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Be proud, says indigenous artist

A PROMINENT Aboriginal artist has called for all Melburnians to be proud of their city and to not change historical monuments amid a national debate on the issue.

Wauthorong man Stan Dryden said that while Aborigines had endured “horrific things”, European settlement “was going to happen anyway (and) things could have been a lot worse”.

“Be proud of what’s here,

JOHN MASANAUSKAS

this is Melbourne the way it is right now. It didn’t build itself,” he said.

“And we’ve got to get rid of this self-pity stuff, and we’ve got to get on with it and move forward just like our strong Aboriginal men and women were back then.”

Mr Dryden, whose Aboriginal name is Yarramunua, performed a welcome to country

ceremony yesterday to mark Melbourne Day, which commemorates the arrival of the city’s founders in 1835.

The schooner *Enterprize*, sent from Tasmania by businessman John Pascoe Fawner, carried 11 people and moored on the Yarra River near what is now Queens Bridge.

A national debate is raging over calls to remove or amend inscriptions on statues for historical figures.