

Media Release

Ms Danielle Green MP

Parliamentary Secretary for Sport

Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Victoria



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RECOGNITION FOR HEYWOOD'S GUNDITJMARA WAR HEROES

A stunning mural dedicated to Gunditjmara servicemen and women in south-west Victoria will ensure their part in Australia's war history is honoured for generations to come.

Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Victoria Danielle Green today visited the Gunditjmara War Memorial Mural in Heywood, alongside the Traditional Owners and advocates who brought the mural to life.

The mural depicts Gunditjmara brothers, Privates Herbert, Frederick, Edward and Leonard Lovett who enlisted and served in the first and second world wars. There were 13 members of the Lovett family that served in both world wars.

Captain Reginald Saunders – a Purnim man who was the first Aboriginal Australian to be commissioned as an officer in the Australian Army – also features in the artwork.

Private Herbert Lovett is the great-grandfather of local artist Tom Day who alongside Levi Geebung, returned home to Gunditjmara Country to help paint the 30-metre-high mural with internationally acclaimed street artist Matt Adnate.

The mural has been supported by the Andrews Labor Government's *Stronger Regional Communities Program* which has been delivered by Leadership Great South Coast 2020 Alumni, Troy Lovett, Emily Falla, Craig Kelson and Jason Van Der Heyden.

The Indigenous war memorial mural aims to encourage truth telling and empower the community to honour and acknowledge the contributions and sacrifices made by Indigenous service men and women.

The Labor Government is investing in several initiatives to ensure Victoria's south west is given the cultural recognition it deserves including \$12 million from the *Regional Tourism Infrastructure fund* in establishing Budj Bim as a cultural tourism destination and a UNESCO World Heritage listed site.

This investment is part of the Government's almost \$30 billion investment in rural and regional Victoria since 2015. Find out more at rdv.vic.gov.au/

Quotes attributable to Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Victoria Danielle Green

"This memorial is significant to the community as it recognises the remarkable acts of Gunditjmara service men and women. This artwork will make sure the history and stories of the Gunditjmara people are honoured for years to come."

Quote attributable to Member for Western Victoria Gayle Tierney

"This mural is such a critical piece of artwork that displays a part of Australia's war history that is so important to so many in our community. It will be a centrepiece in town for generations."

Quote attributable to Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owner Aboriginal Corporation Aaron Morgan

"This project has taken a huge step in recognition for Gunditjmara - it is something that will open up very important conversations."

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