

**Thursday 18 May 2023**

## **Dja Dja Wurrung Elder shares children's stories in new book**

Dja Dja Wurrung Elder, grandmother and Barnados Mother of the Year 2012, Aunty Ros Kneebone-Dodson, launched her children's book *Mooie's Stories* today at Castlemaine's Buda Historic Home & Garden.

Aunty Ros, who goes by the kin name BurWhela, meaning Mother Possum, shares Dreamtime stories she learned from her own mother, "Mooie", and Dja Dja Wurrung words and placenames in this beautifully illustrated book.

"Being able to know my oral history through the privilege of storytelling, passing this historic account from my Apical Ancestors to my children and grandchildren, I have been entrusted to preserve our Cultural stories as told to me by my mother and my grandmother before and her mother before," Aunty Ros said.

Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter congratulated Aunty Ros on her beautiful telling of the Ancestor's stories from the Loddon River Country on Djandak (Dja Dja Wurrung Country).

"On behalf of DJAARA, the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, I am delighted and honoured to celebrate the launch of this stunning book," Mr Carter said.

"BurWhela" Ros Kneebone-Dodson is a descendant of the Bpangarang and Dja Dja Wurrung peoples of Victoria and the Worrimi and Birripi peoples of the lakes district of NSW.

As a child, Ros's family called her "Possum", which in Dja Dja Wurrung language is "Whela". As a mother, Ros took on the kin name of "BurWhela", meaning "Mother Possum".

Ros later became a social worker, assisting 14 members of the Stolen Generation to find their families, and helped create the Building Strong Mothers and Babies program for Indigenous parents.

*Mooie's Stories* vividly brings to life the traditional stories of Loddon River Country for children aged 5 to 10 years.

Aligning with the Australian Curriculum, the book will be an important resource for educators and students to learn about the First Nations stories from Djandak, the Loddon River Country. Teacher notes contain many engaging and informative activities for students in early and middle years.

*Mooie's Stories*, written and illustrated by "BurWhela" Ros Kneebone-Dodson is published by Aboriginal Studies Press and is available for \$24.95 (hardback) at [shop.aiatsis.gov.au](http://shop.aiatsis.gov.au).

**ENDS -**

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