



Koorie Records Unit Newsletter

June 2009 – Number 4

NEWS FROM KOORIE RECORDS UNIT AT PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE VICTORIA (PROV)

Welcome to the Koorie Records Unit (KRU) newsletter, which provides updates on activities and projects the KRU have conducted or are developing.

The newsletter is published twice a year advising on new projects and future activities such as exhibitions and seminars.

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1. New Koorie Records Unit webpage completed

Great news! The old KRU webpage has undergone some much-needed changes and is now available for researchers to access. The new KRU webpage <http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/about/kru/> provides users with more detailed information on key projects delivered by the KRU. Some of the new features include:

♦ *wilam naling* projects

This webpage includes information on the *wilam naling* projects being conducted by the KRU, along with photos of various participants at workshops and launches. Other additions to the *wilam naling* webpage are individual links to the four *wilam naling* projects conducted by the KRU, which are:

- ♦ ['Know Your History, Preserve Your Culture' Workshops \(2007\)](#)
- ♦ [Small Grants Scheme \(2007–2008\)](#)
- ♦ [Koorie Index of Names \(KIN\) Project](#)
- ♦ [Common Access Guidelines \(CAG\) Project](#)

- ◆ **Footprints**

The new *Footprints* webpage provides a wealth of information about this great publication, including photographs of Lucy and Percy, and digital images of original records utilised in the publication. There are also photographs of the launch of *Footprints* which took place on 13 May 2008, along with media alerts highlighting *Footprints* reviews which provides web-links where possible. We have also included a podcast of a radio interview conducted on Perth radio station 882 6PR and a video podcast from the launch of this book.

- ◆ **Victorian Koorie Records Taskforce (VKRT)**

Until now there has been very little information available about the VKRT and the important work this groups has conducted since its establishment by the Victorian Government in 2001. The VKRT was created in response to Recommendation 23 of the 1997 report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families (the *Bringing Them Home* report).

The revised webpage now includes details about all the important projects the VKRT has developed and how they have raised awareness about the importance of records about Aboriginal people. The efforts of the VKRT has helped create dramatic changes to the Victorian recordkeeping framework.

The new webpage features links to all the resources that have been produced by the VKRT, which are:

- ◆ [wilam naling ... knowing who you are ...](#)
Improving access to records of the Stolen Generations: a report to the Victorian Government from the Victorian Koorie Records Taskforce.
- ◆ [Finding Your Story](#)
A resource manual for the records of the Stolen Generations in Victoria.
- ◆ [VKRT Bringing Them Home Report 2001](#)
The VKRT released the Finding Your Story Community Forums Summary Report in 2001 after the completion of eight community forums across Victoria.
- ◆ [VKRT Bringing Them Home Newsletters](#)
In 2001 the VKRT developed a newsletter to promote the workshop activities they were delivering state-wide in the Victorian Koorie community.

- ◆ **Research resources**

Along with updating the webpage we have updated PROVguides 65 and 67 to better provide researchers with specific information relating to the Aboriginal records available in PROV's collection:

- ◆ [PROVguide 65](#) Koorie Heritage – Aboriginal Records at PROV provides general information about the Aboriginal records available at PROV.
- ◆ [PROVguide 67](#) Koorie Heritage – Koorie Index of Names (KIN) Project provides detailed information about the KIN project and how researchers can utilise the KIN database to search for family history.

The new KRU webpage will ensure that researchers are kept well informed about the KRU, PROV and future projects that will be delivered.

2. Common Access Guidelines (CAG) project update

The KRU has continued to work through stage two of the CAG project, however the project has faced challenges in developing policies appropriate for all the recordkeeping agencies involved. Combined with recent staff changes, this has slowed

progress on the project. In May 2009 Tsari Anderson commenced work as the *wilam naling* Project Officer. Tsari had previously been working in the joint PROV/NAA Koorie Reference Officer role within the KRU.

Thus far we had held numerous talks with recordkeeping agencies with the key agency being Department of Human Services – Adoption and Family Records Service. We are continuing to develop these talks further with the aim of launching the first signatory to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Stolen Generations Victoria later this year. We are also looking at including the following agencies in the first phase of CAG – MOU signings:

- ◆ Public Record Office Victoria
- ◆ National Archives of Australia
- ◆ State Library of Victoria
- ◆ Koorie Heritage Trust

CAG project background

The CAG project was created in response to recommendation 1 of the *wilam naling* report, which recommended that a new access framework for records affecting Indigenous people be established, including common guidelines for all recordkeeping organisations governing the release of information to Indigenous people.

The CAG project will be delivered in two stages. The first stage, completed in 2008, focussed on reviewing current access standards, establishing working partnerships with key stakeholders and developing a proposed implementation process for CAG. Stage two incorporates the establishment, implementation, and launch of CAG and its promotion to the Victorian Aboriginal community.

For more information about the CAG project please refer to the webpage at <http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/about/kru/cag.asp>

3. Koorie Index of Names (KIN) update

The KIN database is now available to researchers following its launch in December 2008. However, researchers can only access the KIN database at the Victorian Archives Centre Reading Room located at 99 Shiel Street, North Melbourne. The database is easy to use and researchers can search by individual names, places and date ranges.

Since December 2008 the indexing statistics have increased to **125 files** consisting of **17,540 pages**, and with **13,797 names** recorded in the index.

Just a reminder that the KIN PROV*guide* 67 has been developed to assist researchers; the guide provides background information and basic step-by-step instructions on how to utilise the KIN database. An online version is available on the PROV website at:

<http://www.access.prov.vic.gov.au/public/PROVguides/PROVguide067/PROVguide067.jsp>

4. Koorie Records Unit staff update

Departures

Sharon Huebner resigned as the *wilam naling* Project Officer in March 2009. We would like to recognise and thank Sharon for all her hard work while working as part of the KRU team.

New Appointment – wilam naling Project Officer

As stated earlier, Tsari Anderson was appointed as the *wilam naling* Project Officer in May 2009. Tsari had previously been working in the joint PROV/NAA Koorie Reference Officer position. Tsari is a trained historian and brings a wealth of knowledge about Victorian government records relating to Aboriginal people, with particular emphasis on records from the Board for Protection of Aborigines.

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5. Other news

- **National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week 2009**

Theme: *Honouring our Elders, Nurturing our Youth*

5–12 July 2009

NAIDOC Week celebrations are held across Australia each July to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. NAIDOC is celebrated not only in Indigenous communities, but by Australians from all walks of life. The week is a great opportunity to participate in a range of activities and to support your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

NAIDOC originally stood for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee. This committee was once responsible for organising national activities during NAIDOC Week and its acronym has since become the name of the week itself.

To find out more information about NAIDOC week visit::

<http://www.naidoc.org.au/index.aspx>

- **Public Record Office Victoria – NAIDOC 2009 Events**

New PROV travelling exhibition

An Aboriginal Moomba: 'Out of the Dark'

This new PROV travelling exhibition will be on display at the Victorian Archives Centre in North Melbourne from Tuesday 7 July to Friday 28 August 2009.

The exhibition features high quality reproductions of photographs from the performance *An Aboriginal Moomba: 'Out of the Dark'*, sourced from the PROV collection and from Bill Onus's personal scrapbook collection.

The exhibition will include story panels about the performance, and the performers.

The year 1951 marked both the Centenary of Victoria and the fiftieth anniversary of Federation in Australia. To celebrate these historical milestones, a specially selected Victorian Commemoration Committee planned an arts festival and a parade of floral floats through the streets of Melbourne. However, the absence of any Indigenous Australian content in these arrangements rankled members of the



A page from the program for *An Aboriginal Moomba*. PROV, VPRS 7655/P1 Stationery and Photographs of State Occasions, unit 1

Aboriginal community. With only weeks to go before the festivities were due to start, community leader and Hon. Secretary of the Australian Aborigines' League, Pastor Doug Nicholls (1906–1988), obtained funding from the Commemoration Committee to mount a theatrical production.



A scene from *An Aboriginal Moomba: Out of the Dark*, 1951. PROV, VPRS 7655/P1 Stationery and Photographs of State Occasions, unit 1, image 9

The all-Indigenous *An Aboriginal Moomba: 'Out of the Dark'* was staged at Melbourne's Princess Theatre and was received with critical

and popular acclaim. Most of the principals in the concert-style production, including Doug Nicholls and filmmaker Bill Onus, were from south-eastern Australia, but others had a connection to country further afield. The opera singer Harold Blair was from Queensland, and blues singer Georgia Lee was a Torres Strait Islander.

This travelling exhibition will provide people with a great insight into Aboriginal culture and an understanding of how a groundbreaking theatrical event set the standard for what has evolved into the modern-day Moomba Waterfest. Celebrated in Melbourne every March since 1955, Moomba is one of the largest and longest-running festivals in Australia. With its emphasis on community involvement, the festival commands a strong place in the social history of Melbourne.

An Aboriginal Moomba 'Out of the Dark' Exhibition

When: Tuesday 7 July to Friday 28 August 2009

Where: Victorian Archives Centre (PROV)
99 Shiel Street, North Melbourne

Parking: Two-hour street parking available on Shiel Street, alternatively free all day park available in PROV car-park which can be accessed from 112 Macaulay Road, North Melbourne.

Cost: Free event

- **NAIDOC 2009 – KRU Seminar**

'Retracing Your Family's Footprints' Seminar – Cancelled

The Koorie Records Unit was planning on presenting a free half-day seminar called 'Retracing Your Family's Footprints' during NAIDOC week 2009. Unfortunately the seminar has been cancelled. The KRU are proposing to hold a whole day recordkeeping workshop later this year. The proposed workshop will include participation from other government recordkeeping agencies and Stolen Generations service providers.

Please keep an eye on the KRU webpage for further updates about this proposed seminar.

The KRU apologises for any inconvenience the cancellation of the 'Retracing Your Family's Footprints' seminar may have caused.

- **New PROV reading room opening hours from 1 June 2009 to February 2010**

As part of a program of building works being conducted by PROV to improve its facilities there will be some disruptions to all PROV services from 1 June 2009. As a result of the works, new opening hours will be:

Victorian Archives Centre

Mondays	Closed
Tuesday to Friday	9.00 am to 4.30 pm
Saturdays	Closed

Ballarat Archives Centre

Mondays	Closed
Tuesday	9.30 am to 4.30 pm
Wednesdays	9.30 pm to 4.30 pm
Saturdays	Closed

PROV apologises for any inconvenience experienced during these closures. If you have any concerns regarding PROV's building works please refer to the PROV website <http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/> or email buildingworks@prov.vic.gov.au

6. Feedback

If you would like to send feedback and suggestions on the content of this newsletter or if you know someone who would be interested in receiving the KRU newsletter, please email ask.prov@prov.vic.gov.au

7. About this Publication

We have included you on our mailing list because you have indicated interest in receiving PROV information. However, if you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please email ask.prov@prov.vic.gov.au or phone PROV reception (03) 9348 5600 and we will remove you from our list.

You can access the web page version of this newsletter at <http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/about/kru/>

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