

Burrandies Land Grant

Monday 27 February 2012

Mt Gambier

Firstly, as is our custom, I would like to acknowledge the Boandik people as the Traditional Owners of the lands around Mt Gambier and pay my respects to all elders present.

I would also like to specifically acknowledge South East Elder Aunty Val Brennan, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Minister Paul Caica MP, Mt Gambier MP Don Pegler, his Worship the Mayor of Mt Gambier Mr Steve Perryman, Ms Khatija Thomas, Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement, Mr Parry Agius Chairperson, South Australia Aboriginal Advisory Council and Ms Debbie Bond also a Member of SAAAC.

The Indigenous Land Corporation Chairperson Dr Dawn Casey is unable to be here today to join in your celebrations and sends her regards and best wishes.

I would like to thank Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation for having me here today on her behalf and thank you for your welcome of myself and the staff of the ILC.

In particular, I would like to thank Chairperson Linda Clayton and CEO Emma Hay for the opportunity to say a few words.

The ceremony today is a very important event as we celebrate the granting of this land to Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation.

It is a privilege for me to be here as a Board Member of the ILC.

Land has always played a vital part in the lives of Indigenous people.

It was the High Court's decision of 1992, which first recognised Native Title.

The recognition of prior Indigenous ownership of land paved the way for an entirely new direction in Indigenous affairs, including the establishment of the Indigenous Land Corporation in 1995.

Since that time the ILC has been working hard with Indigenous communities and people all over Australia to help them build a land base that will assist them in developing a better and stronger future for themselves and generations to come.

The ILC was pleased to be able to purchase this parcel of crown land and the ILC spent \$710,000 to secure the site for Burrandies.

The fact the ILC was able to acquire the land in January 2011 and divest it to Burrandies in June 2011 is testament to the fact that the ILC believes Burrandies is a well-run effective organisation that has a vision for the future on behalf of indigenous people in the wider Mt Gambier region.

Therefore, the granting of this property today is a significant milestone for Indigenous people in South Australia, in particular those in the Mount Gambier area.

This property provides a culturally appropriate base for Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation to continue its good work in providing much-needed services to the Indigenous community.

Today's land grant paves the way for Burrandies to establish a new culturally appropriate training centre on the property, for the delivery of training, employment, and educational services.

It will enable the continued use of the property by the Indigenous community as a hub where social and cultural activities can take place, and provides Burrandies with enterprise opportunities in horticulture.

Burrandies has established itself as an effective and well-run organisation which has successfully delivered employment and training services to the local Indigenous community for over 13 years.

The ILC Board is aware of the strong partnerships Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation has developed with both Government and non-government agencies and that the programs and services you are delivering are playing an invaluable role in creating a better future for Indigenous generations to come.

The ILC Board strongly believes that Indigenous-held land should deliver direct benefits to Indigenous people.

The development of a new training centre will deliver many benefits and create new opportunities in the areas of training, education, employment and the delivery of social services.

The ILC has been pleased to play its part and I say a heartfelt thank you to everyone for your dedication and your care. Well done.

The benefits of handing over the title this property are far reaching.

Today is an opportunity to celebrate your achievements and to look forward with confidence to the challenges which lie before us.

I again thank you for having me here to celebrate this handover with you today and on behalf of the ILC Board, Management and staff, I would like to wish you success with your future endeavours, and offer you our sincere congratulations.