

Welcome to the first edition of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council's bi-annual newsletter!

This first edition highlights some of Council's work in recent months as we have continued to work hard to ensure that Victorian Traditional Owners' cultural rights and responsibilities are appropriately recognised and respected.

It has been a privilege to lead the Council and to share its many achievements in 2014.

The Council thanks you for your support and looks forward to continuing this important work with you in 2015.

Rodney Carter  
Chairperson



### Launch of the Council's third strategic plan

The Council's [Strategic Plan 2014-2019](#) was launched by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs on 8 September at Parliament House. The launch was attended by 65 stakeholders from 42 organisations/agencies. Please contact the Council if you would like to receive copies of the plan.



## Meeting with the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Victoria

Council members met with the then Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Tim Bull, in June 2014. Council discussed Ancestral Remains and RAP sustainability, amongst other items, and laid a positive foundation for a future relationship with him and his office.



## Release of Council's Ancestral Remains Advisory Paper

In July 2014, Council published its third Ancestral Remains paper *Bringing Our Ancestors Home: we will not be well until this is done* to inform proposed legislative changes to the Act. Copies of Council's Ancestral Remains paper are available [here](#).



## Regional Meetings regarding the protection of Ancestral Remains

The Council and the Office of Aboriginal Affairs Victoria Joint Steering Group (JSG) held four regional meetings in 2014 to inform Traditional Owners and other stakeholders of the JSG's work. The JSG guides the development of policies, procedures and records regarding the management and return of Ancestral Remains. The meetings were held in Mildura on 27-28 March, Warrnambool on 19-20 June, Lakes Entrance on 18-19 September and Wangaratta on 27-28 November. Another meeting will be held in greater Melbourne in February 2015.

## Sites With Shared Aboriginal & Non-Aboriginal Heritage Values Project

Council, together with the Heritage Council of Victoria, is looking at sites with shared Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage values to strengthen recognition of the Aboriginal values of these sites on the Victorian Heritage Register. The initial project looked at nine sites. A methodology is being developed to continue this work.

## Influencing State and Federal heritage legislation and policy

Council is determined to see that the cultural rights and responsibilities of Traditional Owners are realised and respected. Since July 2014, Council has advocated this through working with stakeholders and making submissions to the following:

- The Aboriginal Heritage Bill 2014 (Exposure Draft)
- The Parliamentary Inquiry into Heritage Tourism and Ecotourism in Victoria
- The Australian Heritage Strategy

## Current and arising vacancies on the Council

The Council is made up of up to 11 Traditional Owners from Victoria. It has three main functions under the Act:

- To promote understanding and awareness of Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- To provide advice to the Minister and others.
- To make decisions about RAP applications.

There are currently two vacancies on the Council and further vacancies will arise in September 2015. Appointments to the Council are made by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. Council members are paid a sitting fee and are reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with Victorian Government guidelines.

If you are interested in being appointed, please check the *Koorie Mail* and the DPC website for public notices that will advertise when Expressions of Interest are open. For further information, you can also contact the Council's Secretariat (details below).



### Contact the Council:

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