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Talking to Country the Dja Dja Wurrung way

Exciting changes are happening across **Djandak** (Dja Dja Wurrung Country). Read about:

- [our General Manager Cassandra Lewis' Be.Bendigo award](#)
- [how Djaara have been returned to the landscape in Emu Country.](#)
- [how our RSA is opening conversations about our shared history.](#)
- [why we're writing YES in the referendum](#)
- [djandak wi highlights](#)
- [Treaty Chamber Meeting - First People's Assembly](#)
- [our joint statement to keep our community safe](#)

and [meet the DUMAWUL team](#).

DJAARA General Manager wins business award



Congratulations to our DJAARA General Manager Cassandra Lewis! Cassandra took out the Regional Women's Business Award at the 2023 Bendigo Bank and Be.Bendigo Business Excellence Awards Gala on Friday Night at Red Energy Arena.

Accepting her award, Cassandra said she felt very fortunate to work for DJAARA.

"The work that DJAARA does for and on behalf of our People allows me to stand here today, proud and humbled, for all that we have achieved," Cassandra said.

Our CEO Rodney Carter congratulated Cassandra on her significant achievement.

We see day in, day out the commitment, dedication and passion Cassandra brings to her role here at DJAARA. We already knew how great she is, now so does the city and region,” Mr Carter said.

The Business Excellence Awards celebrate the success and achievements of our local businesses.

Emotions run high in Emu Country

They have been a long time coming, but significant changes have been celebrated recently in Emu Country – at **Larni Barramal** (home of the emu) near Franklindford and at nearby **Lalgambuk**, known as the nest of the emu (and as Mount Franklin).

We were honoured to celebrate these changes with our partners Hepburn Shire Council and Parks Victoria, and our allies and friends in joyful and heartfelt ceremonies.



Mount Alexander Shire Councillor Christine Henderson and Hepburn Shire Mayor Cr Brian Hood, with Rodney Carter at the new roadside sign for Larni Barramal Yaluk. Photo: Dan Hough

A Dja Dja Wurrung presence has been returned to the landscape with the official naming of **Larni Barramal Yaluk**, which means ‘the creek that flows through the home or dreaming place of the emus’. It has happened after a 12-year battle to remove an offensive name that had been used since the 1830s.

Speaking with great emotion at the ceremony in July, Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter said that the creek was finally liberated.

‘The creek has an identity and a spirit. We are at last affording it the respect it deserves by giving back its name. To now say its name is speaking to Country in the most beautiful way,’ Mr Carter said.

[Listen to 3KND Larni Barramal Yaluk Special Audio](#)



It feels amazing to get Dja Dja Wurrung language and Culture out in the environment. - Uncle Rick Nelson (left). Larni Barramal Yaluk (right). Photos: Dan Hough

Lalgambuk gets a makeover – Djaara-style

In August, DJAARA and DJANDAK completed transformation of the Lalgambuk visitor site, building and installing Djaara-designed furniture and facilities in partnership with Parks Victoria.



During the ceremony, DJAARA Board Chair Trent Nelson acknowledged the ‘extended family: the people who support us and walk with us – our **Ngaldurrong Yana**. We walk together as one’.

‘As Traditional Owners, we’ve gone through a lot of sadness. We acknowledge that; we can never forget that. But we can turn what we’re doing now into positive things for the

'We're righting the wrongs of the past and putting back the right way in what we do.'



Bottom left: DJAARA Board Chair Trent Nelson speaking at Lalgambuk, with Uncle Graham Atkinson (4th from right, representing the Parks Victoria Board), Jason Kerr, and Uncle Rick Nelson. Bottom right: DJAARA Program Manager Galkangu Joint Management Harley Douglas. Photos: Brendan McCarthy.

The 'Djaara-fied' visitor site is a great outcome of DJAARA's Joint Management with Parks Victoria for the benefit of the whole community.

Joint Management – DJAARA leading the management of six parks and reserves – was a key element in our Recognition and Settlement Agreement with the State of Victoria, which was signed almost 10 years ago, in 2013.

[Read Lalgambuk media release](#)

Conversations lead to great outcomes at Rochester

Rochester Golf Club symbolises the positive relationship between the two organisations.

It recognises Dja Dja Wurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the golf course, and acknowledges the horrible historical treatment of Dja Dja Wurrung People locally.



The sign was installed following negotiations between DJAARA and the Golf Club to secure irrigation water for the golf course.

The opportunity for these negotiations came through the Corporation's 2013 Recognition and Settlement Agreement (RSA) with the State of Victoria.

This opened the way for conversations about shared history. These, in turn, have led to a positive relationship and a deeper appreciation of Dja Dja Wurrung People's traditional rights.



L-R: Rochester Golf Club members Peter Anderson, Robert Vise, Lee Hicks (President), DJAARA Board Chair Trent Nelson, RGC Club Captain Chris Eeles, DJAARA staff members Elias Norman and Jim Brooks, and RGC member Peter Lawford at the unveiling ceremony.

In his speech, DJAARA Board Chair Trent Nelson acknowledged the challenges of the past year in Rochester.

We recognise the good hearts at the Golf Club continuing to engage with us as Rochy struggled through the flood events and during the rebuilding stage," Mr Nelson said.

Peter Lawford from the Golf Club said the Rochester Golf Club appreciates the co-operation shown by DJAARA in allowing the club to access vital irrigation water supply.

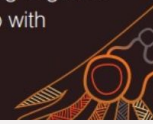
"The club welcomes the recognition of the Dja Dja Wurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the land on which the golf club sits. The club also acknowledges the atrocities of the past as part of the ongoing co-operation with the Dja Dja Wurrung People," Mr Lawford said.

The Rochester Golf Club Inc recognises **Dja Dja Wurrung** People as the Traditional Owners of this course and the surrounding areas.

We respect **Dja Dja Wurrung** People, their Elders past and present and their age-old management and use of this land, their survival, their knowledge and continuing Culture.

The Club recalls the 1839 massacre of up to 40 **Dja Dja Wurrung** People - virtually an entire **Dja Dja Wurrung** clan but for one woman and child - near this site at Restdown Plains. The Club acknowledges the terrible and outrageous nature of that massacre and the loss and hurt suffered by **Dja Dja Wurrung** individuals and families.

This Club has enjoyed the cooperation of **Dja Dja Wurrung** People in delivering irrigation supply to this course and looks forward to a productive and happy relationship with **Dja Dja Wurrung** People in the future.



[Read the media release here](#)

Referendum: Dja! We're writing YES!

Everyone needs to make up their own mind about the referendum this year. Knowledge is vital when you're making important decisions.

Watch these videos to learn more about why it's happening and why it's important for our mob.



Why are we voting on a Voice to Parliament?

What does it have to do with the Uluru Statement of the Heart?

And what about Treaty?



Federal Member for Bendigo, Lisa Chesters speaks on the importance of a Voice to Parliament.

Lisa speaks about Dja Dja Wurrung People and the wider local community.



Will you be part of history?

The referendum is our chance to close the door on a sorry past and become a nation with a united and hopeful future.

It's up to all of us to make a future that is better for all of us.

If you want to learn more about the Yes campaign locally, [Bendigo for Yes](#) is one of the many Yes23 groups across the country. Bendigo for Yes covers the federal electorate of Bendigo and stretches from Creswick to Elmore, Heathcote to Castlemaine.

Djandak Wi: autumn-winter highlights



Djandak Wi (Country fire) is making a resurgence on Djaara Country. Often referred to as 'cultural burning', **Djandak Wi** is cool, slow fire, that results in a patchy burn.

Using the principle of 'right fire, right time, right place', it improves the health of Country by stimulating native plant seeds to germinate, promoting biodiversity, and managing fuel loads.



In the past 12 months, we've done 24 days of burning out on **djandak** (Dja Dja Wurrung Country) under DJAARA's cultural burning program. This is over three times more than we've achieved in any year since the program began in 2017. We have also been able to burn across a range of ecosystems.

For every burn delivery day, there are many more days of hard work put in by the more than 10 staff employed in the program. This includes training, planning, walking and reading Country for indicators that it's ready to burn, preparing the site, post-burn patrolling, and monitoring changes in biodiversity and structure of the vegetation.

The program is going from strength to strength – with more growth and much more healing of **djandak** to come.



Treaty Chamber Meeting report



Image source: First Peoples Victoria

The newly elected second term of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria gathered at Parliament House for their first chamber meeting on July 26 and 27.

This first meeting, which opened with a Welcome to Country by Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung elder Uncle Perry Wandin and performance by Djirri Djirri dancers saw the Assembly determine their new leadership.

Wamba Wamba, Yorta Yorta, Dhudhuroa and Dja Dja Wurung woman Ngarra Murray and

The chamber further saw election of Assembly Council, Elders' Voice co-chairs and Youth Voice convenors.

In his inaugural speech, Dja Dja Wurrung Reserved Seat Djaran Murray-Jackson thanked Djaara for entrusting him with the seat and acknowledged previous Reserved Seat holder Trent Nelson.

Djaran also spoke to the importance of capturing our Elders in the treaty process.

"I do not want to lose another Elder without them getting a chance to contribute. We owe it to our Elders past, present and emerging to set this up now," Djaran said.

This term of the Assembly is expected to negotiate statewide Treaty with the Victorian government.

[Learn more](#)

Please walk with us to keep our community safe

Later this year, all Australians will vote whether to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament in the Constitution.

DJAARA has joined with other local First Nations organisations, Bendigo and District Aboriginal Cooperative, Bendigo NAIDOC Week Committee, and the Reconciliation Committee, to call for respect towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in the lead up to the 2023 referendum.



L-R BDAC CEO Dallas Widdicombe, Co-Chair Bendigo NAIDOC Week Committee Narlinga Morgan, Co-Chair Reconciliation Committee Nicola Perry, Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter

We understand that the wider community will have conversations about this, and we welcome informed, respectful and sensitive conversations about a better future for our people.

Irrespective of how individuals choose to vote, the debate in the lead up to the referendum and the outcome will have a profound impact on our people.

local community.

You have the power to ensure racial violence under the guise of political and social debate is not tolerated.

Please walk with us to ensure our community remains safe:

- calmly call out behaviour and words against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People
- ensure your conversations are respectful and informed
- remember these discussions are about the rights, wellbeing and future of our Elders and families.

[Read the full statement here](#)

Meet the DUMAWUL team

DUMAWUL, by DJAARA for Djaara is a creative arts and cultural tourism business.

Our mission is to actively support and enable Djaara creatives in their self-determined pursuits. That includes artists, musicians, story tellers, cultural educators/ facilitators, cultural tour guides, sculptors, artefact makers, wood burners and the like. Our mission is founded on the Djaara Cultural Integrity Guidelines.

We've been in operation for just over a year. in that time we've grown from one staff member to seven - many of us First Nations.

We are for-profit, and we put 100% of our profit back into the Djaara community.



Recently the DUMAWUL team were invited onto Taungurung country to walk Wawa Biik's cultural tour in Euroa with Uncle Shane Monk. We look forward to hosting Wawa Biik staff on Djaara Country later this year.

L-R: Dan Mitchell, Jasmine Edwards, Sarah Lowe, Maurial Spearim, Kennisha Edwards (Djaara guest), Kyrun Kerr, Bonnie Cavanagh (Taungurung), Uncle Shane Monk (Taungurung), Hakeem Johnson.

SHARING DJA DJA WURRUNG LANGUAGE

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.

djandak | Country, Dja Dja Wurrung Country

djaara | Dja Dja Wurrung People

larni barramal yaluk | the creek that flows through the home or dreaming place of the emus

ngaldurrong | walk together

Let us know what you think!

Do you like this newsletter?

What would you like to see more of?

We'd love to hear your feedback.

Get in touch



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