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Djaara Newsletter

**Wurreka | Yarns**

JUNE 2023



## STEPS TOWARDS SELF-DETERMINATION

### DJAARA leading the way on climate

More than 75 people turned out to celebrate the launch of DJAARA's Climate Change Strategy, *Turning 'wrong way' climate 'right way'*, at Wanyarra Dum (Frog Ponds) in Bendigo on 24 March.



L-R: ADAPT Loddon Mallee's Dona Cayetana, Climate Change Policy Officer Oli Moraes, DJAARA General Manager Cassandra Lewis, Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance CEO Annika Kearton, Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter.

The strategy emphasises the importance of DJAARA leadership in both mitigating climate change and adapting to the impacts of a changing climate.

CEO Rodney Carter highlighted DJAARA's unique approach to healing climate, which is outlined in the strategy.

and healing Dja Dja Wurrung People are very connected," Rodney said.

"If you have been following the work that DJAARA is doing, you'll understand that the Dja Dja Wurrung Climate Change Strategy is connected to much of our other work."

Focus areas and actions in the Strategy highlight DJAARA's leading role in cultural landscape management, restoring cultural fire to country, water and forest management and the renewable energy transition.

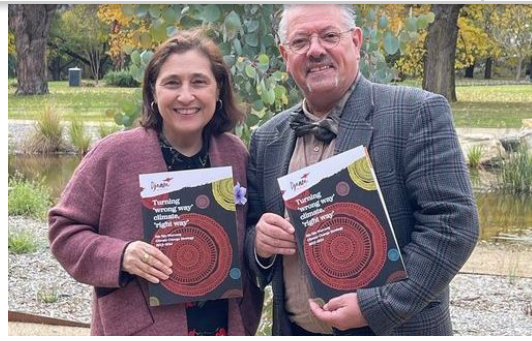


People came from far and wide for the launch of the Dja Dja Wurrung Climate Strategy.

On Saturday following the strategy launch, Rodney spoke at the Greater Bendigo Climate Summit and met with the Minister for Climate Action.

DJAARA is on the governance group of the [Greater Bendigo Climate Collaboration](#), which brings together government organisations, business, community organisations, schools and households to work collaboratively towards zero emissions in Greater Bendigo by 2030.





Left: Rodney Carter welcomes people to the Greater Bendigo Climate Summit. Right: Minister for Climate Action Lily D'Ambrosio discusses the Dja Dja Wurrung Climate Change Strategy with Rodney Carter after the Climate Summit.

[Learn more about the Dja Dja Wurrung Climate Strategy](#)

[Learn more about the Greater Bendigo Climate Collaboration](#)

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## DJAKITJ - our new enterprise is up and running!

DJAARA's food and fibre enterprise DJAKITJ, which means 'dining room' in Dja Dja Wurrung language, was launched in a day of celebration at our new property DJAKITJ Farm on 19 May.

DJAKITJ Farm is to be the site of several projects around native Australian ingredients – including **buwatj** (kangaroo grass) and **murna** (yam daisy), and possibly the largest yabby farm in the southern hemisphere.

Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter said the enterprise was a significant milestone and a step towards a strong and diverse economic base for Dja Dja Wurrung People.



L-R: DDWCAC Board Chair Trent Nelson, Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter, Indigenous Land & Sea Corporation Group CEO Joe Morrison, DJAKITJ Business Manager Dan Duggan

“For the first time, DJAARA has invested its own funds - \$1.6 million - to buy our own land back so we can set up this exciting business,” Rodney said.

“The enterprise has been a long-held dream. DJAKITJ is all about **dheikunya beng** – nourishing the body.

The Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC) has provided more than \$3.5 million in grant funds to establish the yabby farm, including negotiating water rights for agriculture.





When fully operational, the farm is expected to yield up to 15 tonnes of yabbies each year.

DJAKITJ Business Manager Dan Duggan said construction of the yabby farm is scheduled to begin in the second half of this year, with the first harvest anticipated in late 2024.

“The scale of the operation is really going to be something special, with more than 50 yabby ponds, a brood stock and hatchery facility as well as research and development areas for both aquaculture and native plants and bush foods,” Dan said.



Top: L-R DDWCAC Board Members Aunty Sue Charles and Uncle Walter Harrison with Jason Kerr on didge at a Members private ceremony ahead of the launch. Left: DJAARA Members were invited to a private ceremony and tour ahead of the public launch and lunch. Right: Rodney Carter with Agriculture Victoria Deputy Secretary Matt Lowe.

[Read more](#)

## Mooie's Stories - new children's book from Auntie Ros



Congratulations to Dja Dja Wurrung Elder Auntie Ros Kneebone-Dodson, on her deadly children's book *Mooie's Stories*, which she launched on 17 May at Castlemaine's Buda Historic Home & Garden.

Auntie 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," Auntie Ros said.





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](https://shop.aiatsis.gov.au)

[Buy the book](#)

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## Reconciliation Week





Thanks to Deb Pople for use of this image.

## Marngrook

More than 60 people showed up for a game of **marngrook** (aka Indigenous footy), organised by DJAARA and the Parks Victoria Ranger Team for Reconciliation Week.

It was **gurri** (kangaroos) vs **barramal** (emus) following a smoking ceremony, welcome, and warming up with traditional dance.

Members and staff from DJAARA and Parks Victoria were also joined by staff from DJANDAK, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, and North Central Catchment Management Authority.







## V/Line installs acknowledgement plaque at Bendigo Station

Rodney Carter, Jackson Dunnolly-Lee, Jason Kerr and Jenni Chaloner from DJAARA were pleased to join V/Line staff to unveil a plaque acknowledging Dja Dja Wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the lands around the Bendigo Station during Reconciliation Week.

V/Line Chief Executive Officer Matt Carrick said he hoped the plaque would be the first of many across the V/Line network.



Left: V/Line Regional Manager Darren Laphorne, DDW Group CEO Rodney Carter, V/Line Advisory Board Member & CoGB Councillor Margaret O'Rourke, V/Line conductor Ashley Leech, V/Line CEO Matt Carrick, CoGB Deputy Mayor Jennifer Alden, V/Line conductor Drew Harrington with the acknowledgement plaque. Right: Jackson Dunnolly-Lee conducts a welcome ceremony at the Bendigo Station.

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## Gatjin (water) partner workshop: Dhelkuyanga gatjin

DJANDAK's **Gatjin** (Water) team presented key aspirations around Dja Dja Wurrung People's role in water management to representatives from all water authorities on djandak at a recent **gatjin** workshop in Sutton Grange.

The concept of Dja Dja Wurrung People being at the centre of water planning and management was central to the day and water authorities were asked to consider how their organisations would engage with and support DJAARA's Gatjin Strategy.





Uncle Rick Nelson welcomes workshop attendees to Country, looking out towards Leanganook (Mount Alexander).

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## Balik Kalak Manya - Walking Together



Balak Kalik Manya – Walking Together – is a collaborative project to rehabilitate or improve areas of public land near urban centres.

The idea is to enhance and protect existing natural areas to encourage local residents to



Following the success of Balak Kalik Manya Phase 1, DJANDAK is now working on Phase 2 of the project, which will focus on improving three sites across djandak, in collaboration with local communities, land managers and other stakeholders.

The three-year project, funded by Agnico Eagle, will draw on Traditional knowledge around caring for Country as well as western approaches to improve the amenity of each location.

More information about how mob and the wider community can get involved will be out in the coming months.

[Learn more](#)

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## **SHARING DJA DJA WURRUNG LANGUAGE**

*Our language connects us to water, land, animals, and People.*

*It calls us to ceremony and strengthens our identity.*

We are making sure our language, Dja Dja Wurrung language, is increasingly spoken; we share it in song and ensure it is placed lovingly back to Djandak, where it belongs, by us. Those that live and visit here in Central Victoria more and more want to support Dja Dja Wurrung reclamation of our rights and support our continued presence here. We hope that those who travel across, visit and reside on Djandak recognise our unique language and distinct culture.

**balak kalik manya** | walking together  
**barramal** | emu  
**buwatj** | kangaroo grass  
**dhelkunya beng** | nourishing the body  
**dhelkunya dja** | healing earth, healing Country  
**djakitj** | food, dining room  
**djandak** | Country, Dja Dja Wurrung Country  
**djandak wi** | Country fire  
**gatjin** | water  
**gurri** | kangaroo  
**marngrook** | Indigenous footy  
**murna** | yam daisy  
**ngaldurrong** | together

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## **Let us know what you think!**

Do you like this newsletter?

What would you like to see more of?

## Get in touch



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