



**AAG**  
Australian  
Association of  
Gerontology



**ATSIAAG**  
Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islander  
Ageing Advisory Group

## Recognition of Traditional Owners - Yalukut Weelam Clan of the Boon Wurrung

### Acknowledgement of Country if meeting at AAG National Office at 322 St Kilda Road - St Kilda, Victoria.

While AAG will arrange for a formal Welcome to Country when arranging large events such as Conferences or ceremonies it is appropriate for smaller meetings and gatherings to include a formal recognition of traditional owners with suggested wording as follows.

*'I would like to acknowledge and pay my respect to the Elders past and present, to those who have passed before us and to the members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community who are also attending here today. I want to acknowledge the Yalukut Weelam Clan of the Boon Wurung who are part of the Kulin Nation, the traditional custodians of the lands we are meeting on here today'.*

For further details around [Acknowledgement of Country protocols](#) in Port Phillip where the AAG National office is based, please use this link.

#### Context

As part of AAG's commitment towards its reconciliation journey, an agreed action within the AAG Reflect, Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was to 'Explore who the Traditional Owners are of the lands and waters in our local area'. The AAG Head Office is located at 322 St Kilda Road, in St Kilda (Melbourne, Victoria).

The original inhabitants of the St Kilda area called it **Euro-Yroke** a name they used to describe the red-brown sandstone found along the beach. This area is now known as St Kilda which is part of the City of Port Phillip. [Please use this link to find out further historical information around the traditional owners, as well as cultural landmarks and sites.](#)

It is hoped that this summary and recognition of the Traditional Owners of the land where AAG is located will provide a template for similar Recognition of Traditional Owners summaries to be developed by AAG State and Territory Offices throughout Australia, as we progress on our organisational reconciliation journey together.

#### AAG National Office – 322 St Kilda Road, St Kilda

Before the arrival of Europeans in 1835, the City of Port Phillip area was managed by the Yalukut Weelam clan of the Boon Wurrung people or language group, one of the five clans of the Boon Wurrung, known as the coastal tribe, and who were members of the Kulin nation. They inhabited the swampy areas below Emerald Hill and the sandy-ridged ti-tree covered coastline, which extended from St Kilda to Fishermans Bend (Port Melbourne).

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**Yalukut Weelam** means 'river home' or 'people of the river'. This is an accurate description for a people whose territory was on a flood plain surrounded by water near the mouth of the Yarra River. The local area has changed vastly since European occupation, but it was once a kind of 'temperate Kakadu' surrounded by sea, river, creeks, lakes and lagoons. Between the sea and the river was a score of wetlands surrounded by dunes, heath, woodlands, salt marsh and beach.

In terms of European colonisation, Port Phillip is one of the oldest areas of European settlement in Melbourne. Known for its unique urban villages and magnificent heritage buildings, cultural diversity and creative arts, as well as its picturesque foreshore, parks and gardens, the City attracts approximately four million visitors each year.

Several contemporary sites of interest in Port Phillip occupy locations that were first significant to the Boon Wurrung, the First Peoples of Port Phillip. In St Kilda, the Ngargee tree, a River Red Gum, is located in the south east corner of Albert Park between Albert Park Lake and Fitzroy Street at St Kilda Junction. It is the longest living resident with an estimated age of 300-500 years. The tree marks a junction of pre-European walking trails where tracks connected to southern, northern and eastern districts. St Kilda Town Hall sits on a natural spring and was once a Boon Wurrung camp.

Also, in St Kilda was Euro-Yroke which means the 'grinding stone place'. The Esplanade, where weekend markets take place was once a stone quarry. Stone axes were a highly valued tool, universally used by Boon Wurrung men for cutting bark for trees for housing, canoes and containers. Emerald Hill, now the site of South Melbourne Town Hall, was a significant local site to engage in ceremonies and trade. The Boon Wurrung met at this permanently cleared site every three months and conducted ceremony on full and new moons.

Port Phillip has an estimated resident population of 108,472, with an 11.51 per cent increase since 2011. The total identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of Port Phillip is 283 with many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents living in St Kilda, South Melbourne and Port Melbourne. The local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is diverse and is made up of Boon Wurrung Traditional Owners, Aboriginal people from regional Victoria, Torres Strait Islander peoples from Queensland and from all states and territories of Australia.

*(AAG wishes to acknowledge that much of the above information was sourced from the City of Port Phillip and from its Reconciliation Action Plan, 2017-2019).*