, Fire Rescue Victoria, Tennis Victoria, Victoria Police, Complete Office Supplies and North Melbourne Football Club.

These organisations have provided career experiences, volunteer opportunities and facility tours for our young people throughout the year, allowing them to gain an insight into the different pathways that are available to them.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: BDAC

BDAC has collaborated with Anglicare Victoria and the Buldau Yioohgen program for many years and in 2023, two staff members and two young people from BDAC took part in our Leadership Academy. Our partnership with BDAC helps us strengthen relationships, broaden perspectives and deepen Cultural connections, and we look forward to working with them again in 2024 and beyond.



A MAP OF IDENTITY: YOUNG PEOPLE REVIVING THE POSSUM SKIN CLOAK

In October the Buldau Yioohgen Leadership Academy hosted our first possum skin cloak workshop, rebirthing the thousand-year-old tradition of mapping the identity of its owner and the stories of their Clan and Country. Prior to colonisation, cloaks began as a few small skins together wrapped around the baby, with new skins added over time as the person grew, along with their stories. Cloaks were designed for the lifetime of the individual and often held 40-70 skins sewn together at adulthood. In this way, the cloak is more than an item of clothing – it is a map of identity.

Over the course of four Buldau Yioohgen on-Country experiences, the participants were tasked with designing and etching their story onto one pelt per camp, to eventually sew the four pelts together at the closing of the year.



The workshop was facilitated by Bobbie Pepper, who assisted each young person to sew their skins together to form a shawl. Bobbie, a Wotjobaluk, Gunaikurnai woman with ties to Taungurung, has a background in creating and delivering Koorie Leadership programs and leading the Taungurung Youth Group called Wayilak Bayubarring meaning 'youth round circle' in the Taungurung language.

In the mid-1800s, government-issued cotton blankets replaced many of the individual possum skins owned by communities. They were neither warm or dry, and so the practice of creating the cloak was thought to be lost. With pieces of knowledge from communities across the south-east of the continent, the information to craft the cloak has slowly been re-established from the grassroots.



One young person on the day expressed their joy that they could pass on this knowledge to their younger siblings, taking extra materials so that their family could have a go when they returned home.

Following the workshop, the handcrafted possum skin shawls were handed to each young person at the inaugural Buldau Yioohgen Leadership Academy Graduation in November. The event was held at Melbourne Museum for families, carers, and friends to attend alongside all nine graduates, to wrap up the year. Each young person was presented with a certificate of completion, a stole in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag colours, and a gift bag of Indigenous products.



BULDAU YIOOHGEN LEADERSHIP ACADEMY 2023 ALUMNI



JASMINE HEYWOOD
(Gunditjmara)



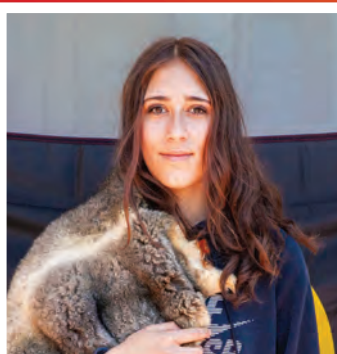
TRAVIS MELDRUM
(Yorta Yorta and
Wamba Wamba)



LUCIA GAUCI
(Kurnai Gunai)



GUNDITJMARA PROCTOR
(Gunditjmara)



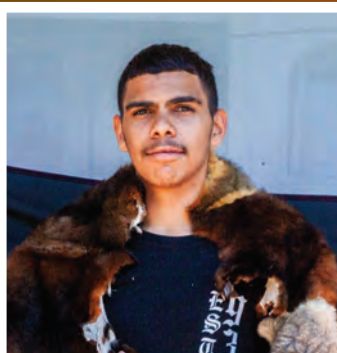
AMBER WALLACE
(Kuku Yalanji
and Yidindji)



MATTHEW FARRANT-GLASS
(Muthi Muthi, Tati Tati and
Wiradjuri)



TAHLIA WHEATLEY
(Yorta Yorta)



DAMIEN HAYES
(Madi Madi, Yorta Yorta,
Gunaikurnai and Gunditjmara)



TYRESE WALSH
(Taungurung and Kurnai)

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OCTOBER 2023



WOMINJEKA

Come with purpose.

Cabbe melemung'il narrin-ik Kellie.

Hello my name is Kellie.

It's been an amazing year working with the Leadership Academy. The Buldau Yioohgen team have been busy making some memorable moments with our young people from across Victoria. We are so proud of all nine young people who participated in the Leadership Academy this year. We've watched you grow, and build confidence to become leaders in your community.

Thank you to our partner organisations for your commitment in supporting our young people and their career opportunities. Buldau Yioohgen are here to support every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young person that is part of Anglicare Victoria.

Since the last newsletter we have been running a range of cultural workshops with a great attendance from community. Don't forget to check your emails for the next upcoming events. If you're not on the mailing list, please email us to get onto it.

The next First Peoples Staff Network meeting is at Darrango yan-dhan on Wednesday 22 November. We'll be choosing a name for the group together, so don't forget to join in and come with suggestions. Please email us to register your attendance.

Ngoon Godgin

Kellie Hunter
Senior Cultural Operations Lead





EXPLORING CAREER PATHWAYS ON THE NARRM SOUTHERN EXPERIENCE

In June, nine young people joined Aunty Kellie and Uncle Les at Darrango yan-dhan for the Narrm Southern Experience. Narrm, meaning scrub in the Woiwurrung language, is the name given to the Melbourne area by the Wurundjeri people. Over four days they had the opportunity to visit some of Buldau Yioohgen's corporate partners and learn about the careers of other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

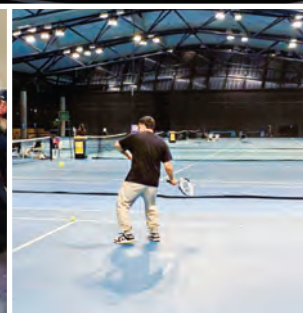
The week began with a trip to the ANZ Centre for a tour of their amazing facilities, including the art gallery, basketball courts and boardroom. We heard from inspiring speakers from across the organisation who shared where they came from and how they got to where they are today. One of the highlights of the day was playing basketball upstairs with an amazing view of Docklands.

We also visited Darley Stables at Northwood Park, chose some new runners at Rebel Sport thanks to Tennis Victoria, and enjoyed a Money Minded session with Uncle Les.

Later in the week we toured the Victorian Police Academy in Mount Waverley and the Eastern Hill Fire Station, before finishing up with a visit to Seven West Media and the North Melbourne Football Club.

A huge thank you to all our partners who made the Narrm Southern Experience possible:

- ANZ
- Darley Stables
- Tennis Australia
- Taungurung Land and Waters Council
- Victoria Police
- Fire Rescue Victoria
- Seven West Media
- North Melbourne Football Club



BULDAU YIOOHGEN HEADS TO THE TOP END FOR THE FOURTH NATIONAL INDIGENOUS TENNIS CARNIVAL

10 young people from Buldau Yioohgen jetted up to the Darwin International Tennis Centre on Larrakia Country in August to attend the National Indigenous Tennis Carnival (NITC).

The NITC was led by 14-time Grand Slam Champion Evonne Goolagong Cawley (Wiradjuri) and aims to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture, Community and wellbeing. Over 160 young people from every state and territory took part in four days of tennis for players of all abilities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture was woven through the event, which was packed with activities such as basket weaving and spear throwing, as well an opening performance from BARKAA (Malyangapa and Barkindji).

We also participated in a three-hour cultural workshop with Yanyuwa and Larrakia Elder Uncle Kim Mulholland. Uncle Kim spoke about cultural healing, and how the maintenance of cultural practices in young people can lead them on this path.

UNCLE RAY THOMAS BRINGS HIS DEADLY ART SKILLS TO MORWELL

We were thrilled to welcome Uncle Ray Thomas back to Buldau Yioohgen recently for another of his deadly art workshops. A highly acclaimed self-taught artist and proud Gunnai man, Uncle Ray has won several awards for his art and is best known for his large murals at the Northcote Town Hall and behind the Aboriginal Advancement League. His work has also been featured on the Avon River bridge and on a tram for Melbourne's RISING festival.

Nine young people and six adults participated in the workshop at Anglicare Victoria's Morwell office, including members of AV's Aboriginal Youth Justice program, Kickback. Kickback is designed to help Aboriginal young people who are at risk of offending or becoming disengaged from school, by providing

"It's not just about tennis but about learning from each other and learning from each other's Country."



Congratulations to all the young people who attended and represented Team Victoria at the NITC this year, and a big shout out to Tennis Victoria for their continued support of Buldau Yioohgen.



them with mentoring and opportunities to pursue their interests – making Uncle Ray's workshop the perfect activity for all the art lovers in the group. Local Victoria Police members also came along, to say g'day and build positive relationships with the young people.

AV staff who were working in the building joined the group for lunch and tried their hand at a bit of painting throughout the day. Everyone was excited to learn some new techniques and as you can see, the finished works looked amazing.



TAHLIA WHEATLEY, YORTA YORTA WOMAN AND RISING TENNIS CHAMPION

Tahlia Wheatley is a proud Yorta Yorta woman who first met the Buldau Yioohgen team through her love of tennis. In 2022, Tahlia attended the National Indigenous Tennis Carnival (NITC) alongside Tennis Victoria, placing fourth in the competition. It was in Larrakia Country when she caught up with Aunty Kellie and Uncle Les through the Tennis Victoria and Buldau Yioohgen partnership, and they thought she was a perfect candidate for the program.

Reflecting on the first time she walked into Darrango yan-dhan, Tahlia said "It felt like home, seeing all the pictures along the walls from different years and the fire pit outside. It got rid of my nerves."



Tahlia's passion for tennis came full circle in August this year when she returned to Garramilla (Darwin) to play in the NITC again. She says it was her favourite program, and that it was cool to play against other Indigenous kids. Tahlia was fascinated by the teachings of Yanyuwa and Larrakia Elder Uncle Kim Mullholland, saying "It's good to see a different side to Culture up at the top."

In exciting news, Tahlia has secured a position in customer service at the Australian Open next year. Remembering her first steps into the program, she says "I was quiet, reserved, and shy. Now I feel like I've grown as a person and put myself out there". Over the course of a year, Tahlia has grown as a young leader in the sporting world with Culture walking alongside her.

"It's not an everyday thing that Indigenous kids get this opportunity, I feel proud and grateful."

The memories of other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth displayed on the walls of the centre provide a homely environment, where young people feel surrounded by Culture. Tahlia says that seeing what she was about to do in the next year on the walls was exciting.

Upcoming dates:

27th October	Expressions of interest close for the next Buldau Yioohgen Leadership Academy intake	Please submit your expressions of interest before the 27th of October.
15th November	Culture on Court Gippsland	Join us in Traralgon for a game of tennis and learn about Culture.
22nd November	First Peoples Staff Network	Come and yarn with the Buldau Yioohgen mob at our Cultural Centre.
7th December	Culture on Court Bendigo	Learn about Culture whilst enjoying a game of tennis.

Contact by anglicarevic.org.au for more information.

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JULY 2023

WELCOME

Wominjeka Cabbe Melemungil Narrin ik Kellie

Welcome to the Buldau Yioohgen newsletter

It's been another very busy time for Buldau Yioohgen. Our cultural centre Darrango yhan-dan had another facelift, building on previous efforts to make it a culturally safe space for our young people, families and staff.

Tennis Australia, one of our amazing partners, worked with BY to invite over 100 young people and their families to the second First Nations Day at the Australian Open. Uncle Les and I interviewed 15 young people to join the BY Leadership Academy for 2023, and after a lot of discussion we chose 10 very lucky young people to join us for the year. With great excitement we set off to our On Country camps at Maria Island and Lake Mungo, with Narrm and Darwin around the corner.

Once again Uncle Ron Murray joined us to share his cultural knowledge with our young people. It is always a pleasure and privilege having such a strong and passionate Elder join us.

We had our inaugural First Nations Staff Network meeting, with our CEO Paul McDonald yarning around the firepit with us. Anglicare Victoria also launched its Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) at Darrango yhan-dan with a Smoking Ceremony and Uncle Ron playing the yidaki (didgeridoo). And Tennis Victoria nominated BY's "Culture on Court" program for a Victorian Sports Award.

Expressions of Interest for our 2024 BY Leadership Academy will be sent out in July so watch this space!

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, culturally safe and can immerse you in a beautiful, strong and proud culture.

We would like to say "thank you" to our friends and family of Buldau Yioohgen for your support and belief in what we are doing for our Mob. See you all in NAIDOC Week, if not before.

Ngoon Godgin

Kellie Hunter
Senior Cultural Operations Lead





DREAMING BIG AMONGST THE ANCIENT LANDSCAPE

Mungo National Park is a deeply spiritual place for Barkandji/Paakantyi, Mutthi Mutthi and Ngiyampaa peoples. The ancient landscape, filled with striking formations and rolling sand dunes, once contained freshwater lakes and was inhabited by the communities of the oldest continuous Culture in the world. The annual Lake Mungo Cultural Camp is an on-Country experience giving young people in the Buldau Yioohgen program the opportunity to connect with their identity and Culture in this sacred place.

Aunty Kellie Hunter and Uncle Les Corlett ran activities for the young Mob in Moulamein along the Edwards river with the help of Wamba Wamba Elder Uncle Ron Murray, before heading to Mungo National Park. The week-long camp included a variety of immersive experiences such as fishing, astronomy and camping by the fire.

The program is designed to build resilience, camaraderie and leadership skills in a culturally safe environment. Since Buldau Yioohgen's last visit a year ago, the reburials of Mungo Man and Mungo Lady have taken place, bringing a deeper sense of connection to the land they walked upon. During a sunset tour of the landscape, the group performed Ceremony on-Country together with their feet in the sand.

Two volunteers from Anglicare Victoria (AV), Mel and Josh, supported the Buldau Yioohgen team. **"We learned about the unique ways Aboriginal people utilised the land and why it holds such a profound connection to them,"** said Josh, reflecting on his time with the young people.

"It was evident that preserving Aboriginal history is crucial to young Aboriginal people and their sense of identity."

"Preserving Aboriginal history is crucial to young Aboriginal people and their sense of identity"

– Josh, AV volunteer



Mel shared similar thoughts about her time in Mungo National Park. "It was so inspiring to see them connect with and embrace their culture over our time away, and the way they expressed such respect to Aunty Kellie, Uncle Les, Elders, staff and the volunteers," she said.

"Mungo National Park proves beyond any doubt that Aboriginal people are the oldest living groups of peoples in the world. The young people sense they are walking in the blood of their ancestors of over 50,000 years," said David Law, our Buldau Yioohgen Program Manager.

CELEBRATING CULTURE ON COURT WITH TENNIS VICTORIA

Everyone had a ball when 150 participants from the Buldau Yioohgen Culture on Court program descended on Melbourne Park this April. The attendees had the opportunity to connect with community through the joy of tennis and share in several amazing cultural experiences led by Aunty Kellie and Uncle Les.

We enjoyed some Deadly performances from Indigenous Hip Hop Projects and Culture Evolves, and Fire Services Victoria came along with one of their fire trucks for us to explore. Last year we held similar events in Bendigo and Castlemaine, and we're looking forward to planning the next one soon. These events are made possible thanks to our partnership with Tennis Victoria.

We are also very grateful for the support of Tennis Australia, who facilitated our participation in First Nations Day at the Australian Open in January and helped us get 12 Aboriginal young people from Victoria off to the National Indigenous Tennis Carnival in Darwin last year. Not only did they have a once-in-a-lifetime tennis experience, but they were also lucky enough to head out on our Northern Experience on Country for a unique camp they'll never forget.





INTRODUCING KAHLEA SPIBY: WURUNDJERI WOMAN, ARTIST AND BULDAU YIOOHGEN ALUMNI

Kahlea Spiby is a proud Wurundjeri woman from Echuca who participated in the Buldau Yioohgen program in 2022. She's also an accomplished artist who has been commissioned by organisations including Anglicare Victoria and Tennis Australia to create unique works of art.

Kahlea has loved drawing and art since she was little, but it wasn't until her teenage years that she discovered she had an incredible talent. After selling her first painting to the Njernda Aboriginal Corporation in 2020 Kahlea realised her art could become more than just a hobby. She started taking her art more seriously and was inundated with requests for her work. In fact, she became so busy that she had to stop taking commissions!

"I kept painting and experimented with different materials and eventually found my style and developed it over time. Practice makes progress."

Kahlea travelled to Darwin with Buldau Yioohgen in 2022 to represent Victoria in the National Indigenous Tennis Carnival. During the carnival she had the opportunity to design and paint a tennis racquet, and her talent was immediately recognised by Tennis Australia. She was asked to design tennis racquets for the Australian Open, which were presented to the women's singles finalists Aryna Sabalenka and Elena Rybakina at the grand slam tournament.



It took Kahlea almost eight hours to carefully hand-paint her intricate design onto each racquet.

Kahlea's amazing art is a unique combination of traditional Aboriginal designs with some of her own style thrown in, and she says a lot of her pieces are open to interpretation. Her artworks are inspired by land and nature, with symbolism often featured. One of her recent commissions is a vibrant work called Bunjil (pictured), which she created for Anglicare Victoria.

"Art tells a story, and it's so much more than just a painting," Kahlea said. **"I've loved art my whole life. It has led me to so many places and to meet so many amazing people."**

Kahlea hopes her art will be a vehicle for change, helping to educate people on the issues facing First Nations peoples today. **"I want my art to be able to help people, to tell a story, and raise awareness. People need to be aware of the issues still taking place,"** she said.

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