

AAV news



ABORIGINAL
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The Ministers Message

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Mr. Keith Hamilton



NAIDOC WEEK

'TREATY-LET'S
GET IT RIGHT.'

Once again, another NAIDOC Week has recently concluded. As you are aware, the week is an annual national event that celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait cultures and recognises Indigenous achievers.

This year, NAIDOC Week ran from 8 to 15 July and had as its theme 'Treaty-Let's Get It Right.'

Melbourne was chosen as the national focus city for 2001 and hosted the National NAIDOC Ball and Awards night on Friday, 13 July, at Melbourne Park.

Other highlights for Melbourne were:

- Victoria's Aboriginal Young Achiever Award, which is sponsored by Aboriginal Affairs Victoria,
- Official launch of NAIDOC activities at a flag raising ceremony on Monday, 9 July at the Aboriginal Advancement League,
- AAV's Youth Celebration was held at Ward 9, Flinders Street City on Tuesday, 10 July, where the Kutcha Edwards band performed;



- The 2001 NAIDOC Committee at the Minister's Reception.

- The Indigenous Elders Luncheon was held on Tuesday, 10 July,
- The Minister's Reception, was held in the evening of Wednesday 11 July at the Redmond Barry Room 55 Collins Street where I hosted a reception for senior members of Victoria's Indigenous community,
- The NAIDOC march through the CBD, on 13 July and the NAIDOC Ball held at the National Tennis Centre. At the ball, Kutcha Edwards was named Aboriginal person of the year by the National NAIDOC Committee. Kutcha, a member of the Stolen Generation is a well known musical identity in Australia through his work with Koori band Blackfire and his solo work with his own band. Kutcha is about to release an album of his songs that have been produced by such people as Paul Kelly and Ross Wilson.

It was a great week, where the community came together to talk, to renew old acquaintances and to reaffirm their unique and living culture.

THE NAIDOC BALL

The National NAIDOC Ball and Awards night was held at Melbourne Park this year and saw over one thousand people enjoy a night of entertainment, celebration and fun. It was an evening of highlights which saw Kutcha Edwards named Aboriginal Person of the Year, and the presentation of the 2001 Victorian Young Achiever Award by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Keith Hamilton.

Mr Hamilton introduced the 20 nominees for the Award to the audience describing them as great ambassadors for their people and role models for all young Australians.

He then introduced this year's winners Peter Shane Rotumah and Eileen Harrison.

Both Peter Shane and Eileen were presented with special trophies designed by Wathaurong Glass which featured the slogan for NAIDOC Week, 'Treaty-Let's Get It Right.'

The Ball once again was a highlight.



- All the fun of the Naidoc Ball.

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AWARDS FROM THE NAIDOC BALL



- Kutcha Edwards is named Aboriginal person of the year.



Minister Hamilton presents Peter Shane Rotumah & Eileen Harrison with their Awards.

YOUNG ACHIEVER AWARD

As was mentioned above, Peter Shane Rotumah and Eileen Harrison were named this year's Aboriginal Young Achievers by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Keith Hamilton.

The award, which recognises the contribution and achievements made by Aboriginal people under the age of 25 within his or her community, is now an integral part of Victoria's Koori calendar.

Peter Shane and Eileen are outstanding young people who have already made their mark on their community.

Peter Shane became a qualified Joey Scout leader and now runs a scouting program of some 80 registered kids, the first Aboriginal Scout Group in Australia.

A talented sportsperson Peter Shane plays senior football for Sebastopol Football Club and works as a youth worker for the Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative.

A dedicated community activist, Peter Shane represented Victoria and Australia at the 5th World Indigenous Youth Conference in Aotera, New Zealand.

He has been a member of the Victorian Indigenous Youth Council that is developing an outline for a Victorian Indigenous Youth Advisory Council that will advise Government on issues affecting young Kooris today.

Eileen Harrison is also a valuable and active member of her community.

She works as an administrative officer for the Fitzroy Stars Youth Club and Gym and has been an integral member of the Binning Meeting Place planning committee.

Eileen is a keen sportsperson, playing netball at 'A' grade level, and is a constant support for her family and friends.

Eileen has been described as an ambassador for her people and an inspiration for not only the Kooris, but the wider community.

The way Victoria's Aboriginal community can prosper is by encouraging its young people to take advantage of the opportunities that will emerge in the 21st Century. The Young Achiever Award is therefore an opportunity for the Victorian Government to recognise the strength of young Aboriginal Victorians and acknowledge their future role.

This year the quality of nominees from the community for the award was outstanding. Nominees included, young people of high academic achievement, some who had obtained employment success, and others who had achieved outstanding artistic and sporting accomplishments.

It is encouraging that with the talent that currently exists within the community, young Indigenous people can meet the significant challenges of the future with confidence and will develop a prosperous and self-reliant future.



- Peter Shane Rotumah & Eileen Harrison at the Young Achievers Award.

YOUTH GET TOGETHER AND HAVE FUN

This year Aboriginal Affairs Victoria hosted a celebration of youth at Ward 9, a well known dance and live music venue in Flinders Lane. Young people from all over the state came together to celebrate NAIDOC Week and dance to the music of Kutcha Edwards and Denise Hudson. It was a memorable afternoon that was enjoyed by all that attended. As Cecily Wellington Carpenter has said,... 'young people coming together will unite and gain strength to survive, gain courage to aim for goals and ultimately develop pride in their race and culture'.



Right: Kutcha Edwards and friends enjoy the Youth Event at Ward 9.

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE WALK THROUGH ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS SCOOPS VICTORIAN TOURISM AWARD

The much-applauded Aboriginal Heritage Walk (AHW) at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne recently scooped one of the prestigious Victorian Tourism annual awards. It secured the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Award for its extraordinary ability to interpret the inseparable connection between Aboriginal culture and the land; to foster reconciliation; and to provide a stimulus and catalyst for the many Indigenous tourism students who wish to begin tourism operations in their own traditional lands. This is the second major award that the Aboriginal Heritage Walk has received in just two years of operation. In 1999 it received the Interpretation Australia Award for best face-to-face interpretation. Last year, nearly 2,500 people participated in the Walk, with all profits being returned to the program to allow it to survive and grow. Dean Stewart, RBG's full-time Aboriginal Liaison Office, said: "This award is significant because it acknowledges the part that the AHW can play in providing a path for people to gain a unique and personal insight into Aboriginal life." The Aboriginal Heritage Walk has a particularly poignant message in the march for reconciliation. Before being established as a Botanic Gardens, the site was Victoria's first Aboriginal Mission. "This was a place of terrible hardship and cruelty for Aboriginal people. But it is this place, over 150 years later, that is able to act as a conduit from that time, providing connections with the richness of Aboriginal culture and land," Dean added. Initiated in 1999, the Aboriginal Heritage Walk is operated entirely by a team of Indigenous people working within the Royal Botanic Gardens. They are Dean Stewart, Mark Williams, Elizabeth Savage-Kooroonya and Solomon Tamiru.

AAV'S FLAG RAISING

A special flag raising was also held at Aboriginal Affairs Victoria in Collins Street. An invitation was extended to staff from the Department of Natural Resources and Environment and AAV as well as the Minister Keith Hamilton.

Troy Brickell, who works as a Heritage Information Officer within AAV's Heritage Services Branch and was a Young Achiever nominee played the didgeridoo. Troy, who has played at a number of performances promoting Aboriginal culture including the Celebration of Federation 2001, National Sorry Day 2001 and the Holy Melbourne Annual Multi-Faith Concert 2001, gave his usual outstanding performance.

AAV's Flag Raising is becoming an important part of NAIDOC Week. As well as being an enjoyable time, it also provides an opportunity for staff to come together and celebrate the uniqueness of Indigenous people and their culture.

Below: Maria Couzers at AAV's flag raising.



MARN GROOK KICKS OFF NAIDOC WEEK

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Keith Hamilton joined Essendon Football Club Chairman Graeme McMahon, Michael Long, Cory McGrath and the Bombers first Koori champion, Norm McDonald to open a photographic exhibition celebrating the contribution of Australia's first footballers, Aboriginal people.

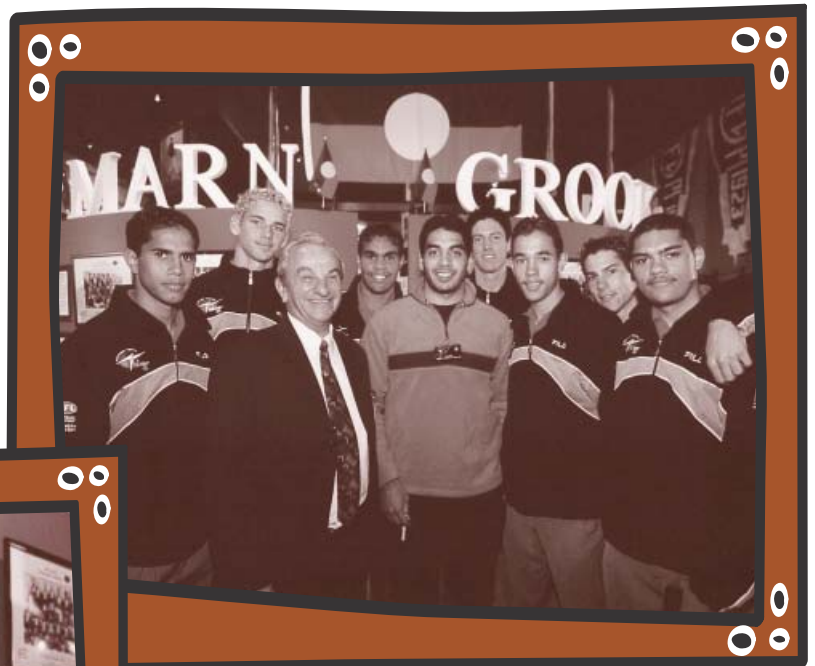
Marn Grook is the name of the exhibition that will be displayed at the Essendon Football Club Hall of Fame until the end of September. The exhibition features photographs of past and current Aboriginal players who have made such an enormous contribution to the development of our unique game.

The Marn Grook exhibition features video highlights of Aboriginal players, memorabilia and photos of Essendon Football Club Aboriginal players and a roll of honour of all Aboriginals who have played in the VFL/AFL since 1897.

In pictorial form, the exhibition highlights the role Aboriginal footballers have played, from the game's inception right up to the present day.



- Norm McDonald Essendon's first Koori Champion.



Above: Minister Hamilton, Dean Rioli & members of the Northern Territory Youth Football Club.



Above: Norm McDonald, Michael Long & friend at the Marn Grook opening.