

## **VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL HERITAGE COUNCIL BIOGRAPHIES OF COUNCIL MEMBERS**

### **DENISE LOVETT (CHAIR)**

Denise Lovett is a Guditjmarra woman and brings to the Council six years experience as the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Officer for the South West and Wimmera Cultural Heritage Program. In this role, Ms Lovett is responsible for brokering agreements between the Guditjmarra people, developers, local government, individual land owners, and stakeholders such as Telstra and VicRoads. She has been involved in negotiating agreements on high profile projects including the Portland Wind Towers and the Glenelg Water Pipeline.

Denise is currently the Executive Officer of the Guditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation. This Corporation represents the Guditjmarra people connected to the Guditjmarra Native Title Claim, which successfully had Guditjmarra native title rights and interests recognised by the Federal Court of Australia and is the registered Aboriginal party for cultural heritage management.

### **MICK HARDING (DEPUTY CHAIR)**

Mick Harding is a Taungurung man who is dedicated to protecting and reinvigorating culture within his community. Mick is a board member of the Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation. He is also actively involved in coordinating camps to promote Aboriginal culture through his art and storytelling. With many years experience in cultural heritage management, Mick has provided expert advice on a range of sensitive issues. As a board member of Native Title Services Victoria, Mick brings strong leadership skills to the Council.

### **GRAHAM ATKINSON**

Graham Atkinson is a descendant of the Dja Dja Wurrung and Yorta Yorta people and is currently chairperson of Native Title Services Victoria. Mr Atkinson has significant leadership experience, also holding positions as the chair of the Dja Dja Wurrung Native Title Group and the co-chair of the Victorian Traditional Owners Land Justice Group. He was appointed to the State Government Steering Committee charged with developing a native title settlement framework for Victoria. Graham has been involved in many high profile heritage projects including the development of an Indigenous Land Use Agreement with the Minerals Council of Australia, which is considered an important precedent. Graham has a Master of Business Administration (MBA) and degrees in arts and social work.

## **JENNIFER BEER**

Jennifer Beer is a proud and strong Wudyubaluk woman from the Wimmera/ Mallee region and is a descendant of Yanggendinyanyuk (Dick-a-Dick). She has 30 years of Koori Education experience and a Diploma in Vocational Education and Training.

Jennifer on behalf of her people, negotiated the first successful Native Title Claim in Victoria in 2005/2006. She also went on to do revival and reclamation of her language Wergaia, with the support of the Victorian School of Languages. In 2008/9 Wotjobulak people successfully completed the VCE Revival and Reclamation which caused major changes to the LOTE curriculum in all Victorian secondary schools for Indigenous Languages. Jennifer is passionate about her culture and language and the rights of all to live, breathe and practice their culture.

## **JIM BERG**

Jim Berg was the driving force behind the establishment of the highly successful Koorie Heritage Trust Inc and has been involved in the organisation for 21 years, serving as Chief Executive Officer from 1985 to 2003, and as the Chairperson from 1985-2000. Jim has played a leadership role in many cases in which Aboriginal human remains have been returned to their rightful owners and reburied. Earlier in his career, Jim had long-standing involvement with the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service, including as Chief Executive Officer from 1976-84 and chairperson from 1977-82. Jim is a Gunditjmara man.

## **ELEANOR A. BOURKE**

Eleanor Bourke was born in Hamilton, Victoria and is a prominent member of the Wergaia people with a career in Aboriginal affairs spanning 40 years in Victoria, the ACT and South Australia. Eleanor has held various executive positions in the community and in State and Federal government sectors, including five years as the Co-Chair of Reconciliation Victoria.

Eleanor has also played a leading role in the education sector. She was appointed professor and headed the Aboriginal Research Institute (UniSA) and the Centre for Aboriginal and Islander Studies at Monash University. She has lectured in Indigenous issues nationally and as far a field as Harvard University and the University of British Columbia.

Eleanor is currently chair of the VAHC, a board member of Native Title Services Victoria and a member of the Winyula Council, which has been established under the Cooperative Management Agreement between the Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Cooperation and the State Government.

## **RODNEY CARTER**

Rodney "Tallarook" Carter is a descendant of Dja Dja Wurrung and Yorta Yorta people, and currently resides in Swan Hill. Including his children's ancestry, his family covers much of the traditional owner group's areas of Central Northern and North West Victoria.

Rodney has extensive experience in cultural heritage management and a particular interest in linking 'people to landscape' through the integration of biodiversity projects with cultural heritage projects. He is passionate about passing on Aboriginal knowledge and practices to future generations. Rodney also has a keen interest in hunting, using techniques from traditional cultural methods to modern.

## **TIM CHATFIELD**

Tim Chatfield of Halls Gap is a member of the Djab Wurrung community and has held numerous leadership positions in Aboriginal communities, serving as Chair of the Victorian Aboriginal Housing Board and previously as Chairperson and Regional Councilor for the Tumbukka Region of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission. Tim has cultural heritage expertise and experience in the field going back to the early 1980s.

Tim was General Manager of the Brambuk Cultural Centre for five years where he was responsible for education initiatives to promote cultural heritage. His expertise has also been sought on a wide range of local and statewide plans and initiatives. More recently, Tim has played a key role in the cultural heritage assessment conducted on the Gariwerd Grampians National Park following the fires of January 2006, and is a member of the Premier's Aboriginal Advisory Council.

## **KAREN JACKSON**

Karen Jackson is a Yorta Yorta woman with broad experience in Indigenous affairs ranging from State and Federal Government to community organisations. She is currently Acting Director of the Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit at Victoria University which involves the direction and management of Indigenous programs including the Bachelor of Arts (Kynandoo) program, local research activity and Indigenous student pastoral care. Karen is also currently a member of the Western Metropolitan Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee, the DHS Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group and a previous member of the Victorian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

## **RICKY MULLETT**

Ricky Mullett is a qualified archaeologist and has been a passionate advocate for the protection and preservation of Aboriginal heritage for more than 25 years. Ricky has managed many archaeological projects and field surveys in Gippsland, including the Duke Energy Eastern Gas Pipeline Project, Horse Hair Plain Airport and was a key advisor on the post-fire 2003 and 2007 Alpine ICVM Recovery Projects.

As well as playing an advisory role on heritage issues locally, regionally, statewide and nationally, Ricky is involved in running education and managing programs about protection and preservation of significant Aboriginal sites in South Eastern Australia. Ricky has extensive experience in leading and representing his community and was the Chairperson of the Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative for over thirteen years. Ricky has extensive traditional links to the Gunnai/Kurnai and other Aboriginal peoples in South Eastern Australia. Ricky was also the inaugural Chairperson of the VAHC throughout its first year of operation.