

**Welcome to Country speech by Aunty Julieanne Axford for the opening of the Yallabirrang Learning Story Fence.**

**Wominjeka everyone.**

**My name is Aunty Julieanne.**

**I am elder of Wurundjeri the people.**

**In recognition of doing my welcome to country, I'd like to acknowledge and pay my respects:**

**To my Elders past and present and elders here today.**

**I would like to welcome the City of Yarra Mayor and Richard Wynn and everyone here today. I hope you all have an enjoyable day.**

**I feel honoured doing the Welcome to Country today as Aunty Gail and myself have been working with Sally and Yuki on this for the last 12 months, with the last few months it has just been Sally. It has been a privilege to get to know them and thank them for all their hard work. It was also wonderful acknowledgement of our people and other cultures.**

**The Wurundjeri tribe consist of three families the Nevins the Wandin's and The Terrick's.**

**I am part of the Nevin Family, the three family all descend from one woman called Annie Boorate, which makes us one big family.**

**Annie Boorate is the younger sister of William Barak, a pioneer for Aboriginal people in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, fighting for equality and land rights.**

**I am here today to welcome you all to the land of my ancestors. We call the land within our tribal boundaries our country.**

**The kulin nation, Kulin meaning man, is made up of 5 groups. They are Woi -wur-rung /Wurundjeri BoonWurrung, Taungurong, Watharuong , Dja Dja wurung To give you an outline of Wurundjeri country and area we cover:**

**Wurundjeri Country extends from the north to the Great Dividing Range, East to Mount Baw Baw, South to Mordialloc Creek and West to Werribee River. We cover a diverse range of land, from the mountain, to the beach, and everything in between.**

**Many thousands of years ago if an Aboriginal person from another tribe wanted to cross over our boundary they would have to sit at the boundary and wait for our Nurungaeta (head man ) or an elder to come past to give permission to cross . Traditional Aboriginal culture was highly territorial, visitors risked violent reprisal for crossing a tribal or clan boundry without permission, this is how a welcome to country originated in our culture.**

**Traditionally, being welcomed onto Country meant you respected Bunjil's Lore. Bunjil, the wedge tailed Eagle, is our creator. As long as you look after the country, you had access to our waterways and land resources.**

**When you enter our country we ask that you respect our resources: our fauna, flora and water. They are very special to us and when you are ready to leave you should leave it how you found it.**

**Once again thank you Sally for having me do the welcome to country today.**

**On behalf of my elders I would like to say:**

**WOMINJEKA WURUNDJERI BULLUK YEARMAN KOONDIE  
BIK**

**Welcome to the land of Wurundjeri people.**

**Thankyou**