

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
HANSARD
Tuesday 17 March 2026

[Excerpt]

Recognition of Visitors

Mr PRESIDENT - Honourable members, before I call the honourable member for Nelson, I'd like to welcome, again, the very patient members of the Kingborough Reconciliation Action Group, who have been waiting all this time to hear what the honourable member is going to say about them. I will not make them wait any longer because I call on the honourable member for Nelson.

Kingborough Reconciliation Action Group

[11.52 a.m.]

Ms WEBB (Nelson) - Mr President, it's been a great delight and pride that I rise today to introduce to this Chamber the Kingborough Reconciliation Action Group, also known as KRAG. I particularly wish to highlight and celebrate the fact that KRAG was a recent recipient of Reconciliation Tasmania's award for being reconciliation champions for 2025. This is a wonderful and important contribution for which to be formally recognised, particularly since KRAG is an organisation and is relatively young.

KRAG's origins stem from a group of enthusiastic volunteers who engaged in community conversations in the lead-up to 2023 Voice Referendum. The outcome of the Voice Referendum instilled in this group a sense of urgency to continue with those local conversations, to foster improved engagement with and understanding of and support for the Tasmanian Aboriginal community. Hence this group got organised and became affiliated with Reconciliation Tasmania's Local Action Network. It was established in October 2024, barely a year after the 2023 Voice referendum.

Just over a year later, their efforts have been acknowledged by this recent award, what a wonderful outcome. Reconciliation is a social justice matter that is close to my heart and therefore I was excited and moved when I witnessed local members of my community not to be discouraged by that referendum outcome but instead decide to keep going and keep working to make a positive difference, demonstrating how individuals and community groups can foster meaningful reconciliation in our community.

From those quiet and humble beginnings, success and recognition have flourished. The Reconciliation Champions Award recognises the educative and local engagement approach of Kingborough Reconciliation Action Group (KRAG) and I would add a tireless approach to that list. The group seeks to advance reconciliation by building knowledge, empathy, respect and community understanding, particularly regarding local Aboriginal history, traditional and ongoing culture.

Additional to their regular meetings, the group hosts events such as educational talks with

guest speakers, film presentations and discussions. A book group meets every two months to discuss relevant books exploring Tasmanian Aboriginal culture, history and literature.

Last month I attended a packed standing room only public talk provided by author Shayne Breen, based on his research for his book *First Tasmanians: A Deep History*. The focus of this particular public talk was primarily on Shayne's research into the Tasmanian Aboriginal practice of cultural burning from the beginning to now. A very timely and important area of traditional knowledge, which many across our broader community are just beginning to appreciate.

KRAG has also brought to the local Kingborough community a recent film event called *Her Will to Survive*. It was taken from the First Australians video made by Rachel Perkins and focuses on the years of 1803 to 1880, in Tasmania. A separate event attended by more than 60 people viewed another short film, *The Land Bridge*, discussing the research being undertaken into the historic period when the low sea level saw the land appear, connecting Tasmania with Victoria. Another well-attended event that I also managed to get to was a public talk provided by Ian Terry where he discussed his book retracing Robinson's journey and detailed his trek retracing those journeys.

However, KRAG's focus is not just about looking back and re engaging with important history. The group is just as focused about how engaging Tasmanian Aboriginal culture and custodians can continue here and now. KRAG is currently working on an exciting initiative where they intend to link up with local Tasmanian Aboriginal representatives to host a walk on Country to foster greater local understanding and connection with the land where we live. I look forward to being able to provide an update on that initiative. \

In closing, I wish to pay tribute to the vision, dedication, and efforts to pursue reconciliation with the traditional owners of Lutruwita/Tasmania, made by KRAG as a local community organisation. Also, the personal examples set by the representatives of the KRAG committee, some of whom are attending here today. I do acknowledge Geoffrey Syme and Chloe Bibari who are in the chamber with us today.

I must also mention the indomitable KRAG convener Anne Warren, who unfortunately could not be here today due to other commitments, but certainly is a real driving force with the group. To the KRAG members, congratulations on your deserved recognition as reconciliation champions, and as your local member I could not be more proud.

Members - Hear, hear.