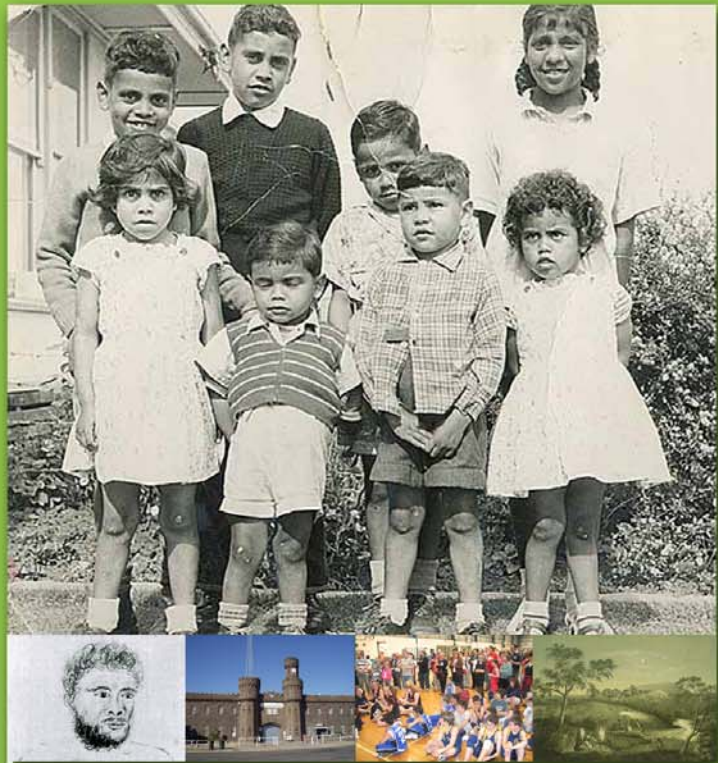


# Moreland Post-Contact Aboriginal Heritage Study



Report to Moreland City Council  
April 2006

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Megan Goulding and Mary Menis

**goulding heritage consulting pty ltd**

**April 2006**

Prepared for Moreland City Council

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Front cover image:

- ❖ Front cover images – top clockwise: The Murray family (reproduced courtesy of the Murray family); Merry Creek, Plenty Ranges (Cagne, F. 1829-1883. Lithograph. Reproduction rights owned by the National Library of Australia. Library Record Number: NLA S3333); Thornbury Basketball Club Grand Final (Courtesy John & Pam Brown); Former Pentridge Prison (Mary Menis); Billibillery Ngurungaeta of the Wurundjeri-willam Tract 2 clan titled "Chief of the Yarra tribe on settlement being formed" (by William Thomas, c. 1839, pencil sketch on paper, La Trobe Picture Collection, SLV).

Prepared by Goulding Heritage Consulting Pty Ltd

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# Executive Summary

The aim of the Moreland Post-Contact Aboriginal Heritage Study (MPCAHS) is to identify Aboriginal heritage sites and landscape associations in the Moreland municipality that date from the pre-contact period through to the early contact period when Europeans settled in and around the area to the present day. Funded by a Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage grant to the City of Moreland, the project has been undertaken by Goulding Heritage Consulting Pty Ltd. The Moreland City Council is situated approximately 3 kilometres north of Melbourne.

The underlying aim of this study has been to identify Aboriginal post-contact places and landscape associations that can be taken into consideration in the local planning context. By working with Aboriginal people to identify connections to places in the study area and to establish the nature of their cultural attachments to those places, this study has demonstrated a wide range of connections between Aboriginal people and the Moreland area.

Information on Aboriginal peoples' associations with the Moreland municipality was obtained from historical sources and a program of Aboriginal community consultation. A total of 18 interviews were carried out with local Aboriginal people in order to record their stories about places within the Moreland area and to document what those places mean to them as Aboriginal people. Historical research was also carried out using primary and secondary sources. This research has been used to produce an historical narrative that provides the context within which to understand the different places associations within the Moreland area and the connections between those places and the wider historical landscape within which Moreland is placed.

A total of 44 places were recorded for the study area and an additional 10 places adjacent to the study area that are of historical interest. These places which are characterised by both tangible and intangible values have been recorded in Place Data Forms and assessed for their significance using the Criteria for the Register of the National Estate for their social values (Criterion G). They include places demonstrating connections dating to the 1830s when contact first occurred between Aboriginal people and Europeans in the Moreland area through to places of contemporary importance.

This study has recommended that the Moreland City Council develop an Aboriginal Heritage Protocol as a way of ensuring that the places identified are considered in future planning processes. It has also identified gaps in knowledge about Aboriginal associations with the Moreland area that can be addressed through further research.



# 1 Project Background

Introduction  
Project Context  
Study Area  
Aims  
Project Methodology



## Introduction

The Moreland Local Government Area (LGA) is situated in the traditional country of the Woiworung people.<sup>1</sup> Bordered by the corridor of the Merri Creek to the east and the Moonee Ponds Creek to the west, the Moreland area was part of a rich natural and cultural landscape used by Aboriginal people for thousands of years. This study focuses on the diverse range of associations between Aboriginal people and place in the present-day Moreland LGA since European settlement in 1835. Some of these place associations belong to the traditional Woiworung people who first experienced sustained contact with Europeans in the mid 1830s when John Batman ventured into their country. The ensuing settlement in the Port Phillip district (later Melbourne) which included the municipality of Moreland, resulted in significant disruption to Woiworung social structures and cultural practice which dramatically changed the nature of Indigenous occupation of the study area. Forced to move from the Melbourne environs by government policy in the 1840s and 50s, Woiworung cultural activity in the Moreland area significantly diminished during this time.

It was not until the mid 1900s that Aboriginal people came to live in the Moreland area again. The history of Aboriginal people living in the suburbs of Melbourne in the Twentieth century is largely untold.<sup>2</sup> Yet its importance in providing a context within which to understand the complexity of Indigenous cultural associations in urban environments such as the City of Moreland is frequently overlooked. Other suburbs such as Thornbury, which is well known for the Aboriginal Advancement League or Fitzroy for the Aboriginal Health Service, have long histories of Aboriginal community associations stretching back to pre World War II days. Since the 1930s many Aboriginal people living in regional Victoria were drawn to suburbs including Collingwood, Fitzroy and Thornbury for employment and housing opportunities. In the post-war period the municipalities of Darebin and Yarra continued to be central in the fight for equality and basic human rights for Aboriginal people (as was Footscray in the west).

These important historical associations in urban Aboriginal community activity foster the perception that other suburbs such as the City of Moreland held little focus for Aboriginal people during this period. However, this study has uncovered strong Aboriginal community connections with the municipality that have developed over the past 50 years. Aboriginal people and their families who have been living in, and adjacent to, the Moreland municipality since World War II have developed important attachments to places that reflect their family histories and the history of their community. This study provides an understanding of the nature of Aboriginal history in the Moreland LGA through the memories of Aboriginal people and through an analysis of the historical record. These associations with the Moreland area reflect Aboriginal peoples' experience from the time of colonisation and the associated displacement of traditional Woiworung people in the 1830s through to urban settlement and the development of Aboriginal community organisations from the mid 1900s to the present.

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<sup>1</sup> The Woiworung are also known as the Wurundjeri people.

<sup>2</sup> An exception to this is an investigation by Bunj Consultants. (Bunj Consultants. 2002. *Snapshots of Aboriginal Fitzroy*. City of Yarra).

## Project Context

This study has been funded by a Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage grant to the City of Moreland. Goulding Heritage Consulting Pty Ltd was commissioned in February 2005 to undertake this investigation for the Moreland City Council. The study is situated within a strong national, state and local policy context that recognizes the importance of Aboriginal heritage values and places and their ongoing protection and management. At a local level the City of Moreland's Reconciliation Policy and Action Plan commits Council to an ongoing process of respect for and management of important Aboriginal heritage places in the municipality. This investigation constitutes the first of three stages of the Moreland Post-Contact Aboriginal Heritage Study (MPCAHS). The MPCAHS aims to identify Aboriginal heritage sites and landscape associations in the Moreland municipality that date from the pre-contact period through to the early contact period when Europeans settled in and around the area to the present day.

This study follows on from an assessment of pre-contact archaeological sites completed in 2004.<sup>3</sup> That assessment, which was largely limited to open space areas not impacted by development, compiled information on 16 Aboriginal archaeological sites situated within the Moreland LGA. Principally comprising stone artefacts scatters, these sites reflect traditional Aboriginal land-use practices and are an important tangible reminder of Aboriginal occupation across the study area. The MPCAHS is structured so that data collected for the pre-contact Aboriginal Heritage Study and this post contact Aboriginal Heritage Study can be used to promote recognition and protection of Aboriginal places and sites of significance to Aboriginal people. This will be achieved through the development of a strategic decision-making framework that is designed to ensure the protection of Aboriginal heritage places and the values associated with them within the context of the local planning environment.<sup>4</sup>

## Study Area

The study area is defined by the boundaries of the City of Moreland Local Government Area (LGA). The municipality is bounded by the Merri Creek in the east and the Moonee Ponds Creek in the west (Figure 1). The Western Ring Road defines the northern boundary and the southern boundary extends along Park Street. Situated 3 kilometres north of the Melbourne CBD, the City of Moreland covers an area of 51 square kilometres consisting of the following suburbs:

- Gowanbrae
- Glenroy,
- Hadfield
- Oak Park
- Fawkner
- Pascoe Vale
- Pascoe Vale South
- Coburg
- Coburg North
- Brunswick
- Brunswick West
- Brunswick East
- Fitzroy North (part)
- Parkville (part)

<sup>3</sup> TerraCulture Pty Ltd. 2004. Moreland Pre-Contact Aboriginal Heritage Study. Report to Moreland City Council.

<sup>4</sup> As will be discussed in the final chapter of this report, it is likely that statutory mechanisms will play a limited role in managing these values.

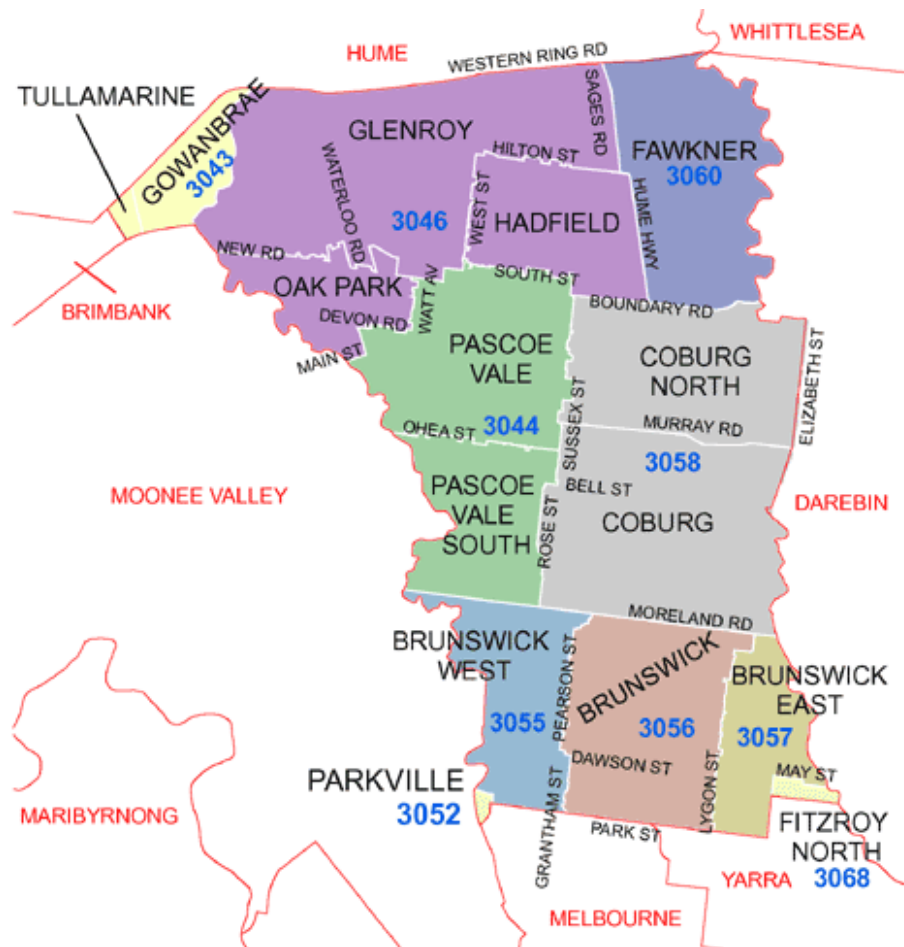


Figure 1: Map of Moreland local government area ([www.moreland.vic.gov.au](http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au)).

The study area is predominantly urbanised with limited open space. The creeks along the western and eastern boundaries provide narrow corridors of open space.

Although the focus of this study is on the Moreland municipality, Aboriginal occupation of the area is situated within a wider historical landscape context. As a way of better understanding the local as well as broader historical influences on Aboriginal peoples' occupation of the Moreland municipality places in close proximity to the primary study area have been recorded.

## Aims

The principal aim of this project has been to build an understanding of the nature of Aboriginal post-contact heritage values in the Moreland LGA. Specific aims of the project as specified in the Project Brief (Appendix 1) included the following:

- Work with Aboriginal people to identify connections to places in the study area and to establish the nature of their cultural attachments to the places/study area<sup>5</sup>;
- Demonstrate the connections between Aboriginal people and both the Moreland municipality and the wider landscape;
- Produce field reviews of identified places in the form of datasheets, including assessments of the social value of the places;
- Make recommendations on the future management of Indigenous places identified.

The underlying objective of this study at its outset was to identify significant Aboriginal sites and places with a view to exploring planning mechanisms that would ensure their ongoing protection. As the project developed it became apparent that no single planning tool, such as the Moreland City Council Heritage Overlay, would provide the necessary protection and/or recognition of the diverse place and landscape associations recorded. Instead it was recognised that the focus of project outcomes should be on a “package” of initiatives tailored to a number of outcomes. While one of these outcomes would involve better protection of Aboriginal places where appropriate, other outcomes explored included:

- creating greater awareness of Aboriginal heritage values amongst Council planning staff;
- promoting a better understanding of Aboriginal history and places associations within the wider community;
- developing stronger links with Aboriginal people with traditional connections (the Wurundjeri) to the Moreland municipality as well as local Aboriginal people who have developed connections to the region over the past 50 years.

## Project Methodology

The tasks listed in the project brief (Appendix 1) required a review of all available literature and the documentation of Indigenous cultural heritage places in the Moreland LGA from written and oral sources. The method outlined below has been tailored to meet this objective through an analysis of documentary information and oral information that reflect Aboriginal peoples’ past and contemporary associations with the Moreland landscape.

### Defining Aboriginal Heritage Places for Investigation

The approach employed in this project to documenting Aboriginal cultural associations across the Moreland landscape relies heavily on the notion of place. The cultural meaning of places can be defined by the fabric of the place (a building or archaeological site), its use over time (activities or incidents that mark the place) or by social value attributed to that place (how people relate to or

---

<sup>5</sup> While it is acknowledged that the Wurundjeri people are the traditional inhabitants of the Moreland area, this investigation recognises the diversity of Indigenous groups that may be represented in the Moreland area. As such a key objective for the project is the development of an understanding of the diversity within the local Indigenous community.

remember a place). Cultural landscapes, whether historical or contemporary, are constructed through different layerings of peoples' attachments and activities – through a "being in place". History is shaped by place and the historical associations that manifest in place over time. Places that inform our understanding of this history might relate to the recent past or they can include Aboriginal cultural associations that have a long tradition in the pre-contact period but which were carried on into the post-contact period. Indigenous heritage places investigated can therefore relate to the pre-contact period or distant past through to the historic period and recent past. In this study the emphasis is on place associations relating to the post-contact settlement of the Moreland municipality.

The kinds of place-based associations that can be recorded in these broad investigations include camps, ceremonial sites, places of conflict, travelling routes, story places, dreaming trails, places where people have worked, places where people have lived places where people collected or continue to collect resources, locations where people have been born, locations where they have been buried and places where people have gathered socially. Places might include associations where early Europeans recorded traditional information and other written and visual sources or as archaeological traces of past human activity. Some places may reflect continued use over long periods of time that may show physical traces. Other associations might derive from events that may or may not leave physical traces. In summary, Aboriginal peoples' associations with their local landscape can be characterised in the following ways:

### ***Intangible (Non-Physical) Dimension***

- non-archaeological places (eg. events/occupation/use associations)
- places invested with cultural meaning (eg. spiritual/ceremonial places)

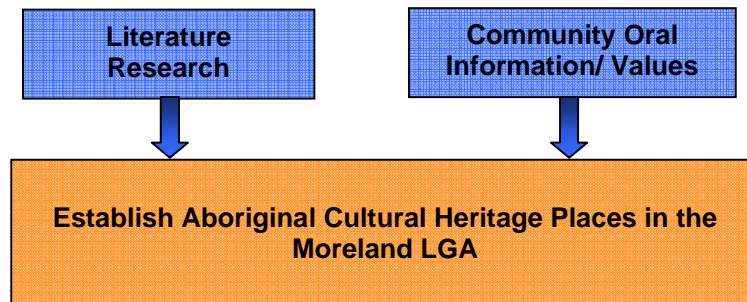
### ***Tangible (Physical) Dimension***

- natural features (eg. resource use/procurement places)
- material traces (eg. archaeological sites, graves, houses)

These manifestations are by no means mutually exclusive but are useful delineations when thinking about the documentation and management of the Aboriginal cultural heritage values attached to a place/landscape. This method allowed for the identification of the broad variety of attachments and associations that Aboriginal people had, or continue to have, with the Moreland LGA.

## **Collection of Information**

In order to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the diversity of the Indigenous landscape attachments in the Moreland LGA and to develop the historical context in which to understand those associations, data was recorded using a mixture of Aboriginal community oral information and historical information from written sources (see Figure 2).



**Figure 2:** Collecting information on a broad range of Indigenous cultural heritage places in the study area.

These methods are discussed below.

## Historical Research

An overview of the nature of post-contact Aboriginal history in the study area was drawn together from primary and secondary historical documents.<sup>6</sup> This history provides an important context for the place associations recorded and the different themes that characterise the history of Aboriginal associations in the Moreland LGA. This documentary research also provided the basis from which a variety of Aboriginal places were identified and recorded. The challenge for this investigation was to find references to Aboriginal people in the study area in the 1800s. Much of the focus of government administration of Aboriginal people during this time focussed on the Protectorate camps at the confluence of the Merri Creek and Yarra River, Reverend Langhorne's Mission where the present-day Botanical Gardens are situated and the Nerre Nerre Warren Protectorate Station in Dandenong. References to Aboriginal people outside these places tend to record fleeting information on peoples' movement, incidents of conflict with white settlers and references to camps for which there is not always clear geographical information. Primary sources relating to the post-contact period were examined as part of the historical research undertaken. Amongst the sources examined were the original journals and letters of Assistant Protector William Thomas who lived in the Pentridge Village area in the 1840s and who recorded several incidents involving Aboriginal people in the locality. A number of key secondary sources with references to Aboriginal people in the post-contact period were also examined including Richard Broome's history of Coburg - *Coburg: between two creeks* (1987).

## Community Consultation Program

An important aspect of this project was to engage with Aboriginal people who might have information to share on places within the Moreland LGA. It was therefore a priority that as many people as possible heard about the project and were given the opportunity to be involved in the information collection process. By way of promoting the project, a project flier introducing the aims and proposed outcomes of the project was produced (Appendix 2). The flier was prominently

<sup>6</sup> These documents are referenced in the Bibliography at the end of this report.

displayed at the Moreland City Council offices and was distributed to key organisations including Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association, ACES Nursing Home, Enmaraleek Cooperative, ANTAR Melbourne and the Brunswick and Coburg Historical Societies. Fliers were also sent to potential interviewees to provide them with a context for the project.

As the primary source of information for the places under investigation are people with connections to those places, an ongoing task during the project has been to establish the names and whereabouts of potential interviewees and to organise ways for them to find out about the project and to be interviewed if willing. The initial strategy employed to find interviewees was to target organisations who might know of Aboriginal people with connections to the Moreland area. Some names of likely informants were supplied by the Moreland City Council Reconciliation Committee (4<sup>th</sup> May 2005). As the project progressed this list of people was constantly updated as new names were suggested. Interviewees also provided helpful leads for other people who might be approached for an interview. Regular contact was kept with the interviewees as a way of reporting back on the results of fieldwork and also of clarifying additional community contacts and organising future community meeting opportunities. To assist the process of reaching people who may have connections to the area, Mary Menis (Goulding Heritage Consulting) and Anita Doilibi (Co-ordinator Strategic Planning, Moreland City Council) were interviewed about the project on the Koori Radio Station, 3KND (24/11/2005).

A detailed record of consultation meetings and interviews is documented in Appendix 3. A total of 18 interviews took place and 20 people were interviewed. These are listed in the table below (Table 1).

Interview No.	Interviewee/s	Location	Type	Date
BS1	Barney Stephens	KODE School, Glenroy	Notes	12 July 2005
FC1	Fay Carter	ACES, Brunswick East	Notes	22 September 2005
GH1	Gary Hansen	Moreland City Council, Coburg	Notes	21 October 2005
RB1	Reg Blow	Preston	Notes	23 November 2005
FC2	Fay Carter	ACES, Brunswick East	Taped interview	28 November 2005
AT1	Allan Thorpe	Moreland Hall, Coburg	Notes	30 January 2006

Interview No.	Interviewee/s	Location	Type	Date
JS1	Jacqui Stewart	Juvenile Justice Centre, Parkville	Notes	30 January 2006
JN1 SH1	Joe Narbaluk Shannon Hood	Enmaraleek Co-op, Broadmeadows	Notes	8 February 2006
RW1	Russell Weston	VAHS, Fitzroy	Notes	14 February 2006
TA1	Troy Austin	Department of Justice, Melbourne	Notes	14 February 2006
TC1	Ted Chessells	Brunswick	Notes	16 February 2006
GH2	Gary Hansen	Brunswick Power Football Club	Taped interview	16 February 2006
AB1	Alf Bamblett	Fitzroy	Notes	20 February 2006
LN1	Lionel Norris	Heidelberg West	Notes	21 February 2006
KC1	Kevin Coombs	Pascoe Vale	Notes	22 February 2006
PB1	Pam Brown	[Phonecall]	Notes	09 March 2006
BM1 NM1	Bev Murray Nora Murray	Glenroy	Taped interview	11 March 2006
IH1	Ian Hunter	Brunswick East	Taped interview	19 April 2006

**Table 1:** List of Interviews Conducted.

One of the aims of this project was to engage a member of the local Wurundjeri community to assist with the data collection process. Mr. Ian Hunter, a Wurundjeri Elder with strong connections to the Moreland area, indicated in the early stages of the project that the Wurundjeri Council was

not in a position to work on the project directly.<sup>7</sup> Instead, the Wurundjeri Council has been kept informed of the progress of the investigation.

## Methods Used for Recording Oral Information

As a primary data source for this project was community oral information, notes were taken at all interviews. Interviews were also taped where appropriate. Interviewees were paid \$50 for a taped interview which was usually between 60 and 90 minutes long. Oral Information Release Forms were signed by each interviewee. This form specifies how their information can be used and provides interviewees with an opportunity to put additional controls over that information. It also ensures that interviewees have the right to read the written accounts of their interviews before the report is finalised. A copy of the Oral Information Release form is attached as Appendix 4.

Partial transcripts have been produced for each interview. These transcripts and the tapes used for recording will be returned to each interviewee at the end of the project.

## Recording Places Identified

Places identified in the historical literature or from the oral history interviews have been recorded on a standardised data form. Each form records the following information:

- Place number
- Place name
- Description of association/values
- Themes
- References
- Date/when used
- Location
- Assessment of Significance

This information form is designed to assist the Moreland City Council to manage the data recorded for each place and to facilitate further consideration of these places and their associated cultural values within the planning process.

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<sup>7</sup> The Wurundjeri Council has been in a state of flux over the past 18 months which has significantly affected its governance and structure. The Council is currently working to reconfigure its structure following Supreme Court action in June 2005.



## 2 Aboriginal History in the Moreland Region

Ethnohistory  
Settlement of Port Phillip  
Recent History

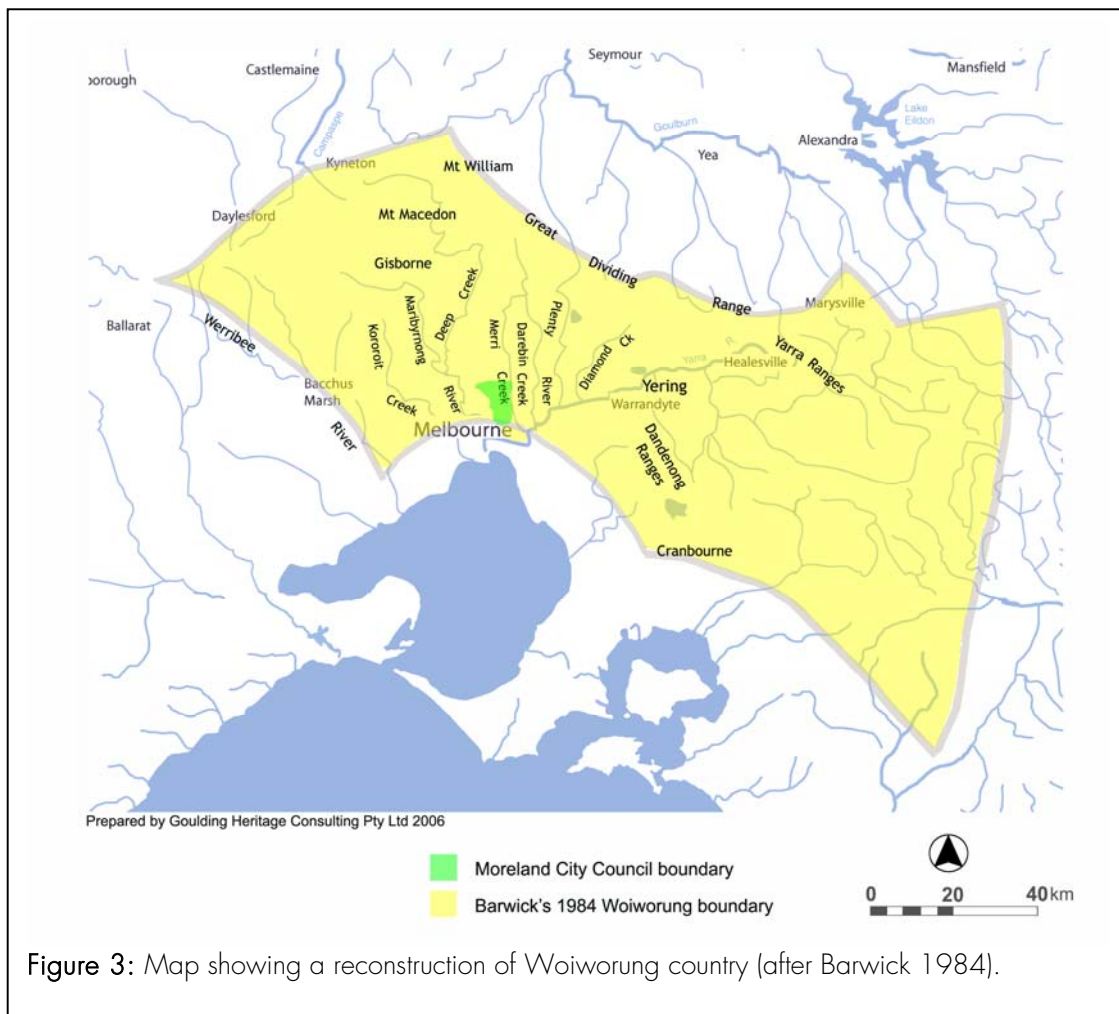


# Ethnohistory

## Woiworung

At contact with Europeans the Woiworung occupied a large area of country that encompassed present-day City of Moreland. Woiworung country extended from the Werribee River in the west, Mount Baw Baw in the east and to the Great Dividing Range to the north (Figure 3). The Yarra River was an important geographical marker in the south of Woiworung country. The Woiworung were part of the larger East Kulin speakers whose identity was premised on a shared language and connection to country.

Woiworung spatial organisation was to a significant extent a reflection of its social, linguistic and political organisation. Group identity reflected both in shared language and connection to country was at the heart of Woiworung experience. Within the “-(w)urrung” or language group existed



smaller groups called clans which were divided principally along geographical lines.<sup>8</sup>

Diane Barwick (1984) has produced the most comprehensive analysis of Woiworung clans. Based on an extensive examination of early Protectorate records not available to Howitt, Barwick concludes the following:

- The Woiworung was made up of four main clan groupings – the Gunung-willam-balluk, Wurundjeri-balluk, Marin-balluk, Kurung-jang-balluk.
- Several of these “super” clans was comprised of separate patrilineal clans, viz:
  - o Gunung-willam-balluk had one patriline:
    - the Talling-willam
  - o Wurundjeri-balluk had two patrilineal:
    - the Wurundjeri-willam which was further broken down into:
      - Tract 1
      - Tract 2
      - Tract 3
    - the Baluk-willam.

The suffixes –balluk or –bulluk, which meant a number of people, and –(w)illam or –yellam which meant a dwelling place, were appended to clan names.

Wurundjeri Elder Ian Hunter states that the Gunung-willam-balluk was the principal patriline under which the Wurundjeri-balluk, Wurundjeri-willam, Balluk-willam and Talling-willam were situated.<sup>9</sup>

These land-owning groups were divided into moieties: Waa/ Waang – meaning crow or Bunjil – meaning eagle. Descent was organised along the male line so that children inherited their father’s moiety. Clan identity was premised on genealogical, historical and religious affiliations and underscored by a shared physical and spiritual relationship with the clan estate. This came with a responsibility to care for the estate as well as religious obligations.

A clan was essentially an estate ownership group, responsible for renewing and sustaining the local ecology. Members had a ritual relationship to clan estate. Clan estates were punctuated by localities reflecting dreaming or creation stories which formed the backdrop for ritual practices such as initiations. They were also subject to the activities of supreme beings (mythical heroes) that were able to influence the availability of critical resources such as food and water and thus impact on the wellbeing of the clan members.

According to Howitt, clans were further broken down into smaller groups or bands “...each with its own definite tract of country and food ground”.<sup>10</sup> Barwick calls these “residential groups”.<sup>11</sup> Bands

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<sup>8</sup> Howitt has confused the definition of “clan” and “horde” by taking the former to define a land-owning group “in which descent is in the male line” and “horde” “to denote the division of a tribe in which descent is counted in the female line” (2001 [1904]: 89). There is no evidence that this type of distinction existed. For the purposes of this study, the local land-owning group is referred to as a clan.

<sup>9</sup> Ian Hunter, pers.com. 19th April 2006.

<sup>10</sup> Howitt 2001 [1904]: 72.

occupied a discrete range in order to hunt and gather foods to sustain the lives of group members. Band spatiality and movement was thus underpinned by this economic emphasis, which essentially defined this relationship to country. While band ranges fell within the clan estate these were principally defined by economically viable tracts of land and given that not all country was viable, not all band ranges covered clan country.

### ***Clan Estate – City of Moreland***

According to ethnographers, the Wurundjeri-willam Tract 2 clan occupied land that includes the present-day Moreland LGA. At contact, the Ngurungaeta or Headman of this clan was Billibillery (Table 2).

Barwick's Clan Name	Sub-Patriline	Ngurungaeta	Moiety
Wurundjeri- balluk	Wurundjeri-willam (Sub- Patriline A) – Tract 2	Billibellary/ Billbilyeary/ Bil-bil- ry/ Jika Jika/Jacky Jacky/ Jakka Jakka/ Jaga Jaga	Waa
		<b>Successor 1</b> - Berberry/ Bearberry/ Barberra/Bar-ber-ry/ Old Jacky/ Mr Bateman/ Old Malcolm	Waa
		<b>Successor 2</b> - Wonga/ Wangu/ Simon Wonga	Waa

**Table 2:** Records of Woiworung Ngurungaeta for the Wurundjeri-willam (Tract 2) located on clan lands that include present-day City of Moreland.

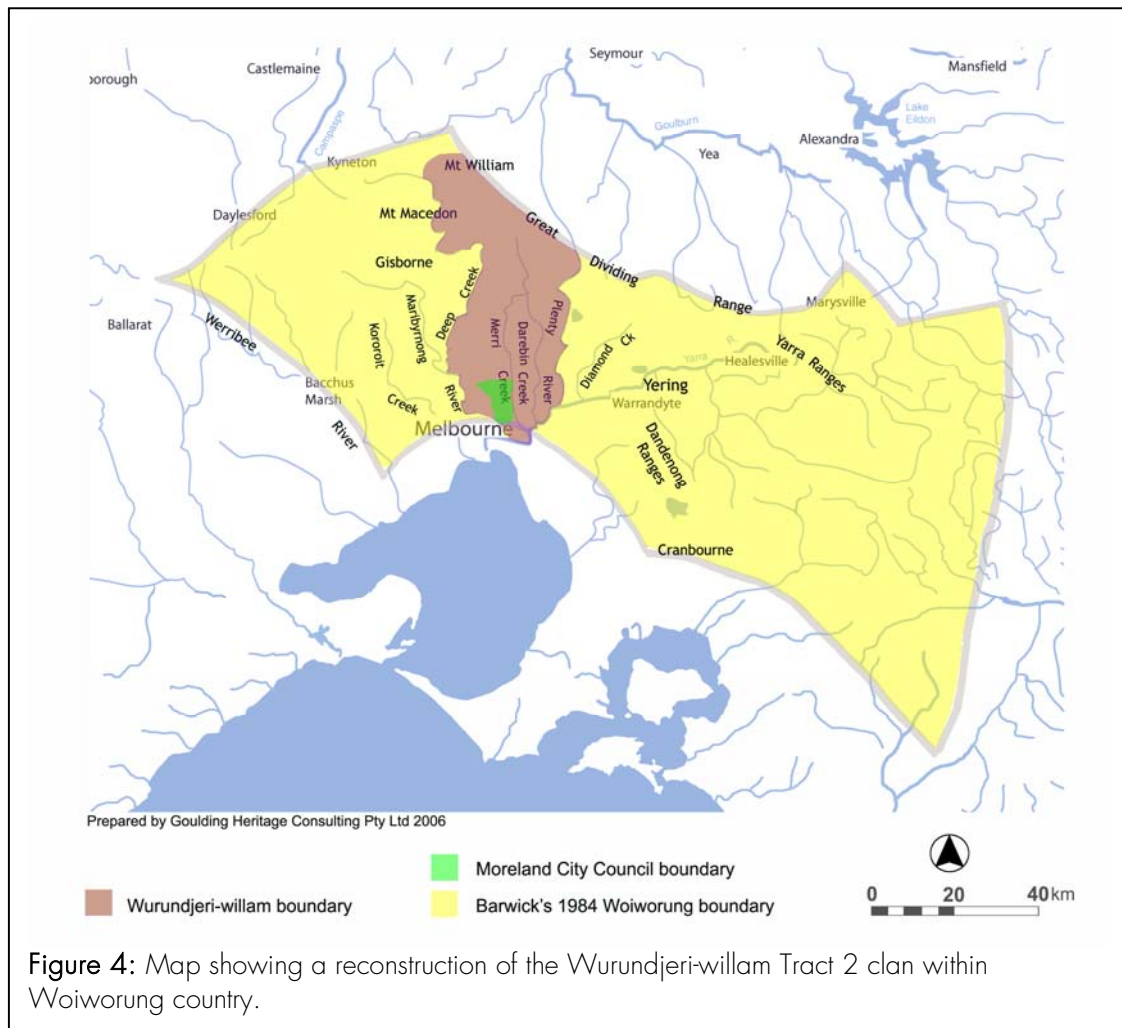
Based on a survey of existing ethnohistorical records, the geographical extent of the Wurundjeri-willam (Tract 2) headed by Billibellary included the following features:

- eastern border was Darebin Creek
- southern border is not clearly defined but extended at least to the Yarra River
- western border was the Maribyrnong River and Jacksons Creek
- northern border was near Mt William at Lancefield and the Great Dividing Range (Figure 4).<sup>12</sup>

Members of the Wurundjeri-willam (Tract 2) patriline were to become active participants in these early frontier years. Billibillery (ca. 1799-August 1846) and his son Wonga feature in numerous records from this period. The so-called “treaty” with John Batman occurred in their clan country as did the main settlement of Port Phillip, later known as Melbourne.

<sup>11</sup> Barwick, D. 1984. 'Mapping the past: an atlas of Victorian clans 1835-1904' in *Aboriginal History*, 8: 106.

<sup>12</sup> Barwick 1984: 120, 124; Howitt 1904: 70-72; Clark 1990: 385-386.



The use of historic records to draw together information on the social and spatial organisation of Aboriginal groups such as the Woiworung is a highly fraught process as it means working with a record that is incomplete and in many instances imprecise. Early recorders, disadvantaged by a lack of cultural awareness and unfamiliarity with the local language, had difficulty recording cultural information. These difficulties were compounded by the effects of colonisation which disrupted cultural practice and impacted on group size and movement.<sup>13</sup> The rapid change in Aboriginal social structures, population numbers and disruption to normal land-use practices that occurred as a consequence of colonisation also clouded these perceptions. As the boundary of the City of Moreland is an arbitrary construct that had little meaning in terms of the way traditional Aboriginal people related to their surroundings, the ethnographic and historic references to Aboriginal

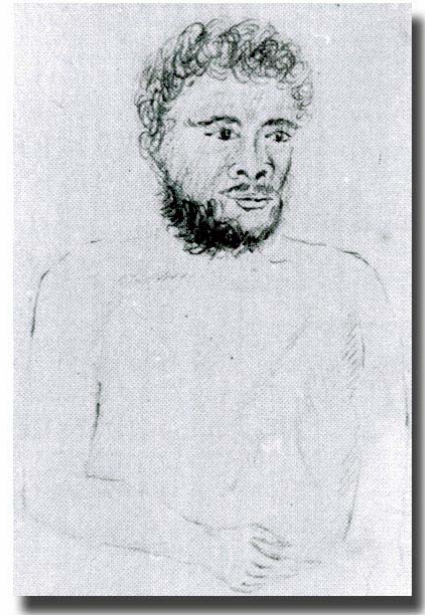
<sup>13</sup> Clark (1990: 3) points out that local organisation was always the first to be destroyed.

occupation in the early years of European settlement tend to reflect the wider landscape with an emphasis on the Yarra River camp at its confluence with the Merri Creek and Melbourne.

## Settlement of Port Phillip

Aboriginal people in Victoria first encountered the British government at the Sullivan Bay settlement, near present day Sorrento in October 1803.<sup>14</sup> This settlement, comprising a party of 300 convicts and a number of free settlers and led by Governor Collins was short lived, principally because of threats from the local Bunurong people and lack of fresh water.<sup>15</sup> The first recorded exploration by Europeans in Woiworung country occurred when Charles Grimes and fellow explorers reached the Yarra River after landing at Mornington in 1803.<sup>16</sup> The party reached as far as Dights Falls on the Yarra after exploring the Maribyrnong. During this expedition they had a “friendly meeting” with local Aboriginal people, noting that “...two of them appeared to be marked with the smallpox”.<sup>17</sup>

The next major incursion into the Victorian colony was not until October 1824, when Hume and Hovell embarked on an expedition overland from Lake George to Westernport Bay.<sup>18</sup> Although no specific information on encounters between Hume and Hovell and the Woiworung was recorded this expedition was to play a significant role in the permanent European settlement of Port Phillip and therefore in the colonisation of Woiworung country.<sup>19</sup> Hume and Hovell’s favourable reports on the fertile nature of the soil and suitability of the pasture for grazing in Port Phillip led the government to attempt for a second time to establish a permanent settlement in the region. This time, Westernport Bay was chosen as a suitable locality and a site near present day Corinella was selected on 24 November 1826. The settlement, which was again situated in Bunurong country, was abandoned in 1828.<sup>20</sup>



**Plate 1:** Billibillery Ngurungaeta of the Wurundjeri-willam Tract 2 clan titled “Chief of the Yarra tribe on settlement being formed” by William Thomas, c. 1839, pencil sketch on paper, La Trobe Picture Collection, SLV in Clark and Heydon 2004: 39.

<sup>14</sup> Boys, B. A. 1959. *First years of Port Phillip*. Robertson and Mullens Ltd, Melbourne: 18-20. The unofficial settlement along the Victorian coastline by sealers from Bass Strait had likely been occurring for many years by the early 1800s.

<sup>15</sup> Boys, 1859:18-20. The settlement at Sorrento was the result of the government’s fears over the possible colonisation of Port Phillip by the French.

<sup>16</sup> Boys 1959: 17.

<sup>17</sup> Boys 1959: 17.

<sup>18</sup> Boys 1959: 26.

<sup>19</sup> Bonwick, J. 1883. *Port Phillip settlement*. Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, London: 83.

<sup>20</sup> Boys 1959: 27-31; Cannon, M., (ed.). 1981. *Historical records of Victoria*. Volume 1: Beginnings of Permanent Government. Public Record Office, Melbourne: xiv.

### ***John Batman's Encounter with Woiworung***

It was not until May 1835 that the permanent settlement of Port Phillip commenced. The Port Phillip Association, acting on behalf of a number of squatters from Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania), dispatched an expedition to acquire a tract of country at Port Phillip. The *Rebecca* sailed from Sydney to Port Phillip conveying John Batman, his crew and seven Aboriginal men from Sydney. The Port Phillip Association's aim was to establish their right to the land by way of a treaty with the local Aboriginal people.<sup>21</sup>

Batman's expedition took him from Pt Gellibrand (Williamstown) north into Woiworung country along the Maribyrnong River to Mt Kororoit and then easterly towards Darebin Creek.<sup>22</sup> This route, guided by local Aboriginal people, likely took him through the present-day Moreland City Council area. It was during this expedition that Batman met with a number of Woiworung Ngurungaeta and persuaded them to sign a treaty, which in his view gave the Port Phillip Association exclusive control over 600,000 acres of the surrounding land. The following account written by Batman clarifies how these events unfolded:

*After travelling eight miles we struck the trail of the natives, which in a short time led us to a branch of the tribe, consisting of one chief, his wife, and three children – fine, plump, chubby, healthy-looking urchins. To this distinguished royal chieftain of the prairies I gave one pair of blankets, handkerchiefs, beads, and three pocket-knives; upon the receipt of these presents he undertook the part of guide. We crossed a fresh water creek, with good land on either bank. Our new guide informed us that he would take us to his tribe, at the same time naming many of their chiefs.*<sup>23</sup>



**Plate 2:** A photograph of Wurundjeri-balluk Ngurungaeta William Berak/Barak taken in the late 1800s (Howitt 2001 [1904]: 254).

Some years later, Morundulk, Ngurungaeta of the Wurundjeri-balluk Baluk-willam patriline claimed to have, been the 'chief' who guided Batman to the winter camp where the treaty exchange occurred.<sup>24</sup> According to Robinson, Bungarie/Berberry "...was the man who showed or was said to show Batman the land".<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Boys 1959: 15.

<sup>22</sup> Campbell, A. H. 1987. *John Batman and the Aborigines*. Kibble Books, Melbourne: 94, map on p.95.

<sup>23</sup> Batman 1985: 19.

<sup>24</sup> Barwick 1984: 121.

<sup>25</sup> Barwick 1984: 124.

*After travelling about eight miles we were surprised to hear a number of voices calling after us, and on looking round encountered six men, armed with spears fixed in their wommeras. We stopped, and they at once threw aside their spears, and came up to us in the most friendly manner possible. We all shook hands and I gave them knives, tomahawks, &c. whereupon they took the lead, and brought us back about a mile, to where we found huts or gunyahs, and a number of women and children. We sat down in the midst of these sooty and sable aboriginal children of Australia; amongst whom, we ascertained, were eight chiefs belonging to the country near Port Phillip, over which we had travelled, and with which we had so much reason to be pleased. The three principal chiefs were brothers. Two of them were fully six feet high and tolerably good-looking; the third was not so tall, but much stouter than the others. The other five chiefs were equally fine men.<sup>26</sup>*

At least two of the "three principal chiefs" who were brothers were Billibellary/ Jaga Jaga (Wurundjeri-willam Tract 2) and Bor-run-upton/ Jaga Jaga (Wurundjeri-willam Tract 1).

The other Ngurungaeta known to have been present were Bebejan/ Jerum Jerum (Wurundjeri-willam Tract 3) and Bungarim/ Bungarie/ Kone-nulher-gil (Marinballuk). The ceremony was also attended by Berberry (Billibillery's brother) (Wurundjeri-willam Tract 2) and Cooloolock/ Kollorlock (clan not established). Well known Aboriginal leader William Barak witnessed the negotiation between Batman and the Ngurungaeta when he was just 11 years old.<sup>27</sup> What took place next sealed the fate of the Woiworung and their Kulin neighbours:

*And a question to myself, here arises, and the answer as speedily follows, viz: now is the time for entering into and affecting a purchase of their land. A full explanation, that my object in visiting their shore was to purchase their land, they appeared to understand; and the following negotiation or agreement was immediately entered into. I purchased two large blocks or tracts of lands, about six hundred thousand acres, more or less, and, in consideration there for, I gave them blankets, knives, looking-glasses, tomahawks, beads, scissors, flour, &c., and I also further agreed to pay them a tribute or rent yearly. The parchment or deed was signed this afternoon by the eight chiefs, each of them, at the same time, handing me a portion of soil: thus giving me full possession of the tracts of land I had purchased.*

*This most extraordinary sale and purchase took place by the side of a lovely stream of water; from whence my land commenced. A tree was here marked in four different ways, to define the corner boundaries. Good land to any extent, either for stock or tillage, with good water, was here in abundance ready for sheep, cattle, or the plough. The timber was she-oak, dwarf-gum, and wattle.<sup>28</sup>*



**Plate 3:** Batman's reproduction of the Woiworung sacred mark (1985:21)

<sup>26</sup> Batman 1985: 19-20.

<sup>27</sup> Barwick, D. 1998. *Rebellion at Coranderrk*. Aboriginal History Inc., Canberra: 25.

<sup>28</sup> Batman 1985: 20.

Although Batman had convinced himself that a land purchase had been made, it is clear that he misunderstood the intentions of the Aboriginal owners. What they had performed for Batman was a kind of Tanderrum ceremony that was designed to welcome newcomers to country. The exchange of gifts that marked the encounter was a standard ritual of the Tanderrum. This reciprocity is evident in the gifts presented to Batman by the Ngurungaeta the next morning:

*Our negotiation was terminated by my Sydney natives giving our newly-acquired friends a grand corroboree at night, much to their delight. Upon a close observation of the domestic habits of these peoples we discerned that each chief had two wives and several children. The group consisted, altogether, of 45, men, women, and children...*

*With a view, however, of securing this rite more permanently, I busied myself in drawing up triplicates of the deeds of the land I had purchased, and in delivering over to the natives more property.... After the purchase and payment, at the conclusion of the preliminaries I had made preparation for departing, when two of the principal chiefs approached, and laid their royal mantles at my feet, begging my acceptance of them. Upon my acquiescing, the gifts were placed around my neck and over my shoulders, by the noble donors, who seemed much pleased at their share in the transaction and begged of me to walk a pace or two in their (now my) princely vestments. I asked them to accompany me to the vessel, to which request I received a rather feeling reply, by their pointing, first to the children, and next to their own naked feet, importing that they could not walk so fast as ourselves but would come down in a few days. In the course of the last transaction I had no difficulty in discovering their sacred and private mark, so important in all their transactions and universally respected. I obtained a knowledge of this mark by means of one of my Sydney natives, Bungit, who, going behind a tree out of sight of the females, made the Sydney aboriginal mark. I afterwards took two others of my natives, and the principal chief of Port Phillip, to whom I showed the mark on the tree, which he instantly recognised, and pointed also to the knocking out of the front tooth.*

*This mark is also made simultaneously with the loss or abstraction of the tooth. I requested the chief, through the interpretation of my Sydney natives, to give the imprint of his mark. After a few minutes hesitation, he took a tomahawk and did as he was desired on the bark of a tree. A copy of this mark is attached to the deed, as the signature and seal of their country.*

*About 10am I took my departure from these interesting people. The principal chief could not be less than six feet four inches high and his proportions gigantic; his brother six feet two inches, also a fine man.<sup>29</sup>*

Barwick has suggested that the group who signed the treaty were all Woiworung.<sup>30</sup> The signatories listed on the "treaty" were Jaga jaga, Jaga jaga, Jaga jaga, Cooloolock, Bungarie, Yanyan,

<sup>29</sup> Batman 1985 [1856]: 19-21.

<sup>30</sup> Barwick 1998: 21.

Moowhip and Mommarnalar.<sup>31</sup> While it is possible that it is a coincidence that all or most of the Ngurungaetas were in the area when Batman arrived, it is more likely that the group came together as soon as Batman was detected in their country.

According to Campbell (1987), the Aboriginal camp where the treaty exchange took place was most likely situated close to the present day Norris Bank Reserve near Darebin Creek approximately 6.5 km east of the Moreland municipality.<sup>32</sup> Campbell argues that due to the difficult terrain that Batman and his party travelled through leading up to the meeting with the Woiworung, the explorers could not have covered more than eleven miles, and the creek that they reached could not have been Merri Creek six miles further on, as has been suggested.<sup>33</sup> Neither Batman's journal nor map support the view that the treaty site was the banks of the Merri Creek, nor that it was on the Darebin Creek near Epping, which is a more northerly route than Batman's account suggests.<sup>34</sup> Campbell also believes that the site would not have been as far east as the Plenty River, because according to Batman's report, the journey was of four hours duration from 8 am until midday, hampered in places by thick grass and delayed by a meeting with the Woiworung. Although Batman claims that they walked 16 miles, Campbell demonstrates that Batman exaggerated distance in his journal.<sup>35</sup> Campbell concludes that the journey was of about 12 miles, and the stream that the party reached was probably Darebin Creek:

*...for the distance between Moonee Ponds Creek and Darebin Creek is approximately nine miles and Batman reports traveling beyond the latter for about a mile before returning to it. As the route followed was to the east, it would have been parallel and a little north of the present Camp, Mahoney's and Settlement roads across the small Edgar's Creek to Darebin Creek, close to Settlement Rd. Batman would have crossed the creek close to the Norris Bank Reserve.*<sup>36</sup>

The treaty, however, applied to a large area of land encompassing present-day Moreland City Council. While the legality of this arrangement was disputed by the colonial government in Sydney, it symbolised the dispossession of land that the Woiworung Ngurungaeta and their clans were about to experience.



**Plate 4:** "Billibillery's Young Lubra with infant on back". Billibillery had two wives. Pencil portrait by William Thomas. R.B.Smyth Papers.

<sup>31</sup> Barwick 1984: 124.

<sup>32</sup> Campbell 1987: 94.

<sup>33</sup> Campbell 1987: 93.

<sup>34</sup> Campbell 1987: 94.

<sup>35</sup> Campbell 1987: 92.

<sup>36</sup> Campbell 1987: 94.

Despite the difficulties Batman faced in convincing the British government to recognise and confirm the treaty he went ahead and selected a locality at Indented Head as a suitable place for a village. Although Batman's treaty was later claimed to be void by the government, this did not stop the *Norval* expedition anchoring in Hobson's Bay and unloading 500 sheep and cattle on behalf of the Port Phillip Association.<sup>37</sup> Other pastoralists seeking to settle in Port Phillip such as John Pascoe Fawkner from Van Diemen's Land were beginning to arrive around this time and other districts accessed by sea such as Portland Bay and Gippsland were rapidly being taken up by squatters.

The next major incursion into Woiworung country (from the north) was made by Major Thomas Mitchell during his 1836 expedition from Sydney.<sup>38</sup> The route traversed by Mitchell and his party became known as 'Major's line' and was soon followed by a number of squatters in search of improved pastures for sheep and cattle grazing. The first wave of the overlanders to set up permanently in the Port Phillip region came from the north-east, having worked their way southwards along the 'Majors Line' from Sydney.<sup>39</sup> In March 1837, Bonney, on behalf of Ebdon, overlanded the first 10,000 sheep to Port Phillip.<sup>40</sup> Bonney took up land at Kilmore just near the northern boundary of Woiworung country.<sup>41</sup>

The Port Phillip settlement focussed on the Yarra River, which would later become Melbourne, became the epicentre of settlement in the region. The speed by which the Woiworung and adjoining Bunurong land was occupied at this time is revealed by the notes of Captain William Lonsdale who was sent to the locality to commence official government control in the district. Arriving on the *Rattlesnake* on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1836 Lonsdale found a thriving settlement dominated by John Batman's "six-roomed weatherboard house" and gardens situated on Batman's Hill where present-day Spencer Street Station is now located.<sup>42</sup> Lonsdale's census of people, livestock and associated infrastructure reveals that since Batman's arrival eighteen months earlier, approximately 30 properties had been established with approximately 42,000 sheep and 200 head of cattle.<sup>43</sup> By the end of 1837 there were over 1,000 settlers in the Port Phillip District.<sup>44</sup>

For the Woiworung whose country included present-day Moreland municipality, the impact of European settlement was as swift as it was devastating. The large numbers of sheep brought into the district in the first few years of European settlement had a devastating impact on Aboriginal country as their hooves churned up the ground affecting the growth of the myrnong daisy which was a staple component of the Woiworung diet. Settlers favoured well-watered locations which were also valued by Aboriginal people. Their presence restricted Aboriginal peoples' access to

<sup>37</sup> Boys 1959: 43.

<sup>38</sup> Milbourne, J. 1978. *Mount Macedon: Its history and its grandeur*. J. Milbourne, Kyneton: 11.

<sup>39</sup> Martindale, H. G. 1958. *New Crossing Place: The Story of Seymour and its Shire*. Cheshire, Melbourne: 4.

<sup>40</sup> Tucker, M. 1988. *Kilmore on the Sydney road*. Shire of Kilmore, Kilmore, Victoria: 27.

<sup>41</sup> Billis, R. V. & A. S. Kenyon. 1974. *Pastoral pioneers of Port Phillip*. Stockland Press, Melbourne: 30 & 62.

<sup>42</sup> Billis and Kenyon 1974: 40-43.

<sup>43</sup> Billis & Kenyon 1974: 40-43.

<sup>44</sup> Christie, M. F. 1979. *Aborigines in Colonial Victoria 1835-86*. Sydney University Press, Sydney: 29.

resources and their land clearance practices reduced available wildlife. The impact of this occupation was observed first-hand by Assistant Protector Edward Stone Parker, who wrote some 5 years after settlement of the pressures that the Woiworung and surrounding Kulin were experiencing as a consequence of European settlement:

1. *The first is the rapid occupation of the country by settlers, and the consequent attempts made to deprive the Aborigines of the natural products of the country, and even to exclude them from their native soil.*

*The entire country of the Waworong [Woiworung] and Witerong [Wathuarong] tribes, with scarcely any exceptions, is now sold or occupied by squatters*

*It is common opinion among the settlers that the possession of a squatters licence entitles them to with the exclusion of the Aborigines from their runs...*

*The plain fact is that this is their ordinary place of resort, as furnishing them with their most abundant supplies of food...*

2. *Another fact consequent upon the foregoing is the diminution of the natural food of the Aborigines... The common result of this is that the natives resort to the out-stations to procure bread, and too frequently under the excitement of hunger or cupidity, to take by force what is denied their importunity. They have acquired universally a taste for the white man's food – they tell me invariably they prefer it to their own wild productions. This acquired taste might and ought to be employed as a secondary means of their civilisation.<sup>45</sup>*

Carving up of Woiworung land in the Moreland area began as early as 1838, some 3 years after Batman's foray into the region, when land sales were organised in the northern Moreland area.<sup>46</sup> Over the next decade land was subdivided with blocks extending from Sydney Road to the Merri Creek in the east and the Moonee Ponds Creek to the west.

## Early Government Policy 1835–Aboriginal People in the Port Phillip District

In the first years of settlement the British philanthropic lobby groups collectively known as the 'Exeter Hall' movement heavily influenced the development of the government's policy in relation to the colony's Aboriginal people.<sup>47</sup> By July 1834 members of the groups were making recommendations to the British government suggesting that it should be taking measures to protect the rights of the indigenous people in the new colonies. They argued that the government should actively promote the spread of civilization amongst the Aboriginal people and lead them to the peaceful and

<sup>45</sup> Parker to Robinson 1/4/1840 in Cannon, M. 1983. *Historical records of Victoria, Volume 2B: Aborigines and Protectors 1838-1839*. Public Record Office, Melbourne: 692-693.

<sup>46</sup> TerraCulture 2004: 27.

<sup>47</sup> Christie 1979: 81-3.

voluntary reception of the Christian religion.<sup>48</sup> These recommendations were forwarded to the various colonial authorities, including Governor Bourke who by this stage, with the arrival of Batman and his associates, had realised that permanent European settlement of Port Phillip was inevitable. Bourke subsequently devised a scheme for the colony's Aboriginal people. Bourke's scheme was designed to ensure that the Aboriginal people settled down in one location, adopted a civilized lifestyle and worked in return for government benefits including food, clothing and medical aid.<sup>49</sup> His scheme resulted in the establishment of Port Phillip's first government mission which operated from 1837 to 1839 on the banks of the Yarra River.<sup>50</sup>

### **Port Phillip's First Government Mission**

The establishment of the Yarra mission and the appointment of the aspiring Anglican Minister, George Langhorne, to oversee its management, mark the first concerted efforts by the government to manage the Aboriginal residents of Port Phillip. Despite skepticism from Langhorne himself about his ability to convince the Aboriginal people to stay in the district and adopt a 'civilised' mode of life, an 895 acre site was selected on the south side of the Yarra River (where the Botanical gardens are now situated). Here, Langhorne supervised the construction of a number of buildings and established a school to educate the Aboriginal people residing at the mission.<sup>51</sup>

Attendance at the mission was dominated by both the Woiworung and Bunurong –(w)urrung which was in part a function of proximity. Langhorne concentrated his efforts on the Aboriginal children of the mission, giving the pupils uniforms to wear and a strict routine of meals, washing and sleeping and ensured their isolation from their tribes. In the early months of the mission Langhorne was satisfied with its outcomes:

*The experiment of keeping the children, which I was enabled to try to a partial extent for one month previous to my return hither, as stated in my report, succeeded beyond my expectation. Although no restraint was put upon their persons as regarded coming and going, they seldom left the house even for an hour or two without my permission, as I had made it a rule that the child who left without leave of absence should forfeit one of the three meals daily served to them; this regulation I propose to continue.*<sup>52</sup>

Several months later he reported:

*Children resident: There are now 20 children and youths resident in the Mission premises, of these 14 are under daily instruction and make a reasonable progress in acquiring the English language. They take their meals regularly at table and conform in every respect to the regulations of the Mission house. The six elder boys have been lent a few days with us, they are employed in working the boat, etc.... The blacks, sometimes in number 60 or 80 at a time, have been constantly with us*

<sup>48</sup> Christie 1979: 26.

<sup>49</sup> Christie 1979: 82.

<sup>50</sup> Christie 1979: 82-84.

<sup>51</sup> Christie 1979: 83. This school was the first of its type to be established in the new colony.

<sup>52</sup> G.M.Langhorne to Col. Sec., 14 August 1837 in Cannon, M., (ed.). 1982. *Historical records of Victoria*. Volume 2A: The Aborigines of Port Phillip 1835-1839. Public Record Office, Melbourne: 173.

*during the past month. Several of them have been engaged in work for which they have received the rations allowed, according to the scale by which they are rewarded for work done.*<sup>53</sup>

In late 1837 Woiworung children dominated the mission resident numbers:

*There are now 18 children and youths resident, 13 under regular daily instruction. For these a school hut to accommodate about 30 children has been erected, and fitted with sleeping berths for their accommodation at night...Fourteen are of the Waworongs tribe in whose district I have commenced missionary labours, two of the Bonurongs, a small tribe which appears dependent upon the first mentioned; one Tonnurong, a people who but seldom visit us...*<sup>54</sup>

While several adults attached themselves to the station, others stayed for short periods:

*Blacks adult: With their families have been frequent visitors, staying however but a short time. Five or six of the natives who consider themselves immediately attached to the Mission Station have been rather more industrious than common and regularly engaged with the spade. A considerable number of the blacks obtain food and clothing for themselves by shooting the Menura Pheasant or Bullun Bullun for the sake of the tails, which they sell to the whites.*<sup>55</sup>

As one of the incentives open to Langhorne to encourage people to settle on the mission was access to supplies of food and goods, he was in direct competition with the settlers who would pay money to Aboriginal people for their labour. As a consequence, by late 1838 Langhorne was unable to maintain numbers:

*Few of the blacks have been with us during the past month. Three boys had left who had not been long with us and one who has been much at school during the last twelve months. I have the mortification of seeing these children running in rags and filth about the town.*

*The blacks might earn a comfortable subsistence in the town, were it only as hewers of wood and drawers of water, and indeed some few who were constantly working here are now employed in Melbourne, having attached themselves to individuals there for whom they obtain money in part payment for their services. On this account they generally refuse to labour here, being paid only in coarse flour with a little meat. The persons we have now about us are generally old people or the sick and infirm.*<sup>56</sup>

In early 1839 many Woiworung and Wathaurong appeared at the mission:

<sup>53</sup> G.M. Langhorne to Col. Sec., 30 November 1837 in Cannon 1982: 207.

<sup>54</sup> G.M. Langhorne to Col. Sec., 31 December 1837 in Cannon 1982: 208.

<sup>55</sup> G.M. Langhorne to Col. Sec., 30 September 1838 in Cannon 1982: 229.

<sup>56</sup> G.M. Langhorne to Col. Sec., 30 November 1838 in Cannon 1982: 233.

*...Towards the latter end of the month the blacks made their appearance in considerable numbers in the settlement. They consisted of the two tribes, the Waworong and the Watowrong.<sup>57</sup>*

Again, they refused to work for rations, instead preferring money:

*The blacks of the former tribe have visited my station occasionally, but they scorn the idea of performing labour to be rewarded with coarse flour or a few potatoes, and nothing will satisfy them but 'white money' to buy bread for themselves. Money they obtain readily in the town in return for the trifling services they perform, and the bakers in Melbourne assure me they are their best customers.<sup>58</sup>*

In a report to Governor LaTrobe in mid October 1839, Langhorne elaborated on the constraints he faced:

*At the outset of my proceedings here I endeavoured to obtain the children for instruction by studiously courting the goodwill of their parents with presents of clothing and provisions placed at my disposal for their benefit, and so far succeeded as to have had resident at one time about 20 boys who were regularly instructed in school.*

*...I was frequently visited by the adult natives in numbers sometimes as many as 80 or 100, whom I endeavoured to engage in trifling labours, for which I arranged a regular scale of remuneration as well as of indulgences for good conduct. But here I met with a difficulty...I found that my labours had been hitherto confined to the Waworong tribes, which including the remnant of the Bonwarry or Westernport blacks does not, I conceive, exceed 150 men, women, and children.*

*In endeavouring to extend the sphere of my labours to the neighbouring tribes, and to enable the Watouring, Torongolong, Nillamgourn and other blacks to participate in the benefits of the Mission Station, I found that the constant petty contentions and strife in which these tribes are continually embroiled one with another frustrated every attempt to bring them together in peace even occasionally.<sup>59</sup>*

Langhorne had little success keeping the Woiworung at the station:

*As soon as the novelty of the Mission Station wore away, the blacks of the Waworong tribe removed their children from school upon every frivolous pretext, and although the boys were invariably brought back after a short absence, it was only to abscond a second or a third time into the bush, until at length the school was entirely neglected and deserted.*

<sup>57</sup> G.M.Langhorne to Col. Sec., 28 February 1839 in Cannon 1982: 235.

<sup>58</sup> G.M.Langhorne to Col. Sec., 28 February 1839 in Cannon 1982: 235-236.

<sup>59</sup> G. M. Langhorne to C. J. La Trobe 15 October 1839, PRO Vic in Cannon 1983: 509.

*As the town of Melbourne increased in the number of its inhabitants, the blacks found that as hewers of wood and drawers of water they could obtain better pay in the settlement, and therefore deserted the Mission Station, frequently reproaching me that they could obtain from the white men at the 'Big Miam Miam' (as they named the town) plenty of white bread, when I gave them only coarse flour and that in small quantities.<sup>60</sup>*

According to Barwick, the Woiworung leadership encouraged attendance at the mission, particularly Billibillery whose clan country included the Moreland area:

*The pre-eminent Woiworung clan-head Billibellary supported most of the innovations adopted by the Woiworung and Bunurong in the early years. Two of his sons were among the 18 boys who attended the government's Yarra Mission School taught by George Langhorne from 1836 to 1839.<sup>61</sup>*

Barak was one of its early pupils:

*In 1837 Wonga's cousin Barak had spent a few months at Langhorne's Yarra Mission school on the land which became Baron von Mueller's Melbourne Botanic Gardens. He had one of the Coranderk school children write his reminiscence of this in 1888: 'we heard our minister Mr. Lanon. We got a schoolroom in the German garden and the Schoolmaster's name Mr. Smith. We was singing up Hallalooler.'<sup>62</sup>*

The mission station closed in 1839 when it became obvious that Aboriginal people would not settle there.

### **1837 Select Committee Inquiring into the Condition of the Aborigines**

By 1835 a Select Committee led by members of the 'Exeter Hall' movement had been established to inquire into the condition of the colony's Indigenous inhabitants. Investigations began in July 1835 and the Committee heard witnesses up until May 1837.<sup>63</sup> Their report found that the pressures associated with European settlement such as frontier violence, loss of land and cases of drunkenness, prostitution and disease were having a profound and negative impact upon the Aboriginal population.<sup>64</sup>

The Committee recommended that the government assume responsibility for the protection, religious instruction and education of the colony's Aboriginal residents. The Committee argued that any parties involved in crimes against the Aboriginal people should be penalised as if their 'victims were white'. It was also argued in the report that the lives and property of the colony's Aboriginal people deserved protection since their land had been taken from them 'by force' in the first place.

<sup>60</sup> G. M. Langhorne to C. J. La Trobe 15 October 1839, PRO Vic in Cannon 1983: 509.

<sup>61</sup> Barwick 1998: 30.

<sup>62</sup> Barak MS 1888 in Barwick 1998: 55; 'The Argus' 28 November, 12 and 19 December 1931 in Barwick 1998: 55; Selby 1935: 89 in Barwick 1998: 55.

<sup>63</sup> Christie 1979: 85-87.

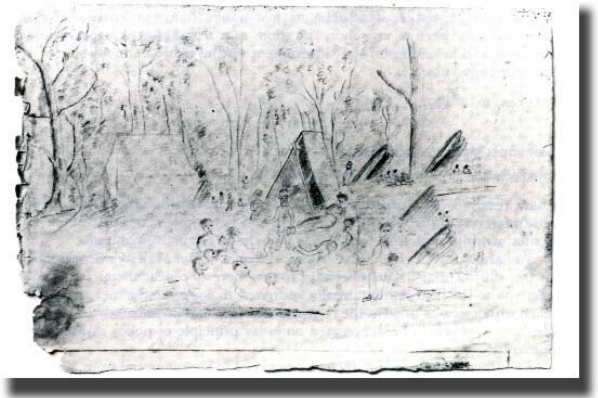
<sup>64</sup> Christie 1979: 85.

The latter suggestion subsequently led to the establishment of government's second scheme to deal with the colony's Aboriginal residents, the Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate.<sup>65</sup>

### ***Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate – Early Months in Melbourne***

The establishment of the Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate scheme began in January 1838 with the appointment of the George Augustus Robinson as Chief Protector and four Assistant Protectors, namely William Thomas, James Dredge, Charles Sievwright and Edward Stone Parker.<sup>66</sup>

According to Glenelg, the role of the Protectors was to promote the well-being of the colony's Aboriginal people and to represent their interests or grievances to the Colonial Executive or British government.<sup>67</sup> Glenelg stipulated that the long-term objective of the scheme was to 'civilise' the Aboriginal residents, to teach them agriculture, house-building and other white endeavours, to educate them to a settled European lifestyle and to convert them to Christianity.<sup>68</sup> Under the new scheme the Protector was to move with the Aboriginal groups they were responsible for, learn their customs and gather information on their numbers and tribal areas. Most importantly, the Protector's role was to physically safeguard the colony's Indigenous residents from encroachments to their property and from acts of cruelty and injustice that might be perpetuated by the colonists.



**Plate 5:** The Protector of Aborigines (centre, wearing a top hat) attempts to explain British law to a group of natives in the bush. Drawing dated 5 April 1843, possibly William Thomas. In the R.B.Smyth Collection, La Trobe Library, State Library of Victoria.

The new scheme was not received well by the colonists who argued that they were the ones requiring protection from Aboriginal people rather than the other way around.<sup>69</sup> By the time the Assistant Protectors met Robinson in Sydney in September 1838, the Protectorate had received much criticism from the Sydney and Melbourne newspapers.

The Assistant Protectors arrived in Melbourne in December 1839, setting up camp at the former mission site on the banks of the Yarra River where Aboriginal people from various parts of the colony had gathered. Robinson joined them in February 1839.<sup>70</sup> Soon after, the Protectors began recording their daily activities and encounters with the colony's Aboriginal population in journals. Their records provide some of the first accounts of the Woiworung during the early years of settlement in the Port Phillip district. William Thomas' jurisdiction encompassed the Melbourne area

<sup>65</sup> Christie 1979: 87.

<sup>66</sup> Sir George Grey to Assistant Protectors 21 December 1838 in Cannon 1983: 366-367; Christie 1979: 88.

<sup>67</sup> Christie 1979: 89.

<sup>68</sup> Lord Glenelg to Sir George Gipps, 31 January 1838 in Cannon 1983: 373-375; Christie 1979: 89.

<sup>69</sup> Christie 1979:90.

<sup>70</sup> Christie 1979: 89; Cannon 1983: 434.

from Maribyrnong River in the west to the Yarra ranges in the east and the Great Dividing Range in the north. This included the Moreland City Council region although he recorded few direct references to Aboriginal people frequenting this area.

### **Pentridge Village**

Some of the early references in the literature to Aboriginal people in the present-day Moreland municipality centre on the former Pentridge Village in Coburg. In 1839 the government auctioned 4293 acres in eleven blocks for an average price of £1 13s. Some of this land was bought for settlement, but much was bought by speculators like Sydney merchant, Thomas Walker (375 acres), George Urquhart (650 acres) and Arundel Wrighte (270 acres). Subdividing his purchase for resale, Urquhart advertised 'neat and elegant Dwellings, where after the busy turmoil of business the 'Merchant' may retire and become newly invigorated for the business of the ensuing day...'.<sup>71</sup> Many of these portions were further subdivided, resold, or leased. The village reserve containing these blocks of land was named Pentridge in August 1840.<sup>72</sup>

Assistant Protector William Thomas was one of those who bought 20-acre lots in John Fawkner's subdivision of Crown Portion 140. This lot is situated between Bell Street and Munro Street with the western boundary between Shackell and Linsey Streets and the eastern boundary running between Bellevue and Kelson Streets. On taking possession of Lot 6 in 1842 Thomas built a stone house on five acres in the north-east corner. The rest of the land he rented out to various farmers including Robert Gilmour. Around the mid-1860s William Thomas moved to another residence 'Merri Ville Lodge' in Brunswick Road East. The old bluestone house was demolished early in 1981.<sup>73</sup> The historical records left by William Thomas indicate that in the late 1830s and throughout the 1840s and 1850s, Aboriginal people visited him at his home at Merri Creek at its confluence with the Yarra River, his property at Moonee Ponds and his son's farm to the north near Merriam. While no direct evidence has been found to link Aboriginal people directly with his property at Bush Reserve it is more than likely that this was the case. According to Context (2006), there is the possibility of the existence of a photograph of Aboriginal people standing with Thomas outside this property.<sup>74</sup>

### **Conflict**

In February 1838 Lieutenant-Colonel Snodgrass as Acting Governor appointed an extra sergeant and six mounted police to guard the road. On 23 February 1838 Lieutenant-Colonel Kenneth Snodgrass wrote to Lord Glenelg:

*I have the honour to report to Your Lordship that in consequence of more than one murder being committed in the vicinity of Port Phillip under circumstances proving the serious deficiency of means for preventing such outrages, and for pursuing the perpetrators, I considered it necessary to order a sergeant and six rank and file of*

<sup>71</sup> Port Phillip Gazette 26 August 1839 in Shaw 2003: 164.

<sup>72</sup> Broome 1987: 37.

<sup>73</sup> Burchell 2004: 268-269.

<sup>74</sup> Context 206:3. It was not possible to establish the whereabouts of this photograph.

*the Mounted Police to proceed to that territory as a protection to the peaceable and well disposed inhabitants and to aid the civil power established at Melbourne and Geelong (the two principal towns) in the execution of their duties.<sup>75</sup>*

On 8 June 1838 a group of prominent pastoralists and merchants asked for increased protection along the road to Port Phillip, to protect travellers against the 'natural cupidity and ferocity' of the Aboriginal tribes:

*The Memorial of the undersigned colonists, landholders and proprietors of stock respectfully sheweth:*

*That your memorialists having a deep interest in the welfare and prosperity of the new settlement at Port Phillip and in the peace and good government of this colony generally, conceive it incumbent upon them to bring under the notice of your Excellency and Honourable Council the state of that part of the country arising from the hostility of the Aborigines.*

*That your memorialists have learnt with feelings of regret and alarm that certain tribes on the road to and in the neighbourhood of Port Phillip have lately assumed a hostile attitude towards the settlers and have committed many murders and other outrages upon them; that they are assembled in large numbers armed and attacking such persons as are most unprotected and within their reach so that many have been obliged to abandon their stations leaving in some cases their flocks and herds at the mercy of the hostile tribes; and that the intercourse by land between this part of the territory and Port Phillip, if it has not already ceased, has become one of imminent danger to life and property...<sup>76</sup>*

This issue continued, with Sir George Gipps writing to Lord Glenelg on 21 July 1838:

*...Your Lordship will observe that a large proportion of these acts of violence occurred in the neighbourhood of Port Phillip, or on the road between the settled parts of the Colony and that place; the reason of which is that large herds of cattle and flocks of sheep have been recently driven through these extensive tracts of country, with a very insufficient number of people to guard them...<sup>77</sup>*

Broome estimates that the population of Pentridge settlement (current Coburg) would not have been much more than two hundred in the early 1840s.<sup>78</sup> There were problems with theft and violence as there were no police stationed at the village. In May 1843 the Port Phillip Gazette stated that 'complaints reach us daily of depredations committed in the village of Pentridge'. It cited the case of Cummings, 'a poor but honest and industrious working man' whose bullock had been so mistreated that it could no longer be used.<sup>79</sup> Mr Bellinger had timber stolen and Mr Douglas of Ravensdale had his farm and carpenter's tools stolen. Some Aboriginal people were also responsible for minor thefts and sometimes more serious assaults. In July 1843 Mrs Smith of Merri

<sup>75</sup> Cannon 1983: 344.

<sup>76</sup> Phillip G. King *et al* to Sir George Gipps, Sydney, 8 June 1838 in Cannon 1983: 349.

<sup>77</sup> Cannon 1983: 355.

<sup>78</sup> Broome 1987: 45.

<sup>79</sup> Broome 1987: 46.

Creek was seized by three Aboriginal men on the Sydney Road, dragged into the bush, threatened with tomahawks and her dress pulled up. Two Aboriginal women tried to prevent the imminent rape but the men's efforts were only prevented by the screaming of Mrs Smith which attracted a horseman on the Sydney Road.<sup>80</sup>

This and other incidents led to the Gazette's plea:

*Let Pentridge have some protection afforded it... Not a night elapses but of the settlers around, or the inhabitants of the village, lose property by those marauders... Nay, worse, the miscreants often maltreat the cattle of the settlers for not other purpose apparently than to gratify their fiendish thirst for mischief'.<sup>81</sup>*

Some settlers such as the farmer, W. Snowball, decided to take the law into their own hands. Snowball had a tower built on his barn, allegedly to spot Aboriginal people approaching his property.<sup>82</sup> It became known as 'Squatter's Lookout' and was located at Balloan Street.<sup>83</sup>

In December 1843, it was reported to William Thomas that some Aboriginal people had caused damage to properties on Sydney Road. This report turned out to be incorrect:

*December... On the 1<sup>st</sup> I was with the natives by the Merri Merri Creek, they divide into parties and most diverge from the settlers end in order to get skins for sale. I remain with those by the Creek. I commence this month with taking the names and noting the tribes of those who attend instruction, on the 3 [3<sup>rd</sup>] attend Divine Service 19, on the 4<sup>th</sup> it being reported to me that some farms on the New Sydney Road had been damaged by the blacks, I proceed to their encampment and charge (?) them not to enter enclosed grounds. The reports proved ill founded nothing had taken place further than their importunities. On the 5<sup>th</sup> I again visit the Encampments Nth and Sth of the Yarra and continue the same to those on the New Sydney Road to the 7<sup>th</sup> when I leave them they promising me not to enter any fenced grounds...<sup>84</sup>*

The crimes at Pentridge settlement continued into the late 1840s. In 1848 Billy Hamilton/Jacky Jacky and some of the Goulburn River Aboriginal group knocked down and robbed William Moore on his farm near present-day The Avenue.<sup>85</sup>

## Camps Frequented by Woiworung Around Melbourne

<sup>80</sup> Broome 1987: 46.

<sup>81</sup> Port Phillip Gazette 22 July 1843 in Broome 1987: 46.

<sup>82</sup> Broome 1987: 46.

<sup>83</sup> Weekly Times, 6 July 1918 in Broome: 47.

<sup>84</sup> VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 79, Thomas to GAR – regarding 1/12/1843-1/3/1844.

<sup>85</sup> Broome 1987: 47.

The close ties between the Woiworung and their Kulin neighbours meant that spending time in Melbourne for social events, ceremonies and ritualised fights was not an uncommon occurrence. In part, Aboriginal people from outlying districts would have been attracted to Melbourne because of the settlement and the resources it offered. For example, in late October 1839, James Dredge, Assistant Protector stationed in Taungurong country at Mitchellstown recorded an exodus of Taungurong who were making their way to Melbourne in the expectation of receiving “food, clothes & c.” from the Governor.<sup>86</sup> Melbourne - and the Yarra River and its swamps - was an important meeting place for members of the Kulin confederacy during pre-contact times and these early records document an ongoing, albeit modified cultural practice. Thomas reported, for example, camps of different -(w)urrung situated at specific sites in Melbourne in 1844:

*During this quarter [March – May 1844] I have been [journeying excepted] at my quarters by the Native encampment E of Melbourne. March [1844] \_\_\_\_ In the month of March there was three encampments of Natives in the precincts of Melbourne, viz. Nth of the Yarra Yarra – Mt Macedon Blacks about 83 Sth of the Yarra Yarra - Western Port Blacks about 45 E of Melbourne – Yarra, Goulbourne Blacks about 70 Total about 198.<sup>87</sup>*

An analysis has been undertaken of the records left by Thomas and Robinson to establish different camping localities in Melbourne and around Woiworung country. In summary, the different camps frequented are listed in Table 3 below.

### ***Tromgin and Turruk/Kurruk Camps***

The earliest records of the Aboriginal Protectorate reveal that the swampy area south of the Yarra River (later remodelled as the lake in the present-day Botanical Gardens), was a camping place favoured by the Woiworung, Bunurong and Taungurong. With the siting of Langhorne’s mission (1836-1839) and later the Chief Protector’s residence in the old mission buildings in its general vicinity, the Tromgin camping area was the focus of some of the earliest government activities directed towards local Aboriginal residents.<sup>88</sup> For the protectors, the greatest challenge lay in managing the many challenges that arose as a consequence of the close proximity of the white settlement to the Aboriginal camps. Thomas spent a great deal of energy attempting to keep Aboriginal residents away from the main town across the Yarra and was constantly thwarted in his attempts to persuade the camp’s residents to move out of town. His exasperation is obvious in his reports to Robinson that “On the 3<sup>rd</sup> January, after a consultation of 35 weeks, in two hours they determined on leaving Melbourne”.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>86</sup> James Dredge to G. A. Robinson 30 October 1839, NSW in Cannon 1983: 713.

<sup>87</sup> Thomas to Robinson 1/6/1844, VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 80.

<sup>88</sup> Clark and Heydon 2004: 29.

<sup>89</sup> Thomas to Robinson 29 February 1840, NSW in Cannon 1983: 620.

Camp	Location	Date Range
Melbourne	In vicinity of Melbourne	March 1839
Tromgin	South side Yarra (Botanical Gardens swamp area)	November 1839 - April 1840
Merri Creek	Confluence of Merri Creek & Yarra River, Clifton Hill	November 1841 – November 1847
Ryrie's Hill	Clifton Hill	1844
Hydelburg Road	Heidelberg Road, Clifton Hill	1846
Bolin Swamps	Bolin Billabong area, Bulleen	August 1840 – June 1841
Turruk/Kurruk	Toorak area	August 1840 – June 1842
Langparrn waterhole	North of Pascoe Vale	c.1840
Nutbubeloran Camp	Possibly Ryrie's Yering Station, Yarra Valley	February to March 1841
Ballite	Possibly near Warrandyte	March 1841
Beal	Near Koonung Creek	March 1841
Nerre Nerre Warren	Dandenong	March 1841 – March 1842
South East Melbourne Camp	One and a half or two miles south east of Melbourne	June 1841
South Melbourne Camp	One and a half miles south of Melbourne	July to August 1841
South of Yarra Camp	One mile from Melbourne/ Three-quarters of a miles south of the Yarra Rivere/one and a quarter miles south of Yarra	April 1839; March 1848 – April 1848
East Melbourne Camp	Between Richmond & Newtown, Fitzroy	March to June 1844
North Melbourne Camp	One and a half miles north from Melbourne (or the Yarra)	March to June 1844
Camp two miles north of new jail	Probably Clifton Hill	June to July 1844
Camp north west of Melbourne	Two and a quarter miles north west of Melbourne	July to August 1844
Camp north east of Melbourne	Possibly Clifton Hill (one and a quarter to one and half miles north east of Melbourne	July to November 1844
Campbellfield Camp	Campbellfield	June 1845
Junction of Plenty & Yarra Rivers Camp	Rosanna	June 1848
McLean's Station camp	By Darebin Creek	June 1848
Darebin Creek Camp	By Darebin Creek amongst settler stations	November 1841

**Table 3:** Camps frequented by Woiworung in the Melbourne district following settlement.

The pressure from the bureaucracy to move people out of Melbourne was motivated in part by the recognition that Aboriginal people were vulnerable to the negative influences and effects of white settlement – disease, alcohol, prostitution and violence. However, it was also motivated by a desire to rid the town of the unsavoury presence of the camps. Large numbers of dogs, frequent disputes and noisy outbursts exacerbated by alcohol and social breakdown were an undesirable presence for those in Government who wished to maintain a semblance of order in the fast growing town. Although seen as a threat to white settlers and their property, there is evidence that the camp residents more frequently attacked one another. For example, Thomas was able to report in February 1840 that while the Tromgin camp residents, including Woiworung, had been rowdy over the previous two months they had not really interfered with the white population:

*The blacks were encamped by the Yarra 63 days, during which I beheld scenes of iniquity and debauchery almost incredible, yet but one case of outrage committed by them on the whites that required my interference.*<sup>90</sup>

### **Merri Creek Encampment**

From the earliest days of European settlement, the confluence of the Merri Creek and Yarra River in present day Clifton Hill was an important focus of Woiworung activity.<sup>91</sup> Situated in the Wurundjeri-willam Tract 2 clan country 1.5km south of the Moreland Municipality, the area had traditionally served as a meeting place where whole tribes often gathered to participate in a range of ceremonial activities such as corroborees and the exchange cultural information.<sup>92</sup> An initiation was held there in 1843. The area had also played an important role in the Aboriginal subsistence economy, with the waterways providing Aboriginal people with a plentiful supply of fresh water eels and other food sources.<sup>93</sup>

In 1841 a camp of Aboriginal people was evident on the Clifton Hill side of the Merri Creek near the Heidelberg Road at Ryrie's Hill. Richard Howitt, a milkman, described the Aboriginal camp in his diary on the 6 December 1841 as follows:

*What a scene! Naked savages, shaggy dogs, bark and bough shelters, the simplest, the rudest ever contrived by the creature man. The howl, growl, yelp and curs and mongrels, which followed at our heels, and the sight of the natives, young and old, is no substitute for Inferno.*<sup>94</sup>

From 1842 onwards the newly created Native Police Corps was stationed at the junction of the Yarra River and the Merri Creek. The establishment subsequently attracted many relatives and others with social ties to the members of the corps. By September 1842 as many as 500 people

<sup>90</sup> Thomas to Robinson 29/2/1840, NSW in Cannon 1983: 620.

<sup>91</sup> Clark, I. D. & T. Heydon. 1998. The Confluence of the Merri Creek and Yarra River: A History of the Westernport Aboriginal Protectorate and the Merri Creek Aboriginal School. Report to Aboriginal Affairs Victoria: 55-6. Both Robinson's and Thomas' accounts indicate that members of the Woiworung and Taungurong tribes used the creeks that empty into the Yarra River for navigation from the uplands and inlands of Port Phillip.

<sup>92</sup> Clark & Heydon 1998: 56.

<sup>93</sup> Clark & Heydon 1998: 56.

<sup>94</sup> Lemon 1990: 17.

were camped in the area. Following Robinson's orders, Thomas attempted to break up the numerous camps, but driven by hunger people kept returning to the barracks.<sup>95</sup> As a result, the Native Police barracks were moved from this area and relocated to Dandenong in late 1843.<sup>96</sup>

The Nerre Nerre Warren Protectorate Station at Dandenong (see discussion below) failed to attract Woiworong and Bunurong people. The large numbers of Aboriginal people encamped at the junction of the Merri Creek and Yarra River provided the incentive for Thomas to station himself there to assume his Protectorate duties in late 1843. Once settled, Thomas proceeded to distribute food and blankets, encouraging children to attend classes and the fringe camps to take up residence at the station.<sup>97</sup> The Woiworong spent long periods of time at the Merri Creek encampment. During Thomas' first three years there, Woiworong as well as Bunurong and Taungurong were in regular attendance.<sup>98</sup>

The Woiworong and Taungurong are known to have participated in fights and dispute settlements at Merri Creek, mostly against the Bunurong, Wathaurong and the Barrabools.<sup>99</sup> These dispute settlements were usually arranged through messengers who traveled from camp to camp spreading the word.<sup>100</sup>

The Gaggip ceremony discussed above demonstrates that the Merri Creek encampment was also the focus of ceremonial activity in which the Woiworong were participants. Howitt's informant Barak recalled the gathering of Kulin tribes at the Merri Creek in 1840 from as far east as the Mogullumbeetch on the Buffalo River. The different tribes bartered and exchanged items of importance. Barak recalled that people made presents and gave them to others from distant parts in a bid to make friends.<sup>101</sup>

### **Moreland Camps**

From December to March, 1843-1844, William Thomas reported the Chief Protector on the Aboriginal encampments near New Sydney Road, Merri Creek, Moonee Ponds and South of Brunswick:

*December...On the 1<sup>st</sup> I was with the natives by the Merri Merri Creek, they divide into parties and most diverge from the settlers end in order to get skins for sale. I remain with those by the Creek. I commence this month with taking the names and*

<sup>95</sup> Clark & Heydon 1998: 63.

<sup>96</sup> Fels, M. 1988b. The Dandenong Police Paddocks: Land History and Use 1851-1988. Report prepared for the Victorian Archaeological Survey, Victoria: 183.

<sup>97</sup> Clark & Heydon 1998: 54.

<sup>98</sup> Clark & Heydon 1998: 71.

<sup>99</sup> Robinson Journal 5/11/1839, 21/5/1840, 10/10/1841 in Clark 2000a & Clark, I.D., 2000b. The journals of George Augustus Robinson, Chief Protector, Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate. Volume 2: October 1840 – August 1841. Heritage Matters, Ballarat, Victoria; Thomas 7/11/1839 in Cannon 1983: 557; Thomas 7/12/1839 in Cannon 1983: 573; Thomas to Robinson 17/12/1839 in Lakic, M. & R. Wrench. 1994. *Through their eyes: an historical record of Aboriginal people of Victoria*. Museum of Victoria, Melbourne: 104.

<sup>100</sup> Thomas 7/11/1839 in Cannon 1983: 557.

<sup>101</sup> Howitt 2001 [1904]: 718.

noting the tribes of those who attend instruction, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> attend Divine Service 19, on the 4<sup>th</sup> it being reported to me that some farms on the New Sydney Road had been damaged by the blacks, I proceed to their encampment and charge (?) them not to enter enclosed grounds. The reports proved ill founded nothing had taken place further than their importunities. On the 5<sup>th</sup> I again visit the Encampments Nth and Sth of the Yarra and continue the same to those on the New Sydney Road to the 7<sup>th</sup> when I leave them they promising me not to enter any fenced grounds...

...Sunday the 28<sup>th</sup> early as usual I go round the encampment encouraging them to attend service. I find that they are about shifting some however attend but as soon as it was over the whole encampment break up. On the 30<sup>th</sup> they again shift to within 1 and ½ miles of Melbourne altho' nearly a mile from my quarters...

February...On the 12<sup>th</sup> you visit the Encampment, in the afternoon Yanki Yanker (??) who was insolent to the Chief Constable on the 10<sup>th</sup> instant is taken, the Blacks are in great fear and separate forming several Encampments, Western Port Sth of the Yarra, the Loddon and Campaspie Blacks after sun set shift to a little water in a gully Sth of Brunswick, the observation of one of the Loddon Blacks was touching (??) he said 'poor Blackfellows White men take Blackfellows country and frighten him...On the 13<sup>th</sup> the Blacks form 7 Encampments which kept me riding the whole of the day dissipating their fears and cautioning them not to embark upon fenced grounds; On the 14<sup>th</sup> it is reported to me that the Blacks had set fire to some Huts at La Rose Farm Moonee Ponds, I hasten to the spot find the report false 2 Huts were on fire but was occasioned by the carelessness of the men, the Loddon Blacks were Encamped near there, I got them to move which they do and at night Encamp near Paterville. On the 15<sup>th</sup> the Loddon, Campaspie and Goulburn Blacks leave the precincts of Melbourne. On the 16<sup>th</sup> the Barrabools, on the 17<sup>th</sup> the Western Port, on the 18<sup>th</sup> most of the remaining leave, there being now but 2 Encampments one Nth of Melbourne consisting of Mt Macedon and Blacks from the Western (?) about 85 in number, the other by the Merree Creek near my Quarters about 32...<sup>102</sup>

May...On Thursday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May I returned to Melbourne and the same evening visited the two Encampments Nth and Est of the Settlement, also a few families on the Sth who remained but till the 8<sup>th</sup> instant....during my absence some Blacks who had been kindly treated in a house by the Moonee Ponds decamped with a small box (??); on the evening the proprietor missed from his man mantelpiece a Tortoiseshell Box containing a family likeness (??) mounted in gold, much concerned for his loss and suspecting the Blacks must have taken it he came and reported the case, my son early the following morning went to the Encampment and recover'd it, after threatening the Blacks to inform me all about it when I returned...<sup>103</sup>

Another camping place was at Langparn waterhole, north of Pascoe Vale.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>102</sup> VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 79, Thomas to GAR – regarding 1/12/1843-1/3/1844.

<sup>103</sup> VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 80, Thomas to GAR: Journal of Proceedings 1/3/1844-31/5/1844.

<sup>104</sup> Broome 1987: 25.

### ***Bolin Swamp Camps***

One of the other important camping places in the Melbourne district frequented by the Woiworung was at Bolin Swamp in Heidelberg. According to Thomas this area, which encompassed a network of "fine lagoons" including the substantial Bolin Billabong, was an extremely important source of eels.<sup>105</sup> By March 1841, when Thomas arrived at the camp with some Woiworung and Taungurong, the northern side of the Yarra River had been settled by squatters and access was denied to Aboriginal people wishing to camp and fish there.<sup>106</sup>

*[W]e encamped at Bolin also by Yarra about 13 miles a little to Nth E from Melbourne. Here the Blacks made a hold for eel catching – since their last migrating visit to this spot, a village had sprung up on their banks of the Yarra, which (unconscious of the end of things) by the pleasure shown bid fair to prolong their stay, they always remained long at this place on account of the quantity of eels in the great swamp Bolin, so that in the neighbourhood, after some days complaints were made to me continually of Blacks catching eels on allotments disposed of, and one of a more serious nature from Mr Boulden who stated that some potatoes had been stolen (\*) and that one Hamilton had used threatening language, but which, by making the Blacks appear before Mr Bolden I was enabled to adjust to the satisfaction of Mr Boulden.*

*It became necessary to caution the Blacks from crossing the Yarra which they abided by for a few days but then again crossed. I could not but feel for the poor Blacks they had till this visit an undisturbed range among the lagoons and supplied themselves for a month or 5 weeks, now one side of the Yarra is forever closed from them. Finding I could not keep them from crossing the Yarra, and receiving an order from the Chief Protector to remove the encampment after some altercations with the Blacks (who argued their innocence), I in a determined manner broke up the encampment.*

*\* [margin] In crossing the Yarra I found the potatoes the Blacks took and from off a field that had been gathered, think what in England would be termed gleaning. Most of the settlers are kind enough to let the poor blacks into their station fields. The blacks considered that they were not offending by the act.<sup>107</sup>*

As Thomas's report indicates, Billy Hamilton, from the Taungurong Nira-balluk clan, took little notice of the prohibition on crossing the river as the following letter from the landholder's brother to Robinson indicates:

*The blacks are located on the Yarra opposite Mr. Brown and Mr. Bolden's farm, they cross the River onto Mr. Bolden's farm under the pretence of fishing in the lagoons on the farm. They were at the huts and in two instances have so frightened*

<sup>105</sup> Thomas to Robinson 12/3/1841, VPRS 11 Unit 7 Item 375.

<sup>106</sup> In fact, in August 1840, the Government was considering creating an Aboriginal settlement at Bolin in order to keep them away from the camps south of the Yarra (likely at Tromgin and Turrak) (Thomas to Robinson 7/11/1840, VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 67).

<sup>107</sup> Thomas to Robinson 24/6/1841 Journal of Proceedings 1/3/1841-31/5/1841 VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 69.

*the women whom they found alone that they positively refuse to remain in the huts during the day unless their husbands are with them. On Monday last one calling himself "Billy Hamilton" came up to the house during the absence of my brothers and myself and threatened to kill Mrs. Bolden and her children. The Blacks have so frightened Mrs. Bolden that we dare not leave her in the house alone. Added to the fright the Blacks dogs have destroyed a turkey, a pig and stolen a quantity of beef out of the mens hut.<sup>108</sup>*

## Frontier Violence

There are numerous accounts of violent interactions between the Kulin and early settlers in the historical records. The following discussion provides a brief overview of frontier violence in the Woiworung country during the early years of settlement.<sup>109</sup> The incidents of violence commenced with the early occupation of Woiworung country by squatters in 1835. By the late 1840s frontier violence had died down across the Victorian settled districts.

Aboriginal resistance to unwelcome intrusions into country was a common feature of early pastoral expansion. Attacks on livestock were not infrequent and in many instances were likely motivated by necessity. The rapidity of the expansion of pastoral runs very quickly disrupted sensitive ecosystems and the availability of food resources for the Aboriginal people. This was compounded by the fact that pastoralists tended to establish settlements at favoured Aboriginal camping spots near good water supply and flat ground. Runs also tended to encroach on well watered, low lying country best suited for hunting. The murnong daisy, a staple food in Aboriginal peoples' diet quickly became scarce as sheep and cattle ate the tuber leaves and churned the ground with their hooves. Cattle and sheep were therefore an obvious target when seeking food.

Violent incidents also tended to occur where there was an absence of reciprocity. A common cause of frontier violence across south-eastern Australia was the failure of shepherds to reciprocate properly when provided with Aboriginal women for sexual purposes.

## Inter-tribal Conflict

The frequency with which different clan groups (including besides Woiworung and Bunurong clanspeople, Taungurong and Wathaurong clanspeople) attended camps in Melbourne gave occasion to dispute settlement and in some cases caused additional conflict or hostility between groups.<sup>110</sup> According to Thomas at the end of June 1844 Taungurong and Wathaurong groups,

<sup>108</sup> S. Bolden to Robinson 10 March 1841, VPRS 11 Unit 7, Item 375.

<sup>109</sup> This overview does not purport to be exhaustive. Whilst a variety of primary sources have been consulted as part of this study, it could be expected that further research would reveal additional incidents. In addition, it is common knowledge that not all incidences of frontier violence were reported. Even though Aboriginal people held the official status of British citizens and atrocities directed towards them were technically illegal, incidents were commonly covered up by the perpetrators (see Christie 1979: 78). Reports of attacks on Aboriginal people relied on eye-witness accounts and the survival of Aboriginal people to tell their story to sympathetic settlers and bureaucrats.

<sup>110</sup> Clark and Heydon 2004: 49.

who had been encamped at various camps around Melbourne, gathered at one location "2 miles north of the new jail" in order to unite their camps:

*On 3 July 1844, Boonwurrung people joined them expecting conflict. This did not occur, as the Assistant Protector affected the dispersion of the camp, warning people that if they were to 'fight', the police would be called. Their response was to disperse. Although some of the Daungwurrung remained at the site, others joined Woiwurrung clanspeople ¼ miles northeast of Melbourne. The Gunung willam balug and 'North Eastern Aborigines' went to a camp 2¼ miles northwest of Melbourne. Boonwurrung and Wathawurrung clanspeople went to Nerre Nerre Minnim, 1 ¼ miles south of Melbourne.<sup>111</sup>*

This incident may be the same as the 'great battle' which William Kyle witnessed on Heidelberg Road on Heidelberg Rd, Ryries Hill, in the vicinity of Nicholson St and Alexander Parade, North Fitzroy.<sup>112</sup> Kyle arrived in Melbourne in 1841 and lived at Dight's Falls near Merri Creek with his parents. Given the description and time of the battle it may also refer to the fight that occurred at Merri Creek in February 1844 involving the punishment of Poleorong (see above):

*A great and decisive battle was fought about the year 1843-44. In the various camps the total number would have been between 500 and 600 blacks. There were tribes from the Yarra Yarra, Goulburn River, and River Plenty. These three tribes were allies on this occasion, and formed camp in touch with each other, some distance away from the tribes from Lal Lal, Barrabool Hills and Corio, who camped on the West side of the old Plenty Road, about in line with Nicholson Street. These tribes also were allies for the fight impending.*

*The spot selected for the battle was on the Southern slope of what was known as Ryries Hill, and now called Clifton Hill. The road to Heidelberg was the dividing line of the approaching armies. Having to pass through the camp twice a day, we learned that a fight would soon take place. For about a week before the battle there were meetings of the heads of various tribes; angry discussions were heard and when the 'yabba yabba' (ie. much talk) ceased, young warriors would run to meet on the dividing line (the road), and there would be wrestling, and a sort of sham fight. No weapons were thrown, nor were waddies used in the actual warfare.*

*These preliminaries having served the purposes of arousing them in a thirst for battle, an ultimatum was at last given by one of the Western District tribes throwing a spear right into the camp of their opponents. The spears were purposely thrown high enough to avoid striking any person in the mia-mias. This was honourable enough challenge to actual combat, and it was not long before the various detachments were gathered together under their respective leaders, and soon formed themselves into opposing armies. And then the battle commenced in earnest. For a time the Heidelberg Road was the duty line. In order to get a good*

<sup>111</sup> Clark and Heydon 2004: 49; Thomas to Robinson 2/9/1844 in VPRS 4410, Unit 3, Item 81.

<sup>112</sup> Kyle, W. 1925. 'Reminiscences from 1841 of William Kyle, a pioneer, communicated to and transcribed by Charles Daley' in Victorian Historical Magazine 10: 158-172, 116; Lemon 1990: 19.

*view, I hobbled my horse and climbed into a tree, but soon had to alter position owing to a flank movement by the Yarra Yarra tribe and their allies hard pressing the left flank of their opponents, thereby turning their foes. I again mounted my horse, and keeping it at a safe distance from the spears, etc., rode backwards and forwards, watching the combat.*

*For a short time the battle seemed to be in favour of the Lal Lal tribe and allies. Before long, however, the Yarra Yarra, Goulburn and the Plenty River tribes, forced their enemies over the crest of Clifton Hill, and almost surrounded the Western tribes, who suffered severely.*

## Port Phillip Native Police

One government response to escalating violence between the colony's Indigenous population and the settlers and the subsequent diminution of the Aboriginal population, was the establishment of a Native Police force. In 1837 Captain Alexander Monconochie proposed a plan to Governor Burke, suggesting that the establishment of a Native Police force would reduce clashes between the stock-keepers and Aboriginal people, help quell civil disturbances and be used in tracing criminals or escaped prisoners: 'if the natives (could be) formed into an active field police we should be enabled...to preserve and improve them, and benefit ourselves essentially'.<sup>113</sup>



**Plate 6:** The Native Police, c. 1851. In Fels 1988.

Sir Richard Bourke agreed with the plan and authorised Captain Lonsdale to use Native Police in the Port Phillip District as a trial. Lonsdale's idea was to lead the Aboriginal people in the Native Police gradually to changes in their habits. They would not have a definite routine, but could travel from place to place, and hunt for recreation. The policemen and their families were to live in European style huts, and were to cook European style meals to be eaten using utensils. They would have regular meal times, neatness and cleanliness. It was through these measures that other fundamental changes would take place in their lives, according to Lonsdale.<sup>114</sup> Lonsdale wanted the policemen to be chosen from one tribe and to select a place within their tribal territory that would be the Headquarters where they would settle with their families. Only occasional visits from outsiders would be permitted. When off-duty, the men were required to remain on the station. The wearing of a uniform would persuade the Aboriginal policemen that they were superior to the 'barbarous practices' of other Aborigines.<sup>115</sup>

Charles de Villiers was selected as Commandant of the corps and a site at Narre Narre Warren, near present day Dandenong was selected to serve as the police headquarters.<sup>116</sup> This 1837

<sup>113</sup> Christie 1979: 72.

<sup>114</sup> Bridges, B. 1971. 'The Native Police Corps, Port Phillip District and Victoria, 1837-1853' in *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 57 (2): 116-117.

<sup>115</sup> Bridges 1971: 117.

<sup>116</sup> Christie 1979: 73; Fels 1990: 2, 3.

Native Police Corps was largely unsuccessful. A feud between Langhorne and de Villiers ultimately led to the Commandant's resignation: "...the 1837 Native Police Corps lasted only ten weeks, from 28 October to 7 January 1839".<sup>117</sup> A second attempt was made to set up the Corps from 18 September to 15 January 1839, located at what is now Jolimont, Melbourne.<sup>118</sup> The corps did not reconvene until three years later when it was re-formed under the command of Henry Pulteney Dana.<sup>119</sup> Dana attempted to recruit men from those camped at Narre Narre Warren where Thomas had his station. To recruit the force, Dana and Thomas sought the aid of Billibellary. Billibellary exercised his influence over his people, and on 24 February 1842, he brought 21 men from the Bunurong and Woiworung tribes.<sup>120</sup> To encourage the recruits Billibellary made his mark on the muster roll, followed by the other men.<sup>121</sup> Although he wore a uniform Billibellary declined to ride a horse or go out of the tribal country.<sup>122</sup>

The early principle of establishing the Corps to civilise the Aboriginal people was soon lost sight of, and the military value of the institution became the Corps primary function. The incidents of drunkenness and immorality amongst the policemen were largely ignored by the government and those in charge of the Native Police. This was the main reason why Thomas and Billibellary were highly critical of the force and Billibellary and his cousin Murrumbean attempted to disband the Corps.<sup>123</sup>

The Native Police Corps operated for ten years and was disbanded after the death of Captain Dana in 1852. After this some of the men were used in tracking bushrangers or as gold escorts, stationed at police depots rather than in one central location.<sup>124</sup>

### ***Pentridge Prison***

As a consequence of overcrowding at the Melbourne Gaol, a penal stockade was proposed at Pentridge Village in 1850. Local residents were alarmed at the news.<sup>125</sup> The makeshift stockade was to be guarded by a superintendent, an overseer and three constables, and was to accommodate 50 of 'the greatest ruffians', who were to be housed in log huts on wheels behind a stake fence about 4 feet high. The Native Police were to play an important policing role in the early days of the new prison.

On 5 December 1850, 16 prisoners from the Melbourne Gaol were marched to the Pentridge Stockade. The prisoners were handcuffed and wore white hats, jackets and trousers that were branded with PRG (Pentridge Road Gang). They were accompanied by 6 constables on foot, 2 mounted native policemen, Chief Constable Brodie on horseback and the newly appointed Superintendent of the Stockade, Samuel Barrow, who rode in a cab.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>117</sup> Fels 1990:3, 5.

<sup>118</sup> Fels 1990:5.

<sup>119</sup> Fels 1988a: 25-31; Christie 1979: 74-75.

<sup>120</sup> Bridges 1971: 121.

<sup>121</sup> Fels 1990: 19.

<sup>122</sup> Bridges 1971: 122.

<sup>123</sup> Bridges 1971: 133-34.

<sup>124</sup> Christie 1979: 77.

<sup>125</sup> Broome 1987: 98.

<sup>126</sup> Broome 1987: 98-99.

Barrow wanted convicts be appointed as overseers at the stockade. This request was refused and a detachment of Aboriginal police and their officers were stationed at the stockade instead. Fels reports that a detachment of native police arrived at Pentridge at least ten days before it was due to open [around November 25 1850], probably to construct their own quarters: the Commandant, Corporal Cowan, and Troopers Tallboy, Moonering, Muggins, Lankey, Charlie, Beerack and Andrew made up the party. Pentridge remained one of the responsibilities of the Corps for 8 months until 21 August 1851, but the men themselves were rotated at irregular intervals, the longest period without relief being three months. Their duties were two-fold; sentry duty around the clock at the Stockade itself, relieved at three hour intervals, plus mounted, armed supervision of the road-gangs outside Pentridge in the Coburg area. In addition, when the alarm was sounded every man on or off duty was obliged to turn out.<sup>127</sup> The Native Police preferred to guard the work gangs because sentry duty, especially at night, was punctuated only by calling out the half-hour.

Barrow had been told by Governor La Trobe that the superintendent of the prisoners had no power to interfere with the internal arrangements of the Native Police, and that there were two distinct commanding officers. There was possibly some friction between Barrow and Native Police Corps due to these issues of control. Barrow complained to La Trobe that Dana would not let him have the loan of a police horse whenever he wanted it.<sup>128</sup> He also requested for payment of forage for the horse he used; he could not see why Native Police got a forage allowance while he did not. Barrow complained of Native Policeman Sergeant Pearson's 'utter defiance' of his authority.<sup>129</sup> Pearson refused to give a carter a bucket of water and turned the carter's horse out of the Pentridge stables. When challenged by Barrow, Pearson said that he would turn any horse he liked out of that stable, and that he was master of the stable. Barrow borrowed local residents carts to transport road metal, and had allowed them to put their horses in vacant stalls in the stable. Pearson would have no foreign horse in his Native Police stable. The visiting magistrate, E.P.S. Sturt, reduced Pearson's rank for a month and fined him 8 shillings and sixpence for insolence.<sup>130</sup>

There were several escapes from the stockade. On 26 March 1851 Overseer James Barfoot had two detached parties working outside Pentridge under the supervision of Constable Thomas Price, and four men under the supervision of a sub-constable working 500 yards away on the Sydney Road. The Aboriginal Trooper Jack, mounted and armed, guarded both the parties. Between 3 and 4 o'clock a settler, John Davidson, distracted Price's attention by talking to him, and while Price's back was turned prisoner John Rich knocked him down, held him to the ground by sitting on him, and took his gun. Rich fired at Trooper Jack, who was about 20 yards away. Trooper Jack fired in return, but missed. Overseer Barfoot raced back to Pentridge to call out the rest of the native police and returned to find 6 prisoners still working under supervision of Trooper Jack with the rest gone. A detachment of native police rounded up and brought back some of the escapees, but a small number got away. Trooper Bushby Jamieson, the 'boy from Tarcomb', patrolling in Kyle's paddock west of the Sydney Road, rounded up eleven. John Rich was apprehended, charged with shooting an Aboriginal native named Jack, but found not guilty at his trial on 16 April 1851. According to

<sup>127</sup> Fels 1988a: 206-207.

<sup>128</sup> Barrow to La Trobe, 14 Feb. 1851, VPRS 19, Box 145, 51/400 in Fels 1988a: 207.

<sup>129</sup> Barrow to La Trobe, 10 April 1851, VPRS 19, Box 147, 51/699 in Fels 1988a: 207.

<sup>130</sup> Fels 1988a: 207.

Fels, Trooper Jack's action is interesting because it is the first recorded instance of firing to prevent an escape.<sup>131</sup>

The Commandant and a detachment of 9 Native Police left Nerre Nerre Warren the next day to capture the escapees: six men patrolled the south side of the Yarra; the sergeant major and the tailor patrolled the road from the South Yarra Pound to Dandenong; troopers von Beverout and Andrew rode for the Bunya Bunyip, a swamp at Westernport. The patrolling continued for six days, but if any of the escapees were caught it is not recorded.<sup>132</sup>

On 29 March 1851, thirty-one men burst free due to the overseer's inattention. Five of the nine working in irons managed to chisel chains and join others. Five constable and two mounted Aboriginal troopers called on them to stop and fired, shooting two men. Robert Taylor, an elderly prisoner, died instantly. Seven of the 11 prisoners who kept running were recaptured a mile away by three Pentridge residents, Messers G. Anderson, Gough and Richards, and 6 Aboriginal troopers who are not named.<sup>133</sup>

This is the last recorded activity of the native police at Pentridge. By this time a very small number of men still worked as Native troopers as most had deserted a month or so earlier. Troopers Bushby Jamieson and Sam deserted 18 July, and seven more left two nights later. Dana was mortified. He acknowledged that it was a 'great disgrace' to the Corps, but understandable: 'I have long been of the opinion that the duties required to be performed by the native Troopers on the establishment, have been more than their constitutions could bear, as they are unable to stand the cold and wet nights, and the constant duty required on a penal establishment'.<sup>134</sup> Fels mentions that this was a particular wet winter where even the prisoners at Pentridge went on strike on 18 August saying they would not work in the rain.<sup>135</sup> After these desertions, the men were relieved of their responsibilities for guard duty at night, and on 10 October 1851, were replaced by the 11<sup>th</sup> Regiment on 10 October 1851.<sup>136</sup>

Fels believes that the Native Police would not have liked the work they did at Pentridge, as nothing in their cultural system would have resonated with the role of guards of persons whose liberty was curtailed, or guards of people forced to do hard manual labour (unlike for example the role of despatch rider which corresponded with the high status role of messenger in traditional society). With one exception, there is no negative comment recorded on the performance of their duties by the Aboriginal troopers themselves; the exception is a comment by Barrow that it was 'greatly to be regretted' that a native trooper 'missed his shot' when firing at an escaping prisoner on 1 April 1851, because if the trooper had hit the escapee, 'it would have been an example'.<sup>137</sup> There is specific praise made by Barrow and general praise of native mounted police and European foot constables alike, in various reports of attempted escapes. It looks as though the men went on doing their job till they made a decision to desert in 1851.

<sup>131</sup> Fels 1988a: 209-210.

<sup>132</sup> VPRS 90, 27 Mar.-1 Apr. 1851 in Fels 1988a: 210.

<sup>133</sup> Argus, 2 September 1851 in Broome 1987: 105.

<sup>134</sup> Dana to La Trobe, 23 Jul. 1851, VPRS 19, Box 144, 51/183 in Fels 1988a: 211.

<sup>135</sup> Fels 1988a: 211.

<sup>136</sup> Fels 1988a 212.

<sup>137</sup> Barrow to La Trobe, VPRS 19, Box 149, 51/649 enc. With 51/928 in Fels 1988a: 208.

On 24 July 1852, one of the Native Police, Trooper William was arrested and found guilty of statutory rape. He was sentenced to five years on the roads. Assistant Protector Thomas and La Trobe, believed that William was an innocent man. Thomas organised a petition for clemency, and all the members of the jury aside from two who had left for the diggings signed. Williams was given privileged treatment at Pentridge, serving his sentence as personal servant to the family in the superintendent's house.<sup>138</sup>

## Diminishing Populations

It is virtually impossible to provide accurate estimates of population figures for Victorian Aboriginal people at contact and through time. The following estimates, though imprecise, show a general picture of decline. Radcliffe-Brown estimates that at contact there were at least 11,500 Aboriginal people living in Victoria.<sup>139</sup> By 1863, less than 2,000 Aboriginal people remained, a loss of approximately 85%.<sup>140</sup> In 1863, estimates are that there were 1,920 Aboriginal people living within a European population of 540,322.<sup>141</sup> By 1877 there were 1,067 Aboriginal people recorded living in Victoria.<sup>142</sup> In 1886, 844 Aboriginal people lived in Victoria, half of whom were of mixed ancestry.<sup>143</sup>

In contradistinction to the Aboriginal population decline the Victorian European population expanded rapidly after contact. By 1841, there were 12,000 Europeans living in Kulin country.<sup>144</sup> By 1851, there were 77,345 Europeans living in Victoria.<sup>145</sup> The 1850s decade saw massive immigration as a consequence of the goldrush and by 1861, ten years after gold was discovered, this population expanded to 540,000.<sup>146</sup>

It is extremely difficult to estimate the size of –(w)urrung and clans at contact. Records that were made were done so by government officials and settlers who, even with the best intentions, frequently had difficulties understanding group affiliations and spatial distribution. Even when group membership was known, population figures were distorted by the impact of disease, violence and lowered fertility rates. In early 1840 Thomas wrote to Robinson of his fears for the Indigenous population:

<sup>138</sup> Fels 1988a: 218.

<sup>139</sup> Barwick, D. E. 1971. 'Changes in the Aboriginal population of Victoria 1863-1966' in Mulvaney D. J. & J. Golson (eds.). 1971. *Aboriginal man and environment in Australia*. Australian National University Press, Canberra: 288.

<sup>140</sup> Barwick 1971: 288; Barwick, D. E. 1972. 'Coranderrk and Cumeruogunga: Pioneers and Policy' in Epstein, T. S. & D. H. Penny (eds.). 1972. *Opportunity and Response: Case Studies in Economic Development*. Hurst, London: 15.

<sup>141</sup> Barwick 1972: 15.

<sup>142</sup> Barwick 1971: 298.

<sup>143</sup> Barwick 1971: 289.

<sup>144</sup> Barwick 1984: 108-9.

<sup>145</sup> Barwick 1984: 108-9.

<sup>146</sup> Barwick 1984: 109.

*They are fast diminishing in numbers, but few are born to fill up the ranks of the dead, and ere long may be beyond the pale of a nation's commiseration.*<sup>147</sup>

The Woiworung were suffering from the increasing pressures brought to bear by pastoral settlement:

*Several important facts materially affecting the condition and prospects of the aboriginal population...have been forcibly brought under my notice ... The first is the rapid occupation of the entire country by settlers, and the consequent attempts made to deprive the Aborigines of the natural products of the country, and even to exclude them from their native soil.*

*The entire country of the Waworong and Witowrong tribes, with scarcely any exceptions, is now sold or occupied by squatters. A considerable portion of the country ranged by the Jajowrong and Taouringurong tribe is also taken up by sheep or cattle runs. All available portions of the tracts that remain will speedily be absorbed in like manner by stock. The very spots most valuable to the Aborigines for their productiveness – the creeks, water courses, and rivers – are the first to be occupied.*<sup>148</sup>

*Thomas, for instance, reported with dismay that there were thirty-four deaths and only four births in the Yarra and Western Port tribes between April 1 1839, and 31 May 1843.*<sup>149</sup>

## **Disease**

Disease was a principal factor in population decline. There was little resistance within the Aboriginal population to common European ailments such as influenza and measles. The signs and symptoms of these new diseases were foreign to the Aboriginal people and the application of their traditional methods of treatment often failed. In addition, lack of government funds meant that Aboriginal people suffering from disease did not receive much needed treatment. This combination of factors meant that many cases of disease resulted in death. It is difficult to gauge from the records the extent that disease contributed to the decline of the Aboriginal population, though Barwick has argued that disease was a principle factor in an 85% population reduction in Central Victoria in twenty-four years to 1863.<sup>150</sup> References to disease amongst the Woiworung included tuberculosis, ulcers, venereal disease (gonorrhoea and syphilis) dysentery (accompanied with typhus fever), rheumatism, acute catarrh, famine and influenza.

<sup>147</sup> Thomas to Robinson 29/2/1840 in Cannon 1983: 624-25.

<sup>148</sup> E. S. Parker to Robinson 1/4/1840 in Cannon 1983: 692.

<sup>149</sup> Foxcroft, E. J. B. 1940. 'The New South Wales Aborigines' Protectorate, Port Phillip District, 1838-1850' part one in *Historical Studies in Australia and New Zealand* 1 (2): 82.

<sup>150</sup> Barwick 1972: 15.

Date	Number	Description	Source
1835	350	Yarra and Westernport tribes	Thomas in Lemon 1983: 15
1839	207	Yarra and Westernport tribes	Thomas in Lemon 1983: 15
1839	123	Yarra tribe	Census Thomas to Robinson 20/11/1839 in Cannon 1983: 606
1846	99	Yarra tribe	Thomas 1846 Family Census in Clark and Heydon 1998: App. 5.1
1849	85	Port Phillip tribe	Thomas in Foxcroft 1941a: 161
1852	39 Men - 22 Women - 17	Yarra tribe	Thomas in Lemon 1983: 28
1858	21 Men - 13 Women - 8	Yarra tribe	Thomas evidence given in the 1858-59 Select Committee: 25
1862	22	Yarra tribe	Thomas reported in the Second Report of the Central Board 1862: 17
1863	22	Yarra tribe	John Green reported in the Third Report of the Central Board 1864: 13

**Table 4:** Population numbers for Woiworung (and Bunurong/Boonerwung) in the early years of the Port Phillip settlement.

Venereal disease (likely a combination of gonorrhoea and syphilis) weakened peoples' health and the effects of gonorrhoea in particular, was a high risk factor in rendering women infertile:

*I beg to forward the following account of syphilitic disease, as it occurs amongst the natives, founded on facts collected during my professional visit at the aboriginal station, Nerre Nerre Warren; on looking over my papers, I found the original notes from which my former report was copied, which I had the honour of forwarding to the colonial surgeon.*

*The natives declared the disease was unknown amongst them before they had intercourse with the white people. It generally originates with a small cluster of irritable papula on the inside of the thigh or scrotum and perineum, which rapidly coalesce, and it spreads very widely, and the skin becomes at length affected with a scaly eruption of a circular form, with a well-defined margin, giving it much the appearance of lepravulgares. The action of the virus is singularly modified by the habits and constitution of the native, as it does not appear to pass through the*

*ordinary channel of the lymphatic system into the constitution, but directly through the general circulation or capillary vessels...*<sup>151</sup>

Thomas recorded that by 1858 venereal disease had become manageable:

*The venereal disease, under which they formerly grievously suffered, introduced by the white population, does not now exist to any material extent. If they contract it, they apply to me for bluestone, and quickly cure themselves; but for the last three years I do not think it has been among them.*<sup>152</sup>

Venereal disease was noticed and recorded by Robinson as early as 1836 when he was told by Derremart and William Buckley that it was 'new'.<sup>153</sup> According to Assistant Protector Charles Seivewright, one in ten inhabitants of the Melbourne camps was suffering from venereal disease:

*In addition to a venereal disease of which nine-tenths of them are the victims, and which appears under a more violent form than even the most extraordinary European cases, and from which neither age nor sex are exempted (as its ravages extend from the infant at the breast to the decrepit and aged), they are now generally suffering from severe dysentery, and influenza, which appear to be rapidly extending among them...leaves them dependent upon the capricious and uncertain eleemosynary support of the inhabitants of the township, who have been for some time past inclined to withhold their usual pittance, in the hope of getting rid of the unusual number of natives who have come in from all quarters to meet their protectors.*<sup>154</sup>

The colony's Medical Officer, Dr Cussens, wrote to Robinson of his concerns for the inhabitants of the camps:

*...I immediately visited the tribe of black aboriginal natives at present encamped on the banks of the river adjoining this township, and it is my painful duty to report to you that I witnessed a most distressing scene of disease, destitution and misery.*

*The unfortunate creatures alluded to are labouring under dysentery (accompanied with typhus fever) of the worst description, and which occurring in subjects (for the most part) worn down by syphilis, rheumatism, (or more properly a [illegible] disease of the bones originating in the former disease) and acute catarrh (which has been lately very prevalent here...).*

*To these horrors are to be added famine (their present peculiar circumstances rendering them totally incapable of obtaining food by their ordinary pursuits) and cold (as they appear to be altogether destitute of covering). Six of their number*

<sup>151</sup> Wilmot to Robinson 17/8/1842 in 1844. Return to An address of the Honourable House of Commons: 257.

<sup>152</sup> Thomas in 1858-1859. Report of the Select Committee on the Aborigines, together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence and appendices: 28.

<sup>153</sup> Barwick 1984: 116.

<sup>154</sup> C.W. Sievwright to Robinson 5/5/1839 in Cannon 1983: 460.

*have died within the last four days...I can assert that syphilis is (generally speaking) committing the most extensive ravages amongst them, and shall most probably, if unchecked, render them extinct in a very few years.*<sup>155</sup>

Three months later in August 1839, Robinson reported further concerns held by Cussens:

*Dr Cussen called on me yesterday and reported that a large number of aboriginal natives of your District were labouring under disease of a most aggravated kind...Such is the state of their ulcers that he can no longer receive them at his own house, and suggests a hut be built on the south bank of the Yarra...He is of opinion the disease is contagious...*<sup>156</sup>

By 1840 patients were 'spitting blood' and dying from respiratory disease, which was likely tuberculosis.<sup>157</sup> Aboriginal people were also extremely vulnerable to chest infections which Barwick concludes, killed most Aboriginal adults by the time they turned 40.<sup>158</sup> An influenza epidemic which began in June 1847 spread rapidly through the colony and was responsible for the death of a number of Aboriginal people.

Alcohol also had a devastating impact on the remnant Aboriginal population. Many incidents of intra-tribal and domestic violence recorded in the early years of the settlement can be attributed to the excessive consumption of alcohol. By the 1850s alcoholism was endemic across the Victorian Aboriginal population and contributed greatly to population decline.<sup>159</sup>

## The Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate

By 1839 plans were underway for the Protectors to move into various districts across the colony. The Protectors were required to compile a complete census of the Aboriginal population in their various districts, provide information on the various tribal groups, associated boundaries and their relations with other groups. This information was to take the form of quarterly reports to the Chief Protector's office.<sup>160</sup>

### **Nerre Nerre Warren Protectorate Station**

The Protectorate's policy to keep Aboriginal people out of Melbourne was a constant source of pressure for Thomas who was continually reminded by Robinson to remove camps:

*2 September 1839: I regret that I should again be so soon called upon to request your attention to the unprotected state of the aboriginal natives within your District.*

<sup>155</sup> Dr. P.E. Cussen to Robinson 6/5/1839 in Cannon 1983: 461.

<sup>156</sup> Robinson to Thomas 27/8/1839 in Cannon 1983: 577.

<sup>157</sup> Barwick 1984: 116.

<sup>158</sup> Barwick 1971: 313.

<sup>159</sup> 1858-59. Report of the Select Committee: 11, 29-30 and 35-6.

<sup>160</sup> Christie 1979: 92.

*For several weeks past my office has been completely beset by them...my time has been wholly occupied to the exclusion of other equally important duties...It is quite obvious that where the greatest number of blacks are, there ought the Assistant Protector be. Your attention to keeping the natives from the township is also requested.<sup>161</sup>*

The following day, Robinson clarified with Thomas that he wanted the Assistant Protector to set up a camp outside of Melbourne:

*3 September 1839: ...I by no means want you in or near Melbourne, but so long as the natives are on its confines it will be necessary, ere you entirely absent yourself, to first get them away.<sup>162</sup>*

Robinson himself was under pressure from Governor LaTrobe to ensure that the policy of removal was effective:

*28 October 1839: On the question of expelling the aboriginal natives from the environs of the township, there can be but one opinion, namely that it would conduce to their advantage. I am decidedly opposed to aboriginal natives visiting towns, or indeed any settlement where a large body of whites are congregated...Two modes present themselves with reference to the points in question: persuasion and force. The former policy is the one observed by me towards the aboriginal natives...I can assure Your Honor that no endeavour of mine shall be wanting to carry into effect the humane objects contemplated.<sup>163</sup>*

In 1840 Thomas and Robinson participated in a lengthy consultative process held with the Woiworung and Bunurong in choosing an appropriate location for an Aboriginal station.

The site that was finally chosen on 2 September 1840 was the location of the 1837 Native Police depot at Nerre Nerre Warren. During the four years that the site was a Protectorate station, five wattle and daub buildings roofed with bark or grass thatch were constructed. A nine acre paddock was sown for wheat and stock paddock was fenced for the ten station bullocks.<sup>164</sup>

*At first up to 150 visited but only those who cooperated in planting nine acres [3.6 ha] of wheat and two acres [0.8 ha] of vegetables were given rations. The collection of vegetable food was women's work in Kulin society and no doubt the senior men and skilled hunters thought such tasks unrewarding and humiliating.<sup>165</sup>*

A school was also briefly established on the site:

*Narre Warren had no school until August 1841 and it was closed at the end of 1842. Billibellary sent a daughter and his young son Tommy Munnering to the*

<sup>161</sup> G. A. Robinson to William Thomas 2 September 1839, NSW in Cannon 1983: 577.

<sup>162</sup> G. A. Robinson to William Thomas 3 September 1839, NSW in Cannon 1983: 582.

<sup>163</sup> G. A. Robinson to C. J. La Trobe 28 October 1839, NSW in Cannon 1983: 600.

<sup>164</sup> Fels 1990: 11.

<sup>165</sup> Barwick 1998: 31.

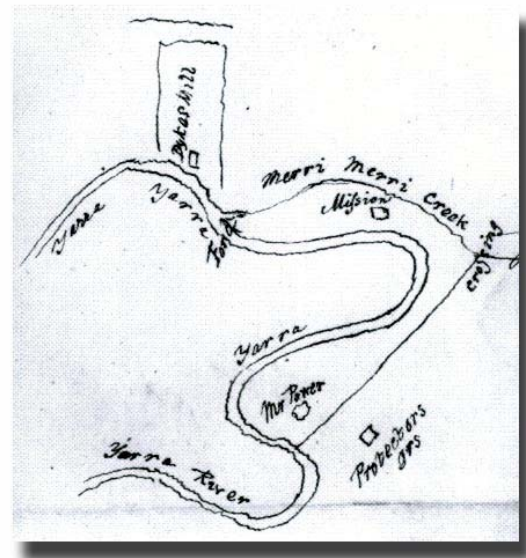
*school but not his eldest and favourite son Wonga. Thomas, who had first met Wonga in 1839, could never persuade him to attend and found that Billibellary 'was so attached to his son that he used no coercion to compel him', although he sent his younger children to any available school between 1836 and 1846.<sup>166</sup>*

For Thomas, the biggest challenge lay in keeping people at the station away from the vices of town. In attempting to move a large camp from the Bolin Swamp area back to Nerre Warren in June 1841, Thomas had to persuade his charges not to travel back towards the Turruk camp closer to Melbourne:

*I in order to get them back to the station on the 19<sup>th</sup> stated to them my determination not to encamp at Turruk, and left them, giving them to understand that my cart should pass thru the encampment that day for the luggage of any who would follow me and the sick. I had not left them many yards when they called after me and stated that they would come with the cart, many did so and by the evening of the 20<sup>th</sup> the encampment at Narre Narre Warren consisted of 81. The Blacks continued increasing in numbers at the station during the remainder of this month and making themselves useful; at the end their number was 119.<sup>167</sup>*

The station was not popular with Aboriginal people and by the end of January 1843 it was deserted. Thomas moved to Northcote, taking up office in the District Police Court.<sup>168</sup>

Lack of funding meant that over time, the Protectorate scheme was phased out, but it was not until 1849 Select Committee found that the Port Phillip Protectorate scheme was a complete failure, that the Protectorate scheme was officially abolished.<sup>169</sup>



**Figure 5:** William Thomas sketch map of the Merri Creek settlement, 1847 (Thomas to Robinson 12/3/1847 in VPRS 11, Unit 658).

### **Merri Creek School**

In 1845, Thomas was asked by La Trobe to comment on the idea of establishing a school for Aboriginal children at the junction of the Merri Creek and Yarra. Thomas replied that he could not support the idea as Aboriginal people were migratory and would not stay at a fixed school for long periods of time. Nevertheless, on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1846 the Government gave the Richmond Baptist Church the use of Dr. Macarthur's former residence consisting of 27 acres near the junction

<sup>166</sup> Barwick 1998: 31.

<sup>167</sup> Thomas to Robinson 24/6/1841: Journal of Proceedings 1/3/1841-31/5/1841.

<sup>168</sup> Fels 1990: 6-12.

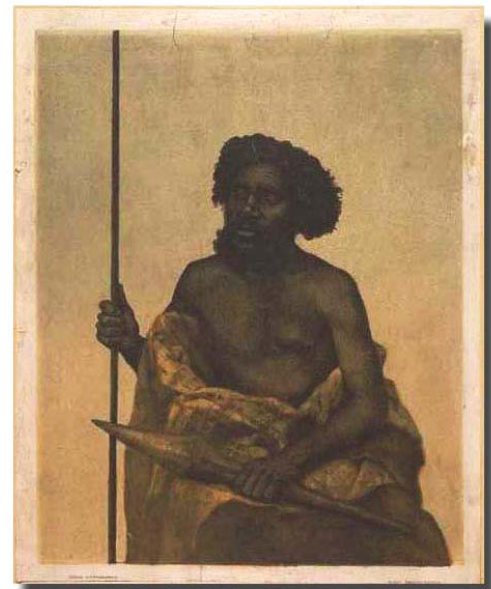
<sup>169</sup> 1849 Report from the Select Committee on the Aborigines and the Protectorate with Appendix, Minutes of Evidence, and Replies to a Circular Letter, NSW Legislative Council, Votes and Proceedings.

of the Yarra River and Merri Creek in Northcote, known as the 'Yarra Bend', near Dight's Falls.<sup>170</sup> As noted above, this area was a favourite camping spot for the Woiworung and visiting -(w)yrung and at the time of the school's opening there was an existing encampment of Aboriginal people at the locality.<sup>171</sup> The school opened with 26 girls and boys in attendance.<sup>172</sup>

The Baptist Church employed Edward Peacock as the teacher. He began his work by teaching in William Thomas's hut which was located ~0.5km east of the junction of Merri Creek and Yarra River.<sup>173</sup> In December 1845, Thomas determined to move the 230 Woiworung/Bunerong from their camp on the Merri Creek to a new camp on the Yarra however they soon returned.<sup>174</sup> The children stayed in the 'boarding school' while their families camped nearby on the Yarra Flats.

In time a number of buildings were constructed including the school building consisted of 4 rooms housing a schoolroom, kitchen, and a bedroom and parlour for the Peacocks. Several buildings were later added including a model farm, a cottage and a garden. The boys learnt cultivation, pest control, skills for measuring and carpentry. Girls learnt food preparation, nutrition, cooking and weighing. In November of 1846 Aboriginal pupils read, sung hymns and displayed their hand writing and needlework to a gathering of over 250 townspeople. Approximately 20 children were taught by Edward Peacock until the Yarra tribe left the area in 1847.<sup>175</sup>

In September 1846 many boys at the school had deserted, returning only after Thomas had persuaded them to do so. In May 1847 there were only 10 boys and 7 girls at the school. The others had been taken away throughout the year.<sup>176</sup> For most of 1846 and 1847 the Yarra tribe had stayed at their camps near Melbourne, such as Merri Creek and Yarra Bend. Distant tribes joined them on occasion, and the numbers fluctuated from about 100 to over 300. In September 1847 the largest camps left Melbourne except for a smaller group of people near the school. 12 boys and 4 girls remained at the school at this time. Thomas believed the children were happy to stay at the school, but there was antagonism towards the school from some of the older Aboriginal people. At the end of November the camps near Thomas' hut left, taking with them 4 girls and 3 boys, with 4 more boys



**Plate 7:** "Simon. An Aborigine of the Yara Yara Tribe who opposed the landing of Batman". A Gould lithograph, Mitchell Library, SLNSW.

<sup>170</sup> Caldere, D. B & D. J. Goff. 1991. *Aboriginal Reserves and Missions in Victoria*. Department of Conservation and Environment, East Melbourne: 7; Felton 1981: 180.

<sup>171</sup> Christie 1979: 140-44.

<sup>172</sup> Lemon 1990: 21.

<sup>173</sup> Christie 1979: 140-45.

<sup>174</sup> Fels 1988a: 99.

<sup>175</sup> Caldere and Goff 1991: 7.

<sup>176</sup> Lemon 1990: 22.

leaving later that day. Two brothers from Port Fairy were the only ones left at the school. In early December, Thomas rode 40 miles up the Yarra to convince the Aborigines to return. They refused. In January 1848, the school temporarily closed.<sup>177</sup>

Francis Edgar took over teaching at the school when Peacock was fired in May 1848. Only one of the boys at the school was from the Woiworung tribe – Gurren Gurrenboop. Three more boys were sent to the school from the native police at Narre Warren. These were Murrumwiller (Charley) who was from the Wimmera, Marbunnun (Jemmy) and Kung-gudbar (Jacky Warton) from Gippsland.<sup>178</sup>

In August 1849, Thomas heard that Jemmy/ James White the eldest boy at the school, who was about 15, wished to marry Kitty Bungeelleen. Thomas had his misgivings about the match but the two were married on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1849.<sup>179</sup>

A disastrous summer flood in 1849-50 ruined the farm and flooded the school. The staff and children were demoralised by the floods and parents took their children away:

*The Edgers were left with 2 young Gippsland blacks, Thomas and John Bungelene.*<sup>180</sup>

After several failed attempts to reopen the school it was finally closed in 1851 and the Edgars left for England.<sup>181</sup> The school 'experiment' was considered a failure.<sup>182</sup>

## The Neglected Remnant - 1850-59

The decade following the abolishment of the Protectorate (1849-59) saw the government's policy towards the colony's Aboriginal people shift from one of protection to neglect. The money spent on Aboriginal affairs in the eighteen fifties, for example, amounted roughly to one quarter of that expended on the Protectorate scheme.<sup>183</sup>

By 1851 Port Phillip had been declared a separate, independent colony from New South Wales and La Trobe, now acting as Lieutenant Governor, was temporarily distracted by his new role.<sup>184</sup> Gold had also been discovered in Port Phillip and the white settlers flocked to new colony, the population rising from 77,000 to 540,000 in the first years of the rush.<sup>185</sup> Against this background of hope and opportunity for the white faction of Port Phillip society contrasted a rapidly declining Aboriginal population whose wellbeing hung in the balance.

<sup>177</sup> Lemon 1990: 23.

<sup>178</sup> Lemon 1990: 24-25.

<sup>179</sup> Lemon 1990: 27.

<sup>180</sup> Christie 1979: 145.

<sup>181</sup> Caldere and Goff 1991: 7; Fels 1988a: 92.

<sup>182</sup> Christie 1979: 144.

<sup>183</sup> Christie 1979: 145.

<sup>184</sup> Christie 1979: 138-39.

<sup>185</sup> Christie 1979: 136.

Michael Cannon suggests that by 1850 the Aboriginal population of Port Phillip had been reduced to nearly half its original size.<sup>186</sup> In the early 1850s the reports written to the Colonial Secretary by William Thomas, Edward Stone Parker, and the five Crown Land Commissioners attribute falling population numbers to in-fighting between tribes and disease and alcoholism. The 1857 census found that only 1,768 Aboriginal people resided in the colony.<sup>187</sup>

With the failure of the Protectorate scheme, the government officials and the colonists were skeptical about alternative systems to deal with the colony's Aboriginal people. The Native Police Corps was expanded and the government appointed William Thomas as Guardian of the colony's Aboriginal people, though he mainly stayed in the county of Evelyn around Melbourne.<sup>188</sup>

During this period a number of reserves were established under the supervision of Medical Officers. Crown Land Commissioners were appointed as Honorary Protectors and were given the responsibility of visiting the reserves, reporting regularly to the government on condition of Aborigines in their respective districts and supplying to the Aboriginal people food and clothes, but only in cases of extreme emergency.<sup>189</sup>

The various church groups continued to pressure the government into formulating policies for the amelioration of the condition of the colonies Aboriginal people. In response, the government established two mission stations, the Moravian or Lake Boga Mission at Swan Hill and the Anglican Mission at Yelta. For various reasons both initiatives failed and the mission stations were subsequently shut down.<sup>190</sup>

It was during the 1850s that pastoral properties, through necessity, became a focus of many Aboriginal people's lives as stockmen, general labourers and domestic servants. The reasons for this were varied. Sometimes the attraction of particular properties arose from their being in clan territories, where people felt a sense of belonging and where they could continue to care for their land. On many of these properties, Aboriginal people lived in camps or huts. Much of this work was seasonal (for example, sheep shearing), and records indicate that Aboriginal people would live itinerantly, sometimes following a familiar round of stations year after year. During this time, those individuals who were able to work could take some control over their lives but for the old and infirm and children this decade was very harsh. During this period, many fringe camps started to emerge around towns. People survived from begging and donations of food and blankets from concerned locals.

During this decade two contradictory forces were at play; on the one hand, with most white labour heading for the goldfields opportunities for work on pastoral properties greatly increased so that healthy Aboriginal men were able to readily obtain work; but on the other, alcoholism, disease and a declining birth rate took a firm hold on the remnant Aboriginal population. Life was indeed precarious and the absence of a government policy only contributed to this.

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<sup>186</sup> Cannon 1990: 263.

<sup>187</sup> Christie 1979: 153-54.

<sup>188</sup> Christie 1979: 137.

<sup>189</sup> Christie 1979: 137.

<sup>190</sup> Christie 1979: 149-53.

Thomas was given clear instructions from Governor LaTrobe that he should keep Aboriginal people out of Melbourne. As Thomas knew that rations rather than force would persuade the remnant population to remain outside the city he was permitted to provide all remaining Woiworung and Boonwurrung people with free rations.<sup>191</sup>

In 1856 the responsibility for Aboriginal Affairs switched to the Surveyor General and for the first time the government's expenditure and policies towards the colony's Aboriginal people was published and subsequently scrutinized by the media.<sup>192</sup> This negative media coverage, compounded by the continuing pressure from philanthropic and religious groups, led to the government's decision to form a Select Committee inquiring into the present condition of the colony's Aboriginal people.<sup>193</sup>

### **1858-9 Select Committee inquiring into the condition of the Aborigines**

The Select Committee's report found that at the time of white settlement in the colony there were approximately 6-7000 Aboriginal inhabitants and that since then the high mortality had resulted in only "... a few hundreds remaining, who are in a state of abject want, with the exception of the Yarra and Western Port tribes, under the immediate charge of the Guardian of Aborigines and a few who settled on or near the old Aboriginal Station at Mt Franklin [the former Loddon Protectorate]".<sup>194</sup> The Committee acknowledged the destruction wrought by white settlement and identified some of the major factors which caused the reduction in numbers of Aboriginal people in the colony including the introduction of alcohol, hunger resulting from the scarcity of game and in some cases cruelty and ill-treatment by the white population.<sup>195</sup>

Thomas recognised the need for the provision of supplies to the remnant Victorian Aboriginal population. In July 1859 William Thomas prepared a 'Report to the Commissioner of Lands & Survey: Scheme for meeting Aboriginal wants' and drew the following conclusion:<sup>196</sup>

*In order to settle the problem permanently, the government must be prepared to supply the necessary wants of all the natives, and must not spare any expense in so doing. Food depots must be established all over the settled parts of the colony, under the charge of trustworthy and humane gentlemen who would be willing to undertake this service gratuitously. At these, the necessities of life, together with a few simple medicines and articles of clothing, should be contained. The natives should not make these depots their permanent abode. In the unsettled districts, extensive tracts of land should be allotted to the tribes, to be placed under the guidance of missionaries and a board of trustees. These reserves would be beyond the area of settlement, and squatters already on suitable areas should be removed, after being compensate*<sup>197</sup>

<sup>191</sup> Clark and Heydon 2004: 74.

<sup>192</sup> Christie 1979: 152.

<sup>193</sup> Christie 1979: 155; 1858-9. Victorian Select Committee on Aborigines: 40-4.

<sup>194</sup> This figure is considered conservative. 1858-9. Victorian Select Committee on the Aborigines: 40-4.

<sup>195</sup> 1858-9. Victorian Select Committee on the Aborigines: iii.

<sup>196</sup> Foxcroft, E. J. B. 1941b. *Australian Native Policy*. Melbourne University Press, Melbourne: 104.

<sup>197</sup> Foxcroft 1941b: 104-5.

In direct response to Thomas' proposal the Select Committee recommended that a central administrative body, to be known as the Central Board for the Protection of Aborigines be established to co-ordinate a system of reserves, the distribution of rations and to oversee all expenditure for Aboriginal people in Victoria:

*That in order to make permanent provision for the maintenance and management of the Aboriginal Population, this Committee recommend that a sufficient quantity of land be set aside in different districts, to be held in trust by a Board of Trustees resident in the particular district, in connection with a Central Board to be appointed from residents in Melbourne, under whose control, any expenditure incurred on account of the Aboriginal inhabitants shall be defrayed*<sup>198</sup>

On the 7th June 1860 the Board held its first meeting.<sup>199</sup> In its first report 1861 it noted that it "...soon became obvious to the Board that it would be necessary to obtain... some clear explanation of the functions which would devolve upon them [both the Board and the Honorary Correspondents], and that duties of the Local Committees should be, in like manner, clearly set forth".<sup>200</sup> Presumably in response to this resolution Sir Henry Barkly, Governor-in-Chief of the Colony of Victoria, signed off a proclamation on the 18th June 1860 which stated in part:

*Whereas it has been deemed expedient by His Excellency the Governor, by and with the advice of the Executive Council of the said Colony, that a Commission should forthwith issue for the establishment of a "Board for the protection of the Aborigines" residing in the Colony of Victoria, to advise the Government as to the amount of public moneys to be voted from year to year for the benefit of the said Aborigines, to control the expenditure of such moneys in the most efficient and economical manner to the benefit of such Aborigines, to recommend the proclamation of reserves for aboriginal purposes; to supply rations, clothes, stock, implements or such other articles as may be deemed requisite in carrying into effect the purposes for which the said moneys may be voted; to recommend the appointment or removal of all agents, officers, or local committees in connection with the said Board; and to direct and control the duties of all such persons so appointed or employed*<sup>201</sup>

This structure was to change almost as soon as the proclamation had been made: "[t]he Local Committees...were abolished, and Honorary Correspondents were appointed in those districts most frequented by the Aborigines".<sup>202</sup> This change was in response to complaints from members of the Local Committees who wrote to the Board informing it "... that it was impossible for them to hold meetings, as some of them (members of the same Committee) lived more than one hundred

<sup>198</sup> Motion put by Mr Snodgrass on 9 March 1860 and passed by the Select Committee, 1859-60 Report, np.

<sup>199</sup> First CBA Report 1861: 34.

<sup>200</sup> The Board comprised the following members: Richard Heales, President, Theodore J. Sumner, Vice-President, Robert Brough-Smyth, Secretary, Henry Langlands, Henry Jennings, William Macredie, Thomas Embling and Stephen George Henty. First CBA Report 1861: 3.

<sup>201</sup> First CBA Report 1861: 34.

<sup>202</sup> First CBA Report 1861: 3.

miles apart".<sup>203</sup> In their place Honorary Correspondents were selected from those regions "most frequented" by Aboriginal people.

While most areas across Victoria benefited from strategically placed depots during the 1850s, the dwindling Woiworung population had to rely predominantly on Thomas who remained as Guardian of the Aborigines from 1850.

## Acheron Reserve

On 28 February 1859 five Taungurong men called on William Thomas at the Merri Creek establishment. Thomas later stated that "their object was to have a block of land on a particular part of the Upper Goulburn on the Acheron River to be set apart for them".<sup>204</sup> The Taungurong men, Parnegean (alias Charley King), son of the Yowung-illum-balluk clan head, Young Kooyan (alias Peter Hunter) and Burruppin (Jemmy Webster Junior) were accompanied by two Woiworung clansmen, Simon Wonga and his brother Tommy Munnering, who acted as interpreters.<sup>205</sup> Simon and Tommy were members of the Wurundjeri-willam clan who had once occupied the present-day Moreland municipality.

The request was subsequently approved by the Land Board and the men made their way across the Yarra Ranges and selected a spot just below the junction of the Rubicon and Acheron Rivers, 55km beyond Yea.<sup>206</sup> The party marked the selection by chopping some marks in some of trees and then proceeded to collect fellow tribe members from nearby pastoral properties and townships of Mansfield, Yea and Alexandra.

Robert Hickson was appointed superintendent of the reserve and arrangements were made to make funding available for provisions and stores for the new reserve. Four trustees, Snodgrass, Aitken, Maxwell and McKenzie, were appointed as overseers with the responsibility of determining whether or not the land was being used efficiently by the Aboriginal people.<sup>207</sup>

Approximately eighty people from the Taungurong Waring-illum-balluk and Yowung-illum-balluk clans from the Yea and Alexandra districts settled at Acheron immediately. They were later joined by some of the Yeerun-illum-balluk from the Devil's River.<sup>208</sup> A small number of the station residents were Woiworung.

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<sup>203</sup> First CBA Report 1861: 3. It is unclear who the members of the Local Committees were, although the Report notes that they were listed in the Government Gazette which I have not cited. The 1877 Royal Commission confirms that Local Committees did not meet:

The Act [1869 *An Act to provide for the Protection and Management of the Aboriginal Natives of Victoria*] empowers the Governor in Council to appoint Local Guardians and local committees... [T]he power to appoint local committees has not, so far as we are aware, been exercised (Royal Commission on the Aborigines, together with minutes of evidence and appendices, 1877:xvi).

<sup>204</sup> Thomas to Board, 26 July 1860 (CRS B312, Folder 3); Christie 1979:157; Barwick 1972: 21.

<sup>205</sup> Barwick 1972: 21; Barwick 1998: 39.

<sup>206</sup> Thomas to Board, 26 July 1860 (CRS B312, Folder 3); Christie, 1979: 157-58.

<sup>207</sup> Bromfield to Board, 25<sup>th</sup> July 1859 (CRS B312, folder 1).

<sup>208</sup> Barwick 1998: 41.

Delays in funding meant that a number of people had to leave the reserve in search of seasonal work. It took nearly nine months for Thomas' requests for funding for the reserve to be approved, though work began immediately in February 1860 with the arrival of the first dray loaded with supplies.<sup>209</sup>

According to Hickson's return for Acheron, by June 1860 five acres of wheat had been sowed, harrowed and fenced and about one and half acres of land for a garden had been ploughed. A school had also been established and 13 young men and 8 children were in regular attendance.<sup>210</sup>

Hickson noted that since the formation of the Acheron establishment he had not heard of any outrages between the residents and other groups and that the residents, which were mostly Taungurong, seemed to be on amicable terms now with the Gippsland, Devils, Ovens and Broken River tribes.<sup>211</sup>

Disease was prevalent at the Acheron, particularly during the winter months. The highest number of deaths (6) was recorded at Acheron between the period of July and August 1860. According to Hickson this was due mostly to an outbreak of influenza. After many requests by Hickson, a doctor was finally appointed.<sup>212</sup>

The reservation at Acheron was bitterly opposed by the nearby settlers, particularly Jones, Glass and Nash. As early as March 1859 there is evidence that they had conspired, along with District Surveyor Bromfield and Snodgrass, a pastoralist at Yea and one of the trustees of the reserve, to have the Acheron residents relocated six kilometres to the north at Jones' Mohican station.<sup>213</sup>

Unbeknown to Thomas and the Board, the land at Acheron had never been formally gazetted as the papers had been withdrawn from the executive council over the question of whether the reserve would devalue the pre-emptive section at Taggerty.<sup>214</sup> The plan to drive off the Aborigines from Acheron only became known after the following series of events had occurred.

On 14 July 1859 the Land Board received a letter from Stephen Jones' Melbourne based solicitors suggesting that his Mohican run located approximately 4 miles north of the Acheron reserve be used for the purposes of an Aboriginal reserve.<sup>215</sup> In this letter, Jones also requested compensation for the losses and damages caused to his sheep by the Acheron residents and their dogs. Snodgrass served as Jones' witness testifying that this was the case.

<sup>209</sup> Barwick 1972: 21-2; Barwick 1998: 46; Hickson to Snodgrass, Report of the Workings of Acheron [& Mohican] Stations, December 1860 (CRS B312, Folder 3, items 48, 47A, 47, 46A, & 46).

<sup>210</sup> Thomas 17 August, 1860. Robert Hickson's Return from the Acheron Aboriginal Establishment from the 1<sup>st</sup> January to 30<sup>th</sup> June 1860 (CRS B312, Folder 3).

<sup>211</sup> Thomas 17 August 1860 in Robert Hickson's return from the Acheron Aboriginal Establishment from the 1<sup>st</sup> January to June 1860 (CRS B312, Folder 3).

<sup>212</sup> Hickson to Board, December 1860 (CRS B312, Folder 3).

<sup>213</sup> Bromfield to Board of Land and Water, 25 July 1859 (CRS B312, Folder 1).

<sup>214</sup> Barwick 1998: 48; Bromfield to Land Board 25 July 1859 (CRS B312 Folder 1).

<sup>215</sup> Messrs. Brown and Stewart for Stephen Jones to Land Board. 14 July 1859 (CRS B312, Folder 1).

Despite Thomas' doubts over the legitimacy of Jones' claim for compensation, at the first meeting of the newly established Central Board for the Protection of Aborigines a resolution was passed to acquire the Mohican run for a price of £1,000. Not realising the current reserve had not been formally gazetted, both Thomas and the Board agreed that the new run could be used in addition to the Acheron reserve for hunting purposes.<sup>216</sup> In the meantime, in an unprecedented move and without the Board's authority, Snodgrass ordered Hickson and the Aboriginal residents off the Acheron reserve and instructed them to move to the newly acquired Mohican run.<sup>217</sup>

Thomas protested against Snodgrass' actions, arguing that he did not have the authority to give such orders and attempted to appeal the decision. However, Thomas did not have a case as the Acheron reserve had never been formally gazetted. Thomas was bitterly disappointed. His promise to the Taungurong people that the land would remain theirs forever had not only been broken. Thomas also realised the limitations of the new reserve, observing that such a move would be detrimental to the health and well-being of the Aboriginal people.<sup>218</sup> By November 1860, when Hickson returned to the station he found that Glass and Nash had claimed possession of the station and destroyed sections of the cultivation fence. The remaining livestock subsequently escaped and trampled the wheat and potato crops.<sup>219</sup>

Like Thomas, the Acheron residents were bitterly disappointed by Snodgrass' decision, so much so, that many refused to accompany Hickson to the new Mohican reserve and he was forced to drive the dray himself.<sup>220</sup> The Acheron pioneers complained that the land had been promised to them and that if they were permitted to stay at their selection they would not need government assistance as they would be self sufficient and produce their own food and run their own cattle.<sup>221</sup> Hickson reported that they were also anxious to return to the station to form a school.<sup>222</sup>

## Mohican Reserve

By the time the new Mohican reserve had been established it was clear that Hickson's relationship with the residents had begun to deteriorate. They complained that they did not like the superintendent and his wife.<sup>223</sup> By this stage a number of the Aboriginal men had gone to work at John Aitken's property and the numbers on the station were not sufficient to maintain the crops.<sup>224</sup>

In the meantime John Green had been appointed as General Inspector to superintend the Aboriginal people of Port Phillip. In October 1861 Green was ordered to investigate the grievances of the Taungurong as by this stage 51 of the 86 Acheron pioneers were still refusing to

<sup>216</sup> Christie 1979: 159; Barwick 1998: 48.

<sup>217</sup> Hickson to Board, 30 October, 1860 (CRS B312).

<sup>218</sup> Thomas to Board 5 October, 1860 (CRS B312, Folder 3).

<sup>219</sup> Thomas to Board, 22 November 1860, CRS B312, Folder 3; Hickson to Snodgrass, December 1860 (CRS B312, Folder 3).

<sup>220</sup> Thomas to Board, 8 October 1860 (CRS B312, Folder 3).

<sup>221</sup> John Green to Board, 18 October, 1861, Acheron [Mohican] Aboriginal Station (CRS B312/0, Folder 5).

<sup>222</sup> Hickson to Board, December 1860 (CRS B312, Folder 3).

<sup>223</sup> John Green to Board, 18 October, 1861, Acheron [Mohican] Aboriginal Station (CRS B312/0, Folder 5).

<sup>224</sup> Hickson to Board, 30 October 1860 (CRS B312, Folder 3). Hickson wrote to Snodgrass for advice on this matter, asking whether he was to encourage the able bodied and industrious men to leave the station or if he should keep them on to tend to the crops and livestock.

settle at Jones's. They had remained on a section of the Acheron reserve tending to the crops and traveling to the new reserve for weekly rations.<sup>225</sup> Others re-located to nearby public houses and stations.<sup>226</sup>

The records indicate that the Taungurong residents at the Acheron continued to maintain strong social ties and alliances to other groups in the colony. Thomas wrote to Hickson in 1860 informing him that he had conversed with some Gippsland and Barrabool blacks in Melbourne and they informed him of their intentions to send messengers to the Mohican to fetch the Goulburn blacks for a corrobber. Thomas instructed Hickson that if they arrived and they attempted to draw the Goulburn blacks away from the reserve, he was to tell them that 'Mr Thomas will have the police after them'.<sup>227</sup>

In his investigation, Green found that the new Mohican reserve was unsuitable for settlement and recommended that the establishment be abandoned. Not only was it too cold, the original buildings were in a dilapidated state and traditional food resources were in limited supply. Due to Hickson's tense relationship with the residents, Green recommended that Hickson be dismissed as Superintendent.<sup>228</sup>

Green's report to the Central Board for November 1861 found that sixteen people Aboriginal people, seven men, two boys, five women and two girls, were residing at the station. Since their arrival, the residents had been busy erecting fences including stock yard calf paddocks and wheat and potato paddocks, but more fencing was needed to prevent the cattle mixing from wild stock outside the boundaries of the reserve. The residents had also been engaged in basket making, presumably for the purposes of trade.

It would appear that these improvements did not make life any easier for the residents as they continued to voice their complaints about the new station. They told Green that the new station was "no good" as it was too cold and they worked hard tending to the crops for very little return. The old station, they argued, "was very good – plenty hot, plenty work, plenty wheat, potatoes, cabbages, plenty everything".<sup>229</sup>

Green's list of station residents shows that in October 1861 a total of 28 men, 23 women, 12 children and 2 people of 'mixed descent' 'belonged to the station. These people belonged to both the Taungurong and Yarra Yarra or Woiworung tribes.<sup>230</sup> Green notes that "four of these blacks belong to my tribe on the Yarra".<sup>231</sup>

Hickson was dismissed in early 1862 and Green was appointed in his place. By this stage the Board and Snodgrass were still arguing over status of the tenure of Acheron and so Green settled on another site within Mohican boundaries. Green was joined in February 1862 by members of

<sup>225</sup> Hickson to Board, December 1860 (CRS B312, Folder 3).

<sup>226</sup> Hickson to Board, December 1860, CRS B312, Folder 3.

<sup>227</sup> Thomas to Hickson, 26<sup>th</sup> September 1860 (CRS B312, Folder 3).

<sup>228</sup> John Green to Board, 18 October 1861, Acheron [Mohican] Aboriginal Station (CRS B312/0, Folder 5).

<sup>229</sup> John Green to Board, 18 October, 1861, Acheron [Mohican] Aboriginal Station (CRS B312/0, Folder 5).

<sup>230</sup> John Green to Board, 18 October, 1862, Acheron [Mohican] Aboriginal Station (CRS B312/0 folder 5).

<sup>231</sup> John Green to Board, 18 October, 1862, Acheron [Mohican] Aboriginal Station (CRS B312/0 folder 5).

the Woiworung and Taungurong groups. The station laboured on for almost a year until was abandoned in March 1863, after a group of approximately forty Aboriginal people led by two influential Woiworung men – Simon Wonga and William Barak - left the station in search of a new locality.<sup>232</sup>

## Coranderrk Aboriginal Reserve, Healesville

After leaving the Mohican station in March 1863, Green and the party of Acheron pioneers selected a site at Woori Yallock.<sup>233</sup> Soon after their arrival they were forced from this locality after the area had attracted settlers in search of gold.<sup>234</sup> The group subsequently relocated to a site in Woiworung country at the junction of the Badger Creek and the Watts River in the upper Yarra Valley near Healesville.<sup>235</sup> The area was part of the outstation of the Yering run which was a familiar part of Barak's country. Its Aboriginal residents named the site Coranderrk, meaning the 'Christmas bush' in the Wurundjeri dialect.<sup>236</sup> Soon after, the area was settled.<sup>237</sup> Within four months Green and the Aboriginal residents had built nine slab huts and had started raising funds by selling Aboriginal artefacts.<sup>238</sup>

By the time Coranderrk had been established the effect of European settlement on the Aboriginal population had well and truly taken its toll. Coranderrk housed a complex community as those residing at the station represented a remnant population of Woiworung, Taungurong, Jajowurrung and others from as far a field as Lake Condah. According to Barwick, the Kulin marriage systems maintained by many of the residents had been complicated by the recruitment of clan members from distant tribes.<sup>239</sup>

Despite the fact that many of the Coranderrk residents were not residing 'in country', the clan heads from Woiworung and Taungurong tribes were still held in high regard. Barak, for example, assumed leadership of the people at Coranderrk after his cousin Simon Wonga died in 1874.<sup>240</sup> Tommy Mickie, a Taungurong Ngurungaeta from the Broken River tribe, was also very prominent until his death in 1893.<sup>241</sup>

On the 23 May 1863, some of the Coranderrk pioneers attended Governor Barkly's birthday celebration where they presented hand-made gifts to the Queen's representative. They also

<sup>232</sup> Third report of the Central Board, 1863: 5-6; Christie 1979: 167.

<sup>233</sup> Fels, M. 1986a. *A History of the Coranderrk Aboriginal Station*, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Melbourne; Fels, M. 1989. *Some Aspects of the History of Coranderrk Station*. Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, Melbourne: 31-2.

<sup>234</sup> Christie 1979: 167; Barwick 1972: 24.

<sup>235</sup> Christie 1979: 167.

<sup>236</sup> Christie 1979: 167; Mulvaney, D. J. 1989. 'Self-determination at Coranderrk' in Mulvaney, D. J., (ed.). 1989. *Encounters in Place: Outsiders and Aboriginal Australians 1606-1985*. University of Queensland Press, St Lucia: 147.

<sup>237</sup> Christie 1979: 167; Fels 1986a: 39.

<sup>238</sup> Christie 1979: 167.

<sup>239</sup> Barwick, 1998: 263-4.

<sup>240</sup> Fels 1986a: 1; Christie 1979: 183.

<sup>241</sup> Rev. F.P. Strickland in 1881-82 Report of the Board of Inquiry - Coranderrk Aboriginal Station (CRS No. B352): 6.

discussed the issue of securing the land at Coranderrk for their exclusive use. The official gazettal of the land at Coranderrk as a temporary reserve on the 30 June 1863 coincided with the delivery of the Queen's letter which guaranteed her interest and protection for the Coranderrk pioneers. As a result, the Coranderrk people believed that the land was a gift from the Queen and Sir Henry Barkly and would remain theirs forever.<sup>242</sup>

By 1864 a total of 67 people had settled permanently at Coranderrk and a school had been established. Green reported that the residents had shown great interest in the reserve and had begun to manage the livestock and had sold some of their handicrafts. Over fifteen acres of land had been cleared and fenced.<sup>243</sup>

The school at Coranderrk became a de facto orphanage with orphans and deserted children sent to Coranderrk from other areas of the state. When the school closed down at Franklinford in 1862, the children were sent to the school at Coranderrk.<sup>244</sup> To some extent, children at the school were kept separate from their parents, with some children living in the school dormitory while their parents lived elsewhere on the station. It was thought that parents and elders would frustrate attempts to 'civilise' the children in the school environment.<sup>245</sup> By the 1860s, however, there was a growing recognition by some Aboriginal people (particularly Wonga) that education was a key to physical and political survival for Aboriginal people and their culture and the little education that younger people had gained by then was used with devastating effect from then on.<sup>246</sup>

It was also at this time that the Board began to take a keen interest in the children of mixed parentage and began to express the view that they should be removed from their parents to be educated. From that time onwards the BPA lobbied the Government persistently to enact legislation to allow it to legally remove children from their parents.<sup>247</sup>

To a certain extent Coranderrk was much more self-sufficient than other reserves due to the sale of artefacts, crops, and due to the earnings acquired by Aboriginal people from seasonal work as farm hands, fruit pickers and shearers. This money paid part of the Superintendent's wages and also went toward the purchase of new farm implements, machinery and stock. Unlike the mission stations, the Board still directly controlled the reserve and issued supplies including food and clothing. The Board also contributed to the cost of teachers' salaries and building costs.

By June 1865 there were 105 permanent residents at Coranderrk, including 44 children.<sup>248</sup> Given the rapid growth of the establishment 2,500 acres of additional land was added on the 16 July 1866. This land, however, was not officially gazetted as a permanent reserve until September 1884.

<sup>242</sup> Barwick 1972: 24; Christie 1979: 168.

<sup>243</sup> Annual Report, fourth Report BPA 1864 (4). (CRS B332: 5).

<sup>244</sup> Christie 1979: 167-8.

<sup>245</sup> Christie 1979: 171.

<sup>246</sup> Christie 1979: 172.

<sup>247</sup> Christie 1979: 175-6.

<sup>248</sup> Barwick 1972: 24.

After the passing of a bill 'to provide for the protection and management of the Aboriginal natives of Victoria' in 1869, the Board became the Board for the Protection of Aborigines (BPA). The new act gave the Board substantial power over the movement and lives of the Aboriginal people.<sup>249</sup>

By the 1870s the relationship between Green and the Secretary of the Board, Brough Smyth, had deteriorated considerably. This was due to their differing ideas about the management of Aboriginal people. Smyth adopted an autocratic attitude to Aboriginal people while Green was more consultative.<sup>250</sup> Coranderk's position close to Melbourne meant that land was quickly settled in the area and the town of Healesville was established nearby.<sup>251</sup> As a result pressure was exerted from 1865 onwards to acquire land from the station. Smyth was in favour of giving up the land and moving the station to a more remote location, while Green was opposed to relocation as he knew that the residents regarded Coranderk as their home. This dispute brought Green into direct conflict with Smyth who proceeded to carry out a relentless campaign to discredit Green. Green was strongly criticised for his running of the station. The success of cash crops from the hop gardens at Coranderk increased the pressure on the Board to sell the now proven commercially viable land. Smyth made Green's position untenable at Coranderk and in 1874 he resigned. The residents of Coranderk, led by Barak, protested and marched to the Board's office in Melbourne but Green was not reinstated.

In 1875 William Barak became Ngurungaeta of the Woiworung after Simon Wonga, Billibillery's son, died.<sup>252</sup> Later, he would nominate his own successors:

*Howitt's 1880/2 notes record his decision to name as his successors three younger men who helped him defeat Curr's scheme to sell Coranderk: 'When I go I shall leave the word that my sister's son shall be Ngurungaet with him two others': he named his nephew Wandoon (Robert Wandin 1854-1908); the Taungurong Birdarak (Thomas Bamfield 1839/44-1893); and Thomas Dunolly (1856-1923), spokesman for the Wathaurung and Jajowrong survivors who inherited from their mothers rights to 'speak for' Wurundjeri-balluk land.'*<sup>253</sup>

Most members of the present-day Wurundjeri Tribe Land & Compensation Cultural Heritage Council claim descent from Wandoon.

Efforts continued to close the station down while Barak and his people continued to resist. Barak complained to John Dow from the 'Leader' newspaper, about the threats to move the Aboriginal people from Coranderk, and he led another deputation to Melbourne. The new Vice Chairman of the Board, Godfrey, threatened the activists with removal from Coranderk but rather than desist they then complained to their local member of Parliament - Hugh Cameron - and were introduced through him to the Chief Secretary of the Board - McPherson. McPherson agreed to visit Coranderk and listen to their complaints. He also denied that the BPA was going to close Coranderk.

<sup>249</sup> Christie 1979: 176-77

<sup>250</sup> Christie 1979: 183.

<sup>251</sup> Christie 1979: 182.

<sup>252</sup> The Ian Potter Centre. nd. *Remembering Barak*: 20.

<sup>253</sup> Barwick 1984: 124.

The health of the Coranderrk residents was of great concern not only to the residents but also to the wider community. Most believed that much of the illness amongst the residents, particularly respiratory ailments, were a direct result of the damp, cool climate at the station. Post-mortem examinations and a study of lung disease carried out in 1879, however, found that disease or the high mortality rate at Coranderrk had nothing to do with the climate. Such diseases were thought to have spread because sufferers were not taught to manage their infection adequately.<sup>254</sup>

From 1870, growing pressure from local landowners for the closure of Coranderrk was aligned with a general feeling within the BPA that the station should be moved to a more remote location. While the argument for removal could be justified on the basis of the 'unhealthy' climate at Coranderrk, the wish to locate the station in a remote area would make it difficult for residents to walk to Melbourne to make complaints.

In 1876, after a visit from Dr. McRae and later the Chief Secretary, improvements were made to housing at the station. But the arguments for closure were still current at the Board. Finally in 1877 a Royal Commission was held to look into the matter. Although the independence of the tribunal was questionable, it found that the people from Coranderrk did not want to move and that housing should be improved.

Despite these findings, the Board did not improve the houses and continued its efforts to close the station down. A new Superintendent, the Rev. Strickland, was employed to exert more control over the station's residents. This had the effect of initiating further Aboriginal protest deputations to Melbourne under the leadership of Barak and Birdarak. The residents also gained the support of many local and important people and used the skills of their young people to orchestrate successful campaigns in the press.

In 1881, a Parliamentary Board of Enquiry was initiated to investigate the problems at Coranderrk. Due to divisions within the Board a joint statement was issued at the end of the investigation listing the causes of the problems. One group issuing a statement listing the causes as the resignation of Green, the hiring of white labour to work the hop fields, the Board's ignoring of resident's complaints and the constant threats to close the station. The second group indicated that the behaviour of white sympathisers who were too ready to listen to complaints that had no real foundation was the main problem. In the end the report recommended that a hospital be built but failed to resolve the other problems. Meanwhile the BPA continued in its efforts to close the station.

At the time of the inquiry 94 people resided at Coranderrk. Strickland reported that five of the residents were from the lower Goulburn, two were from Kilmore, one was from Euston, six were from Terrick, four from the Murray and Mansfield way.<sup>255</sup> The remaining 80 residents were presumably Woiworung or at least predominantly Woiworung.

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<sup>254</sup> Barwick 1998: 113 & 197.

<sup>255</sup> 1881-82 Report of the Board of Enquiry into Coranderrk Aboriginal Station, Commonwealth Record Series B 352: 1.

In 1882 trouble flared again, when a petition was signed by 21 residents delivered a petition to the Chief Secretary of the BPA again requesting the reinstatement of Green. On the 28 March 1882, they once more marched to Melbourne with the backing of several prominent members of the non-Aboriginal community. Their complaints included the lack of medical care, the conduct of the superintendent - Strickland - and the general conditions at Coranderrk. This latest assault on the Board placed them in a very unfavourable light suggesting that there had been some bad mishandling of Aboriginal people at Coranderrk. As a result the BPA finally carried out the improvements at Coranderrk, although they did not reinstate Green. Shortly afterwards, on 5 September 1884, the Coranderrk land, a total area of 4,850 acres, was gazetted as a permanent reserve.

### **1886 Aborigines Protection Act**

In December 1886, the BPA had its long wish for legislation enacted determining the treatment of children of mixed parentage. The effect of the *Aborigines Protection Act* was disastrous. The Act banned children of mixed parentage and over 13 years from living on stations and reserves and imposed stricter controls on those allowed to remain. Only 'full-blooded' Aboriginal people were allowed to remain on the reserves supported by the Government. The purpose was ostensibly to encourage Aboriginal people to find work, to become 'civilised' and assimilate and it was widely believed that 'half castes' were better able to do this. The effect was to deprive the missions and reserves of their literate and often outspoken young people.

The people of Coranderrk were among the first to protest when the Act was proposed, and Thomas Dunolly wrote a letter of complaint to the editor of the 'Argus'. This letter was also signed by Barak, Birdarak, Robert Wandin, William Parker, Alfred Morgan and four other station residents. Despite these protests, the legislation was enacted and large numbers of Aboriginal people were forced to move off the station. Families were split and many people were forced to adopt an itinerant way of life, picking up work where they could in the depression of the 1890s. The much reduced population on such stations as Coranderrk meant once more the BPA pushed to shut down the reserves.

### **Closure of Coranderrk**

In 1893, 2,400 acres of the Coranderrk Reserve was excised for closer settlement by the *Crown Lands Reserves Act*. On 31 January 1924, Coranderrk was officially closed as an Aboriginal station. It is unclear what happened to the Coranderrk residents after the station closed down. It has been possible to establish that some residents were transported to the Lake Tyers reserve in Gippsland.<sup>256</sup> Six elderly residents were given permission to stay with their cottages on fifty acres. The last resident died at Coranderrk in 1944.<sup>257</sup> It is likely that these people received provisions from the local Police Guardian, a position held by Constable W. Bartholomew stationed at

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<sup>256</sup> Pepper, P. and T. De Araugo. 1985. *What did happen to the Aborigines of Victoria Volume 1: the Kurnai of Gippsland*. Hyland House, Melbourne: 244.

<sup>257</sup> Barwick 1972: 44.

Healesville in 1924 (and possibly 1926 and his successor Constable M.J. Kennedy).<sup>258</sup> As the former station residents had worked seasonally in the Goulburn valley, it is likely that many of them moved permanently in this direction. There were also strong ties with properties in the Yarra Glen region. Former residents also gained work in the local timber industry.

## Recent History

Support for the system of Government reserves that had been established by the Board for the Protection of Aborigines in the 1860s started to diminish in the early 1900s as Government policy shifted towards assimilation of Aboriginal people into the wider community. Up until the late 1920s few Aboriginal people lived in Melbourne but it was during this time that a significant population began moving into inner Melbourne from the reserves at Lake Condah, Framlingham, Cummeragunja and Lake Tyers. The move to Melbourne was motivated by several factors including the prospect of employment and housing. The withdrawal of land at the reserves for returned World War I Aboriginal servicemen also forced people off reserves to fringe camps in country towns and to Melbourne.<sup>259</sup> During the 1930s Aboriginal people principally settled in the Fitzroy area and neighbouring Collingwood, while smaller numbers settled in other suburban areas of Melbourne including Footscray and North Melbourne.<sup>260</sup>

*Alick Jackomos has noted that "during the mid 1930s the Aboriginal community of Melbourne consisted of about 10-12 families living in Fitzroy with one or two families living in Richmond and North Melbourne; approximately 100 people". Beryl Booth recalls that her family were the first Aboriginal family to move to Fitzroy in 1928, shifting from Gunditjmarra country in the west of the State. Edna Brown also recalls coming to Melbourne from the Framlingham Mission in 1932, when she was only fifteen years old.*<sup>261</sup>

The onset of World War II generated employment in factories located in these inner suburban areas. A munitions factory in Maribyrnong employed many Aboriginal women. Similarly, tinned goods factories in Collingwood and Carlton were big employers of Aboriginal workers.<sup>262</sup> By the 1940s large numbers of people were living streets off Gertrude Street in Fitzroy, many of them living in overcrowded rooming houses.<sup>263</sup> The social and political galvanisation of the community in Fitzroy around this time was encouraged by the establishment of Pastor Sir Doug Nicholls' church in Gore Street in 1943:

<sup>258</sup> Fels, M. H. 1996. *A History of the Coranderrk Aboriginal Station*. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Environment: 51. The Senior Constable was given an extra 25 pounds per year for his role as Local Guardian of Aborigines (1930 typed manuscript, Police Museum).

<sup>259</sup> Bunj Consultants 2002: 14.

<sup>260</sup> Bunj Consultants 2002: 39.

<sup>261</sup> Bunj Consultants. 2002. *Snapshots of Aboriginal Fitzroy*. The Authors with Yarra City Council.

<sup>262</sup> Bunj Consultants 2002: 16.

<sup>263</sup> Bunj Consultants 2002: 28-29.

*When the war was on, in Gertrude St, they all lived in little lanes, oh there was a lot of our people around there, and dad was the one who had the church in Gore St, he had a little church there and that's where we used to all meet and get to know one another and it was wonderful. But there's nothing like that today... Yeah it was a real meeting place for our people, and it was wonderful. It sort of kept us altogether, you know, yes (Nora Murray Interview NM1).*

In the post-war period there was great demand for public housing as people moved from the country. Many could not afford to stay in the Fitzroy area and it was during this time that Aboriginal people started to move out towards housing in northern and western suburbs around Melbourne. Camp Pell (Place No. 53), a distribution centre at Royal Park, Parkville, was established as a makeshift camp using army tents to accommodate people waiting for public housing. Nora and John Stewart Murray were among those who lived at Camp Pell in the early 1950s. They lived there in a tent with five children for 20 months before being relocated to public housing.<sup>264</sup> The Murrays were moved to a new housing commission estate in Glenroy but other Aboriginal people were provided with public housing in Collingwood, Thornbury, Preston, Reservoir, Northcote and in the western suburbs including Footscray.<sup>265</sup> The settlement of Aboriginal people in Moreland area during this time was limited by the few public houses found in the area. For this reason there are fewer residential places in the Moreland suburbs of Brunswick, Coburg and Fawkner than Hadfield, Glenroy and neighbouring Broadmeadows where there were more public housing opportunities for Aboriginal people.<sup>266</sup>

With the exception of possible incarcerations at Pentridge Gaol (Place No. 08) and Joe Johnson playing at Brunswick Football Club in the 1900s (Place No. 30), it has not been possible to document direct Aboriginal community associations with places in the Moreland area during the hundred year period from 1850s to the 1950s. The arrival of the Murray family in Glenroy in the mid 1950s marks the beginning of the next period of Aboriginal place associations in the Moreland area.

It is also during this post-war period that those who gathered at the church in Gore Street, Fitzroy were active in the fight for basic rights and were instrumental in the establishment of independent Aboriginal services, commencing with the Aborigines Advancement League in Thornbury in c. 1956.<sup>267</sup> These community services formed in suburbs immediately surrounding Moreland and paved the way for more recently formed associations including the Enmaraleek Co-operative in Broadmeadows (Place No. 47) and the Aboriginal Community Elders Service (ACES) and nursing home (Place No. 27) which continue to inform the nature of Aboriginal connection to the Moreland area. Aboriginal community associations with the Moreland area since the 1950s is also characterised by a marked rise in the development of Aboriginal sporting associations. These sporting associations provide the Aboriginal participants and their families with a sense of community and well-being.

<sup>264</sup> Nora Murray Interview, NM1.

<sup>265</sup> Bev Murray Interview, BM1.

<sup>266</sup> Bev Murray Interview, BM1. In 1981 the Aboriginal Housing Board was established and continues to manage the Victorian Aboriginal Rental Housing program (Bunj Consultants 2002: 44).

<sup>267</sup> Bunj Consultants 2002: 40. Key community leader Marg Tucker lived near the Murrays in Glenroy for a period of a time (Bunj Consultants 2002: 52; Nora Murray Interview, NM1).

Aboriginal peoples' connections to the landscape that is now known as the City of Moreland have changed dramatically over the past 170 years since contact between the Woiworung and Batman's party in 1835. The Wurundjeri descendants of the Ngurungaetas who were involved in this fateful encounter with Batman still have strong attachments to their traditional country. Many of these descendants are members of the Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation & Cultural Heritage Council Incorporated. They have a continuing responsibility through Commonwealth legislation for managing their cultural heritage places throughout the Moreland area and the wider Melbourne landscape.

Over the more recent past Aboriginal people with connections to other parts of Victoria have developed associations with the Moreland area through housing, employment, sport and community organisations.



## 3 Project Outcomes

Identification of Places  
Discussion of Themes



## Identification of Places

From the information derived from the historical research and Aboriginal community consultation undertaken for this project a total of 44 Aboriginal post-contact places that reflect Aboriginal history in the Moreland region over the past 170 years have been identified (Table 5). These places, which are located within the primary study area have been recorded in data forms and are presented in Appendix 5. An additional 10 places from outside the study area have also been included as they directly inform the history and Aboriginal cultural associations within the Moreland municipality (secondary study area places, Place Numbers 45 – 54). The place locations for both the primary and secondary areas are mapped in Figure 6. Where only approximate locations are known places numbers are signified with parentheses.

Primary Study Area	
1	Lamparn watering hole camping place
2	Pentridge Village Meeting
3	Attack on Mrs Smith, Sydney Road
4	Attack on William Moore's Farm, The Avenue
5	Theft from House, Moonee Ponds Creek
6	'Squatter's Lookout', Snowball's Tower
7	La Rose Farm, Moonee Ponds
8	Pentridge Prison
9	Camp near La Rose Farm, Moonee Ponds
10	Farms at New Sydney Road
11	Camps at New Sydney Road
12	Thomas's estate, Bush Reserve
13	Merri Creek ceremonial place
14	Merri Creek
15	Moonee Ponds Creek
16	Burial, Coburg High School
17	Counihan Gallery, Brunswick
18	Fawkner Leisure Centre
19	Corpus Christi School
20	Drinking Spot, Pascoe Vale
21	Pascoe Vale Hotel
22	Brunswick Town Hall
23	Victorian P-12 College of Koorie Education, Glenroy
24	Brunswick Music Festival, Sydney Road, Brunswick
25	Moreland City Council, Coburg Municipal Complex
26	Moreland Hall
27	Aboriginal Community Elders Services (ACES)
28	Coburg Athletics Centre, Harold Stevens Athletics Field
29	Fleming Park, Brunswick East
30	Brunswick Football Club, A. G. Gillon Football Oval
31	CERES Environmental Park, Brunswick East
32	Hideaway Club, Moreland Hotel
33	Brunswick City Football Club, Dunstan Reserve
34	Bridges Reserve, Coburg

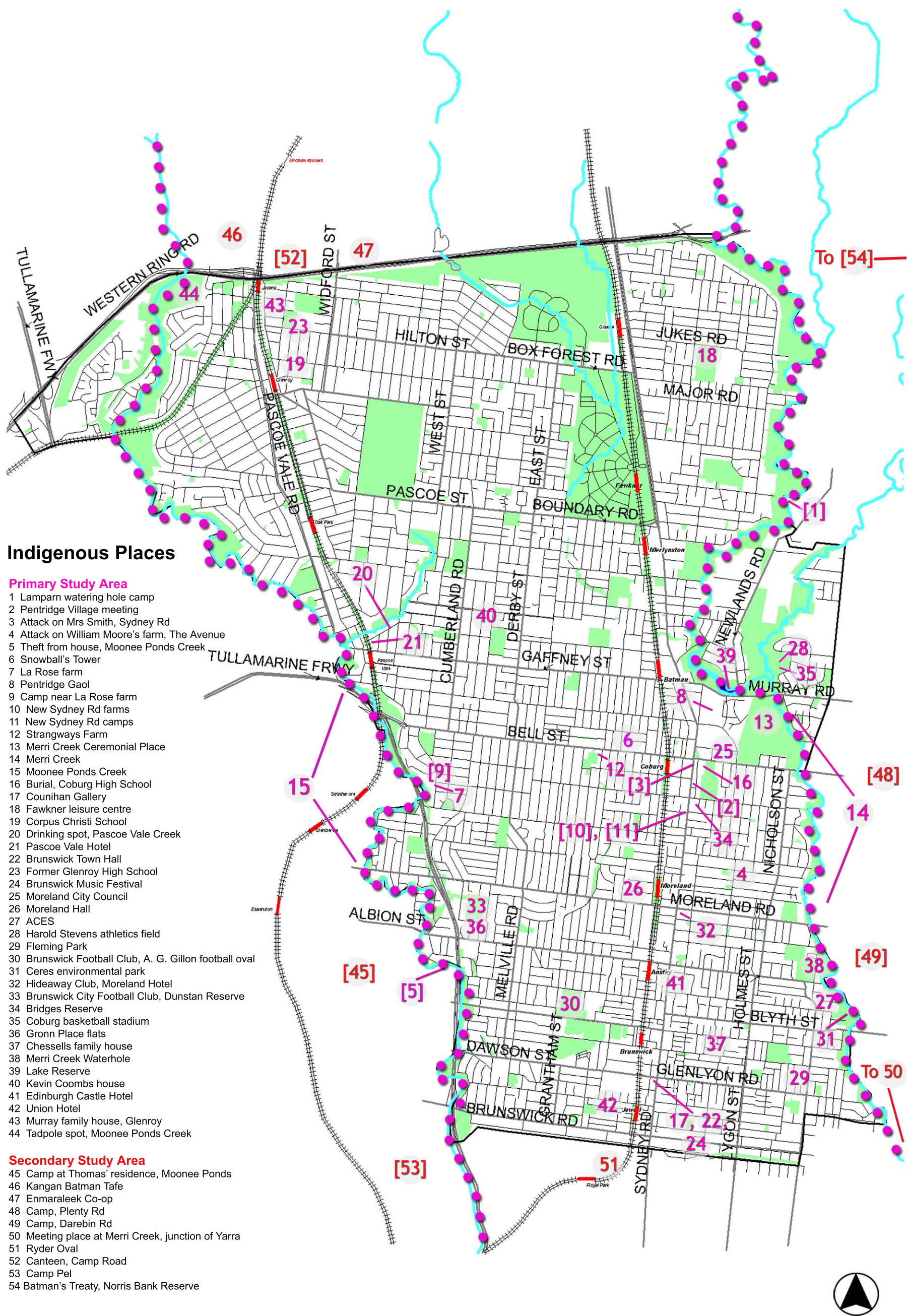


Figure 6: Map showing Aboriginal Post-contact Places and Cultural Associations in and around the Moreland Municipality.

35	Coburg Basketball Stadium
36	Gronn Place Flats, Brunswick West
37	Chessells family house, Brunswick
38	Merri Creek Waterhole, Brunswick East
39	Lake Reserve, Coburg
40	Coombs house, Pascoe Vale
41	Edinburgh Castle Hotel
42	Union Hotel
43	Murray family house, Glenroy
44	Tadpole spot, Moonee Ponds Creek
<b>Secondary Study Area</b>	
45	Camp at Thomas's residence, Moonee Ponds
46	Kangan Batman Tafe
47	Enmaraleek Co-op
48	Plenty Road Camp
49	Darebin Road Camp
50	Gathering place at Merri Creek
51	Ryder Oval, Parkville
52	Canteen at Broadmeadows
53	Camp Pell, Royal Park
54	Batman's Treaty

**Table 5:** Inventory of Post-contact Places Recorded.

A wide variety of Aboriginal cultural attachments and place locations was produced through this investigation. The places identified reflect the changed nature of the Aboriginal experience in the Moreland landscape during the post-contact period and which are defined by a complex range of attributes and historical themes. The places documented include places associated with traditional practices pre-dating the contact period that have been recorded in the historical record. They also encompass a variety of landscape associations and attachments that commenced with the first encounters with Europeans in the study area and which extends through to important associations dating to the past 50 years. The places that demonstrate more recent connections were principally identified through the community consultation program involving Aboriginal people with connections to study area.

## Discussion of Themes

A variety of themes reflecting the cultural interests and experiences of Aboriginal people in the post contact period have emerged during the course of this research. A set of themes developed for previous regional studies is used here to highlight the types of places/associations recorded (Table 6). These themes have been developed over the past 12 years through concerted research in to Aboriginal post-contact places across Victoria and New South Wales. Initially developed by Megan Goulding as a way of organising information collected for the Aboriginal Historical Places Program at Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, these themes have been refined in response to research into the historical influences on Aboriginal peoples' lives after European settlement and into the types of

place and landscape associations that Aboriginal people have continued to hold into the more recent past.<sup>268</sup>

<b>1.0 Traditional/Cultural Places</b> mythological place increase site ceremonial place spiritual place named place camp resource-use	Within formal cemeteries
<b>2.0 Contact Places</b> contact with sealers contact with squatters contact – general	<b>9.0 Religion</b> Church Missions
<b>3.0 Conflict</b> attacks on Aboriginal people attacks by Aboriginal people Segregation	<b>10.0 Government</b> Aborigines Protection Board Aborigines Welfare Board Police Court jail
<b>4.0 Living Places</b> Camps Houses Institutions	<b>11.0 Education</b> child minding schools teaching places
<b>5.0 Work</b> Manual Domestic Shop Business	<b>12.0 Health</b> hospital illness
<b>6.0 Resources</b> Plants Animals other materials	<b>13.0 Life Events</b> Birth death marriage
<b>7.0 Travelling Routes</b> Communication routes Resource collection routes Ritual purposes Work related	<b>14.0 Recreation</b> self with community within broader community
<b>8.0 Burials</b> Outside formal cemeteries	<b>15.0 Self Determination</b> co-operatives land ownership economic enterprises
	<b>16.0 Land</b> permissive occupancy reserve land claim land returned

**Table 6:** List of Themes (after Goulding 2001).

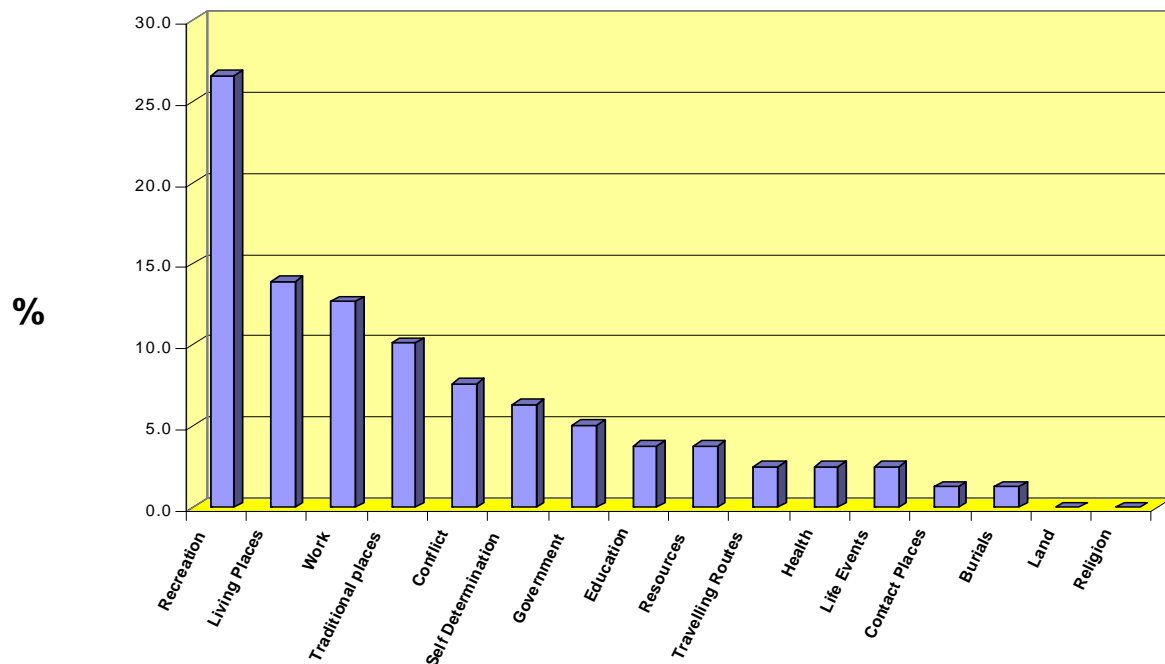
With the exception of the religion and land themes, each of the themes shown in Table 6 is reflected in the data collected on places/associations within the Moreland area. Many of the

<sup>268</sup> These themes were first published in 1997 in Goulding, M. 'Placing the Past: Aboriginal Historical Places in East Gippsland, Victoria'. *Historic Environment.*: 40-51. Over 1,000 Aboriginal post-contact place associations were recorded on the AAV Aboriginal Historical Places Register during the development of these themes.

places fall within multiple thematic categories although for the purposes of the discussion only the dominant themes have been examined. Table 7 shows the percentage of places that fall under each major theme. These are further illustrated in the graph below (Figure 7).

Theme	No. Places per theme	%
Recreation	21	26.6
Living Places	11	13.9
Work	10	12.7
Traditional/Cultural Places	8	10.1
Conflict	6	7.6
Self Determination	5	6.3
Government	4	5.1
Education	3	3.8
Resources	3	3.8
Travelling Routes	2	2.5
Health	2	2.5
Life Events	2	2.5
Contact Places	1	1.3
Burials	1	1.3
Land (Reserves)	0	0.0
Religion	0	0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 7:** Number of places per major theme expressed as a percentage of the total number of places per theme.



**Figure 7:** Graph showing the occurrence of themes per place in the Moreland area.

Five key themes – traditional places (encompassing traditional/cultural places, resources, travelling routes and burials), living places, work, government influence and sport and recreation places (encompassing traditional/cultural places, resources, travelling routes and burials) - are discussed further below.

## Traditional Places

Places with traditional connections in the Moreland area include story places, camping places, ceremonial places, resource places, travelling routes and a burial ground.

Wurundjeri Elder Ian Hunter describes the creation story of the creeks and rivers of the Melbourne area, including Moonee Ponds and Merri Creek. This story was told to him by his mother Tiny Hunter. Ian used the story as inspiration for the creation of a dance performed by his dance troupe, Ngarragee, on a commission from the Moreland Council:

*The story was about the creeks and rivers that formed the creeks, how the creeks and rivers were formed in and around Moreland. So it was a story of the...Merri Creek, Moonee Ponds Creek, and it included other creeks and so forth and told by Barak but a long while ago. Up in the mountain country, it was a great big lake and those creeks didn't flow and Port Phillip Bay wasn't there. So there's one story where the two little boys spill water and the water keeps gushing, but the other story is how the Woiwurung people were camped up where sort of the Upper Yarra Dam is now, and they were sick and tired of eating fish all the time, fish and eels... a couple of old men told the young fellows to dig a trench, and to dig trenches out to let all the water go away because they were sick and tired of eating fish and they'd heard about the Bunurong people down in the low country eating kangaroo and possum...so we created a dance, we actually even created a song, the song went along the lines of, 'sick and tired of eating fish, eating fish, eating fish, heard about people eating kangaroo, possum and emu stew'... and we did the dance to that whereby it started off with...the men were hunting with spears in the dance, looking for fish in the creeks and the women were also looking in the creeks and that for yabbies and things like that. And then the old man telling the boys to go and dig the trench and the water kept coming, filling up the trenches, and then one old man said 'no, you fellas are doing it wrong, you've got to go down there, Bunurong country, and dig the trenches up'. So you get the young fellows digging the trenches and other people still in their canoes looking for food...you dig the big trenches, all the water inundates, where forms Merri Creek, Yarra River, and all those creeks and so forth. And then the end of the story is our people are hunting, but instead of hunting and looking on the ground, they're, down, they're looking in front of them, and the women are actually looking in the trees with sugar bag, and all that sort of stuff (Ian Hunter Interview IH1).*

There is also an account of this creation story as documented by Aldo Massola (1968):

*According to Billi-billeri of the Kulin, Port Phillip Bay in Victoria was formed by the Yarra River which drained the vast waters previously locked in the mountains of the Woiwurong Kulin people.*

*Once the water of the Yarra was locked in the mountains. This great expanse of water was called Moorool, or Great Water. It was so large that the Woiwurong people had very little hunting ground, although the tribes to the south had excellent hunting grounds on the lovely flat which is now Port Phillip Bay. Mo-yarra, the head man of the Woiwurong, decided to free the country of the water and cut a channel through the hills in a southerly direction to Western Port. However, only a little water followed him, the path gradually closed up. Water again covered the land of the Woiwurong.*

*Sometime later, the headman of the tribe was Bar-wool. He remembered Mo-yarra's attempt to free the land and knew the Mo-yarra still lived on the swamps besides Western Port (Koowerup). Each winter he saw the hilltops covered with the feather-down which Mo-yarra plucked from the waterbirds sheltering on the swamps.*

*Bar-wool decided to drain the land. He cut a channel up the valley with his stone axe. But he was stopped by Baw-baw, the mountain. He decided to go northwards, but was stopped by Donna Buang and his brothers. Then he went westwards, and cut through the hills to Warr-an-dyte. There he met Yan-yan, another Woiwurong, who was busily engaged in cutting a channel for the Plenty River in order to drain Morang, the place where he lived. They joined forces, and the waters of Moorool and Morang became Moo-rool-bark, 'the place where the wide waters were'. They continued their work, and reached the Heidelberg-Templestowe Flats, or Warringal, Dingo-jump-up, and there they rested while the waters formed another Moorool.*

*Bar-wool and Yan-yan again set to work but this time they had to go much slower, because the ground was much harder, and they were using up too many stone axes. Between the Darebin and the Merri Creeks they cut a narrow, twisting track looking for softer ground. At last they reached Port Phillip. The waters of Moorool and Morang rushed out. The country of the Woiwurong was freed from water, but the flats of Port Phillip were inundated and Port Phillip Bay was formed.<sup>269</sup>*

One of the camping places used by the Woiwurong people the post-contact period was Langparn waterhole, north of Pascoe Vale along Merri Creek (Place No. 01). William Thomas also recorded camps of Aboriginal people along New Sydney Road in 1844 (Place No. 11):

*December [1843] ...On the 1st I was with the natives by the Merri Merri Creek, they divide into parties and most diverge from the settlers end in order to get skins for sale. I remain with those by the Creek. I commence this month with taking the names and noting the tribes of those who attend instruction, on the 3 [3rd] attend Divine Service 19, on the 4th it being reported to me that some farms on the New*

<sup>269</sup> Massola 1968 in Isaacs 1991 [1980]: 115-16.

*Sydney Road had been damaged by the blacks, I proceed to their encampment and charge (?) them not to enter enclosed grounds. The reports proved ill founded nothing had taken place further than their importunities. On the 5th I again visit the Encampments Nth and Sth of the Yarra and continue the same to those on the New Sydney Road to the 7th when I leave them they promising me not to enter any fenced grounds...*<sup>270</sup>

In the late 1840s, Aboriginal people camped at Thomas's residence in Moonee Ponds (Place No. 45):

*In 1847 William Thomas was resident at Moonee Ponds (Sands and McDougall 1847), where, in February 1848, Aboriginal people from the west and northwest of Melbourne camped.*<sup>271</sup>

A corroboree was held close to Merri Creek near Pentridge Prison (Place No. 19). Merri Creek was also an important source of plant and animal resources for Aboriginal people. This is evidenced in the 1934 discovery of a fresh water mussel midden found just inside the walls of Pentridge prison (Place No. 07). This midden contained mussel shells, small stone chippings, a few worked tools of flint, and local stones, quartz, quartzite, jasper, ironstone and indurated mudstone, with a few bone fragments (TerraCulture 2004: 33). Merri Creek also provided Aboriginal people with plant foods such as myrmong which was plentiful in spring and early summer, and aquatic resources such as eels, fish, mussels and waterfowl (Place No. 20). Smyth noted:

*There are numerous old Mirrn-yong heaps on the banks of the River Plenty, on the Darebin Creek, and the Merri Creek, near Melbourne.*<sup>272</sup>

The Merri Creek landscape provided Aboriginal people with water, timber and bark for shelters and implements, plants for food, medicinal and tool-making purposes, and stone for the manufacture of tools.<sup>273</sup> Merri Creek was a well-known travelling route in and out of Melbourne as indicated in accounts by Robinson and Thomas.<sup>274</sup>

The creeks between Sydney and Mount Macedon Road were also used as travelling routes by Aboriginal people (Place Nos. 14 and 15):

*...The Gouldbourne Black Bot/Bob (?) one of the 2 who was concerned (?) in the Merri Creek outrage was taken into custody but made his escape the same night. I followed the Blacks on their migratory moves after but little difficulty. On the 14th (in consequence of Bob's escape) separated the Gouldbourns from the Yarra and Western Port Blacks about 40 miles north of Melbourne by Major Boyd's at the*

<sup>270</sup> Thomas to Robinson 2/3/1844, VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 79.

<sup>271</sup> Thomas 1/3/1848 in VPRS 4410, Item 104 in Clark and Heydon 2004: 20.

<sup>272</sup> Smyth 1878 Vol. 1: 239.

<sup>273</sup> Clark and Heydon 2004: 10-11.

<sup>274</sup> Clark and Heydon 2004: 33.

*Deep (?) Creek, the Gouldbourns took to the ranges and the others towards Melbourne by the Creeks between Sydney and Mount Macedon Road...*<sup>275</sup>

Moonee Ponds Creek was an important place for Aboriginal people, for resource collection and also as a travelling route (Place No. 15). It was known that Moonee Ponds Creek was a "source of Murnong (*Microseris scapigera*) in the early days of settlement".<sup>276</sup> The creek was named after a Woiworung *ngurungaeta*, Mooney Mooney or Morundub.<sup>277</sup>

In the Moreland area there is also a possible site of a pre-contact Aboriginal burial ground (Place No. 16). The Coburg High School, bounded by Bell and Rodda Streets, was allegedly built on "...a one acre site in Henderson's Paddock, an old Aboriginal burial ground".<sup>278</sup>

## Government Influence

There are several Government institutions in the study area that are associated with Aboriginal people. From 1842 until the mid 1860s, Protector William Thomas lived on his property located at present day Bush Reserve.<sup>279</sup> As noted above, it is likely that Aboriginal people visited Thomas at this property. Thomas certainly used this property as a base from which to carry out his work with Aboriginal people in the Melbourne district.

Aboriginal people have had associations with Pentridge Prison (Place No. 08) from the time of its establishment in 1850 until its closure in 1997. In 1850 Pentridge Prison was established at Pentridge Village in response to overcrowding at Melbourne Gaol. From 1850 until 1851, Aboriginal Native Police were stationed as overseers at Pentridge, carrying out sentry duty and mounting guard over the prison work gangs. According to Fels:

*A detachment of native police arrived at Pentridge a good ten days before it was due to open [around November 25 1850], probably to construct their own quarters: the Commandant, Corporal Cowan, and Troopers Tallboy, Moonering, Muggins, Lankey, Charlie, Beerack and Andrew comprised the party. Pentridge remained one of the responsibilities of the Corps for 8 months until 21 August 1851, but the men themselves were rotated for irregular intervals, the longest period without relief being three months. The duties of the men were two-fold; sentry duty around the clock at the Stockade itself, relieved at three hour intervals, plus mounted, armed supervision of the road-gangs outside Pentridge in the Coburg area. In addition, when the alarm was sounded every man on or off duty was obliged to turn out.*<sup>280</sup>

In 1851 the Aboriginal troopers at Pentridge walked out, and by 21 July 1851 seven troopers had deserted, much to the embarrassment of Commander Henry E. P. Dana who explained that their

<sup>275</sup> Thomas to Robinson 8/12/1842, VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 74.

<sup>276</sup> Presland 1983: 8.

<sup>277</sup> Broome 1987: 40.

<sup>278</sup> Blake 1973: 202.

<sup>279</sup> Burchell 2004: 268-269.

<sup>280</sup> Fels 1988a: 206-07.

duties had been “more than their constitutions could bear as they are unable to stand the wet and cold nights and the constant duty required on a Penal Establishment”.<sup>281</sup> The remaining Native Police were restricted to guarding the road gangs and later that year they were replaced by the military.<sup>282</sup>

During their employment at the Prison, the Native Police were involved in at least two escape attempts, the first on 26 March 1851, and the other on 29 August 1851 which led to the shooting of an escapee.<sup>283</sup> One of the Native Police trooper was later an inmate of Pentridge Prison. On the 24 July 1852, Native Policeman, Trooper William, was arrested and found guilty of statutory rape, and was sentenced to five years on the roads. Assistant Protector Thomas and La Trobe believed that William was innocent and Thomas organised a petition for clemency which all the members of the jury aside from two who had left for the diggings signed. According to Fels, William was given privileged treatment at Pentridge and he served his sentence as a personal servant to the family in the superintendent’s house.<sup>284</sup>

Many Aboriginal men and women have been incarcerated at Pentridge Prison throughout its history. In the late 1960s and 1970s, Joe Narbaluk was imprisoned in Pentridge. He spent about 12 years altogether at this prison:

*It was theft that most Koories got pinched for... We got caught mainly for car thefts...a bit of cash on the side. For me [Pentridge] was a bit of fun. I was a bit of ratbag back then (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).*



Plate 8: Pentridge Prison

Joe Narbaluk recalls the death of several Aboriginal people at Pentridge while he was there:

*Had it a lot better than the blokes these days...you knew where you stood then. You lived by the rules or died by the rules... Three or four Koories did die while I was in there, and some died in the fire at Jika (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).*

Another Aboriginal prisoner at Pentridge was the artist, Ronald Bull, who is considered to be one of the most important Aboriginal artists of south-eastern Australia and whose work had a significant influence on later Aboriginal artists. During the 1960s (possibly 1964), Ronald Bull painted a

<sup>281</sup> Superintendent of Port Phillip District Inwards Registered Correspondence’, VPRS 19, Unit 144, 51/183 in Broome 1987: 100.

<sup>282</sup> Broome 1987: 100.

<sup>283</sup> Fels 1988a: 208-210.

<sup>284</sup> Fels 1988a: 218.

mural (Place No. 24) depicting an Aboriginal encampment while serving time at Pentridge Prison. Bull is known as a landscape artist, and the mural is significant in its depiction of an Aboriginal scene. In 1996, Allom Lovell & Associates prepared a conservation management plan of the buildings of Pentridge. They reported the following:

*Building 39b is a small, open, brick structure built on a concrete slab, containing a urinal and a wc. The Aboriginal flag has been painted on the south wall...Building 39b is of recent construction.*<sup>285</sup>

*Below the gallery at the east end of the corridor is an oil-painted mural by the Aboriginal artist and former prisoner Ronald Bull. The mural, painted in the early 1960s, depicts a camp scene with figures of hunters around a fire and a bark shelter.*<sup>286</sup>

Another connection between Aboriginal people and Pentridge Prison involved employment. Not only were the Native Police stationed there in the 1850s, but Aboriginal people were also employed at Pentridge Prison in the twentieth century. Some of the Aboriginal workers at Pentridge in 1990s include Reg Blow, Muddy Waters, Carmel Barry and Jacqui Stewart.

Reg Blow was employed by the Office of Corrections where he developed their Aboriginal Program. In 1995, Reg worked at the Carlton Corrections Centre and this involved visiting Pentridge as well as other prisons in Victoria. As part of his responsibilities Reg consulted with Aboriginal prisoners at Pentridge and provided reports on the behaviour and status of individual prisoners to Parole Boards.

A low security area at Pentridge known as the Metropolitan Reception Prison, detained prisoners who were yet to be sentenced. In her roles as an Aboriginal Prison Officer and later as Koori Liaison Officer, Jacqui Stewart visited Aboriginal prisoners in this area and the maximum security divisions two days a week for nearly four years. An important part of Jacqui's role as Koori Liaison Officer was raising the awareness of Prison Officers and other officials about culturally appropriate ways of dealing with Aboriginal prisoners:

*I was pretty headstrong... I'm here to show people there's difference when dealing with Aboriginal people... A lot of things, like eye contact. A young Aboriginal prisoner isn't going to make eye contact with you – he's going to keep his head down. In the mainstream that's considered offensive (Jacqui Stewart JS1).*

The Moreland City Council has also provided employment to Aboriginal people. The Council runs one year traineeships for Indigenous people. Russell Weston participated in the traineeship programme for 2005, working in the Recreation, Youth and Leisure section of Council:

*From January to about April I also got on-the-job work as a trainee operations manager at the Fawkner Leisure Centre - learning about how the centre operates,*

<sup>285</sup> Allom Lovell & Associates 1996: 140.

<sup>286</sup> Allom Lovell & Associates 1996: 200.

*about budgets, about people that visit the centre. I was able to sit in on the management team... It was good experience, I've done more – the council has given a lot for sport so we as an Aboriginal community now know more about Moreland Council (Russell Weston Interview RW1).*

In the early 1990s the Brunswick City Council began to actively acknowledge Aboriginal people and their culture. This was reflected in part by flying the Aboriginal flag from the Town Hall at significant times (Place No. 22). In 1991, the Brunswick City Council flew the Aboriginal flag from the Brunswick Town Hall for the first time:

*In 1991, the Aboriginal flag was flown (for the first time as far as can be established) from the Brunswick Town Hall from Monday 2 September 1991-Sunday 8 September 1991 in support of National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week.<sup>287</sup>*

The Brunswick City Council continues to mark days of importance to Indigenous people by flying the Aboriginal flag:

*In 1992 Brunswick Town Hall flew the Aboriginal flag on Wed 27 May 1992 to mark 25 years of citizenship since the Referendum in 1967. On 2 February 1993, the Brunswick Council flew the Aboriginal flag on their municipal buildings in recognition of International Year of the World's Indigenous People (1993) as proclaimed by the United Nations.<sup>288</sup>*

In 1994 the City of Moreland was created from the amalgamation of Brunswick and Coburg and the southern portion of Broadmeadows (Place No. 25). The Moreland City Council has publicly acknowledged its commitment to Indigenous people and culture and to furthering the cause of reconciliation. This commitment is highlighted in an address by Mayor Rod Higgins:

*Moreland is determined to build a local reconciliation movement that will lead to a broadly based understanding of our histories. We want to listen and to learn, to spend time telling our stories, to achieve, to achieve a more profound and lasting dialogue, and to take practical steps to redress historical injustices.<sup>289</sup>*

Two reconciliation policies and plans have been implemented by the Moreland City Council; the first Moreland reconciliation policy and action plan was created and implemented 1996-2001 and the second reconciliation policy and action plan was created and implemented 2002-

<sup>287</sup> Moreland Council Archives, File 230/7/2: Flying the Aboriginal flag by Brunswick City Council and Moreland City Council.

<sup>288</sup> Moreland Council Archives, File 230/7/2: Flying the Aboriginal flag by Brunswick City Council and Moreland City Council.

<sup>289</sup> Moreland Council Archives, File 110/195/1 Part 1: Speech by Mayor Rod Higgins, Civil Reception and Flag Raising Coburg Municipal Complex.

2004.<sup>290</sup> The Moreland City Council also has a Reconciliation Committee that is comprised of Council staff, Councillors and Ian Hunter as representative of the Wurundjeri people.

The Council's commitment to Aboriginal issues is demonstrated at annual celebrations for Aboriginal Reconciliation Week. An example of these celebrations was the reconciliation week in May 27 to 3 June, 2000 with the "Ngarragee Willam" camp out at CERES on the weekend of May 27-28. The purpose was to:

*...engage in discussion, addressing issues relevant to Wurundjeri culture, rights, place and identity. This activity will take place on two levels under a primary theme of the development of 'Wominji-Ka' (welcome to this our land).<sup>291</sup>*

## Work

Aboriginal employment experiences in the Moreland area have been varied. Pentridge Prison (Place No. 08) has been a significant place of employment with the earliest recorded form of employment in the study area. As detailed above the Native Police were guards at the stockade in its founding year. More recently Aboriginal people were employed there as liaison and welfare officers in relation to Aboriginal prisoners.

Similarly all other recorded instances of employment of Aboriginal people are roles that are intrinsic to being Aboriginal/ are specifically designed Aboriginal roles. Russell Weston was given the opportunity to work at the Moreland City Council as Indigenous trainee (Place No. 25). While Allan Thorpe's work at Moreland Hall (Place No. 26) as a Koori Access worker involves liaising between sufferers of drug and alcohol in the Aboriginal community and Moreland Hall to allow Aboriginal people access to the services they provided.

*When you grow up already connected and I grew up in the community. I make it accessible and it's about giving 'em a good experience in the service... Making 'em feel comfortable and worthy (Allan Thorpe Interview AT1).*

Significantly, another place with strong connections to health is the ACES nursing home (Place No. 27) is run by, and employs, Aboriginal people. The very nature and the reason for the establishment of ACES is the provision of culturally appropriate aged care for Aboriginal Elders which was lacking in mainstream services. Similarly the P-12 College of Koorie Education in Glenroy (former known as KODE, Place No. 23) sensitively deals with education of Aboriginal children and is benefited by the employment of Aboriginal teachers and support staff. The intimate understanding of culture and background that Aboriginal people, in the facilitative roles discussed, can provide for members of the Aboriginal community, emphasises the value and necessity of Aboriginal liaison workers in other institutions in the Moreland area, in particular the Moreland City Council:

<sup>290</sup> Moreland Council Archives, File 230/7/2: Flying the Aboriginal flag by Brunswick City Council and Moreland City Council.

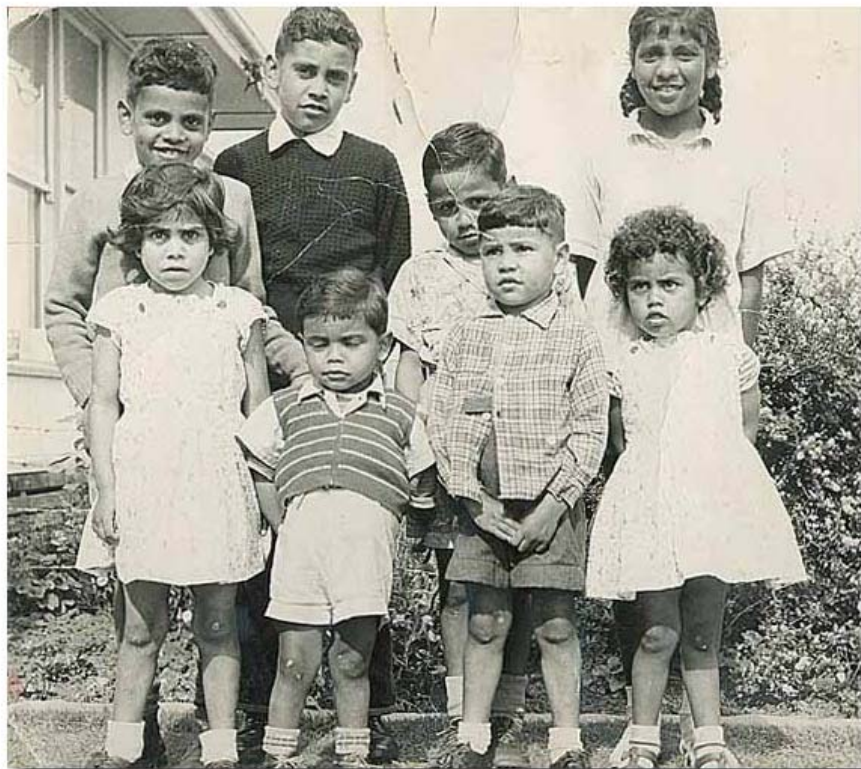
<sup>291</sup> Moreland Council Archives, File 030/020/19 Part 1: Reconciliation Week proposal from Ian Hunter and Moreland City Council to Ceres Committee of Management.

*Because of blackfellas being black, they want to be asking blackfellas (Russell Weston Interview RW1).*

## Living Places

A number of living places were recorded during this research. The living places range from camps recorded by Europeans in the early post contact period, residential housing in the last 50 years, and more institutional living places such as Pentridge Prison which once housed Aboriginal prisoners and the ACES nursing home established in 1991. The early camps (Place Nos. 01, 9, 11, 45, 48, 49) also relate to the Traditional/Cultural theme due to the probable ongoing use of the camp sites from pre-contact through to the post-contact period.

Principally Aboriginal people living in the Moreland area since the 1950s have lived in housing commission homes. Two family homes have been occupied by the Murray and Chessells families since they first moved into them in the 1950s and 1970s respectively (Place Nos. 43 and 37).



**Plate 9:** The Murray children at the Glenroy house (Front L-R: Margaret, Greg, Wayne, Bev. Back L-R: Gary Stephen, Brian, Diana; photo courtesy of Bev Murray).

The Murray family were likely to be the first family to settle in the Moreland area (post reserve period). In the early 1950s they were waiting for public housing at Camp Pell in Royal Park,

Parkville, a temporary camp made up of army tents used to house those waiting to be distributed to commission housing. In 1954 the family was placed in a new housing estate at Glenroy:

*About a little over 50 years, yeah in this house, and...when we first come out here I suppose we would be the second family, hey, that moved into this street, and the back was just all paddock but in no time houses started to go up everywhere (Nora Murray Interview NM1).*

*Yes this is one of the major public housing estates that were created after the war. And so you had the factories that were built in Broadmeadows and then all housing built around it for the workers, back then public housing were very different from what it is now (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

Nora Murray still lives in the house at Heather Court, Glenroy. Nora and her husband John Stewart Murray were well known in the Aboriginal community. Stewart worked with Nora's father Sir Doug Nicholls in establishing Aboriginal services for the community in the 1960s. Nora and Stewart raised their eight children in the small, three bedroom house:

*Bev Murray: And we were very poor (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

*Nora Murray: That's for sure (Nora Murray Interview NM1).*

*Bev Murray: Dad wouldn't take any welfare (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

*Nora Murray: No very independent (Nora Murray Interview NM1).*

*Bev Murray: So we knew what it was like to go hungry and have electricity cut off (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

The Murrays experienced forms of racism in the 1950s in Glenroy:

*Bev Murray: Oh yes there was some very good times, but also some cruel times, you know, there was difficult times. There was a terrible racism, you know... (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

*Nora Murray: It was only in the beginning that all that, wasn't it (Nora Murray Interview NM1)?*

*Bev Murray: It was usually from white Australians (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

*Nora Murray: Yes it was. They were the worst ones... Oh yes, had to put up with a lot of that and in the early days... Oh it was a very tough area, you know (Nora Murray Interview NM1).*

*Bev Murray: It was everybody, everybody. You had Maltese, Germans, every nationality... We got on better with the migrants (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

*Nora Murray: Yes we did, didn't we (Nora Murray Interview NM1)?*

*Bev Murray: ...It was about being respectful to whoever, you know, whoever you meet no matter who they are, you know, whether they're German or Maltese or Italian or Greek or whatever, you know (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

The experience of the Murrays was similar to that of another family in the Moreland area, the Chessells. The Chessells family moved from Fitzroy in 1974 into commission housing in Victoria Street in Brunswick:

*Our little part of the street is wonderful... We got exposure to Lebanese people and Greek people... Me old man couldn't have picked a better place to live (Ted Chessells Interview TC1).*

The Chessells house became an important place where people could gather. Jan Chessells had a reputation of opening her doors to anyone in the Aboriginal community who needed a bed or a meal:

*Right from '74 the house was always open. We were the only blackfellas in the area at the time... When we were growing up we even had people staying who just got off the boat. Migrants from Europe and Africa... Magnets, I think we are to nuts (Ted Chessells Interview TC1).*

Jan's son Ted Chessells can remember young Aboriginal men at Pentridge ringing to talk to Jan just so they could make a connection with another Aboriginal person:

*Young fellas goin' in and out of gaol... They'd ring up from prison. She'd get call sometimes two or three times a day. When they'd get out the first thing they do is come to our house and mum would make 'em a roast. Some people we didn't even know, but we got to know (Ted Chessells Interview TC1).*

The same sort of welcoming and nurturing environment existed at the Murray house in Glenroy. Stewart had difficulties getting work and income was low so the family grew vegetables and kept chickens for food. Despite the hardships they experienced the family often fostered additional Aboriginal children in need of a home:

*Nora Murray: No we always shared didn't we, no matter what we had (Nora Murray Interview NM1).*

*Bev Murray: That's one thing that dad taught us kids, sharing and caring, two principles (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

*Nora Murray: Yes, how true (Nora Murray Interview NM1).*

*Bev Murray: So those kids, you know they become a part of our family... It's cultural, it's a cultural thing, you welcome someone into your family then you know, into your home, then they become your family (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

The Murray family were very popular with the local community and it was common for people to visit the house. Terry Hood was fostered by the Murrays as boy and returned often to visit, later settling in the Glenroy /Hadfield area. Similarly people in the Aboriginal communities of neighbouring Fitzroy and other suburbs would often meet at the Chessells house in Brunswick for social gatherings:

*Sundays - everyone would head by and dinner's on – we had a barbie, and everyone always had a feed (Ted Chessells Interview TC1).*

The length of time that the Murray and Chessells families have remained in their homes is unusual in that the trend is for families to stay in housing commission houses for short periods of times and to move often:

*It's not usual for Koori families to move, you know, stay in the one area, because of economic circumstances, basically. We were lucky I suppose that dad had you know, as I said, mum and dad stayed together, they weren't drinkers, they didn't have those sort of issues so the family stayed, stayed as a single, you know as a family unit... But because of the pressures placed on [other families], and because of economic reasons they moved on (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

On the whole settlement of Aboriginal families in the Moreland area appears to have been quite transitory. This is true of areas such as Brunswick and Glenroy:

*A lot of families came and go (Allan Thorpe Interview AT1).*

People have lived in public housing in Brunswick for short periods of time. Joe Narbaluk lived for some time in a commission house in Barkley Street in the 1970s. He recalls some Aboriginal people living in housing in Shamrock Street and the Gronn Place Flats in Brunswick West (Place No. 36):

*A lot of Kooris been checked in at the Flats without support (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).*

Unlike the typical short 'stint', Lionel Norris lived at the Gronn Place Flats for eight years in the 1990s (Lionel Norris Interview LN1; Place No. 36). While he was there the only other Aboriginal people living there were the Chessells who were placed there temporarily in the 1990s while their Victoria Street home was being renovated (Ted Chessells Interview TC1).

Some of the families that have lived in the Glenroy/Hadfield area for short periods of time are the Edwards, Youngs, the Skerrys, the Hoods and the Hayes:

*Harry Hayes the boxer, he's Lionel Rose's cousin. He used to live in and out of Glenroy and Broadmeadows for years... Everyone's been up in Hilton Street, Daley Street, Widford Street, Heather Court, Granview West Street and East Street (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).*

There is limited public housing in the Moreland area:

*It's just the cost of housing and where the public housing is, and where public housing has either already established itself or is able to purchase (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

Some housing is located in Brunswick and Brunswick West however the continuing gentrification of the Brunswick area limits the possibility of more public housing being established in those areas. Similarly Bev Murray observes that suburbs the cost of real estate in suburbs such as Oak Park and Pascoe Vale will prevent more public houses being purchased in those areas (Bev Murray Interview BM1). According to Bev Murray most of Glenroy's public housing is occupied by long term residents:

*Because public housing here now, it's people like ma have done who have bought their house or still renting, are going to stay there till they die, and when that comes up, it's sold off or...or their kids move in so can't get very much here in Glenroy (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

In the neighbouring suburb of Broadmeadows many new Aboriginal residents have taken up public housing. The Enmaraleek Aboriginal Co-operative in Broadmeadows (Place No. 47) is a key local organisation for the Broadmeadows community:

*Yeah a lot of them I wouldn't know, interstate some of them, they don't have that connection to this state in a way, no it's not the same, is it, it would be different if they were from here, but it's not. I mean, Enmaraleek [Co-op] they've, I guess, through that organisation they've created like a little community (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

According to Joe Narbaluk housing and the proximity of a co-operative are important aspects of community identity:

*This is diverse Aboriginal community, totally different to any other community. All the odd people have been pushed out here... In this community it's people from every state. This community down here includes Brunswick, Glenroy mob... There is a large hidden or suppressed Aboriginal community from Carlton through to Hume. These people never really know where they fit and public housing and the co-op, that's structure for people who never really know where they fit (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).*

## Sport and Recreation

It became apparent during the community consultation program investigation that recreation was a prominent theme in reflecting Aboriginal people's associations with the Moreland LGA. Amongst the places classified as recreation places are pubs, places of celebration and sporting grounds. Most of the people consulted had strong attachments to the Moreland area through sporting

activities, particularly football. In the 1960s many of the boys from the Murray family played football at Glenroy High School (Place No. 23) and Gary Murray played for the Corpus Christi football team in the Glenroy area (Place No. 19). In the late 1970s the boys from the Chessells family began playing junior football for the East Brunswick Football Club at Fleming Park (Place No. 29). In both cases the Chessells and Murrays were the only Aboriginal children playing in those mainstream teams:

*Yes yep we enjoyed sport. And sport I guess was, you know, sport always helps to break down barriers, it doesn't matter where it is or what it is... (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

The Fitzroy Stars, an all-Aboriginal football club, played matches at several football grounds in the area. When the Brunswick City Football Club was experiencing difficulties they amalgamated with them and played out of their home ground, Dunstan Reserve, for a year in the early 1980s (Place No. 33). In 2001 the Broady Power football club, an Aboriginal-run club merged with the Brunswick Amateur Football Club to form Brunswick Power at Fleming Park, East Brunswick (Place No. 29). The club is an important social gathering place for people in the Moreland area:

*It is good social interaction that whole diverse groups of you know, vast range of Aboriginal community members get there so, so you treat it as a meeting place, that Brunswick Power's home this weekend, I'll go down and watch 'em because I know that so and so will be there...*

*Yeah, that's always the thing about the football club, Brunswick Power, you know everybody can come to Brunswick Power because it's a meeting place, so it's that tradition where a whole heap of black fellas you don't have to participate in any sport but you can have, but you can be there for the social environment and the social interaction, catching up with an Uncle or an Auntie, you might be isolated, you might be living in a couple of streets where you've got no Indigenous people, or you're not aware of your services out there and so all these people coming around the club and they're finding they're, who they are and their identity...and you get to know people so it becomes more of a useful resource for them...to ensure who they are and the services and what's available to them and what's not available, but yeah, it's just really important for people to have that spiritual connection to something. You know, anywhere they can call home, whether it's their house, a link, a link to land, where Indigenous people say home... (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).*

Fleming Park was also one of the three Melbourne football grounds to host the Annual Victorian Koori Football Netball Carnival in October, 2005. The importance of football and other sports to the Aboriginal community was evident from the record number of Aboriginal people participating (Troy Austen Interview TA1). Gary Hansen also believes that sport is very important to local Aboriginal people:

*Well course it is [important]... City of Moreland hosts free popular sports for these people in the city in the northern suburbs, people participate in basketball, athletics*

*and football, you know, and there's talk about...Ozkick (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).*

Aboriginal sporting clubs like Brunswick Power play an important role in Aboriginal people experiencing empowerment through sport. In particular the all-Koori Fitzroy Stars little athletics club (Place No. 28) and the Thornbury Basketball Club (Place No. 35) are providing Aboriginal children from the northern suburbs with the opportunity to be involved in sport, to interact with other Aboriginal children socially and gain satisfaction from sporting achievement. Aboriginal sporting associations in the Moreland area play a significant part in many Aboriginal people's lives in Melbourne:

*That's it, it's just like every community's proud of their football or any sport, you know, that the community has got ownership of it, and also it's good for players because they think that, you know they know their communities behind them they get people from the community supporting them, in good times and the bad times. And it's really just important to acknowledge that, you know they have got someone in the family with sporting prowess... (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).*

These clubs serve as gathering places now when there are less meeting places in the Melbourne area than before when many would congregate in Fitzroy in the 1950s to 1980s:

*Fitzroy was the meeting place (Allan Thorpe Interview AT1).*

*The main thing [in Fitzroy] it was about us as Aboriginal people being able to spend time together and talk and being Aboriginal people together, you know... and a lot of people, people come in here and I see they don't have that connection, that history, so it's just fragmenting our community (Bev Murray Interview BM1).*

*People don't know how to connect, but things like netball, football clubs, bring us together (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).*

The sporting clubs in Moreland also play an important role in the ongoing health and fitness of Aboriginal people. Brunswick Power provides the players and their families access to health and nutrition information in conjunction with the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service:

*...it's based on community input, I mean it's utilised by whole vast groups of people you know right across the board...now we've just entered into a partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal health service, that they will do all our screening, do all our medical checks, do all our physio...they'll come, come to the club on training nights, bring a doctor, a health worker, to check the players, give them a physical, you know we've got some some equipment in the club rooms that can be utilised for ...checking your heart stuff, vascular workout or something to make sure our players are, are fit to play, because a couple of years ago we lost*

*one of our players due to a heart attack while playing sport and that did rock the club... And then the nutritionist's program be coming in so we're hoping to have*

*cooking program with the nutrition...so give people alternatives to, to carbohydrates and then the diets, so if they're going to training give them, make them healthy on the inside... Oh it can be family, you know family members, mums, dads, whoever has to cook...Come and cook, and players will also will benefit from that because after training then they'll be having nutritionist's programs...nutritionists and everything, gives people other options when they go out shopping, which is nutritious which is garbage, keep that holistic approach. Yeah, physiotherapists will come down when they're needed... (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).*

The earliest recorded connection to sport in the area dates to 1909 when Joe Johnson, an Aboriginal football player, was made captain in a Grand Final match of the mainstream Brunswick Football Club (Place No. 30). The increasing importance placed on sporting clubs as gathering points demonstrates the social value attached to sporting places in the Moreland area.



**Plate 10:** Thornbury Basketball Club, Grand Final 2005, Coburg Basketball Stadium (Photo courtesy of John and Pam Brown)

## 4 Reflecting on Project Outcomes

Discussion

Managing the Heritage Places Recorded

Recommendations

Concluding Comments



## Discussion

This study acknowledges the breadth of Aboriginal heritage values and associations within the Moreland municipality. This acknowledgment is important because it recognises a long standing Indigenous connection with the area and celebrates the importance of the Moreland region to contemporary Aboriginal people. Prior to this investigation there was little sense of the range of these cultural associations and an absence of a cohesive Aboriginal history in the region that includes contemporary Aboriginal associations. In part this has been a function of the way Aboriginal cultural associations have been neglected in the historical record since European settlement. It became evident from the historical research that the written record documented only fleeting references to Aboriginal people associated with the Moreland area during the first 25 years of European settlement. This coupled with the fact that Aboriginal people appear to have left the region from around the 1850s up until the 1950s means that there has not been an obvious Aboriginal presence in the region for a significant period of its settlement. This has been compounded by an absence of written documentation of the Aboriginal place associations in the City of the Moreland over the last 55 years, since the post World War II settlement phase that marked the return of Aboriginal people to the region.

As was outlined in the introduction to this report, one of the principal aims of this project was to identify Aboriginal post-contact places and landscape associations in order to raise awareness of those places within the wider community and to better manage those places in the context of the Moreland City Council statutory framework. At a policy level the City of Moreland is committed to the long term protection, enhancement and promotion of Aboriginal heritage values.<sup>292</sup> This commitment arises out of recognition of the importance of cultural diversity and a need to engage with Aboriginal people with connections to the Moreland area. Through a process of Aboriginal community consultation and an investigation of historical sources this study has gone a long way in meeting the Council policy objective of providing greater recognition for Aboriginal post contact cultural places in the Moreland municipality.

## Managing the Heritage Places Recorded

As one of the aims of this study is to identify the best approach to managing and promoting the Aboriginal post contact places that have been identified, consideration has been given to the following:

- ❖ Significance of the places recorded
- ❖ The nature of the cultural associations identified and the likely effectiveness of using planning tools in their ongoing management.

Each of these points is elaborated further below.

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<sup>292</sup> The Mayor's Speech 2005 identifies the importance of community education and promotion of issues that matter to the indigenous community and commits Council to the protection of Aboriginal heritage places.

## Significance of Places Identified

An important step in the heritage management process is to assess the significance of a place. By establishing what it is about a place that is significant a framework can be put in place to properly manage those values. This significance assessment process has been guided by the Burra Charter (*The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance* 1999) and the Criteria for Register of the National Estate. The criteria against which these places were assessed is Criterion G – Social, cultural or spiritual associations. The Burra Charter outlines five different types of significance against which heritage places can be assessed:

- ❖ Social values
- ❖ Aesthetic values
- ❖ Historic values
- ❖ Scientific values
- ❖ Spiritual values<sup>293</sup>

The statements of significance that have been written for each place have considered this range of values. As this investigation has used historical sources and oral information in order to build up a picture of Aboriginal cultural associations with the Moreland area, the level of analysis has primarily focused on the social and historic values of these places. Each statement of significance has been written to capture what it is about the place that is important to those people connected to it and to assess the place according to important historical themes. Significance assessments are a reflection of the information that has been gathered to date about the values of a place. This means that the significance of a place may change in light of new information and/or in light of changing community attachments to the place. Just as the social values of a place are rarely static, so too is its significance which reflects the importance of a place at a particular point in time and based on a particular suite of information.

The significance assessments carried out for each place are included in the Place Data Forms (Appendix 5).

## Discussion of Cultural Values Assessment

The assessment of significance of places recorded for this study found that the dominant significance criteria to emerge related to the social and historic values of places. The assessment of historic significance related primarily to the early contact period when a number of important themes dominated. These included the themes of conflict, government administration of Aboriginal affairs and the effects of colonisation on where Aboriginal people lived and their long term displacement.

An important aspect of the significance assessment process involved the documentation of social value. Social values assessment focuses on the question of how people relate to their surroundings,

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<sup>293</sup> Burra Charter, Article 1.2.

particularly in relation to the memories and attachments of contemporary Aboriginal people.<sup>294</sup> The world around us is inscribed with memories, meanings and attachments that derive from personal and collective experience or from stories that have been handed down through generations. The way that we relate to these surroundings and the qualities that tie us to different places and landscapes can be expressed in many different ways. This expression of attachment between people and the natural and cultural environment constitutes the essence of social value.

Social value can be expressed in terms of an emotional connection with place – nostalgia, reminiscence, familiarity, affection and even sadness are among some of the sentiments that can guide our response to a place. For Aboriginal people a place or landscape may represent the site of custodial responsibility. It may constitute the site of a significant past event which present-day communities hold with respect (as marked, for example, by remembrance activities).

As “repositories of cultural memory”, places may have an individual or collective appeal.<sup>295</sup> Individuals and communities can derive a sense of identity and connectedness from common experience of places and landscapes. Group experience such as belonging to a local football club is one such example. The sense of belonging generated by place and the activities carried out there can provide the individual or community with a strong sense of cultural identity and social cohesion, qualities that are fundamental to identity and community wellbeing.<sup>296</sup>

Social value can also have something to do with “the form and character of the place”.<sup>297</sup> This may lie in the aesthetic appeal of a landscape, a dominant or unusual feature or the physical attributes of landscape such as a unique landmark or an intact structure that evokes memories of times past. It may also lie in the way a place manifests as a direct link with the past. Archaeological sites are an obvious example of this. Further, a place or landscape may take on social value for more functional reasons such as its repeated use over many years (such as a building for community activities). In this case the ongoing social interaction with or ritualistic use of a place can seal its importance within the community.

Not all social value is based on positive experiences or memories. The social value of a place such as a prison can have negative rather than positive connotations but the community may still regard it as an important place. Similarly, there is not always consensus about the social value of a place. Because people experience places and events differently, expressions of social value will vary and in some instances will be in direct conflict.<sup>298</sup>

Social value, like other heritage values, is a dynamic rather than static phenomenon. What is valued by this generation may change with future generations. The social value of a place may emerge from the recovery of a lost community attachment rediscovered in historical records (such as

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<sup>294</sup> Johnston, Chris 1994. *What is Social Value?* Technical Publications Series No.3, Australian Heritage Commission, Canberra.

<sup>295</sup> Kerr James S. 1996. *The Conservation Plan; A guide to the preparation of conservation plans for places of European cultural significance*. National trust of Australia (New South Wales), Sydney: 47.

<sup>296</sup> English, Anthony 2001. *The Sea and the Rock Gives Us a Feed: Mapping and Managing Gumbaingirr Wild Resource Use Places*. Cultural Heritage Division, NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service.

<sup>297</sup> Kerr 1996: 47.

<sup>298</sup> Johnston 1994: 15.

a fringe camp). Similarly, stories of the importance of a place can be handed down to new generations who can continue that connection without having lived at or even been to the place. In essence, social value is best understood as an expression of the way people express their connections with place and as such, as an expression of the meaning of that place to them.

Many of the places in the Moreland area have strong social value to contemporary Aboriginal people. Examples of these include the Chessells family home where people congregated, the ACES Nursing Home where elderly and sick Aboriginal people are cared for in a culturally appropriate environment, the former Hideaway Club which was an important meeting place for Aboriginal people in the early 1980s, KODE school which caters to the education of Aboriginal youth within a culture-friendly environment and Fleming Park where the Brunswick Power Football Club is based.

## Protection of Heritage Values

As noted above, the commitment of the Moreland City Council to manage Aboriginal heritage places and values is reflected in its policy framework. This framework reflects both Commonwealth and State policy objectives that highlight the need for identifying, understanding, conserving and protecting Aboriginal heritage values. Appendix 6 summarises the different Commonwealth and State heritage legislation and policies that apply to management and protection of Aboriginal heritage places.

At the State level, one of the objectives of planning in Victoria, as outlined in section 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, is to “conserve and enhance those buildings, areas or other places which are of scientific, aesthetic, architectural or historical interest, or otherwise of special cultural value”. Additionally, the State Planning Policy Framework, as recognised in Clause 15.11 of the Moreland Planning Scheme, requires responsible authorities to:

identify, conserve and protect places of natural or cultural value from inappropriate development. These include places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance, including historical and archaeological sites.

Clause 21.06-4 also commits the Council “to conserve and enhance buildings, places, archaeological sites and landscapes that contribute to Moreland’s rich cultural heritage”. One planning control that is central to the management of heritage places in the Moreland City Council area is the inclusion of places in the Moreland Planning Scheme through the Heritage and Built Form Overlay. Used in conjunction with the Particular Provisions of the Moreland Planning Scheme, the Heritage and Built Form Overlay identifies the types of use and development allowed in relation to listed places.<sup>299</sup> The Moreland City Council currently has over 2,000 places listed on its Heritage Overlay.

As discussed in the introduction to the report, one of the original aims of this study was to explore ways of integrating Aboriginal post contact places into the local planning framework with particular consideration to listing places on the Heritage Overlay. What has become apparent in the analysis

<sup>299</sup> [include list of studies that contributed to this?]

of these places and the heritage values attached to them, and through discussions with the Project Manager, is that this is not necessarily the most effective or appropriate way of acknowledging, managing and ultimately protecting these values.

Protecting Aboriginal post contact heritage places with local planning controls presents a number of practical challenges. In reflecting on the data that has been gathered for this study and the significance assessments carried out, it is clear that many of the cultural associations that date to the post-contact period reflect intangible social values that are of local significance only. In this respect they differ markedly from the cultural sites that relate to the pre-contact period or from places already integrated into the Moreland Heritage Overlay which tend to reflect key places within the local built environment or features with a tangible dimension such as an avenue of trees.

These differences will likely influence the way these places are managed in the future. Aboriginal sites recorded from the pre-contact period tend to have a physical manifestation that specifically and solely relates to Aboriginal activity. The tangible nature of pre-contact sites or buildings such as an historic dwelling also means that they can be easily identified in the planning context as they have a generally defined boundary. As such they lend themselves to a listing process in which the values of the site are largely visible and which are amenable to protective measures.

In contrast to the pre-contact archaeological sites documented in the Moreland municipality, this study has identified a range of places and landscape associations that do not necessarily have a tangible, cultural expression that is integral to their Aboriginal cultural value. For many of the places recorded what is important are the more intangible qualities that have resulted through association, use and attachment by Aboriginal people over time. In addition, the places are not exclusively Aboriginal places but rather locations of shared history or shared experience (for example a park where people played football, a pub where people congregated or a school where both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teenagers are students). In this respect what is significant about these places is not so much the physical fabric but the social and cultural value attributed to the place by those people associated with it.

The current legislative regimes that apply to Aboriginal places in Victoria does not readily afford protection to the types of cultural places and associations recorded in this investigation. The *State Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972* and the *Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* (amended 1987) provide protection for the tangible (archaeological, material culture) remains of Aboriginal activity (see Appendix 6 for a detailed description of the applicability of these Acts) While the Commonwealth Act does include reference to "Aboriginal place" this definition is constrained to those places that are "significant in accordance with Aboriginal tradition" thereby largely excluding many post contact place associations. The *State Heritage Act 1995* affords some protection to Aboriginal historic sites of significance but again, is restricted to tangible manifestations such as mission landscapes.

Within the context of a statutory framework the types of places documented in this study are not easily protected as the physical integrity of the place is not central to the cultural association. The inclusion of these places on the Municipal Heritage Overlay would likely create a false impression of the *meaning* of the cultural significance attributed to the place and would present practical

problems relating to the kind of physical development or use that could be pursued within a permit context.

There are however five places identified as having Aboriginal post contact cultural associations which are already listed on the Heritage Overlay for other heritage values, viz.:

- ❖ La Rose Farm (Place No. 7; Heritage Overlay No. HO103)
- ❖ Bridges Reserve (Place No. 34; Heritage Overlay No. HO31)
- ❖ Pentridge Prison (Place No. 08; Heritage Overlay No. HO47)
- ❖ Brunswick Town Hall (Place No. 22; Heritage Overlay No. HO153)
- ❖ Coburg Civic Centre (Place No. 25; Heritage Overlay No. HO204).

It is recommended that the information on Aboriginal heritage associations with these places be added to the existing Heritage Overlay data records as a way of acknowledging Aboriginal cultural heritage values at those places and better understanding the breadth of the rich cultural heritage at each place.

### ***Community Engagement - A Model for Managing Aboriginal Post Contact Places***

Management of Aboriginal cultural places and associations presents many challenges. Over the past three decades in Australia one of the biggest assumptions to have emerged in heritage practice is that “management” of cultural heritage must be driven by a legislative mandate that provides protection to a particular suite of sites. In other words, management strategies are required for those values that are protected by legislation. This study has demonstrated the weakness in this model which privileges protection of those sites with tangible and largely inherently “Aboriginal” qualities. This study has shown that there are many Aboriginal cultural associations with place that have social or historical value but which are not protected within the context of heritage legislation.

The key to appropriate management of those values and attachments therefore lies within a model of ongoing engagement with Aboriginal people. A large number of the places recorded for this study have social value for contemporary Aboriginal people who still use or hold important memories of the place. In addition, those place associations dating to the earlier post contact period (between 1835 and the 1850s) are of interest to the Wurundjeri people who are direct descendents of the Woiworong who occupied the Moreland area at contact with Europeans and who are documented in many of the early place associations in and around the municipality. The Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation and Cultural Heritage Council Inc. is the recognised community under Part IIA of the *Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* (see Appendix 6 for full description of the responsibilities and powers of the Council).

The proposed way forward for managing the Aboriginal post contact heritage places values identified in this study lies in part with the involvement of relevant Aboriginal people in future planning decisions that affect those places. For example, the many sporting venues in the Moreland municipality that have been and still are used by Aboriginal people are very important in fostering Aboriginal peoples’ sense of community and wellbeing. Future planning processes that might affect

the physical fabric at these places or which might alter the conditions of use should involve proper consultation processes with the Aboriginal groups associated with those reserves. To facilitate Council's ongoing engagement with relevant Aboriginal people, key contacts for each place have been identified and are listed on each place data form.

### ***Mapping of Aboriginal Heritage Values***

While the identification of Aboriginal post contact places associations in this study has added to the Moreland City Council's awareness of these types of cultural places, some thought needs to be given to the most effective way of triggering the attention of planning staff to the presence of these different associations in the longer term. One obvious solution is the inclusion of these places on the Aboriginal heritage sensitivity mapping that has been completed as part of the pre-contact Aboriginal heritage study (TerraCulture 2004). The creation of a map overlay that includes pre-contact Aboriginal sites, areas of archaeological sensitivity and Aboriginal post contact cultural places and associations would assist planners and other relevant Moreland City Council staff in identifying where Indigenous heritage interests may need to be accommodated in future planning and policy development decisions. Consideration should also be given to the development of a Planning Practice Note that guides strategic consideration of Aboriginal heritage values in the early stages of planning processes (see Recommendation 1 below).

### ***Raising Awareness of Aboriginal Post Contact Heritage Associations***

An important aspect of ongoing management of Aboriginal post contact heritage values in the City of Moreland lies in the acknowledgement and celebration of those values in the wider community. This can be achieved through dissemination of information on these types of associations in information products such as pamphlets, booklets and posters. At the outset of this study it was evident that there was only a limited amount of information readily available to the Moreland City Council and the wider community on Aboriginal peoples' connections with the municipality over the past 140 years since European settlement. While there is a relatively high awareness these days amongst the wider community of the fact that prior to white settlement Aboriginal people lived in Victoria, there is a distinct lack of readily accessible information on what happened to those people after settlement. In other words, dissemination of information from this project has the potential to assist residents of the Moreland municipality and indeed the wider Melbourne area with a better appreciation of the complexity of their *shared* history with Aboriginal people. At the same time, the distribution of information on contemporary Indigenous associations with the Moreland municipality will reinforce the value of those cultural associations with the Indigenous community while at the same time celebrating those associations and important cultural activities.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on an analysis of gaps in current research and in the identification of opportunities for improving the detection and management of Aboriginal heritage values in the Moreland municipality. In keeping with the objectives of the project, these recommendations highlight potential products for education of the Aboriginal and wider Moreland community in relation to Aboriginal history and cultural attachments in the region.

### Gap Identified (No. 1) – Aboriginal Heritage Protocol

There is currently no co-ordinated approach to ensuring that archaeological sites and other heritage places are identified and managed on an ongoing basis within the context of local planning decisions.

#### *Recommended Action:*

As a way of giving guidance to planners and developers dealing with Aboriginal heritage management issues, Council should explore the development of planning tools such as an Aboriginal Heritage Protocol that sets out the nature of the Aboriginal heritage estate in the Moreland municipality (both pre-contact and post-contact) and mechanisms for its consideration during planning decision-making.

### Gap Identified (No. 2) – Aboriginal Post Contact History Publication

There is currently no single publication that draws together the Aboriginal history, including the wide variety of cultural associations, within the City of Moreland.

#### *Recommended Action:*

Produce a document that is accessible to a wide audience including children. This document could take the form of a poster or pamphlet that picks up on a variety of themes. Two themes that stand out are places where Aboriginal people have lived and worked with a particular emphasis on the last 55 years; and the importance of sport to Aboriginal people in the Moreland area.

### Gap Identified (No. 3) – Incarceration of Aboriginal People at Pentridge Prison, Coburg

There is a long history of Aboriginal people being incarcerated at Pentridge prison however this has not been fully investigated. In particular, while it is asserted by Broome (1987: 300) that Aboriginal people would have been inmates at Pentridge in the early days, to date little primary documentation has been uncovered to confirm this.

#### *Recommended Action:*

- ❖ That further archival research investigation be carried out into Court and police holdings and other official government records to gauge the extent of Aboriginal incarcerations at Pentridge. In addition, further interviews with former inmates should be considered as a way of balancing the likely deficiencies of the historical record.
- ❖ Produce an Aboriginal history of Pentridge Prison which can inform the future management of the site and complement the existing management framework.<sup>300</sup>

### **Gap Identified (No. 4) – Importance of Public Housing to Aboriginal People in Moreland**

Aboriginal people living in the Moreland municipality over the past 55 years have predominantly relied upon public housing. This mode of living has therefore been central to the experience of many Aboriginal people with connection to the area.

#### ***Recommended Action:***

As a reflection of Aboriginal peoples' social and economic standing during the last 50 years of the twentieth century, it is recommended that more research be carried out into the patterns of occupation and the social history that informs that occupation. Gaps identified in the geographical distribution of Aboriginal people who might have used public housing include Glenroy, Hadfield, Pascoe Vale and Fawkner. As part of the methodology for such an investigation, it is recommended that further community consultation be undertaken to assess the full extent of Aboriginal occupation in these areas with relation to suburbs in the north including Broadmeadows. In addition, research could be carried out into housing records.

### **Gap Identified (No. 5) – Importance of Aboriginal Sporting Clubs in the Moreland Area**

This research has shown that sport in the Moreland area is extremely important to Aboriginal people. Three Aboriginal sporting clubs now operate in the area in addition to many miscellaneous sporting activities that are held in the municipality each year. The social and participatory aspects of these clubs and sporting activities draw many Aboriginal people from outside the Moreland area. As a consequence of this growth Moreland is now recognised within the wider Aboriginal community as a centre for Aboriginal sport. The role that these clubs (Fitzroy Stars Little Aths., Thornbury Basketball Club and Brunswick Power Football Club) play in the ongoing health of many children and adults in the Aboriginal community can not be underestimated.

On a broader level the Brunswick Power Football Club, in addition to encouraging adults to get involved in sport and exercise, educate their members about health and nutrition with the assistance of the Enmaraleek Co-operative in Broadmeadows. All three sporting clubs currently lack funding and formal transportation for their members who are often coming from the Cities of Hume, Darebin

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<sup>300</sup> Allom Lovell & Associates. 1996. Pentridge - Conservation Management Plan. Prepared for the Department Treasury & Finance and the City of Moreland.

and Whittlesea. According to Aboriginal people interviewed, the Moreland City Council is largely unaware of the importance of sport to Aboriginal people and as a consequence, does not take this into consideration in the recreation planning context.

***Recommended Action:***

There should be greater recognition and celebration of this important sporting and social phenomenon within the Moreland City Council through a process of acknowledgement and a program of Council assistance. This assistance may take the form of improved consultation over the state of sporting facilities, support in establishing possible funding sources and involvement of relevant groups in significant planning decisions that affect sporting facilities.

**Gap Identified (No. 6) – Aboriginal Heritage Values at Bush Reserve, Coburg**

There are suggestions in the historical literature of early Woiworung connections the current Bush Reserve (Council depot and nursery) where Assistant Protector of Aborigines William Thomas was resident in the early 1840s. It is possible that during his time there Aboriginal people visited him or received food and government rations there (see Place No. 12). Historical research to date has not conclusively established whether Aboriginal people had connections to the site. The original 20 acre depot has been disturbed by farming activities and some building activity however there is some possibility for undisturbed deposits relating to the pre-contact period and post-contact Aboriginal camping places at this site.

***Recommended Action:***

- ❖ It is recommended that further historical research be carried out into early Protectorate records in order to shed more light on Thomas's occupation and visits by Aboriginal people. These references would likely be found in the Thomas Papers held at the State Library of NSW and the State Library of Victoria and at the Public Records Office.
- ❖ Any future redevelopment of this land will need to be done in consultation with the Wurundjeri Council.

**Gap Identified (No.7) – Oral Information From Key Aboriginal people with Connection to Moreland**

There are several Aboriginal people who were identified during this research by other community members because of their longstanding associations with the Moreland area and, who, due to time constraints and logistical difficulties, could not be interviewed as part of this study

***Recommended Action:***

It is recommended that further interviews be carried out with:

- ❖ Jan Chessells, an Aboriginal community leader and resident in Brunswick for the past 30 years
- ❖ Alice Young, an Elder who likely has connections with the Moreland municipality

## Further Recommendations

- ❖ That Council adopt the MPCAHS and use its findings, in particular the place data sheets, to inform future decision-making.
- ❖ That Council provide cultural awareness training for staff in relation to liaising with Aboriginal community members and using the place data sheets as a resource.
- ❖ That Council incorporate Aboriginal values in the heritage values of places already included in the Heritage Overlay in the Moreland local planning scheme.
- ❖ That the study be distributed to the Aboriginal community and made available to the wider community.
- ❖ That the place data sheets be continually updated in light of new information.
- ❖ That Council continue to strengthen links with identified Aboriginal community members and places, and build relationships with the wider Aboriginal community in Moreland. The MPCAHS study and a list of key Aboriginal informants for places in the study will form a basis for identifying people and places.

## Concluding Comments

The research undertaken for this project has established a wider range of Aboriginal place associations across the City of Moreland. These places reflect the history of Aboriginal people from the earliest contact with Europeans in 1835 when John Batman likely traversed the present-day Moreland area, through to the present-day connections that Aboriginal people have with places across the municipality. This investigation has highlighted the importance of these place associations in telling the history of Aboriginal people. It has also provided Aboriginal people with contemporary connections to the Moreland area with an opportunity to speak about the places that are of importance to them. This information provides the context within which the City of Moreland can confidently move forward in further engaging with Aboriginal people about places in the municipality that are of importance to them, and in celebrating and protecting those places in the long term.

Key outcomes of this study include the following:

- A better understanding of the Aboriginal history in the Moreland region and its place within the wider social, cultural and political landscape;
- Documentation of Aboriginal cultural associations with place/landscape dating from the early post contact period up to the present;

- Identification of significant Aboriginal place associations in the Moreland municipality that can be better protected through heritage legislation and local planning mechanisms;
- Greater awareness within the local Aboriginal community of the commitment of the Moreland City Council to better understanding places that are important to them in the municipality
- Information on Aboriginal cultural and social history in the Moreland municipality that can be developed into educational products.
- Recommendations for further investigation and promotion of Aboriginal post contact heritage in the Moreland municipality.

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## Images

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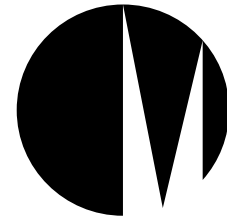
## Appendices



## Appendix 1 - Project Brief



## MORELAND MORELAND POST-CONTACT ABORIGINAL HERITAGE STUDY STAGE 1 - INFORMATION



Moreland City Council

# REQUEST FOR QUOTATION

## 1 OVERVIEW

### 1.1 Moreland Post Contact Aboriginal Heritage Study

The aim of the *Moreland Post-Contact Aboriginal Heritage Study* (MPCAHS) is to identify and conserve places of post-contact Aboriginal heritage in the City of Moreland. Such places will include evidence of Aboriginal community life co-existing with European settlement and represent key significance to the process of Aboriginal political resistance in the latter half of the twentieth century.

Importantly, the Wurundjeri are the traditional inhabitants of Moreland. However there are many other indigenous groups that have lived in Moreland over time and it is likely that Moreland contains post-contact heritage places representing a number of different indigenous groups.

The MPCAHS will augment the *Moreland Pre-Contact Aboriginal Heritage Study 2004*, which is currently being completed. Outcomes of the MPCAHS will include:

- An amendment to the Moreland Planning Scheme to ensure the statutory protection of any identified sites of post-contact significance.
- A public resource document to inform and assist the Moreland community in appreciating and managing local Aboriginal heritage values.
- Indigenous heritage management training for relevant Council officers, which will pick up on both pre-contact and post-contact heritage management issues.

### 1.2 Stage 1: Information (The Project)

The MPCAHS will involve three stages as outlined in the table below. This Request for Quotation relates to Stage 1: Information (**The Project**) and is to be funded by a grant from the Cultural Heritage Projects Program of the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage. Stage 2: Statutory Controls will be undertaken by Council. Stage 3: Implementation will be outsourced to a suitably qualified consultant, subject to Council's 2005/06 budget process.

Stage 1 - Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background research and scoping</li> <li>• Collection of oral histories</li> <li>• Fieldwork, internal inspections if necessary</li> <li>• Preparation of statements of significance</li> <li>• Written report and mapping</li> </ul>
Stage 2 - Statutory Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Moreland Aboriginal Heritage Study (pre-contact)</li> <li>• Recommendations for statutory protection</li> <li>• Final report</li> </ul>
Stage 3 - Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production of public resource document/education materials</li> <li>• Training of Moreland City Council staff</li> <li>• Implementation of Final Report</li> </ul>

## 2 BACKGROUND

Moreland City Council recognises that Aboriginal people are the original custodians of the land now known as the City of Moreland. The Wurundjeri people, part of the Woi wurrung language group, traditionally used the rich resources of the region and its many waterways. The 'Merri Merri' Creek, in particular, was a meeting place for the Woi wurrung and three other cultural language groups for the purposes of social contact, ceremonies, marriage, trade and for deciding issues of law.

European settlement severely impacted the significant spiritual, cultural and physical relationship that the Woi wurrung and their neighbouring groups had sustained with the land over thousands of years. However, a number of local Wurundjeri were able to sustain their community life in co-existence with European settlement. Records tell the story of an Aboriginal community living adjacent to the Merri Merri creek during the 1840s, only 5km from the then emerging city of Melbourne.

When State and later Commonwealth policies of 'Aboriginal Protection' saw the relocation of Victoria's Aboriginal communities to six designated stations or missions across the State, many of the Aborigines that inhabited what is now the City of Moreland, including the local Wurundjeri and also other tribes, found residence at Corranderk Station, Healesville. While this period in history represented the dispossession of traditional lands for the Wurundjeri, political activism remained strong.

Throughout the 1930s when legal restrictions on Aboriginal freedom of movement were relaxed, many Aboriginal community members relocated to the inner northern suburbs of Melbourne such as Fitzroy and Brunswick. An additional wave of migration occurred in the 1950s. As such, many places within these suburbs became the sites of Aboriginal political resistance and cultural expression, playing a key part in the story of the Aboriginal civil and political rights movement in Australia, which, to a large degree, was centred in Melbourne.

Today, the demographics of Moreland tell a story of Aboriginal dispossession, but also of resistance and survival.

Today, there are a number of pre-contact Aboriginal heritage sites in Moreland that have been recorded and registered. We now need to identify, record and register Aboriginal heritage places of post-contact significance, associated with the shaping of the relationship between Indigenous people and the state.

The declining health of Moreland's Indigenous Elders, combined with unprecedented development pressure in the municipality (particularly in the southern suburbs) contributes to a sense of urgency to identify and conserve Moreland's post-contact Aboriginal heritage values.

### 3 POLICY CONTEXT

The MPCAHS augments the *Moreland Pre-Contact Aboriginal Heritage Study 2004*, which is limited to the identification and conservation of pre-contact Aboriginal heritage places within the municipality.

The MPCAHS supports a number of Commonwealth, State and local policy objectives in identifying, understanding, conserving and protecting indigenous heritage.

At the State level, one of the objectives of planning in Victoria, as outlined in section 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* is to, "conserve and enhance those buildings, areas or other places which are of scientific, aesthetic, architectural or historical interest, or otherwise of special cultural value".

Additionally, the *State Planning Policy Framework* (Clause 15.11 of the Moreland Planning Scheme) requires responsible authorities to "identify, conserve and protect places of natural or cultural value from inappropriate development. These include places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance, including historical and archaeological sites."

At the local level, Moreland's *Municipal Strategic Statement* (Clause 21.06-4) makes a commitment to conserve and enhance places, archaeological sites and landscapes that contribute to the City's diverse social, cultural and physical character, and to respect heritage elements such as Aboriginal relics and artefacts. The *Council Plan 2003–2006* sets the agenda for Moreland's *Reconciliation Policy and Action Plan 2001-2004*, which commits Council to respecting indigenous sacred sites and special places, improving indigenous land management processes and engaging meaningfully with the indigenous community. The *Mayor's Speech 2004* identifies the importance of community education and promotion of issues that matter to the indigenous community and commits Council to the protection of Aboriginal heritage places.

### 4 PROJECT AIM

The aim of **The Project** is to:

- Undertake the more urgent and specialised tasks of the MPCAHS and provide a platform to complete the remaining work.
- Identify and document post-contact Aboriginal heritage places in Moreland.
- Provide information on the thematic history, location, significance and future use, conservation and management of post-contact Aboriginal heritage places.
- Enable places with post-contact Aboriginal heritage significance to be identified in the Moreland Planning Scheme and conserved during the land use and development process.

**The Project** will be undertaken in accordance with the ICOMOS Code on the Ethics of Co-existence in Conserving Significant Places, as documented in the publication *Conserving Significant Places* (**Attachment 1**).

## 5 PROJECT AREA

The project area is the entire City of Moreland, as shown on the accompanying map (**Attachment 2**).

## 6 PROJECT TASKS

The Consultant will undertake the following tasks:

### 6.1 Background Research and Scoping

Develop a comprehensive understanding of the diversity of the local indigenous community, including the processes, events and reasons for the diversity. This will involve developing a thematic history of indigenous heritage in Moreland, based on the framework of *Australian Historic Themes* prepared by the Australian Heritage Commission.

Prepare a comprehensive referenced review of the available literature, archival records and other sources relating to the study of the Aboriginal history and heritage of the region, with particular reference to:

- a) Identification of any known Aboriginal archaeological sites and heritage places with sourcing from the *Moreland Pre-Contact Aboriginal Heritage Study 2004*;
- b) Archaeological and/or anthropological reports, studies, research projects and investigations with relevance to the study area, and in consultation with the AAV identify other appropriate studies and sources from the surrounding region and adjacent municipalities;

- c) Historic records and accounts of early settlers that make reference to Aboriginal people and land use practices;
- d) Any available photographic records and tape recordings; and
- e) A review of relevant legal and planning issues, including but not limited to:
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protection Act 1984
  - Environment and Heritage Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 1) 2003
  - Australian Heritage Council Act 2003
  - Australian Heritage Council (Consequential & Transitional Provisions) Act 2003
  - Victorian Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972
  - Victorian Planning and Environment Act 1987
  - Victoria Planning Provisions (VPPs)
  - Moreland Planning Scheme

## **6.2 Collection of Oral Histories**

The collection of oral histories will involve project briefing and recording of oral histories from Aboriginal residents of the municipality, former residents and residents' descendents. Consultation will clarify:

- a) Location of individual places of post-contact Aboriginal heritage significance;
- b) Value of those places to the Aboriginal community;
- c) Issues relating to the management and future use of places; and
- d) Any future nomination of places to State/Commonwealth/National heritage registers.

## **6.3 Fieldwork**

The fieldwork component will allow for places identified through the background research and scoping to be assessed for their level of intactness. Components of this stage include:

- a) Development of fieldwork strategy;
- b) Field review of each nominated heritage place, with collaboration from relevant Aboriginal community representatives;
- c) Complete photographic records;
- d) Field assessment as to level of intactness; and
- e) Access to building interior where this is critical to assessment (to be negotiated with building owner and with Council assistance).

#### 6.4 Statements of Significance

Statements of significance will be prepared for each place of post-contact Aboriginal heritage significance, based on the principles and guidelines of the Burra Charter and the Australian Historic Themes Framework. With the consent of Aboriginal stakeholders, this process will incorporate:

- a) Additional historical research on individual places, where necessary;
- b) Collation of various research components into individual datasheets;
- c) Addition of photographic records to the datasheets;
- d) Input of data into an electronic database compatible with Council systems; and
- e) Separate maps in MapInfo format (or other format to be discussed with the Project Officer), showing:
  - Each place assessed, indicating through contrast places that are and are not significant.
  - Each place identified as having significance.
  - Any other information deemed relevant by the Consultant and the Project Officer.

#### 6.4 Reporting

The Final Report to Council will clearly articulate the Aboriginal post-contact heritage values in the municipality. The Final Report must, as a minimum, include:

- a) The process and methodology used;
- b) Documentation of all research and scoping;
- c) Detailed information on the collection of oral histories, including persons interviewed and transcripts of conversations;
- d) Detailed information on all places assessed, including any places identified as not having significance.
- e) Statements of significance for places identified as having significance;
- f) Separate maps showing:
  - Each place assessed, with clear distinction between places that are and are not significant. The map must contain information on the criteria used to determine significance.
  - Each place identified as being significant. The map must contain information on the criteria used to determine significance.
  - Any other information deemed relevant by the Consultant and the Project Officer.

- f) Recommendations/conclusions for the future use, management and conservation of identified heritage places.

## **7 DOCUMENTATION**

The Consultant will submit:

- 7.1 Two hard colour copies of the Draft Report, including maps: one copy bound and double sided, one copy un-bound and single sided.
- 7.2 Two electronic copies of the Draft Report, including any maps: one copy in Microsoft Word 2000 format, one copy in PDF format.
- 7.3 Two hard copies of the Final Report, including maps: one copy bound and double sided, one copy un-bound and single sided.
- 7.4 Two electronic copies of the Final Report, including maps: one copy in Microsoft Word 2000 format, one copy in PDF format.
- 7.5 Preparation and presentation of a Powerpoint Presentation at the completion of the Final Report. The consultant will present to Council officers and Councillors at a date to be determined by the Project Officer, which is likely to be within 2-8 weeks of completion of the project.

## **8 RESTRICTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS**

- 8.1 No person involved in the project shall damage or interfere with sites or places beyond the requirements of the survey.
- 8.2 The Consultant shall be fully responsible for the supervision of all sub-consultants or assistants engaged in connection with the work.
- 8.3 All necessary arrangements for access to private land are to be made in advance of the fieldwork by the Consultant, in consultation with the Project Officer. The Project Officer will provide the Consultant with a letter of introduction that explains to the landowner the nature and purpose of the study.
- 8.4 Council recognises that collaboration with both current and prior Aboriginal residents of the City of Moreland is central to the identification and planning for future use and management of any places identified. As such, extensive consultation with relevant Indigenous community members, as well as with statutory authorities such as the Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation and Cultural Heritage Council Inc. and Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV) is a key requirement of this project. Local Wurundjeri representatives relevant to Moreland include the Hunter family, who are key contacts in this regard.
- 8.5 In the case of Crown land parcels within the City of Moreland, it may be necessary to consult with any parties who hold Native Title interests in the area.
- 8.6 In the case of Crown land parcels within the City of Moreland, it may be necessary to consult with any parties who hold Native Title interests in the area.

## **9 PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND TIMING**

- 9.1 The Project Officer is Anita Doilibi, Strategic Planner, City of Moreland.
- 9.2 The Final Report and all additional documentation must be submitted to the Project Officer by April 2004. This timeline can only be amended with the consent of the Project Officer. Detailed timelines will be determined between the Project Officer and the successful consultant.
- 9.3 Monitoring of the project will be achieved through regular project meetings between the Consultancy, relevant Aboriginal community representatives and the Project Officer. Moreland City Council's Reconciliation Steering Committee may also participate in ongoing review and monitoring.

## **10 PARTICIPATION FROM COUNCIL**

Council will support the consultancy by:

- 11.1 10.1 Providing a detailed briefing and orientation to the consultancy team.
- 11.2 10.2 Ensuring availability of management and relevant staff, and making necessary appointments on behalf of the consultants.
- 10.3 Providing access to planning materials and other information as needed.
- 10.4 Providing access to existing heritage studies.
- 10.5 Providing advice and regular feedback in relation to specific issues and the progress of the Consultancy on a whole.

## **11 BUDGET**

The consultancy budget represents funding of \$31,800 (including GST) from the Cultural Heritage Projects Program of the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage.

## **12 SUBMISSIONS**

Submissions must be clearly marked "PCAH Study" and received in the Tender Box, Moreland Civic Centre, 90 Bell Street, Coburg Vic 3058 by **4pm on Monday 20 December 2004**. Submissions must specify:

- 13.1 12.1 Details of your firm's relevant skills and experience;
- 13.2 12.2 Details of the personnel who will actually carry out the assignment, including their roles for this project and their previous experience;
- 12.3 Proposed methodology with appropriate timelines; and
- 12.4 Fee schedule, including any expenses to be charged.

### 13 SELECTION CRITERIA

The project team will include the following expertise:

- 13.3 13.1 Direct experience in the design, implementation and project management of cultural heritage assessments, particularly Aboriginal post-contact heritage;
- 13.2 Effective stakeholder consultative capabilities, including direct experience in consultation and liaison with Aboriginal people on issues associated with the management and conservation of heritage places;
- 13.3 Thorough understanding of the Victoria Planning Provisions and the tools available in the Planning Scheme for conserving Aboriginal post-contact heritage; and
- 13.4 Capacity to work effectively with Council.

### 14 ADVICE TO TENDERERS

For inquiries regarding this project please contact:

Project Manager	Project Officer
Rachel Haynes	(Unavailable from 2–14 December 2004)
Team Leader Strategic Planning	Anita Doilibi
Telephone (03) 9240 1188	Strategic Planner
Fax (03) 9240 1186	Telephone (03) 9240 1260
<a href="mailto:rhaynes@moreland.vic.gov.au">rhaynes@moreland.vic.gov.au</a>	Fax (03) 9240 1186
	<a href="mailto:adoilibi@moreland.vic.gov.au">adoilibi@moreland.vic.gov.au</a>

Council will not pay any costs associated with the preparation of submissions.

Council will not be obliged to accept any quotation.

Council will require the successful consultants to assign any intellectual property rights arising out of this assignment to Council.

## ATTACHMENT 1

# ICOMOS Code on the Ethics of Co-existence

# Code on the Ethics of Co-existence in Conserving Significant Places

(Adopted by Australia ICOMOS in 1998)

## Preamble

This Code has been drafted in the context of several national and international agreements and statutes, such as:

- the *Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (the Burra Charter) 1981*, last revised 1988;
- the *Code of Ethics of the Australian Archaeological Association*, 1991;
- the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Australia);
- the *Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975*;
- the *UNESCO Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Co-operation 1996*; and
- the *UN Decade for the Cultural Development (1988-1997)*;

## Assumptions

The Code assumes that:

- (i) the healthy management of cultural difference is the responsibility of society as a whole;
- (ii) in a pluralist society, value differences exist and contain the potential for conflict; and
- (iii) ethical practice is necessary for the just and effective management of places of diverse cultural significance.

## Definitions

### Article 1.

For the purpose of this Code:

- 1.1 *values* means those beliefs which have significance for a cultural group — often including, but not limited to, political, religious and spiritual, and moral beliefs;

- 1.2 *cultural group* means a group of people holding common values, expressed through the sharing of beliefs, traditions, customs and/or practice;
- 1.3 the *national estate* means 'those places in the Australian environment which have aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or other special value for the present community and for future generations';<sup>1</sup>
- 1.4 *cultural significance* means 'aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations';<sup>2</sup>
- 1.5 *conflict* means a relationship in which 'two or more parties perceive their values or needs to be incompatible';<sup>3</sup>
- 1.6 *dispute* means a relationship in which two or more parties perceive their goals, interests or needs to be incompatible and in which each seeks to maximise fulfilment of its own goals, interests or needs; and
- 1.7 *conflict resolution*, as a generic term, includes the management of conflict through both mediated dispute settlement and the acceptance of value co-existence.

## Ethical Principles

### Article 2.

The co-existence of diverse cultures requires acknowledgment of the values of each group.

- 1 based on the *Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975*, section 4
- 2 Australia ICOMOS, *Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (the Burra Charter)*, Article 1.2
- 3 G Tillett, *Resolving Conflict*, 1991

**Article 3.**

Conserving the national estate requires acknowledgment of, and sensitivity to, the values of all associated cultural groups.

**Article 4.**

Each cultural group has a primary right to identify places of cultural significance to it and this right may include the withholding of certain information.

**Article 5.**

Each cultural group has the right of access to pertinent information and to any decision-making process affecting places it has identified as significant.

**Article 6.**

In identifying places of significance to it, a cultural group assumes some custodial responsibility towards those places.

**Article 7.**

In the case of indigenous peoples, and other peoples, the right to identify significant places may extend to the right to their full custodianship.

**Ethical Practice**

In assessing or managing a place of significance to different cultural groups, the practitioner shall:

**Article 8.**

adopt a co-ordinated multi-disciplinary approach to ensure an open attitude to cultural diversity and the availability of all necessary professional skills;

**Article 9.**

identify and acknowledge each associated cultural group and its values, while accepting the cultural right of groups to withhold certain information;

**Article 10.**

enable each cultural group to gain access to pertinent information and facilitate the exchange of information among groups;

**Article 11.**

enable each cultural group to gain access to, and inclusion and participation in, the decision-making processes which may affect the place;

**Article 12.**

apply a decision-making process which is appropriate to the principles of this Code;

This will include:

- co-responsibility among cultural groups for the assessment and management of the cultural significance of the place;
- accepted dispute settlement practices at each stage at which they are required; and
- adequate time to confer with all parties, including the least outspoken, and may require the amendment of existing procedures in conservation practice.

**Article 13.**

whilst seeking to identify issues and associated cultural groups at the beginning of the process, accept new issues and groups if they emerge and accommodate evolving positions and values;

**Article 14.**

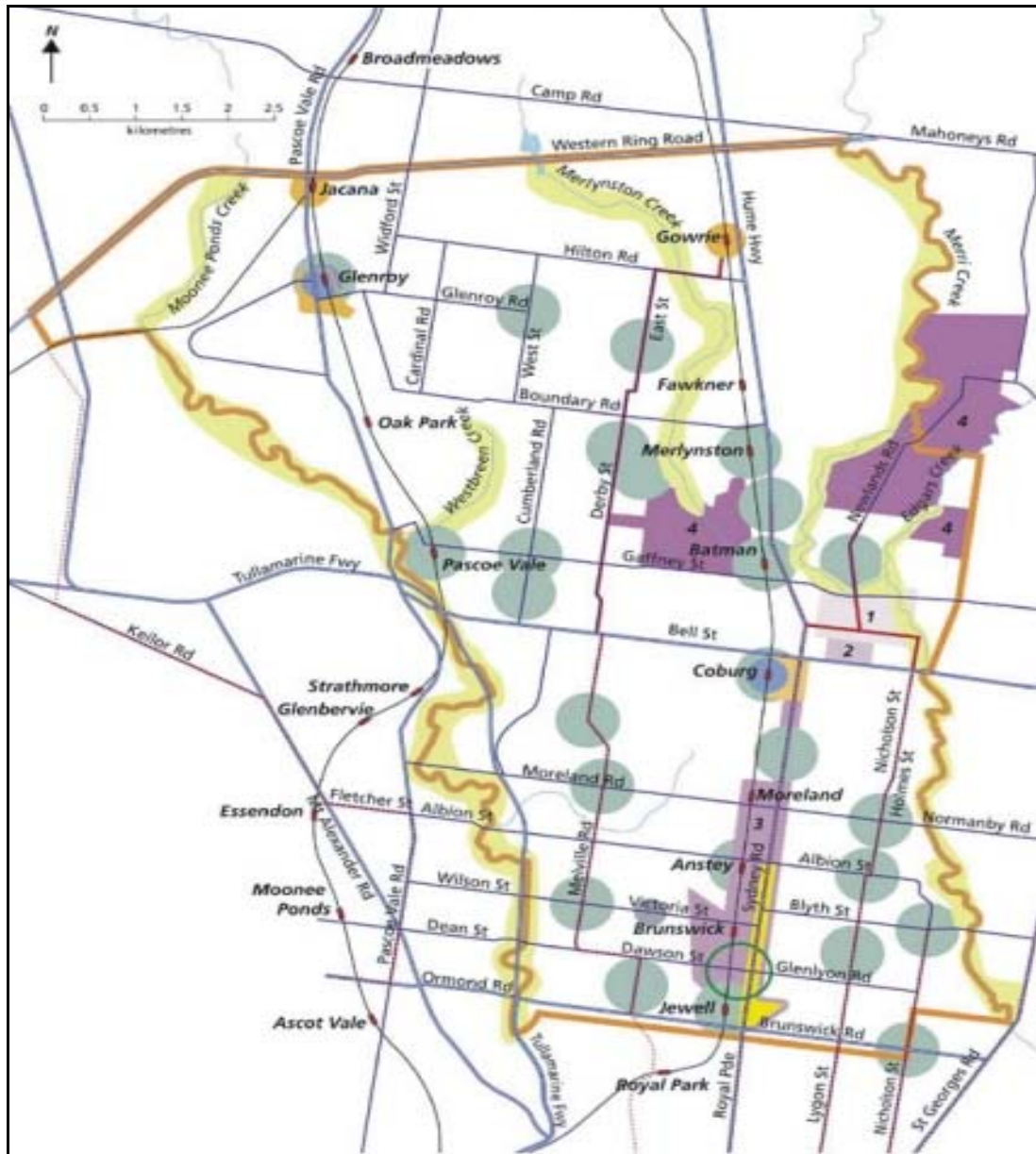
where appropriate, seek co-existence of differing perceptions of cultural significance rather than resolution; and

**Article 15.**

accept compensation as a possible element in managing irreconcilable cultural difference.

ATTACHMENT 2

Location Map City of Moreland





## Appendix 2 – Project Flier



# Moreland Post Contact Aboriginal Heritage Study - Stage 1

Community Newsletter Number 1 - July 2005

## What is the Moreland Aboriginal Heritage Study?

The Moreland Post-Contact Aboriginal Heritage Study aims to develop a better understanding of the Aboriginal post-contact history and landscape associations in the city of Moreland through historical research and collection of oral history from Aboriginal people with connections to the Moreland municipality. The study will record a wide range of heritage values of historic and contemporary importance to Aboriginal people. It aims to ensure that those values and places of significance to Aboriginal people will be recognized and where possible protected in local planning processes.

The study is being undertaken by Goulding Heritage Consulting Pty Ltd for the Moreland City Council. The project has been funded under the Cultural Heritage Projects Program from the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage and is being managed by Anita Doilibi (Strategic Planner, Moreland City Council).

## What the project involves

The main tasks and outcomes of the study include:

- writing an overview history of Aboriginal people in the area of the Moreland Local Government area
- producing a bibliography of historical sources that relate to Aboriginal history in the area
- finding references to places in the documentary historical sources that reflect this history
- collecting oral history from Aboriginal people with memories and associations to the area
- identifying, recording and assessing places of significance

To meet these tasks we will be carrying out oral information collection, historical research and field recording. Aboriginal people will be employed to assist with these processes.

## What will happen to information recorded?

The data collected will provide a better understanding of the unique nature of Aboriginal heritage values in the Moreland Local Government area and will identify places of significance. The final report will make recommendations for future management of those heritage values.

## How you can be involved

If you would like to know more about the project or if you have any information on Aboriginal places in the City of Moreland, please feel free to contact heritage consultants Meg Goulding or Mary Menis on the numbers below.

Goulding Heritage Consulting Pty Ltd

• 322 Park Street  
North Carlton 3054  
P/f 9380 6159 m 0409 145 489  
megan@gouldingheritage.com.au



## Appendix 3 – Record of Field Work



Date	With	Organisation/ Location	Type
29 April 2005	Ian Hunter	Wurundjeri Tribe Land and Compensation Cultural Heritage Council Inc.	Meeting
04 May 2005	Moreland Reconciliation Committee	Moreland City Council	Meeting
21 June 2005	Barney Stephens, Principal	Koorie Open Door Education (KODE) school, Glenroy campus	Phonecall
12 July 2005	Barney Stephens, Principal	Koorie Open Door Education (KODE) school, Glenroy campus	Interview, notes taken
10 August 2005	Jenne Perlstein	Moreland (Wills) ANTaR group	Phonecall
18 August 2005	Laurie Burchill, President	Coburg Historical Society Inc.	Phonecall
23 August 2005	Laurie Burchill, President	Coburg Historical Society Inc.	Meeting, notes taken
23 August 2005	Sharon Huebner, Oral Archivist	Koorie Heritage Trust	Phonecall

22 September 2005	Fay Carter	ACES	Interview, notes taken
21 October 2005	Gary Hansen	Brunswick Power Football Club	Interview, notes taken
8 November 2005	Daryl Naylor	3KND, Koori radio station	Phonecall
23 November 2005	Reg Blow	Preston	Interview, notes taken
24 November 2005	Daryl Naylor and Shirley Firebrace	3KND, Koorie radio station	Radio programme discussion about project
28 November 2005	Fay Carter	ACES	Taped interview
30 January 2006	Allan Thorpe	Moreland Hall	Interview, notes taken
30 January 2006	Jacqui Stewart	Parkville	Interview, notes taken
8 February 2006	Joe Narbaluk and Shannon Hood	Enmaraleek Co- operative	Interview, notes taken
14 February 2006	Russell Weston	Moreland City Council; Fawkner Leisure Centre	Interview, notes taken
14 February 2006	Troy Austin	Melbourne	Interview, notes taken
15 February 2006	Gary 'Gilla' McGuiness	3CR, Community Radio station	Phonecall
16 February 2006	Ted Chessells	Brunswick	Interview, notes taken
16 February 2006	Gary Hansen	Brunswick Power Football Club	Taped interview

20 February 2006	Alf Bamblett	Fitzroy	Interview, notes taken
21 February 2006	Lionel Norris	Heidelberg West	Interview, notes taken
22 February 2006	Kevin Coombs	Pascoe Vale	Interview, notes taken
09 March 2006	Pam Brown	Thornbury Basketball Club	Phonecall, notes taken
11 March 2006	Bev Murray and Nora Murray	Glenroy	Taped interview
19 April 2006	Ian Hunter	CERES Environmental Park	Taped interview



## Appendix 4 – Information release form and payment form



## INFORMATION AGREEMENT

Name of Project/purpose: **Moreland Aboriginal Post Contact Study Project.**

This project is a study by the Moreland City Council that aims to collect oral testimony and contemporary values from a range of Aboriginal people associated with the Moreland Local Government Area.

**NO information will be used for any purpose other than that agreed on by the knowledge holder.**

- ***Custodianship*** of the information collected ***remains with the informant***, who agrees to allow specific extracts for publishing in a report and publication for this project. These extracts will be determined in consultation with the custodian.

I have given permission to: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of the Moreland City Council to record a:

- ☐ Taped interview with me:
- ☐ Video interview with me:
- ☐ Or notes from our meeting:

Full Name:

Address:

***I agree to the following:***

1. The information that I give during the interview will be typed up and that part of this transcript can be used by the Council in reports and in a possible publication.
2. After the transcripts have been completed, the original interview tape will be returned to me along with a copy of the transcript. The Moreland City Council will also keep a copy of the transcript.
3. I will be given a chance to change anything that is not correct in the transcript.
4. I would like to nominate the following person to assist on my behalf with any further enquires regarding the use of my information should I not be able to:

Name:

Contact Details:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Moreland Aboriginal Post Contact Project

### Oral History Interview - Elder's/Knowledge Holder's Payment Sheet

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**Elder's/Knowledge Holder's Name:**

**Address:**

**Date of Interview(s):**

I have been paid \$50, as an Elder consultant/ community member, by Meg Goulding/ Mary Menis on behalf of the Moreland City Council, for an oral information interview.

**Signed:**

**Date:**



## Appendix 5 – Place Data Forms



## Indigenous Place 01

# Lamparn watering hole camping place

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### History/ Association

One of the places where Woiworung people camped was Langparn waterhole which was situated north of Pascoe Vale along the Merri Creek (Broome 1987: 25).

### Date/s

Contact/Post-contact

### Location – Primary Study Area

North of Pascoe Vale, along the Merri Creek

### Source/s

#### Written Sources

Broome 1987: 25

### Theme/s

1.0 Traditional/Cultural Places

4.0 Living Places

### Significance Assessment

Langparn waterhole is of heritage interest for its social value because of its use by the Woiworung people in the early contact period.

## Indigenous Place 02

# Pentridge Village Meeting

---

### History/ Association

At Pentridge in the 1850s, Assistant Protector William Thomas witnessed six Woiworung Aboriginal people with lyre-bird feathers attending an election meeting (Broome 1987: 32).

### Date/s

1850s

### Location – Primary Study Area

Pentridge Village (current day Coburg area)

### Source/s

#### Written Sources

Broome 1987: 32

### Theme/s

2.0 Contact Places

### Significance Assessment

The meeting of Aboriginal people at Pentridge Village is of heritage interest for its social value because it is a documented example of early contact between Aboriginal people and Europeans.

## Indigenous Place 03

### Attack on Mrs Smith, Sydney Road

#### History/ Association

A series of violent crimes, some involving Aboriginal people, occurred in the vicinity of Sydney Road at Pentridge Village in the 1840s and 1850s. One such incident was an attack on a European woman, Mrs Smith, by three Aboriginal men (Broome 1987: 46). This assault took place on Sydney Road in July 1843 where Mrs Smith of Merri Creek was seized, dragged into the bush, threatened with tomahawks and had her dress pulled up. Two Aboriginal women attempted to stop the assault, but the men left her alone only when the screams of Mrs Smith's attracted a horseman from Sydney Road (Broome 1987: 46).

#### Date/s

July 1843

#### Location – Primary Study Area

Sydney Road, Pentridge Village (current day Coburg area)

#### Source/s

##### Written Sources

Broome 1987: 45, 46-7

Brunswick Community History Group and Coburg Community Historical Society: Historic Sydney Road brochure

#### Theme/s

3.0 Conflict

#### Significance Assessment

The site of the attack of Mrs Smith by three Aboriginal men in 1843 on Sydney Road at Pentridge Village is of heritage interest for its social value because it is a documented example of early violent contact between Aboriginal people and Europeans.

## Indigenous Place 04

# Attack on William Moore's Farm, near The Avenue

---

### History/ Association

A series of violent incidents, some involving Aboriginal people, occurred at Pentridge Village in the 1840s and 1850s. Around 1848, Billy Hamilton and some other Taungurong Aboriginal people attacked and robbed William Moore at his farm near present-day The Avenue (Broome 1987: 47).

### Date/s

c. 1848

### Location – Primary Study Area

William Moore's farm near present-day The Avenue, Pentridge Village (current day Coburg)

### Source/s

#### Written Sources

Broome 1987: 45, 46-7

### Theme/s

3.0 Conflict

### Significance Assessment

William Moore's farm is of heritage interest for its social value because it is a documented example of early conflict between Aboriginal people and Europeans.

# Indigenous Place 05

## Theft from House, Moonee Ponds Creek

---

### History/ Association

In 1844, some Aboriginal people stole from a house by the Moonee Ponds:

"May...On Thursday the 2nd of May I returned to Melbourne and the same evening visited the two Encampments Nth and Est of the Settlement, also a few families on the Sth who remained but till the 8th instant...during my absence some Blacks who had been kindly treated in a house by the Moonee Ponds decamped with a small box (?); on the evening the proprietor missed from his man mantelpiece a Tortoiseshell Box containing a family likeness (?) mounted in gold, much concerned for his loss and suspecting the Blacks must have taken it he came and reported the case, my son early the following morning went to the Encampment and recover'd it, after threatening the Blacks to inform me all about it when I returned..." (Thomas to Robinson 1/6/1844 in VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 80).

### Date/s

1844

### Location – Primary Study Area

Moonee Ponds Creek

### Source/s

#### Written Sources

Thomas to Robinson 1/6/1844 in VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 80

### Theme/s

3.0 Conflict

### Significance Assessment

The house by the Moonee Ponds is of heritage interest for its social value because it is a documented example of early conflict between Aboriginal people and Europeans.

## Indigenous Place 06

### 'Squatter's Lookout', Snowball's Tower

---

#### History/ Association

A series of violent incidents, some involving Aboriginal people, occurred at Pentridge Village in the 1840s and 1850s. The spate of criminal incidents led European farmer, W. Snowball to build a tower on his barn which he allegedly used to "spy approaching Aborigines" (Weekly Times, 6 July 1918 in Broome 1987: 47). This tower, known as 'Squatter's Lookout', was believed to have been built in the 1840s, possibly during the time when there were no police stationed at Pentridge Village and there were issues with theft and assault in the area (Interviews with George Landells, 20 Feb. 1986 in Broome 1987: 46-7). The lookout was situated at present-day Balloan Street (Weekly Times, 6 July 1918 in Broome 1987: 47).

#### Date/s

1840s

#### Location – Primary Study Area

Present-day Balloan Street, Pentridge Village (current day Coburg)

#### Source/s

##### Written Sources

Weekly Times, 6 July 1918  
Broome 1987: 46, 47



'Squatter's Lookout' at present-day Balloan Street. Folklore claims it was built in the 1840s to spy approaching Aborigines (Weekly Times, 6 July 1918).

**Plate 11:** Snowballs Tower (Weekly Times, 6 July 1918 – photograph in Broome 1987: 47)

## Theme/s

3.0 Conflict

### Significance Assessment

'Squatters lookout' at Pentridge Village is of local significance for its social value because it is a documented example of early conflict between Aboriginal people and Europeans. The lookout, constructed in order to detect Aboriginal people approaching the property, is a rare example of a structure built for this kind of defence.

## Indigenous Place 07

### La Rose Farm, Moonee Ponds

#### History/ Association

It was reported to Thomas that Aboriginal people had set fire to huts at La Rose Farm:

"February...On the 12th you [Robinson] visit the Encampment, in the afternoon Yanki Yanker (??) who was insolent to the Chief Constable on the 10th instant is taken, the Blacks are in great fear and separate forming several Encampments, Western Port Sth of the Yarra, the Loddon and Campaspie Blacks after sun set shift to a little water in a gully Sth of Brunswick, the observation of one of the Loddon Blacks was touching (??) he said 'poor Blackfellows White men take Blackfellows country and frighten him...On the 13th the Blacks form 7 Encampments which kept me riding the whole of the day dissipating their fears and cautioning them not to embark upon fenced grounds; On the 14th it is reported to me that the Blacks had set fire to some Huts at La Rose Farm Moonee Ponds, I hasten to the spot find the report false 2 Huts were on fire but was occasioned by the carelessness of the men, the Loddon Blacks were Encamped near there, I got them to move which they do and at night Encamp near Paterville. On the 15th the Loddon, Campaspie and Goulburn Blacks leave the precincts of Melbourne. On the 16th the Barrabools, on the 17th the Western Port, on the 18th most of the remaining leave, there being now but 2 Encampments one Nth of Melbourne consisting of Mt Macedon and Blacks from the Western (?) about 85 in number, the other by the Merree Creek near my Quarters about 32..." (Thomas to Robinson 8/3/1843, VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 79).



Plate 12: La Rose Farm, Moonee Ponds

The house at La Rose farm was called Wentworth House:

"[Wentworth House, 22 Le Cateau Street] was built for Dr. Farquhar and Agnes McCrae in 1842-3, as part of their 270 acres 'La Rose' farm. Coiler Robertson rented the farm from 1844 until he purchased it in 1852. It passed to James Robertson, a brewer, and his wife Margaret in 1858... Widow Robertson sold 'La Rose' to subdividers in 1886 and it assumed its current name about 1910. It is the oldest private dwelling in Victoria still on its original site" (Historic Nineteenth Century Coburg, brochure The Coburg Historical Society).

Wentworth House is listed as a Heritage Place in the Moreland Planning Scheme (HO103), Heritage Overlay – Schedule). The house is also listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR, H138).

## Date/s

Contact 1843

## Location – Primary Study Area

Le Cateau St and Moonee Ponds Creek, Pascoe Vale South. Approximate Melways Reference 29 A1.

## Source/s

### Written Sources

Thomas to Robinson 8/3/1843, VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 79;  
Coburg Historical Society: Historic Nineteenth Century Coburg, brochure

## Theme/s

3.0 Conflict

## Significance Assessment

The La Rose farm at Moonee Ponds is of historic interest for its social value because it is a documented example of early contact between Aboriginal people and Europeans.

# Indigenous Place 08

## Pentridge Prison

---

### History/ Association

- In 1850, despite local alarm at the idea of a stockade in their neighbourhood, it was decided that a penal stockade would be established at Pentridge Village, due to overcrowding at Melbourne Gaol. Fifty prisoners were intended to be housed there in log huts on wheels behind a fence made of stakes (Broome 1987: 98). Aboriginal police and officers (The Native Police) were stationed as overseers at Pentridge from 1850 to 1851:

"By mid-1851 they were carrying out sentry duty and mounting guard over the work gangs. They much preferred the latter because sentry duty, especially at night, was punctuated only by calling out the half-hour. By 21 July 1851 seven of the Aboriginal troopers had deserted. Their embarrassed commander, Henry E. P. Dana, explained that their duties had been 'more than their constitutions could bear as they are unable to stand the wet and cold nights and the constant duty required on a Penal Establishment' [Ref: Superintendent of Port Phillip District Inwards Registered Correspondence', VPRS 19, unit 144, 51/183]. Few people would have liked the monotony and regimentation of sentry duty, and certainly most young Aboriginal troopers preferred a freer life on horseback. The ones remaining were restricted to guarding the road gangs and later that year they were replaced by the military" (Broome 1987: 100).

Captain Dana's (European in charge of the Native Police) reports c. 1849 record that: "there was duty at Pentridge stockade following the withdrawal of the mounted police to go to New Zealand to fight the Maori wars, duty required a rotating roster of eight men permanently in Melbourne" (Fels 1988a: 196-97). "A detachment of native police arrived at Pentridge a good ten days before it was due to open [around November 25 1850], probably to construct their own quarters: the Commandant, Corporal Cowan, and Troopers Tallboy, Moonering, Muggins, Lankey, Charlie, Beerack and Andrew comprised the party. Pentridge remained one of the responsibilities of the Corps for 8 months until 21 August 1851, but the men themselves were rotated for irregular intervals, the longest period without relief being three months. The duties of the men were two-fold; sentry duty around the clock at the Stockade itself, relieved at three hour intervals, plus mounted, armed supervision of the road-gangs outside Pentridge in the Coburg area. In addition, when the alarm was sounded every man on or off duty was obliged to turn out" (Fels 1988a: 206-07).

"In 1851 the troopers on guard duty at Pentridge walked out (Fels 1988a: 199). Troopers Bushby Jamieson and Sam deserted on 18 July, and seven more cleared off two nights later. Dana was mortified. It was a 'great disgrace' to the Corps, he acknowledged, but nevertheless understandable: 'I have long been of the opinion that the duties required to be performed by the native Troopers on the establishment, have been more than their constitutions could bear, as they are unable to stand the cold and wet nights, and the constant duty required on a penal establishment'" (Fels 1988a: 211).

The last recorded activity of the Native Police at Pentridge was their participation in apprehending and shooting of an escapee on 29 August 1851 (Fels 1988a: 211). On 24 July 1852, Trooper William was arrested and found guilty of statutory rape, and was sentenced to 5 years on the roads. Assistant Protector Thomas and La Trobe, believed that William was an innocent man. Thomas organised a petition for clemency, and all the members of the jury aside from two who had left for the diggings signed. Williams was given "privileged treatment at Pentridge, serving his sentence as personal servant to the family in the superintendent's house" (Fels 1988a: 218).

- Between 1851 and 1853 the population of the stockade grew and expansion of built facilities was intended (Broome 1987: 103). By the 1860s many new buildings had been erected including the bluestone 'B' and 'C' Divisions, a hospital, storerooms, chapel, etc, and "a great wall 12 feet high and over 2 miles long, with a medieval gatehouse, was constructed from bluestone hewn and partly placed into position by prison labour. It was begun in 1859 and completed in about 1866 except for the turreted clock-tower which was added later. The enclosed about 140 acres and stretched as far as Merri Creek [Ref: Anon. A visit to the Pentridge Stockade: 4-8; J.S. James (Ed.), M. Cannon, 1969. The Vagabond Papers, Melbourne: 91-9]" (Broome 1987: 118). Melbourne Gaol closed 1922 which meant that Pentridge became the venue for all future hangings (Broome 1987: 275).



Plate 13: Pentridge Prison

- In 1934 an Aboriginal midden was found just inside the walls of Pentridge Gaol (Broome 1987: 5). This site is registered as AAV Site Number 7822-0006, and is referred to by Hanks in 1933 in the Victorian Naturalist:

"On the banks of the Merri Creek, in the suburb of Coburg, are the remnants of an encampment of the aborigines - so far as I know, the only one recognizable in the district. It is located on the western bank of a deep pool, about midway between Gaffney Street and the well-known basalt tables behind Pentridge Stockade. In a small excavation can be seen a very small midden of freshwater mussel shells (*Hyridella Australis*). I collected, from round about, a variety of small chippings and a few worked tools, some of which are of flint, but in the majority of cases they are of local stone and include quartz, quartzite, jasper, ironstone, and indurated mudstone, and a few bone scraps. There probably are basalt chippings, but these were not collected on account of the stockade wall, which is of basalt, crossing the spot. There is no doubt that the main portion of the camp was situated on a small outlier of Silurian rock, just inside Pentridge wall" (Hanks 1933: 34 in Terraculture 2004: 33).

- "Jika Jika was the alternative name of Billi-bellari, a prominent elder of the Woiworung who died in 1846. Understandably the Aboriginal community objected [to the naming of the 1980 maximum security building as 'Jika Jika'] and the name of the new maximum security division became 'K' Division. Descendants of Billi-Bellari and other original Victorians have experienced Pentridge's cells over the years" (Broome 1987: 300).
- Aboriginal men and women were incarcerated at Pentridge Gaol in its duration: "Descendants of Billi-Bellari and other original Victorians have experienced Pentridge's cells over the years... Victoria has not kept statistics on Aboriginal imprisonments for many years but several Aboriginal prison welfare officers estimated that there have been about 50 Aboriginal prisoners during most of the past decade [1970s – 1980s]: about 3 per cent of the Victorian prison population. A recent researcher has found that at present, Aboriginal Victorians are 29 times more likely to be gaoled than whites. This is currently [1987] the highest rate in Australia. Discrimination is evident in arrest, bail and trial procedures. Jim Armstrong recalls that most were 'excellent' prisoners. He and other prison officers agree that 'fellow prisoners and staff treated them the same as any other prisoners', although Carmel Berry, their current welfare officer who is Aboriginal, disagrees" [Ref: Jim Armstrong, interview; Frank Vass and Carmel Berry, communication]" (Broome 1987: 300).
- During the 1960s (possibly 1964), Ronald Bull painted a mural while serving time at Pentridge Prison. Ronald Bull is considered to be one of the most important Aboriginal artists of south-eastern Australia. Known as a landscape artist, the mural is significant in its depiction of an Aboriginal scene. He was one of the first Aboriginal artists to break into the Melbourne art scene and was recognised by leading Australian artists at the time. He had a significant influence on later Aboriginal artists. The mural represents an important developmental stage in his artistic career. The mural at Pentridge is also a significant statement within the context of a prison environment.

"One Aboriginal prisoner about 1960 painted an ochre and black mural in 'F' Division depicting an Aboriginal encampment with men bringing kangaroo meat back from the hunt. It still survives" (Broome 1987: 300).

In 1996, Allom Lovell & Associates and Associates prepared a conservation management plan of the buildings of Pentridge. There were two recent paintings of interest within the prison:

"Building 39b is a small, open, brick structure built on a concrete slab, containing a urinal and a wc. The Aboriginal flag has been painted on the south wall...Building 39b is of recent construction" (Allom Lovell & Associates 1996: 140).

"Below the gallery at the east end of the corridor is an oil-painted mural by the Aboriginal artist and former prisoner Ronald Bull. The mural, painted in the early 1960s, depicts a camp scene with figures of hunters around a fire and a bark shelter" (Allom Lovell & Associates 1996: 200).



**Plate 14:** Ronald Bull c. 1968 (State Library of Victoria, copyright held by The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd).

- In addition to the work of the Native Police at Pentridge in 1850-1851, Aboriginal people were employed at Pentridge in the 20<sup>th</sup> century until its closure in 1997. Some Aboriginal people who worked at Pentridge in 1990s include Reg Blow, Muddy Waters, Carmel Barry and Jacqui Stewart.

Joe Narbaluk was an Aboriginal person incarcerated in Pentridge in the late 1960s and 1970s. He spent about 12 years all together at the Coburg gaol:

It was theft that most Koories got pinched for... We got caught mainly for car thefts...a bit of cash on the side. For me [Pentridge] was a bit of fun. I was a bit of ratbag back then (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

While Joe is reminiscent of good times in prison such as making 'home brew' with other Aboriginal men like his friend, artist Jackie Charles, a clear cultural divide existed between Aboriginal inmates and others:

Had it a lot better than the blokes these days...you knew where you stood then. You lived by the rules or died by the rules... Three or four Koories did die while I was in there, and some died in the fire at Jika... (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

Reg Blow was employed by the Office of Corrections where he developed their Aboriginal Program. In c. 1995, Reg Blow spent nine months working as a Community Corrections at the Carlton Corrections Centre which involved visiting Pentridge, and other prisons in Victoria. As part of his responsibilities Reg met with prisoners at Pentridge and provided advice to the Courts on the suitability of offenders to receive community based orders and would provide reports to parole boards. Reg went on to work as a project development officer at the Office of Corrections for six years where he developed their Aboriginal program including a cultural awareness program for corrections officers and public servants and developed procedures for handling Aboriginal offenders. As part of this work Reg consulted with groups of Aboriginal offenders incarcerated in the different divisions at Pentridge:

In the prison these guys find their culture... They get their sense of identity, belonging and community in there...very sad. It's where these kids find their place coming from broken backgrounds (Reg Blow Interview RB1).

A lower security area at Pentridge known as the Metropolitan Reception prison, detained prisoners who were yet to be sentenced. In her roles as an Aboriginal Prison Officer and later as Koori Liaison Officer, Jacqui Stewart visited Aboriginal prisoners in this area and the maximum security divisions two days a week for nearly 4 years.

There was only one [Koori Liaison Officer] for all of Victoria... I would fight for the rights of the prisoners (Jacqui Stewart JS1).

An important part of Jacqui's role as Koori Liaison Officer was making Prison Officers and other officials aware of culturally sensitive and appropriate ways to deal with Aboriginal prisoners:

I was pretty headstrong... I'm here to show people there's difference when dealing with Aboriginal people... A lot of things, like eye contact. A young Aboriginal

prisoner isn't going to make eye contact with you – he's going to keep his head down. In the mainstream that's considered offensive (Jacqui Stewart JS1).

Today, Joe Narbaluk works with young prisoners and still sees these noticeable cultural differences causing problems:

If you're a blackfella and you're getting told off you're gonna keep your head down - most people think it's rude not to look in their eyes (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

It's an insignificant thing – its just like a cultural thing... It's like when you're young and you're getting in trouble from your dad or your uncles, if you looked in their eyes it was like being made... (Shannon Hood SH1).

As a known and respected person in the Aboriginal community, Jacqui Stewart was able to communicate the differences in the Aboriginal community's attitude to extended families and funerals from the mainstream white community:

Without me the boys would've had nothing... I fought tooth and nail when it was decided it was right for an Aboriginal prisoner to attend a funeral... Prison Officers would think 'Why does he need to go to the funeral, it was just his Uncle' – but there was a difference... (Jacqui Stewart JS1).

While Jacqui has worked in the prison system for many years her only experience of a black death in custody was at Pentridge. After many months of experiencing workplace difficulties after defending the rights of a young Koori prisoner at Pentridge, Jacqui left her job in the prisons:

The only support I got was from the inmates... As much as I loved working with the prisoners... In the finish I took a welfare position... I strongly believe I did the right thing (Jacqui Stewart JS1).

- Pentridge Prison is also listed as a Heritage Place in the Moreland Planning Scheme (HO47, Heritage Overlay – Schedule). The prison is also registered by the Victorian National Trust is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR, H1551) for its significance as the largest prison complex to have been built in Victoria. Only a selection of the prison's precincts buildings and amenities are protected under the VHR.

## Date/s

1850 - 1997

## Location – Primary Study Area

Pentridge Gaol, Coburg

## Source/s

### Oral Information Sources

Reg Blow Interview, RB1  
Jacqui Stewart Interview, JS1  
Joe Narbaluk Interview, JN1  
Shannon Hood Interview, SH1

### Written Sources

Allom Lovell and Associates 1996  
Broome 1987: 5, 300  
Fels 1988a  
Kleinart 1994  
Lynn and Armstrong 1996  
<http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/historyofmoreland7.htm>  
Terraculture 2004: 33  
Thorn 1996

## Theme/s

1.0 Traditional/Cultural Places  
4.0 Living Places  
5.0 Work  
6.0 Resources  
10.0 Government  
13.0 Life Events  
15.0 Self Determination

## Significance Assessment

The site of Pentridge Gaol in Coburg is of local significance for its social value because it is a place of where Aboriginal people have had ongoing connections from the pre-contact period through to the recent past. The site of Pentridge Gaol was used by Aboriginal people before settlement as a camp. It is also significant as the place where the Native Police were stationed in 1850 to 1851 as guards/overseers. Aboriginal people have been prisoners at the Gaol since it opened in the early 1850s. A prominent inmate was the well-known Aboriginal artist, Ronald Bull who painted a mural in the prison. The Ronald Bull mural at Pentridge Prison is significant as it was painted by one of the most important Aboriginal artists of south-eastern Australia, whose work also influenced later Aboriginal artists. Pentridge prison has also been a place of employment for Aboriginal people since the 1980s.

## Indigenous Place 09

### Camp near La Rose Farm, Moonee Ponds

#### History/ Association

Aboriginal people camped near La Rose Farm:

"February...On the 12th you [Robinson] visit the Encampment, in the afternoon Yanki Yanker (??) who was insolent to the Chief Constable on the 10th instant is taken, the Blacks are in great fear and separate forming several Encampments, Western Port Sth of the Yarra, the Loddon and Campaspie Blacks after sun set shift to a little water in a gully Sth of Brunswick, the observation of one of the Loddon Blacks was touching (??) he said 'poor Blackfellows White men take Blackfellows country and frighten him...On the 13th the Blacks form 7 Encampments which kept me riding the whole of the day dissipating their fears and cautioning them not to embark upon fenced grounds; On the 14th it is reported to me that the Blacks had set fire to some Huts at La Rose Farm Moonee Ponds, I hasten to the spot find the report false 2 Huts were on fire but was occasioned by the carelessness of the men, the Loddon Blacks were Encamped near there, I got them to move which they do and at night Encamp near Paterville. On the 15th the Loddon, Campaspie and Goulburn Blacks leave the precincts of Melbourne. On the 16th the Barrabools, on the 17th the Western Port, on the 18th most of the remaining leave, there being now but 2 Encampments one Nth of Melbourne consisting of Mt Macedon and Blacks from the Western (?) about 85 in number, the other by the Merree Creek near my Quarters about 32..." (Thomas to Robinson 8/3/1843, VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 79).

"[Wentworth House, 22 Le Cateau Street] was built for Dr. Farquhar and Agnes McCrae in 1842-3, as part of their 270 acres 'La Rose' farm. Coiler Robertson rented the farm from 1844 until he purchased it in 1852. It passed to James Robertson, a brewer, and his wife Margaret in 1858... Widow Robertson sold 'La Rose' to subdividers in 1886 and it assumed its current name about 1910. It is the oldest private dwelling in Victoria still on its original site" (Historic Nineteenth Century Coburg, brochure The Coburg Historical Society).

#### Date/s

Contact 1843

#### Location – Primary Study Area

Near La Rose Farm, Le Cateau St and Moonee Ponds Creek, Pascoe Vale South

## Source/s

### Written Sources

Thomas to Robinson 8/3/1843, VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 79;

The Coburg Historical Society: Historic Nineteenth Century Coburg, brochure

## Theme/s

4.0 Living places

## Significance Assessment

The camp near La Rose farm at Moonee Ponds is of local significance for its social value because it is a documented example of early contact between Aboriginal people and Europeans.

# Indigenous Place 10

## Farms at New Sydney Road

### History/ Association

There were reports of Aboriginal people damaging farms on the New Sydney Road:

"December [1843] ... I commence this month with taking the names and noting the tribes of those who attend instruction, on the 3 [3rd] attend Divine Service 19, on the 4th it being reported to me that some farms on the New Sydney Road had been damaged by the blacks, I proceed to their encampment and charge (?) them not to enter enclosed grounds. The reports proved ill founded nothing had taken place further than their importunities. On the 5th I again visit the Encampments Nth and Sth of the Yarra and continue the same to those on the New Sydney Road to the 7th when I leave them they promising me not to enter any fenced grounds..." (Thomas to Robinson 2/3/1844, VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 79).

One source suggests that present-day Sydney Road was called Pentridge Road in 1839. Once it was extended northward through present day Fawkner it became New Sydney Road: "Surveyed in 1839, Sydney Road went no further than Pentridge Village (later called Coburg) and was known as Pentridge Road. The Sydney Road of that time is now Pascoe Vale Road. In 1850 Pentridge Road was extended north and became the new Sydney Road. Convicts from the prison stockade which was established in the same years were then set work building it" (Brunswick Community History Group and Coburg Community Historical Society). According to Thomas, see above, New Sydney Road was referred to as early as 1843.

### Date/s

1843

### Location – Primary Study Area

Farms on the New Sydney Road, present day Sydney Road.

### Source/s

#### Written Sources

Thomas to Robinson 2/3/1844, VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 79

Brunswick Community History Group and Coburg Community Historical Society: Historic Sydney Road brochure

## Theme/s

3.0 Conflict

## Significance Assessment

Farms at the New Sydney Road are of local historic interest for their social value because they are a documented example of early conflict between Aboriginal people and Europeans.

# Indigenous Place 11

## Camps at New Sydney Road

### History/ Association

In 1843 there were camps of Aboriginal people living on the New Sydney Road:

"December [1843] ... I commence this month with taking the names and noting the tribes of those who attend instruction, on the 3 [3rd] attend Divine Service 19, on the 4th it being reported to me that some farms on the New Sydney Road had been damaged by the blacks, I proceed to their encampment and charge (?) them not to enter enclosed grounds. The reports proved ill founded nothing had taken place further than their importunities. On the 5th I again visit the Encampments Nth and Sth of the Yarra and continue the same to those on the New Sydney Road to the 7th when I leave them they promising me not to enter any fenced grounds..." (Thomas to Robinson 2/3/1844, VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 79).

One source suggests that present-day Sydney Road was called Pentridge Road in 1839. Once it was extended northward through present day Fawkner it became New Sydney Road: "Surveyed in 1839, Sydney Road went no further than Pentridge Village (later called Coburg) and was known as Pentridge Road. The Sydney Road of that time is now Pascoe Vale Road. In 1850 Pentridge Road was extended north and became the new Sydney Road. Convicts from the prison stockade which was established in the same years were then set work building it" (Brunswick Community History Group and Coburg Community Historical Society). According to Thomas, see above, New Sydney Road was referred to as early as 1843.

### Date/s

1843

### Location – Primary Study Area

New Sydney Road, present day Sydney Road.

### Source/s

#### Written Sources

Thomas to Robinson 2/3/1844, VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 79

Brunswick Community History Group and Coburg Community Historical Society: Historic Sydney Road brochure

## Theme/s

1.0 Traditional/Cultural Places

4.0 Living Places

## Significance Assessment

The Aboriginal camps on New Sydney Road in 1843 are of local historical interest for their social value because they are a documented example of early contact between Aboriginal people and Europeans.

## Indigenous Place 12

### Thomas's Estate, Bush Reserve

#### History/ Association

Burchell (2004: 268-269) describes a farm owned by William Thomas while he was the Assistant Protector. The farm was located at present day Bush Reserve:

"William Thomas, Protector of Aborigines, was one of those who bought 20-acre lots in John Fawkner's subdivision of Crown Portion 140... On taking possession of Lot 6 [between Bell St and Munro Street, the western boundary between Shackell and Linsey Streets and the eastern boundary running between Bellevue and Kelson Streets] in 1842 he built himself a stone house on five acres in the north-east corner. The rest of his land he rented out to various farmers including Robert Gilmour. When Gilmour died in 1866, first his wife Mary, then his brother, James, took over the lease. Around the mid-1860s William Thomas moved to another residence 'Merri Ville Lodge', in Brunswick Road East and it then appears that the Gilmours now occupied his former house. When Thomas died at the end of 1867, Gilmour bought the whole property, then known as 'Strangway Farm'" (Burchell 2004: Search: Journal of the Coburg Historical Society (73) September 2004: 268).



**Plate 15:** Protector Thomas (Clark and Heydon 2004: 19)

In 1884 Robert Gilmour sold the "remaining 15 acres of lot 6 to Dr Airey who created Linsey Park Estate with 101 lots and two new streets, Linsey Bellevue. With sale proceeds in hand Gilmour was able to give up farming and become a 'gentleman'; residing in his stone house. The Gilmour family continued to live here until the turn of the century. In 1916 Charles A. Sandland bought the land [5 acre Strangways block] from the then owner Benjamin Berry... For almost fifteen years from 1916 Charles A. Sandland operate a poultry farm on this site ... on the east side, about half way between Bell and Victoria Streets, the bluestone house for which the official address was 219 (269 before 1925) Bell Street... Unfortunately the old house was demolished early in 1981" (Search: Journal of the Coburg Historical Society (73) September 2004: 268-69).

Clark and Heydon refer to Protector Thomas' land on the Merri Creek which may be the same property at present day Bush Reserve, as discussed above:

"By 1843 Thomas had purchased land on the Merri Creek, and, on 13 March of that year, Robinson visited him there. Robinson (Jnl 18/3/1843) considered it a 'poor place...The water at Merri Creek is so bad (salt) that it can scarce be drunk'. The exact location of this land is not known, but a general location near Pentridge is likely. This is supported by a reference in Smyth (1878 Vol. 1: 160) to Thomas's 'farm at Pentridge'. On 14 February 1844, Thomas moved to Pascoeville (VPRS 4410, Item 79)... In 1847 William Thomas was resident at Moonee Ponds (Sands and McDougall 1847), where, in February 1848, Aboriginal people from the west and northwest of Melbourne camped (Thomas 1/3/1848 in VPRS 4410, Item 104)" (Clark and Heydon 2004: 20).

It is likely that Robinson was visiting Thomas at his quarters at the encampment at the confluence of the Merri Creek and the Yarra River rather than a separate property of Thomas'. Clark (2000c: 14) transcribed Robinson's journal recounting this visit:

"P.M., left my house with assistant protector Thomas... Cald at Mr. Thomas' land Marri creek, poor place. Thomas went on and was called to assist in taking a man for assault on Mr. Landy... Went on with Landy and slept at his house on the Sydney road... The water at Merri creek is so bad (salt) that it can scarce be drunk" (Robinson Journal 18/03/1843 in Clark 2000c: 114).

Clark and Heydon (2004: 20) assert that Thomas moved to a home in Pascoeville in 1844 (see above). However according to Thomas' letter to Robinson he merely camped at Pascoeville overnight on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1844 (Thomas to Robinson 02/03/1844 in VPRS, Unit 3, Item 79). It is unclear if he camped with Aboriginal people.

When Thomas was 60 years old: "he spent his mornings at court in his role as a Justice of the Peace but each afternoon he sought out the Aborigines. He rode south to Brighton, to the Mordialloc Reserve of the Bunurong and on to Dandenong, or up on the Plenty Road then west and down past his former residence in the village of Pentridge, to his home 'Merri Ville Lodge' in Brunswick" (Broome 1987: 32).

Context recently undertook a heritage impact assessment at Bush Reserve:

"In the course of our historic investigations...we noted [Bush Reserve] does have links to the early history of contact between Aboriginals and Europeans which may be of interest to the contemporary Aboriginal community. William Thomas, Protector of Aborigines 1839-49, lived here during his term. It is not known whether Aboriginal people visited him at his home, but we have been alerted to the possible existence of photographs (possibly held by the City of Moreland) which shows Aborigines near a house on the land known as Bush Reserve. Although none of the early post contact heritage elements – including the Protector's house – are extant (at least, above ground) we thought it worth noting this information to your organisation in case it still has relevance to the contemporary Aboriginal community" (Context correspondence to Wurundjeri Council, 24/02/06).

"The land that would become Bush Reserve is at the centre of the block bound by Bell, Kelson, Victoria and Linsey streets. The first European owner was John Pascoe Fawkner (one of the founding

fathers of Melbourne), who purchased Crown Portion 140 – comprising 569 acres between the present-day Bell Street and Reynard Road – in the second Coburg land sale on 5 October 1839. Fawcner then subdivided his holdings into 20-acres lots for sale. William Thomas, Protector of Aborigines 1839-49, purchased Lot 6, adjoining Bell Street, in 1842 and built himself a bluestone house in the northeast corner of the land, on the site of today's Bush Reserve. Thomas is considered a friend of and advocate for Aboriginals in the area and recorded their language, customs and beliefs. Keeping the five acres around the house for his own purposes, Thomas rented the remaining 15 acres to various farmers, including Robert Gilmour. When William Thomas moved to his new house in Brunswick Road East ('Merri Ville Lodge') in the mid-1860s, the Gilmour family moved into the bluestone house. Upon Robert Gilmour's death in 1866, his wife, Mary, and then brother, James, took over the lease and then bought the entire 20-acre property outright in 1867 upon Thomas' death, and named it 'Strangway Farm'" (Context 2006: 3)

"There are no obvious remnants of the pre-contact period landscapes (vegetation etc.), nor are any post-contact elements visible above ground. As such, no investigation of Indigenous heritage was undertaken for this site. The site does, however, have links to the early history of contact between Aboriginals and Europeans, as William Thomas, Protector of Aborigines 1839-49, lived here during his term. It is not known whether his 'charges' visited him at his home, but there was suggestion made during background research about the existence of a photograph showing Aborigines near a house on land thought to be the present Bush Reserve. This was not investigated further but the potential association might be alerted to the relevant Aboriginal community (Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation and Cultural Heritage Council)" (Context 2006: 8).

## Date/s

c. 1842 – 1860s

## Location – Primary Study Area

Present day Bush Reserve, Coburg. Melways Reference 17 F12.

"The Bush Reserve site is located South of Bell Street, between Linsey Street and Kelson Street, with an entrance in Victoria Street. The Coburg Tennis Club and the Coburg West Bowling Club are immediate neighbours on the northern and western boundary of the Reserve respectively. Bush Reserve is currently owned by the City of Moreland. It is used as a works depot and nursery site. There are a number of buildings on the site that are used as offices and other facilities for Council staff" (Context 2006: 3).

## Source/s

### Written Sources

Broome 1987: 32

Burchell 2004: 268-69  
Clark and Heydon 2004: 20  
Context correspondence to Wurundjeri Council, 24/02/06  
Context 2006: 3, 8.  
Robinson Journal 18/03/1843 in Clark 2000c: 114

## Theme/s

2.0 Contact Places  
4.0 Living Places  
10.0 Government

## Significance Assessment

William Thomas's estate at Bush Reserve is of local historic interest for its social value because it is a documented example of early contact between Aboriginal people and Europeans. William Thomas lived at the farm in the 1840s during his time as Assistant Protector and it is likely that it was used as a camping place by Aboriginal people given the close ties he fostered with the Aboriginal people for whom he was responsible.

## Indigenous Place 13

### Ceremonial Places, Merri Creek near Pentridge

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#### History/ Association

According to Presland (1994: 85) corroborees were held at prominent places around Melbourne including close to the Merri Creek near Pentridge Prison.

#### Date/s

Pre-contact/ post contact?

#### Location – Primary Study Area

Merri Creek near Pentridge

#### Source/s

##### Written Sources

Presland 1994 [1984]: 85

#### Theme/s

1.0 Traditional/Cultural Places

#### Significance Assessment

The ceremonial places on Merri Creek near Pentridge Prison are of historic interest for its social value because it is a documented example of Aboriginal cultural practice in the early contact period.

## Indigenous Place 14

### Merri Creek

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#### History/ Association

The Merri Creek was an important source of food resources for the Woiworong, and was also used as a travelling route.



**Plate 16:** "Merry Creek, Plenty Ranges" (Cogne, F in Clark and Heydon 2004: 11).

- In 2000 Ian Hunter's dance group, Ngarragee were commissioned by Moreland Council to create a dance. The troupe decided to enact the creation story of the creeks and rivers of the Melbourne area, including Moonee Ponds and Merri Creek. Ian Hunter described this story and the dance that was inspired by it:

The story was about the creeks and rivers that formed the creeks, how the creeks and rivers were formed in and around Moreland. So it was a story of the...Merri Creek, Moonee Ponds Creek, and it included other creeks and so forth and told by Barak but a long while ago, up in the mountain country, it was a great big lake and those creeks didn't flow and Port Phillip Bay wasn't there. So there's one story where the two little boys spill water and the water keeps gushing, but the other story is how the Woiwurung people were camped up where sort of the Upper

Yarra Dam is now, and they were sick and tired of eating fish all the time, fish and eels... a couple of old men told the young fellows to dig a trench, and to dig trenches out to let all the water go away because they were sick and tired of eating fish and they'd heard about the Bunurong people down in the low country eating kangaroo and possum...so we created a dance, we actually even created a song, the song went along the lines of, 'sick and tired of eating fish, eating fish, eating fish, heard about people eating kangaroo, possum and emu stew'... and we did the dance to that whereby it started off with...the men were hunting with spears in the dance, looking for fish in the creeks and the women were also looking in the creeks and that for yabbies and things like that. And then the old man telling the boys to go and dig the trench and the water kept coming, filling up the trenches, and then one old man said 'no, you fellas are doing it wrong, you've got to go down there, Bunurong country, and dig the trenches up'. So you get the young fellows digging the trenches and other people still in their canoes looking for food...you dig the big trenches, all the water inundates, where forms Merri Creek, Yarra River, and all those creeks and so forth. And then the end of the story is our people are hunting, but instead of hunting and looking on the ground, they're, down, they're looking in front of them, and the women are actually looking in the trees with sugar bag, and all that sort of stuff (Ian Hunter Interview IH1).

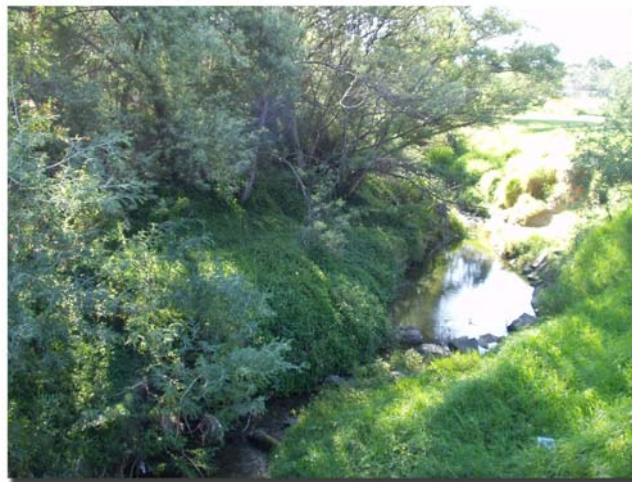


Plate 17: Merri Creek

There is also an account of this creation story given by Massola:

"According to Billi-billeri of the Kulin, Port Phillip Bay in Victoria was formed by the Yarra River which drained the vast waters previously locked in the mountains of the Woiwurong Kulin people.

Once the water of the Yarra was locked in the mountains. This great expanse of water was called Moorool, or Great Water. It was so large that the Woiwurong people had very little hunting ground, although the tribes to the south had excellent hunting grounds on the lovely flat which is now Port Phillip Bay. Mo-yarra, the head man of the Woiwurong, decided to free the country of

the water and cut a channel through the hills in a southerly direction to Western Port. However, only a little water followed him, the path gradually closed up. Water again covered the land of the Woiwurong.

Sometime later, the headman of the tribe was Bar-wool. He remembered Mo-yarra's attempt to free the land and knew the Mo-yarra still lived on the swamps besides Western Port (Koowerup). Each winter he saw the hilltops covered with the feather-down which Mo-yarra plucked from the waterbirds sheltering on the swamps.

Bar-wool decided to drain the land. He cut a channel up the valley with his stone axe. But he was stopped by Baw-baw, the mountain. He decided to go northwards, but was stopped by Donna Buang and his brothers. Then he went westwards, and cut through the hills to Warr-an-dyte. There he met Yan-yan, another Woiwurong, who was busily engaged in cutting a channel for the Plenty River in order to drain Morang, the place where he lived. They joined forces, and the waters of Moorool and Morang became Moo-rool-bark, 'the place where the wide waters were'. They continued their work, and reached the Heidelberg-Templestowe Flats, or Warringal, Dingo-jump-up, and there they rested while the waters formed another Moorool.

Bar-wool and Yan-yan again set to work but this time they had to go much slower, because the ground was much harder, and they were using up too many stone axes. Between the Darebin and the Merri Creeks they cut a narrow, twisting track looking for softer ground. At last they reached Port Phillip. The waters of Moorool and Morang rushed out. The country of the Woiwurong was freed from water, but the flats of Port Phillip were inundated and Port Phillip Bay was formed" (Massola 1968 in Isaacs 1991 [1980]: 115-16).

- "Merri Creek provided the Woiworrung with a diverse range of aquatic resources, especially plant foods such as murrnong (plentiful in spring and early summer), eels, fish, mussels and waterfowl. Smyth (1878 Vol. 1: 239) noted 'There are numerous old Mirrn-yong heaps on the banks of the River Plenty, on the Darebin Creek, and the Merri Creak, near Melbourne...'. Hall (1989) noted that Aboriginal people used many of the 101 species of indigenous plants that once grew along Merri Creek. Hall found that the Merri Creek landscape provided Aboriginal people with: water; timber and bark for implements and shelters; a wide variety of plants for food, medicinal and tool making purposes; flakeable stone for stone tool manufactured; and a wide range of birds, aquatic and terrestrial animals for food and artefacts made from their by-products. Hoddle (1837 in Ellender 1997:11) noted that the Merri Creek was renowned for its 'water of Chalybeate quality', and as having 'a sweet taste and scarce in dry seasons'" (Clark and Heydon 2004: 10-11).
- The Moonee Ponds Creek was used as a travelling route by Aboriginal people in the pre- and post-contact period:

"From the accounts of George Robinson and William Thomas, it is apparent that Woiwurrung and Daungwurrung clanspeople used the creeks [Maribyrnong River, Moonee Ponds Creek, Merri Creek, Darebin Creek and Plenty River] that empty into the Yarra River as pathways connecting the uplands and inlands to Port Phillip Bay. These creeks include Merri Creek, but it would appear, judging from Robinson's account, that the Plenty River and Darebin Creek were more important. It was when moving along these watercourses that Aboriginal groups most often came into contact with European settlers" (Clark and Heydon 2004: 33)

- "Batman wrote that his negotiations with the Aboriginal men took place by the banks of a 'lovely stream of water'. In fact, so taken was the explorer by the beauty of the creek that according to his journal he proposed naming it after himself. Early settlers such as James Bonwick and John Pascoe Fawkner were of the opinion that the beautiful unnamed stream by which the treaty was concluded was the Merri Merri Creek. It is thought that in the Woiworing language of the word 'merri' means rock and 'merri merri' means very rocky. The Merri Merri Creek was known by this name at least as early as 1839 since it appears on an early map of the Yarra and its tributaries" (Ellender and Christiansen 2001: 18).

## Date/s

Pre-contact/ post contact?

## Location – Primary Study Area

Merri Creek is situated along the eastern border of the City of Moreland. Approximately 50 kilometres long, the creek commences at the Great Range near Kinglake National Park and ends at its confluence with the Yarra River to the south.

## Source/s

### Oral Sources

Ian Hunter Interview IH1

### Written Sources

Clark and Heydon 2004: 10, 11, 33  
Terraculture 2004: 18

## Theme/s

1.0 Traditional/cultural place  
6.0 Resources  
7.0 Travelling routes

## Significance Assessment

The Merri Creek corridor is of local significance for its social value because it is an important Aboriginal cultural landscape. The Merri Creek was a rich source of food, a focus for camping

and ceremony and was also a travelling route for the Woiworung people. It's creation story as told by Aboriginal Elder William Barak, records its spiritual significance to the Woiworung. This story is still celebrated in dance form by Woiworung people today. The creek has historical significance to Aboriginal people as the possible site of the signing of Batman's Treaty.

# Indigenous Place 15

## Moonee Ponds Creek

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### History/ Association

Moonee Ponds Creek was named after a Woiworung Ngurungaeta (Headman), and was an important creek in the pre-contact and post-contact periods:

- "The Moonee Ponds Creek or the Moonee Moonee Chain of Ponds, as it was at first called, was named after Mooney Mooney (or Morundub) [a Ngurungaeta of Wurundjeri-balluk patriline, Balluk-willam]... Little is known of this man except that he was blind in one eye and also was acquitted in Sydney in 1838 of sheep stealing on the Werribee River. He died in February 1840, aged sixty-six" (Broome 1987: 40).
- In 2000 Ian Hunter's dance troupe, Ngarragee were commissioned by Moreland Council to create a dance. The troupe decided to enact the creation story of the creeks and rivers of the Melbourne area, including Moonee Ponds and Merri Creek. Ian Hunter described this story and the dance that was inspired by it:

The story was about the creeks and rivers that formed the creeks, how the creeks and rivers were formed in and around Moreland. So it was a story of the...Merri Creek, Moonee Ponds Creek, and it included other creeks and so forth and told by Barak but a long while ago, up in the mountain country, it was a great big lake and those creeks didn't flow and Port Phillip Bay wasn't there. So there's one story where the two little boys spill water and the water keeps gushing, but the other story is how the Woiworung people were camped up where sort of the Upper Yarra Dam is now, and they were sick and tired of eating fish all the time, fish and eels... a couple of old men told the young fellows to dig a trench, and to dig trenches out to let all the water go away because they were sick and tired of eating fish and they'd heard about the Bunurung people down in the low country eating kangaroo and possum...so we created a dance, we actually even created a song, the song went along the lines of, 'sick and tired of eating fish, eating fish, eating fish, heard about people eating kangaroo, possum and emu stew'... and we did the dance to that whereby it started off with...the men were hunting with spears in the dance, looking for fish in the creeks and the women were also looking in the creeks and that for yabbies and things like that. And then the old man telling the boys to go and dig the trench and the water kept coming, filling up the trenches, and then one old man said 'no, you fellas are doing it wrong, you've got to go down there, Bunurung country, and dig the trenches up'. So you get the young fellows digging the trenches and other people still in their canoes looking for food...you dig the big trenches, all the water inundates, where forms Merri Creek, Yarra River, and all those creeks and so forth. And then the end of the story is our people are hunting, but instead of hunting and looking on the ground, they're,

down, they're looking in front of them, and the women are actually looking in the trees with sugar bag, and all that sort of stuff (Ian Hunter Interview IH1).

There is also an account of this creation story given by Massola:

"According to Billi-billeri of the Kulin, Port Phillip Bay in Victoria was formed by the Yarra River which drained the vast waters previously locked in the mountains of the Woiwurong Kulin people.

Once the water of the Yarra was locked in the mountains. This great expanse of water was called Moorool, or Great Water. It was so large that the Woiwurong people had very little hunting ground, although the tribes to the south had excellent hunting grounds on the lovely flat which is now Port Phillip Bay. Mo-yarra, the head man of the Woiwurong, decided to free the country of the water and cut a channel through the hills in a southerly direction to Western Port. However, only a little water followed him, the path gradually closed up. Water again covered the land of the Woiwurong.

Sometime later, the headman of the tribe was Bar-wool. He remembered Mo-yarra's attempt to free the land and knew the Mo-yarra still lived on the swamps besides Western Port (Koowerup). Each winter he saw the hilltops covered with the feather-down which Mo-yarra plucked from the waterbirds sheltering on the swamps.

Bar-wool decided to drain the land. He cut a channel up the valley with his stone axe. But he was stopped by Baw-baw, the mountain. He decided to go northwards, but was stopped by Donna Buang and his brothers. Then he went westwards, and cut through the hills to Warr-an-dyte. There he met Yan-yan, another Woiwurong, who was busily engaged in cutting a channel for the Plenty River in order to drain Morang, the place where he lived. They joined forces, and the waters of Moorool and Morang became Moorool-bark, 'the place where the wide waters were'. They continued their work, and reached the Heidelberg-Templestowe Flats, or Warringal, Dingo-jump-up, and there they rested while the waters formed another Moorool.

Bar-wool and Yan-yan again set to work but this time they had to go much slower, because the ground was much harder, and they were using up too many stone axes. Between the Darebin and the Merri Creeks they cut a narrow, twisting track looking for softer ground. At last they reached Port Phillip. The waters of Moorool and Morang rushed out. The country of the Woiwurong was freed from water, but the flats of Port Phillip were inundated and Port Phillip Bay was formed" (Massola 1968 in Isaacs 1991 [1980]: 115-16).

- "Moonee Ponds Creek was a noted source of Murnong (*Microseris scapigera*) in the early days of settlement [Reference: Smyth 1878: 1: 209]" (Presland 1983: 8).
- "On the evidence of documentary research, Moonee Ponds Creek was an important stream too in pre-European Port Phillip" (Presland 1983: 89).



**Plate 18:** Moonee Ponds Creek

- The Moonee Ponds Creek was used as a travelling route by Aboriginal people in the pre- and post-contact period:

"From the accounts of George Robinson and William Thomas, it is apparent that Woiwurrung and Daungwurrung clanspeople used the creeks [Maribyrnong River, Moonee Ponds Creek, Merri Creek, Darebin Creek and Plenty River] that empty into the Yarra River as pathways connecting the uplands and inlands to Port Phillip Bay" (Clark and Heydon 2004: 33)

"...The Gouldbourne Black Bot/Bob (?) one of the 2 who was concerned (?) in the Merri Creek outrage was taken into custody but made his escape the same night. I followed the Blacks on their migratory moves after but little difficulty. On the 14th (in consequence of Bob's escape) separated the Gouldbourns from the Yarra and Western Port Blacks about 40 miles north of Melbourne by Major Boyd's at the Deep (?) Creek, the Gouldbourns took to the ranges and the others towards Melbourne by the Creeks between Sydney and Mount Macedon Road..." (Thomas to Robinson 8/12/1842, VPRS 4410 Unit 3 Item 74).

## Date/s

Pre-contact/Post contact

## Location – Primary Study Area

"Moonee Ponds Creek commences at Greenvale and flows southeast through Westmeadows before crossing the Western Ring Road at Gowanbrae. From here and for the remainder of its

length through Moreland it flows in a south south-east direction. The creek's valley is generally broad and at Pascoe Vale, the Tullamarine Freeway and then City Link have been built in its valley" (Terraculture 2004: 18).

## Source/s

### Oral Sources

Ian Hunter Interview IH1

### Written Sources

Broome 1987: 40  
Clark and Heydon 2004: 33  
Massola 1968 in Isaacs 1991 [1980]: 115-16  
Presland 1983: 8, 89  
Terraculture 2004: 18

## Theme/s

1.0 Traditional/cultural places  
6.0 Resources  
7.0 Travelling Routes

## Significance Assessment

The Moonee Ponds Creek corridor is of local significance for its social value because it is an important Aboriginal cultural landscape. The Moonee Ponds Creek was a rich source of food, a focus for camping and ceremony and was also a travelling route for the Woiworung people. It's creation story as told by Aboriginal Elder William Barak, records its spiritual significance to the Woiworung. The naming of the creek after Woiworung Ngurungaeta (Headman) Mooney Mooney adds to its heritage interest.

# Indigenous Place 16

## Burial Ground, Coburg High School

### History/ Association

Blake (1973: 202) recorded that Coburg High School was allegedly built on "...a one acre site in Henderson's Paddock, an old Aboriginal burial ground" between 1912 and 1916 when it was officially opened (Blake 1973: 202). This reference may have come directly from an article allegedly by Helen Blyth in the 1966 Jubilee supplement to the school magazine, Echoes (Coburg High School 1984 [1966]). It is not clear where the source of information about a possible burial ground actually comes from. The burial ground likely dated from pre-contact period. It may have been destroyed by the construction of the school in 1912-1916.

### Date/s

Pre-contact?

### Location – Primary Study Area

1 acre block housing Coburg High School, bounded by Bell and Rodda Streets, Coburg

### Source/s

#### Written Sources

Blake 1973: 202  
Coburg High School 1984 [1966]

### Theme/s

1.0 Traditional/Cultural Place  
8.0 Burials

### Significance Assessment

The Coburg High School is of historic interest for its social value because it is a documented example of Aboriginal cultural practice in the pre-contact period. The possible existence of Aboriginal burials at this site adds to its cultural significance to the Woiworung people.

# Indigenous Place 17

## Counihan Gallery, Brunswick

### History/ Association

Moreland City Council's gallery, the Counihan Gallery is located on Sydney Road, in the Brunswick Town Hall. Some exhibitions in this gallery have related to local Indigenous themes/issues.

The Counihan Gallery showed the art exhibition *Black and White. Colour*, in May – June, 2003:

Celebrating reconciliation *Black and White. Colour* examines issues of country, community and creativity from the perspectives of Indigenous and non-indigenous artists. The exhibition explores shared community passion for painting and football, while reflecting on the bridging power of art and sport (*Black and White. Colour*: Opening invitation).

The exhibition was hosted by Moreland City Council as part of reconciliation celebrations. The opening event included a traditional Aboriginal Welcome and Indigenous dancers.

### Date/s

30 May – 22 June 2003

### Location – Primary Study Area

Brunswick Town Hall, 233 Sydney Road, Brunswick

### Source/s

#### Written Sources

McKeown 2004

*Black and White. Colour*, exhibition opening invitation, Counihan Gallery  
<http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/services/counihangallery.htm>

## Theme/s

5.0 Work  
14.0 Recreation

## Significance Assessment

The Counihan Gallery is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary association with Aboriginal people and its role in highlighting the political and social challenges that they face. The gallery has provided a place where Aboriginal cultural events such as Reconciliation Week have been celebrated and where Indigenous artists have displayed their art.

# Indigenous Place 18

## Fawkner Leisure Centre

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### History/ Association

According to Gary Hansen the "City of Moreland probably has the highest participation of Indigenous people engaging in council services..." (Gary Hansen Interview GH2). In addition the Council also takes on Indigenous people for one year traineeships. Russell Weston participated in the traineeship programme for 2005, working in the part of Council that deals with Recreation, Youth and Leisure.

From January to about April I also got on-the-job work as a trainee operations manager at the Fawkner Leisure Centre - learning about how the centre operates, about budgets, about people that visit the centre. I was able to sit in on the management team... It was good experience but I've done more – the council has given a lot for sport so we as an Aboriginal community know more about Moreland Council (Russell Weston Interview RW1).

As part of his traineeship and ongoing work at the Fawkner Leisure Centre, Russell became a trained lifeguard:

March, 2005 I got my lifeguard and first aid, it was really good... I think I'm only the second (Aboriginal) male lifeguard in Victoria (Russell Weston Interview RW1).

### Date/s

2005 to date

### Location – Primary Study Area

79-83 Jukes Road, Fawkner. Melways Reference 17 J2

### Source/s

#### Oral Information Sources

Russell Weston Interview RW1  
Gary Hansen Interview GH2

## Theme/s

5.0 Work

## Significance Assessment

The Fawkner Leisure Centre is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal associations as a place of employment for Aboriginal people.

# Indigenous Place 19

## Corpus Christi College

### History

The Murray children were the only Aboriginal children living in the Glenroy community in the 1950s – 1970s. During this time all of the eight children participated in sport at school:

Yes yep we enjoyed sport. And sport I guess was, you know, sport always helps to break down barriers, it doesn't matter where it is or what it is... (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Many of the five boys played football at local clubs. As a teenager Gary Murray played for the Corpus Christi football club in the 1960s:

Yeah, Gary was quite good in that, they won a few finals and that... They'd been the only [Aboriginal boys] (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

### Date/s

c. 1960s – 1970s

### Location – Primary Study Area

Corpus Christi school, Glenroy. Melways Reference 16 J2.

### Source/s

#### Oral Information Sources

Bev Murray Interview BM1  
Nora Murray Interview NM1

### Theme/s

14.0 Recreation

## Significance Assessment

Corpus Christi College is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association as the places where local Aboriginal people played football in the 1960s.

# Indigenous Place 20

## Drinking spot, Pascoe Vale

### History/ Association

The Murray family have lived in nearby Glenroy since the 1950s. Bev Murray can remember her brothers buying alcohol from the Pascoe Vale Hotel to drink nearby at a small creek off the Moonee Ponds Creek:

Bev Murray: When we were young teenagers before we were allowed to drink, I don't know, underage, we used to go Pakko Creek and get one of the older boys to go and get some beer from the Pakko, and Herbie (Edwards) he was coming back with a dozen bottles, real happy he was, all the boys waiting, and the cops pulled up and took Herbie and the bottles away. So he missed out on a dozen bottles (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Nora Murray: Unknown to my husband and I, of course (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

### Date/s

c. 1960s – c. 1970s

### Location – Primary Study Area

Westbreen Creek, Austin Crescent Reserve, Pascoe Vale. Approximate Melways Reference 16 K9.

### Source/s

#### Oral Sources

Bev Murray Interview BM1

### Theme/s

14.0 Recreation

## Significance Assessment

The Westbreen Creek drinking spot near the Pascoe Vale Hotel is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal association as the place where the Murray children would gather when they were teenagers in the 1960s and 1970s with some of their friends to drink.

# Indigenous Place 21

## Pascoe Vale Tavener Hotel, Pascoe Vale

### History/ Association

According to Joe Narbaluk, Aboriginal people had gathered at the Pascoe Vale Hotel since the 1960s until a few years ago when they introduced poker machines (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

Joe recalls that in the 1960s Terry Hood rode through the hotel on a horse (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

The Murray family have lived in nearby Glenroy since the 1950s. Bev Murray can remember her brothers buying alcohol from the Pascoe Vale Hotel to drink by the Pascoe Vale Creek:

Bev Murray: When we were young teenagers before we were allowed to drink, I don't know, underage, we used to go Pakko Creek and get one of the older boys to go and get some beer from the Pakko, and Herbie (Edwards) he was coming back with a dozen bottles, real happy he was, all the boys waiting, and the cops pulled up and took Herbie and the bottles away. So he missed out on a dozen bottles (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Nora Murray: Unknown to my husband and I, of course (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

When the Murray children were of legal drinking age they frequented the pub:

Yeah... And it was only when Gary...started getting involved in the Aboriginal community too, so then we started going over to Fitzroy and the Builders and what not (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

### Date/s

c. 1960s – c. 1980s

### Location – Primary Study Area

12 Railway Parade, Pascoe Vale.

## Source/s

### Oral Sources

Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1  
Bev Murray Interview BM1

## Theme/s

14.0 Recreation

## Significance Assessment

The Pascoe Vale Hotel is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal association as a place where local Aboriginal people would gather to socialise from the 1960s to 1980s.

## Indigenous Place 22

### Brunswick Town Hall, Brunswick City Council

#### History/ Association

The Brunswick City Council flew the Aboriginal flag for the first time for any local government at the Brunswick Town Hall in 1991:

"In 1991, the Aboriginal flag was flown (for the first time as far as can be established) from the Brunswick Town Hall from Monday 2 September 1991-Sunday 8 September 1991 in support of National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week" (Moreland Council Archives, File 230/7/2: Flying the Aboriginal flag by Brunswick City Council and Moreland City Council).



Plate 19: Brunswick Town Hall

In 1992 the Brunswick City Council flew the Aboriginal flag at Brunswick Town Hall on Wed 27 May 1992 to mark 25 years of Citizenship since the Referendum in 1967. On 2 February 1993, the Brunswick Council again flew the Aboriginal flag in recognition of International Year of the World's Indigenous People (1993) as proclaimed by the United Nations (Moreland Council Archives, File 230/7/2: Flying the Aboriginal flag by Brunswick City Council and Moreland City Council).

The Town Hall and Municipal Offices are listed as a Heritage Place in the Moreland Planning Scheme (HO153), Heritage Overlay – Schedule).

## Date/s

1991 - 1993

## Location – Primary Study Area

233 Sydney Rd, Brunswick

## Source/s

### Written Sources

Moreland Council Archives, File 230/7/2: Flying the Aboriginal flag by Brunswick City Council and Moreland City Council, prepared by Frances Grindlay, Sept. 2004

## Theme/s

10.0 Government

## Significance Assessment

The Brunswick Town Hall is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association. It is of significance to Aboriginal people as the place where the Aboriginal flag was flown for the first time by any local government council in Victoria. The Aboriginal flag continued to be flown in acknowledgement of Indigenous people on significant dates.

## Indigenous Place 23

# Victorian P-12 College of Koorie Education (former Glenroy High School, Box Forest campus), Glenroy campus

### History/ Association

In the 1960s and 1970s the eight children in the Murray family (Diana, Stephen, Gary, Brian, Margaret, Wayne, Bev and Greg) attended Glenroy High School close to their home. They were the only Aboriginal children in the area and at the school:

We were the first Aboriginal family to move out here. ...My brothers earned a reputation as the Murray boys. Because around here it was very tough, very tough neighbourhood It was everybody, everybody, you had Maltese, Germans, every nationality... (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

The five Murray boys were well known in the school and the community:

Bev Murray: Oh yeah, the boys were very popular...you know in their teenage years they had a lot of friends (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Nora Murray: And of course the girls loved them and there was a lot of jealousy between our, you know the white boys of course, and our boys because they were the ones who got all the girls (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Bev Murray: All the pretty girls, hey (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Bev Murray recalls the sport they played at the school:

Yes yep we enjoyed sport. And sport I guess was, you know, sport always helps to break down barriers, it doesn't matter where it is or what it is... Oh, we played everything from you know netball to basketball, hockey...soccer... Yeah, we did everything... Cricket too, cricket, Gary was into cricket, and it must be footy for the boys (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Years later the Box Forest campus of Glenroy High School closed down and the site is now the location of an Aboriginal school. In 1995 a new education initiative for Aboriginal children was launched in Victoria with two campuses of the Koorie Open Door Education (KODE) schools established in Morwell, and Glenroy in the City of Moreland. KODE state schools, funded by the state government, offer standard kindergarten to year 12 curriculum to mainly Aboriginal children but also to children of non-Aboriginal background that attend.

The KODE philosophy is founded upon the dreams of Koorie Elders which have been clearly articulated over many decades in a variety of contexts. The KODE campus has a brief to provide the best of Indigenous and the best of Western knowledge in an educational environment that while welcoming all, is firmly based upon key Koorie values of community and respect. This school has resulted in significant structural, curriculum, pedagogy and paradigm shifts creating a holistic



Plate 20: KODE School

educational package that is improving rates of access, attendance, retention and success (KODE profile 18/06/02: 2).

There are currently four KODE schools in Victoria including the campuses in Morwell and Glenroy and also campuses in Mildura and Swan Hill. The locations for school campuses were decided based on the demographic of Aboriginal children in these areas. Glenroy is part of the "northern wedge" of indigenous settlement in Melbourne which stems from Fitzroy, northward including the Moreland, Darebin and Hume local government areas as far north as Craigieburn (Barney Stephens Interview BS1). About 50 Aboriginal children (or 75% of the student population) attend the KODE school in Glenroy. These students' families originate principally from Mildura, Shepparton and Gippsland and from places as north as the Central Desert and Queensland. According to Barney Stephens most of these children would have been born in Melbourne but some relate very strongly to their "roots, from where their parents and grandparents are from" (Barney Stephens Interview BS1). The school promotes a community attitude to learning which is important for encouraging involvement from "family Elders" and getting children to attend school (Barney Stephens Interview BS1). The school's culturally sensitive approach and inclusion of indigenous studies means that children can still feel a link with their culture even while at school. In

particular it is the understanding environment fostered at KODE which takes into account the needs of children to be absent from school to return to country for family commitments and understands the difficulty of getting children to school, which makes it an important place in the area for the families of Aboriginal students who extend north to Roxburgh, south to Coburg, east to Heidelberg west and west to Pascoe Vale (Barney Stephens Interview BS1).

KODE is well placed in Glenroy as many Aboriginal people live around the Glenroy, Hadfield, Broadmeadows area:

...everybody [who] stays at Glenroy one way or another or has known of Kode school and sends their kids there because, you know people think well you know, it's the only way that my kids are going to learn without being prejudiced and racism and taught where it's an Indigenous school where it addresses the needs the issues of Indigenous and it's controlled by Indigenous people, so you know, it's got that community involvement which is really important for kids, I mean, always making sure that who they are, at sports, causing respect, you know... But yeah, Broadie, Glenroy has always been a travel route for Indigenous people because basically that's where the high level, of housing, the public housing was in those days (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

Gary Hansen and the Brunswick Power Football Club see the KODE School as an important part in developing sport opportunities for young Aboriginal people:

We're currently negotiating with the AFL to, to have an Indigenous Football College where, where a set of criteria is attached where we're encouraging Indigenous footballers who want to take football, sports instruction as a career that we're to develop a football course in conjunction with AFL, KODE school and as so we can ...sporting achievements and our economical goals too, opportunities, and we're, KODE school is great diverse school that deals with a whole lot of issues and we think that it will be centrally located for everybody because there's you know there's a bus run so bus can go round pick up the students or there's community buses that pick up, pick up other kids and so's all this development of partnerships around everything that KODE School given the right opportunities would be the ideal place for developing Indigenous sports, football as sports, because we've got some of the great clubs like Brunswick Power we're hoping you know we have an affiliation with the college so we get the best of their players who aren't being picked up in the colleges (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

The Murray family still have associations with the former Glenroy High school, now KODE school:

Nathan was here, Nathan Lovett Murray, the footballer, he's our nephew, and he would go over there to give talks to the kids, sort of footy clinic with them and that's about it. The school, yeah, my nephew, my Cody, Wayne's son, he's supposed to be going there this year, he's starting there. But, they, I've been over there, and they need a big injection of resources, you know (Bev Murray Interview, BM1).

Bev Murray believes the school needs more funding in order to develop and achieve the same facilities as other public schools.

They've got areas there that need to be developed and I mean, there's also white kids going there. They wouldn't be like that. It shouldn't be tolerated. They should have all the resources they need, those kids... I congratulate them on, on it's surviving this long, really. And I'd like to see it developed further, they've got all that space there, but they need more funding support. Those kids should have their own social area, with all the amenities that they need and they've got very little (Bev Murray Interview, BM1).

At the beginning of 2006 the four KODE campuses amalgamated to form a new school, The Victorian P-12 College of Koorie Education. The four campuses are still retained (Barney Stephens Interview BS1).

## Date/s

Glenroy High School: 1960s – 1970s

Victorian P-12 College of Education (formerly KODE), Glenroy Campus: 1995 to date

## Location – Primary Study Area

Former Box Forest Secondary College campus, Hilton Street, Glenroy

## Source/s

### Oral Information Sources

Bev Murray Interview BM1

Barney Stephens Interview BS1

Gary Hansen Interview GH2

### Written Sources

KODE profile 18/06/02: 2

## Theme/s

5.0 Work

11.0 Education

14.0 Recreation

15.0 Self-determination

## Significance Assessment

The Victorian P-12 College of Koorie Education (formerly KODE school/Glenroy High School), is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association as a place where many Aboriginal people attended school from the 1960s until the present. The school is one of four unique campuses designed to provide Aboriginal children with a culturally sensitive educational environment that encourages them to remain at school.

## Indigenous Place 24

### Brunswick Music Festival

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#### History/ Association

The Brunswick Music Festival has been held every year in March since 1989: "Indigenous music has been part of the Brunswick Music Festival since the 1980s" (Moreland City Council's Reconciliation Policy and Action Plan 2001- 2004). Ian Hunter's Aboriginal dance troop, Ngarragee, performed a dance at the opening of the Brunswick Music Festival on Sydney Road in 2000, enacting the creation story of the creeks and rivers in the Melbourne area. This dance was commissioned by the Moreland City Council in 2000. Ian Hunter explains the story behind this dance:

...the story was about the creeks and rivers that formed the creeks, how the creeks and rivers were formed in and around Moreland. So it was a story of the...Merri Creek, Moonee Ponds Creek, and it included other creeks and so forth and told by Barak but a long while ago, up in the mountain country, it was a great big lake and those creeks didn't flow and Port Phillip Bay wasn't there...the other story is how the Woiwuring people were camped up where sort of the Upper Yarra Dam is now, and they were sick and tired of eating fish all the time, fish and eels... a couple of old men told the young fellows to dig a trench, and to dig trenches out to let all the water go away because they were sick and tired of eating fish and they'd heard about the Bunurung people down in the low country eating kangaroo and possum... (Ian Hunter Interview IH1).

Ian Hunter described how this story was enacted through dance:

...so we created a dance, we actually even created a song, the song went along the lines of, 'sick and tired of eating fish, eating fish, eating fish, heard about people eating kangaroo, possum and emu stew', so ...I translated that into our song ...and we did the dance to that whereby it started off with...the men were hunting with spears in the dance, looking for fish in the creeks and the women were also looking in the creeks and that for yabbies and things like that. And then the old man telling the boys to go and dig the trench and the water kept coming, filling up the trenches, and then one old man said 'no, you fellas are doing it wrong, you've got to go down there, Bunurung country, and dig the trenches up'. So you get the young fellows digging the trenches and other people still in their canoes looking for food, so you have to distinguish between digging and the canoe action, and then of course so what happened then, you dig the big trenches, all the water inundates, where forms Merri Creek, Yarra River, and all those creeks... And then the end of the story is our people are hunting, but instead of hunting and looking on the ground... they're looking in front of them, and the women are actually looking in the trees with sugar bag...we had a weekend

where we actually created the dance, and we had people ...who were actually martial arts experts... And the end of the story...we did use, not only traditional movement but we actually...made manual pyramids whereby there was one guy hanging off another guy, so that was a tree... So as well as the traditional movement we had this pyramid built out of male bodies and the women were picking that sugar bag off the tree (Ian Hunter Interview IH1).

## Date/s

1980s to date

## Location – Primary Study Area

Sydney Road, Brunswick

## Source/s

### Oral Information Sources

Ian Hunter Interview, IH1

### Written Sources

Moreland City Council's Reconciliation Policy and Action Plan 2001- 2004

## Theme/s

5.0 Work

14.0 Recreation

15.0 Self-Determination

## Significance Assessment

The Brunswick Music Festival is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary celebration of Indigenous music and dance. The Brunswick Music Festival has enabled Indigenous performers such as the Ngarragee dance troupe to share their interpretation of a traditional Woiwurung creation story with the wider community, educating the public about Aboriginal cultural practices and beliefs.

## Indigenous Place 25

# Moreland City Council, Moreland Civic Centre, Coburg

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### History/ Association

"The City of Moreland was created in 1994, from the amalgamation of Brunswick and Coburg and the southern portion of Broadmeadows. For two years it was governed by three commissioners, and the local government of Moreland consisting of ten Councillors was democratically elected in March 1996" (Moreland Council Archives, File 230/7/2: Flying the Aboriginal flag by Brunswick City Council and Moreland City Council).

Moreland City Council's commitment to Indigenous issues is reflected in their acknowledgement of historical injustices experienced by Aboriginal people and its recognition of the importance of reconciliation:

"Moreland is determined to build a local reconciliation movement that will lead to a broadly based understanding of our histories. We want to listen and to learn, to spend time telling our stories, to achieve, to achieve a more profound and lasting dialogue, and to take practical steps to redress historical injustices" (Moreland Council Archives, File 110/195/1 Part 1: Speech by Mayor Rod Higgins, Civil Reception and Flag Raising Coburg Municipal Complex).

The first Moreland reconciliation policy and action plan was created and implemented 1996-2001. The second reconciliation policy and action plan was created and implemented 2002-2004 (Moreland Council Archives, File 230/7/2: Flying the Aboriginal flag by Brunswick City Council and Moreland City Council).



Plate 21: Moreland Civic Centre

"As related notions, on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2004, Moreland City Council resolved support for a national Indigenous public holiday on an appropriate day to be selected by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, for example, NAIDOC Day June 5th" (Moreland Council Archives, File 230/7/2: Flying the Aboriginal flag by Brunswick City Council and Moreland City Council).

As part of Aboriginal Reconciliation Week a ceremony was held on Thursday 29 May 1997 at the Coburg Municipal Office (now Moreland City Council buildings) at which the Aboriginal flag was raised and flown (Moreland Council Archives, File: 110/195/1p1). Elders from the Wurundjeri (traditional owners of the Moreland area) attended the ceremony (Moreland Council Archives, File 110/195/1 Part 1: Civil Reception and Flag Raising Coburg Municipal Complex). Councillor Rod Higgins, Mayor of Moreland in 1997 to 1998 gave a speech at the occasion reinforcing the council's commitment to Reconciliation and Aboriginal people:

I want to take this opportunity on behalf of the people of Moreland, in the knowledge that all of us must own and learn from our real history to give an unequivocal apology for the past policy of stealing Aboriginal children from their parents. On behalf of the people of Moreland, I apologise too for the confiscation of Aboriginal lands and the dispossession suffered by many Aboriginal people. On behalf of the people of Moreland. I apologise for past policies that attempted to destroy vast amounts of Aboriginal knowledge, language, and culture – that sought to extinguish traditional practices and ways of life, and that attempted to damage Aboriginal spirituality and management of the land. We recognise the pain and trauma experienced by generations of Indigenous Australians and their families. We acknowledge our past blindness to these injustices, and that these injustices have resulted in a good measure of the prosperity now enjoyed by white Australians (Moreland City Council's Reconciliation Policy and Action Plan 2001-2004).

Other Reconciliation Weeks were celebrated by the Council in the following ways:

Reconciliation week (May 27-3 June 2000) was celebrated by Moreland City Council with a "Ngarragee Willam" camp out at CERES on weekend of May 27-28, 2000. The purpose was to "engage in discussion, addressing issues relevant to Wurundjeri culture, rights, place and identity. This activity will take place on two levels under a primary theme of the development of 'Wominji-Ka' (welcome to this our land)" (Moreland Council Archives, File 030/020/19 Part 1: Reconciliation Week proposal from Ian Hunter and Moreland City Council to Ceres Committee of Management).

Reconciliation week (May 2001) was celebrated by Moreland City Council with "Wadumba Willam" a celebration of Indigenous Arts (Moreland Council Archives, File 030/020/19 Part 1)

According to Gary Hansen the "City of Moreland probably has the highest participation of Indigenous people engaging in council services..." (Gary Hansen Interview GH2). In addition the Council also takes on Indigenous people for one year traineeships. Russell Weston participated in the traineeship programme for 2005, working in the part of Council that deals with Recreation, Youth and Leisure.

From January to about April I also got on-the-job work as a trainee operations manager at the Fawkner Leisure Centre - learning about how the centre operates, about budgets, about people that visit the centre. I was able to sit in on the management team... It was good experience, I've done more – the council has given a lot for sport so we as an Aboriginal community now know more about Moreland Council (Russell Weston Interview RW1).

Russell believes the Council needs an Aboriginal person working full time to deal with Aboriginal issues:

Because of blackfellas being black, they want to be asking blackfellas (Russell Weston Interview RW1).

The Coburg Municipal Offices are listed as a Heritage Place in the Moreland Planning Scheme (HO204), Heritage Overlay – Schedule).

## Date/s

1994 - present

## Location – Primary Study Area

Moreland Civic Centre, 88-92 Bell Street, Coburg

## Source/s

### Oral Sources

Gary Hansen Interview GH2  
Russell Weston Interview RW1

### Written Sources

Moreland Council Archives, File: 110/195/1p1: Councillor Rod Higgins introduction to the civic Reception and flag raising, 29 May 1997  
Moreland Council Archives, File 230/7/2: Flying the Aboriginal flag by Brunswick City Council and Moreland City Council, prepared by Frances Grindlay, Sept. 2004  
Moreland Council Archives, File 030/060/4  
Moreland Council Archives, File 110/195/1 Part 1  
Moreland Council Archives, File 030/020/19 Part 1  
Moreland City Council's Reconciliation Policy and Action Plan 2001- 2004

## Theme/s

5.0 Work  
10.0 Government  
14.0 Recreation

## Significance Assessment

The Moreland City Council and Civic Centre are of heritage interest for their social value because of their strong acknowledgement of Indigenous people and culture. The Moreland City Council has openly acknowledged the historical injustices experienced by Aboriginal people and has been actively involved in creating connections with local Indigenous people through processes such as Reconciliation Week celebrations and employment of Indigenous staff in council services and traineeships.

## Indigenous Place 26

### Moreland Hall, Coburg

#### History/ Association

"Moreland Hall is a drug and alcohol service that provides a range of withdrawal programs to assist people with reducing their drug and alcohol use" (Moreland Hall brochure). It services the northern region including the Moreland Local Government Area.

When Kevin Coombs was chairperson at Ngwala Willumbong Co-operative, which helps sufferers of drug and alcohol problems, he also worked for the Department of Human Services heading up their Koori Drug and Alcohol Unit. Kevin was able to source funds to establish a Koori drug and alcohol service in the Moreland area:

[Ngwala] had the opportunity of a partnership with Moreland Hall. At the time there was no drug and alcohol service that catered well for Koories in the Moreland area (Kevin Coombs Interview KC1).



Plate 22: Moreland Hall

From this partnership the position of a Koori Access Worker at Moreland Hall was created. Allan Thorpe, who has a Certificate 4 in Drug and Alcohol, has been working in this role. His responsibilities include enabling Aboriginal people to access withdrawal services and promote the services offered by Moreland Hall to the Aboriginal community. As a well known member of the Aboriginal community, Allan uses his connections to contact people within in the community who may be in need of assistance:

When you grow up already connected and I grew up in the community. I make it accessible and it's about giving 'em a good experience in the service... Making 'em feel comfortable and worthy (Allan Thorpe Interview AT1).

It is important for Allan that he is working for Ngwala an Aboriginal organisation rather than a mainstream organisation with less cultural sensitivity:

Ngwala understand me as a worker (Allan Thorpe Interview AT1).

In particular this typifies the need for his role as Koori Access Worker allowing Aboriginal people to access the mainstream services of Moreland Hall:

They went from nil to a significant number of Aboriginal people accessing Moreland Hall... Once they've (people in the Aboriginal community) made point of contact, my job is to support them – build the trust... And people just now are stating to trust the organisation and seen that it works (Allan Thorpe Interview AT1).

Allan sees his role as teaching staff at Moreland Hall to be “flexible with the way they think” when dealing with Aboriginal people (Allan Thorpe Interview AT1).

Indigenous people don't access mainstream the way non-Indigenous people do unless they are supported through the process (Allan Thorpe Interview AT1).

Other outreach programs around Victoria have visited Moreland Hall to learn about the effectiveness of having a Koori Access Worker delivering the program.

They have seen that model and want to come and learn the model (Allan Thorpe Interview AT1).

Moreland Hall has also been host three times in the last four or so years to statewide forums held for Indigenous Alcohol and Drug workers from across Victoria.

## Date/s

2000s

## Location – Primary Study Area

26 Jessie Street, Coburg

## Source/s

### Oral Information Sources

Kevin Coombs Interview KC1  
Allan Thorpe Interview AT1

### Written Sources

[www.morelandhall.org](http://www.morelandhall.org)  
[www.ngwala.org](http://www.ngwala.org)  
Moreland Hall brochure

### Theme/s

5.0 Work  
11.0 Education  
12.0 Health

### Significance Assessment

Moreland Hall is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association. It is an important place for Aboriginal people within the northern region of Melbourne as a health service that offers a range of withdrawal programs relating to drugs and alcohol. Moreland Hall employs a Koori Access Worker who assists Aboriginal people in the community to access withdrawal services at Moreland Hall and promotes the services offered to the Aboriginal community.

## Indigenous Place 27

# Aboriginal Community Elders Services (ACES)

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### History/ Association

The Aboriginal Community Elders Service (ACES) "became incorporated in November 1987 (Moreland Council Archives, File 090/050/2p1: ACES Background). ACES was conceived as a retirement home/nursing home that would cater for Aboriginal Elders in culturally appropriate ways:

...it started, we always used to date '86, 1986 when a small group of Elders, there's just 5, we were doing an oral history program at Koorie College in Collingwood which is now defunct, and this small group of 5 Elders were writing their stories about their mission days and fringe dwelling days and there were 2 deaths in the community really in adverse circumstances and it upset these Elders very much and they decided, then and there, that they've got to have their own place to care for their people who needed care outside the home (Fay Carter Interview FC2).

The five elders who came up with this idea were Auntie Iris Lovett-Gardiner, Auntie Edna Brown, Auntie Sissy Smith, Auntie Maude Pepper and Auntie Rosie Donk. In January 1992 the caring place opened with a 25 bed aged care Hostel, Adult Day Care Centre and an Elders Cultural Centre (Moreland Council Archives, File 090/050/2p1: ACES Background). An important aspect of ACES is the work it does to renew Aboriginal culture:

I always feel privileged to have that growing up by old people. They were very strong with their love but very strict, very much you know, instilled ethics, and standards for you to live by. And I always, I'm grateful to have had that. And that's the way it was with the old people being involved in the rearing of children and that's broken down over the years as well because of the dispersal of our people, and I mean I always think our greatest asset was the extended family networks that we had, and because of that dispersal that's broken down as well. And ACES very much is working on reviving those principles in our communities...When we, when we built ACES this Elders Cultural Centre, we seen that as the core of anything that we did at ACES (Fay Carter Interview FC2).

ACES is an important health service for the Aboriginal community in that it attempts to address the major issue of premature aging within the Aboriginal community:

A big boundary for us was the premature aging situation that we've got in our community. And our people have been falling through the gaps because they

hadn't reached the age in years that's the bench mark in the mainstream. And we've got younger people who are really aged people through aging health conditions who because they weren't 60, 65 yet, they weren't entitled to care. And so we had a battle getting government to acknowledge that as well. So now they've actually got it written in the Commonwealth has, that we can accept people in 50 and over. Sometimes we have some here at 48 and if they need care, and if we assess that they need care, we'll take them (Fay Carter Interview FC2).

The site location of ACES also has significance for the Aboriginal community:

We're on the Merri Creek and I'd really like to know about this particular site that ACES sit on, because I believe something really good happened here. I believe it was a camping area because it's near water and it's just the feeling that you get here, I'm sure you can feel it now (Fay Carter interview FC2).



Plate 23: Fay Carter

## Date/s

c. 1986 – present

## Location – Primary Study Area

5 Parkview St, Brunswick East

## Source/s

### Oral Information Sources

Fay Carter interview FC2

### Written Sources

Moreland Council Archives, File 090/050/2p1: ACES Background  
Bunj Consultants 2002: 48

## Theme/s

4.0 Living Places  
5.0 Work  
11.0 Education  
12.0 Health  
13.0 Life Events  
15.0 Self Determination

## Significance Assessment

The Aboriginal Community Elders Service (ACES) is of local significance for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association. It is a place of significance to the Aboriginal community as a health and aged care service that provides culturally appropriate care for Aboriginal elders. The service is based on the Aboriginal concept of extended family networks, where ACES is seen as part of the extended family that ensures that the Elders are integrated into, rather than separated from, their community. The services at ACES are unique in that they are available to Aboriginal people from 50 years of age, dealing with the major health issue of premature aging within the Aboriginal community.

ACES is connected to Aboriginal leaders who have made a significant contribution to Aboriginal affairs in recent decades. Auntie Iris Lovett-Gardiner, who was one of the five female elders who decided in the mid 1980s to establish an aged care service for the Aboriginal community, made a long-standing contribution to the organisation until her death several years ago. ACES was also home to Auntie Geraldine Briggs, an important worker in the Aboriginal community who passed away recently.

## Indigenous Place 28

# Coburg Athletics Centre, Harold Stevens Athletics Field

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### History/ Association

The Harold Stevens Athletics Field in Coburg was the location of the Victorian Aboriginal Statewide Athletics Championships held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February, 2006. The event was organised by VAYSAR.

The Aboriginal run Fitzroy Stars are one of the eight little athletics (aths) club at Coburg Little Athletics Centre at the Harold Stevens Athletics Field (<http://www.coburg.coolrunning.com.au>). On average 20 to 35 kids ages ranging from 8 to 15 years participate in the club. Most of these children live in Preston, Reservoir, and Northcote (Allan Thorpe Interview AT1).



Plate 24: Harold Stevens Athletics Field

Some of the children involved in the little aths also play for the Thornbury Basketball Club, and all Koori club that plays at Coburg Basketball Stadium, adjacent to the Athletics Centre:

They have something like 40 odd kids playing, playing basketball, and then some of them also too where it is you've got have the little athletics behind them so some actually zip, you know play basketball in the morning and little athletics in the afternoon, which Fitzroy Stars has actually got a club there (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

### Date/s

c. 2004 - present

## Location – Primary Study Area

Harold Stevens Athletics Field, Murray Road, Coburg. Melways Reference 18 A10.

## Source/s

### Oral Information Sources

Gary Hansen Interview GH1  
Allan Thorpe Interview AT1

### Written Sources

Victorian Aboriginal Statewide Athletics Championship flier, VAYSAR  
<http://www.coburg.coolrunning.com.au/>

## Theme/s

14.0 Recreation  
15.0 Self Determination

## Significance Assessment

The Harold Stevens Athletics Field is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary use as a place of recreation by Aboriginal children. The ground is used by eight little athletics clubs, including an Aboriginal club, the Fitzroy Stars. The Fitzroy Stars provides Aboriginal children with the opportunity to participate in sport, fosters their social contacts and promotes fitness and wellbeing.

## Indigenous Place 29

### Fleming Park, Brunswick East

#### History/ Association

Fleming Park in East Brunswick is the sporting ground of the Brunswick Power Football Club. It was originally the home of the East Brunswick Football Club. Brothers Ted, Ronnie, Les and David Chessells were an Aboriginal family who played for East Brunswick from c. 1977 to the early 1990s. The Chessells boys played for the Juniors at East Brunswick and they were the only Aboriginal children playing for this club. Ted, Ronnie, Les and David Chessells always looked forward to playing the Aboriginal football club, the Fitzroy Stars, and players for the opposition knew to "watch out for the Chessells boys" (Ted Chessells Interview TC1).

The Brunswick Power Football Club is an initiative of Enmaraleek Association Incorporated, an Aboriginal community support agency that serves the north-western suburbs and rural areas. The Brunswick Power Football Club was originally Broady Power, based in Broadmeadows. The Broady Power Club was started by Greg Lovett and Joe Narbaluk from Enmaraleek. Joe Narbaluk explains that the Indigenous community in Broadmeadows is very diverse and is made up of people from every state. According to Joe Narbaluk, the Broady Power Club was set up to:

get em interested in themselves that was a big part of the reason for setting up the club (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).



Plate 25: Fleming Park, Brunswick East

In 2001 the Broady Power football club merged with Brunswick Amateur Club to form the Aboriginal run club of Brunswick Power based at Fleming Park. In 2004 Brunswick Power began

competing in the Western Region Football League. There are currently 180 registered players for the Brunswick Power Football Club, and about 80% of these are Indigenous people with 20% made up of people from other communities including Lebanese and Greek (Gary Hansen Interview GH1). Gary Hansen describes how Brunswick Power came about:

It was an opportunity to merge with the Brunswick Amateurs Football Club, which was also another football club like affiliated football club but it wasn't really a football club... and they were struggling to have numbers so, so a proposition was put together that they incorporate Indigenous people into the club and, and so after that it was, you know, now we've got 180 registered players this from 2005...Brunswick Power, Brunswick Power Football Club, affiliated with the western region football league, yeah, we fill two teams, second, second division, reserves and seniors. We've been here for 2 years, we've you know constantly changing the rules, the rules to, to engage participation with Indigenous people (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

Brunswick Power fields a Seniors and Reserves side, mostly made up of Indigenous people. Every second week of the competition the club plays at Fleming Park:

...so each week Brunswick Power puts on, probably fills 2 teams and probably out of those 50 probably be 85 percent Indigenous people playing, playing, participating each week, coaching, running, water-boys, timekeepers, canteen and everything... Yeah, the seniors and the reserves, like, you know the AFL...yeah so we're trying to encourage more people to come along and participate...we're getting a lot of young fellows coming down to the club because they saw the future of the club and it was a good place to be, and you know, great facilities (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

In October 2005 the club hosted part of the annual Aboriginal state-wide football/netball carnival:

...each October we have the state wide netball football knockout for Indigenous communities state wide...yeah that happened in Taylor where the grand final was...watched by probably by 2 and a half thousand people...3KND were actually calling the game so people who were sitting in their cars could tune into 3KND and they could get the called game and special comments so, so it gave that whole approach that everybody was involved, everybody could get it on the radio and send cheerios to somebody in the car or whatever, state wide, it was really good... Brunswick Power, Brunswick Power hosted the second divisions. We had about 4 games there (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

Brunswick Power Football Club also has good relationships with other Aboriginal community organisations, such as the Victorian Aboriginal health service:

...it's based on community input, I mean it's utilised by whole vast groups of people you know right across the board...now we've just entered into a partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal health service, that they will do all our screening, do all our medical checks, do all our physio...they'll come, come to the club on training nights, bring a doctor, a health worker, to check the players, give

them a physical, you know we've got some some equipment in the club rooms that can be utilised for vascular...checking your heart stuff, vascular workout or something to make sure our players are, are fit to play, because a couple of years ago we lost one of our players due to a heart attack while playing sport and that did rock the club. It's taken probably the club a long time to get over it, the fact that you know, we've lost one of our, great man, great man that's all I've got to say, great man and great supporter (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

The club has also organised a nutritionist's cooking program for the players and their families:

...and then the nutritionist's program be coming in so we're hoping to have cooking program with the nutrition...so give people alternatives to, to carbohydrates and then the diets, so if they're going to training give them, make them healthy on the inside... Oh it can be family, you know family members, mums, dads, whoever has to cook...Come and cook, and players will also will benefit from that because after training then they'll be having nutritionist's programs...nutritionists and everything, gives people other options when they go out shopping, which is nutritious which is garbage, keep that holistic approach. Yeah, physiotherapists will come down when they're needed... (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

Programs such as this will be held on training nights at the club. The training nights also highlight the family centred nature of the Brunswick Power Football Club:

I mean training happens Tuesdays and Thursdays...and then off-season's probably Mondays and Wednesdays...The club is just family, family orientated...dads are outside training while kids are inside participating, doing colourings or watching movies or playing sports or even just running around outside, so, so the whole club...is benefiting from people around there, and people just take ownership because...they're a part of something that belongs to all of them and they all get in and help, clean what has to be done, you know, and...try our best...it is, good social interaction...that whole diverse group...vast range of Aboriginal community members get there so, so you treat it as a meeting place, that Brunswick Power's home this weekend, I'll go down and watch 'em because I know that so and so will be there. You know what I mean, or it's really good on Tuesday and Thursday...on Saturdays now we're going to have a band every home game, every fortnight we're going to have bands...so you know it's a good family environment where people can sit down, watch TV, have a feed, or you know participate in the activities that the club has (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

The Enmaraleek Association have donated a bus and driver to get people to and from these training nights which has enabled many more Aboriginal people to participate at the football club:

Enmaraleek.... They donate a bus with a driver that picks up people living around Hadfield, Glenroy area, picking up players and take them down to training, you know, pick them up, and take them home at the end of the night, drop them off on their front door so, you know, that's been a really great help, you know, but this is how important it is for community access to transport, you know, it's just so crucial

that we know that if we had more people with cars, more people with buses, that we could probably, you know fill... 16s over and over and over again... Buses are 12 seaters so there's... pretty full of people participating, kids, kids get involved too, so it's really good for the kids that are living at home, actually participating in physical activity...(Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

The Brunswick Power Football Club and Fleming Park are very important to the Aboriginal community as a link to good times of the past:

...Brunswick Power and Fleming Park has got a strong history to the Aboriginal community... a lot of our community members have played a lot of sport there in their younger days without... realising now that it, all these years later... we're back as an Indigenous community, as a group actually participating in sport, and it makes them feel, feel special because they're home now... Brunswick men are actually playing for themselves, you know, at home, where they played a lot of good sport, and they were happy times. And we're just trying to emulate... the very successful Fitzroy Stars... and the good times that people did have in their younger days playing sport... (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

Gary Hansen discusses the benefits of the Brunswick Power Football club, and sport in general, for the Indigenous community:

...every communities proud of their football or any sport... that the community has got ownership of, and also it's good for players because ...they know their communities behind them they get people from the community supporting them, in good times and the bad times. And it's really just important to acknowledge that... they have got someone in the family with sporting prowess, and also feeds the ego of the families too... (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

Sport is something that the whole Indigenous community can get involved in, and benefit from:

People don't know how to connect, things like netball, football clubs, bring us together (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

Gary believes that the football club is not just for the men, but that women also play an important part:

...it's all about, families staying together, paying together I suppose... the wives and the girlfriends all get together because they all support... they have what you'd call women's business I suppose, and same as men's business, and the women are very orchestrated in doing things around the club... I think we as a football club we don't acknowledge the contribution that Indigenous women have and women in general around the club have to the football club (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

Gary Hansen would like to see the role of women at the club grow, and he explains that this is about giving people opportunities:

...we've got women on our board of management...we want to see females be part of coaching be part of the professional staff of the club because a lot of women out there ...or maybe they're outnumbering men in the community, so women need to have, give the opportunities to exceed in sports too...give them an opportunity to develop their skills and hone their skills in because...they've been around football just as much as men...Everybody's got a right to get taught and teach, you know, and given the opportunity to at least excel in something that they feel comfortable about...And it feeds your self esteem and self worth and you know makes them feel happy because they're having a go, and they say at least someone give me a go, and they can walk away and say at least I tried, and give 100 percent (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

The Brunswick Football Club is a meeting place for Indigenous people in the Moreland area, and has important social as well as spiritual elements:

...everybody can come to Brunswick Power because it's a meeting place, so it's that tradition...you don't have to participate in any sport ...but you can be there for the social environment and the social interaction, catching up with an Uncle or an Auntie, you might be isolated, you might be living in a couple of streets where you've got no Indigenous people, or you're not aware of your services out there and so all these people coming around the club and they're finding ...who they are and their identity...And you get to know people so it becomes more of a useful resource for them to be about to ensure who they are and the services and what's available to them and what's not available...it's just really important for people to have that spiritual connection to something. You know, anywhere they can call home, whether it's their house, a link, a link to land... (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

## Date/s

1970s to date

## Location – Primary Study Area

Albert Street, Brunswick East

## Source/s

### Oral Information Sources

Ted Chessells Interview TC1  
Gary Hansen Interview GH1  
Gary Hansen Interview GH2  
Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1

## Theme/s

5.0 Work  
14.0 Recreation

## Significance Assessment

Fleming Park is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association as the home ground of the Aboriginal run Brunswick Power football club. Brunswick Power sporting club is an important example of how Aboriginal people can be empowered through sport. The Brunswick Power Football Club actively encourages healthy eating, social connections between Aboriginal people and a sense of community wellbeing. Entire families are involved in the Brunswick Power Football club and the activities organised by it. The Aboriginal community supports its players and takes pride in their achievements, and this has positive outcomes for the players themselves, and encourages them to continue to participate.

## Indigenous Place 30

# Brunswick Football Club, A. G. Gillon Football Oval

### History/ Association

"Since the mid 1860s Australian Rules football had been played in Brunswick, often among teams drawn from brick yards, and in 1879 the United Potteries Club became the Brunswick Football Club" (<http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/ncas/multimedia/gazetteer/list/brunswick.html>).

In 1909 Joe Johnson, an Aboriginal man who played for the Brunswick Football Club became the first Aboriginal captain of a sporting team in Australia and the first Aboriginal person to captain an Australian rules football team in a premiership final at a senior level. (Barnes and Cunningham 2004: 55):

"When the Brunswick star footballer, Joe Johnson, was chosen on virtually the eve of the 1909 Grand Final to replace the injured Dookie McKenzie as Captain of the Brunswick team for their game against Prahran, history was well and truly made. Joe had become the first Aborigine, in the history of football, to captain a premiership side at senior level. Naturally Brunswick's supporters were concerned that the leadership qualities of the super talented Dookie McKenzie would be sadly missed, but those who had witnessed the numerous heroics of Johnson in the centre position at Brunswick did not ever believe that he would let the side down. And that was exactly as it turned out.

Through out the game Joe led the side brilliantly and was instrumental in the team's success. So much so that even the redoubtable Dookie must have been proud of him. The following season Dookie McKenzie resumed the position of Captain-Coach meaning Joe went back to being just another part of the very talented team. But he continued to give Brunswick excellent service until 1912 when Northcote appointed him Captain and Coach, again a history-making event, as Joe had become 'the first black man to hold such a position'. Joe joined the army early in the First World War and after his return was not interested in resuming his football career" (Barnes and Cunningham 2004: 55).

According to Joe Narbaluk, Aboriginal man Graeme Bradley played for Brunswick Football Club in the mid 1960s (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).



**Plate 26:** Joe Johnson (left) (Barnes and Cunningham 2004: 55).



Plate 27: A. G. Gillon Oval

## Date/s

1900s – 1910s; 1960s

## Location – Primary Study Area

Brunswick Football Club Oval, A. G. Gillon Football Oval, Hope Street, Brunswick.

## Source/s

### Oral Sources

Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1

### Written Sources

<http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/ncas/multimedia/gazetteer/list/brunswick.htm>  
Barnes and Cunningham 2004: 55

## Theme/s

14.0 Recreation

## Significance Assessment

The Brunswick Football Club, and A. G. Gillon oval are of heritage interest for their social value because of their association with Aboriginal for recreational purposes. Many Aboriginal men have played for the Brunswick Football Club, at their home ground the A. G. Gillon oval. The Brunswick Football Club also has historical significance to Aboriginal people as the club where Joe Johnson became the first Aboriginal captain of an Australian sporting team the first Aboriginal person to captain an Australian Rules football team in a premiership final at a senior level.

# Indigenous Place 31

## CERES Environmental Park, Brunswick East

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### History/ Association

CERES Community Environmental Park was established in 1981. As part of the education courses that CERES offers, Wurundjeri elder Ian Hunter teaches an Aboriginal culture course in which people can learn about traditional living and the relationship Aboriginal people have with the land. Ian Hunter explains some of the benefits of this course for primary school age children:

I've been at CERES now for 13 years... but I've had other people coming, listening...and they've actually said, 'hang on, you've left half the story out', talking about, we should be talking about massacres to primary school kids. And I said hang on, we don't need to educate kids of those...let's educate the kids and create intrigue, and that's what this stuff at CERES is all about, creating intrigue for young kids to go, 'I want to know more about that', so that when they do become young adults, they can then make their own assessment (Ian Hunter Interview IH1).

This Aboriginal culture course taught by Ian Hunter is very popular:

...I think over a period of over 6 months anything up to 15000 kids come for the Aboriginal program at Ceres. Actually I think with the other environmental and cultural programs, African and Indonesian programs, and various other programs, the Aboriginal program is the most visited (Ian Hunter Interview IH1).

Ian Hunter believes that it is important to teach school children about Aboriginal cultural practices and the diversity of Aboriginal people:

So whether they be junior primary or tertiary students they need to actually listen to who Wurundjeri people are, and be advised and educated on who the traditional owners of the Melbourne region are...and from there we attempt to do some hands on things like be able to create rhythm and maintain a rhythm, and then...learn a little about the intricacies of weaponry and...what certain weapons were used for...so we teach the diversity of Aboriginal people with the programs so the kids hopefully come away with that diversity ideal as well... (Ian Hunter Interview IH1).

Ian Hunter also teaches cultural practices such as grass weaving and collecting bush foods as well as lessons in rhythm and dance:

There's a very limited amount of native food plants in and around Ceres but at least there we talk about some of the food plants get some of the kids to touch, feel, use some of the native grasses to weave, and to make even a little intricate

bracelet or something like that, crush up ochre to show the kids just how traditional paint was made and is still made using water or saliva or other implements...to make ochre...today, year 9 kids ...when we went and walked and I was showing them food plants and stuff like that and I would say have a try of this, have a try of that, some of them were going 'errgh' and talking about you know little tiny berries and people didn't eat food to become sated they ate food because of the need or fulfilment of minerals and vitamins and things like that. Like you know a little teaspoon full of ...ruby salt bush berries has the equivalent of maybe two oranges in vitamin C, and telling them those sort of things...then we went down, I said we might be able to throw boomerangs, but it was too windy...I said Ok, I'm going to leave you guys here and I showed them how to make ochre by crushing up red rocks with a stick, and I left them there while I attempted to throw boomerangs with 3 or 4 other kids...when I come back I want to see you guys looking at maybe a bit of ochre on your body or whatever to see what it feels like... I came back, every last one of them had ochre all over their faces and all over their hands, and then we stood in a circle and I created the heartbeat rhythm with them, 'boom, boom, boom', like the Native American, but the same as ours, and then one of the things I do is I get them to create that rhythm...and then we create some simple movements and dance that works with that...they all involve themselves with that...(Ian Hunter Interview IH1).

In 2000 the Moreland City Council celebrated Reconciliation week (May 27-3 June 2000) with a "Ngarragee Willam" camp out at CERES on weekend of May 27-28, 2000. The purpose was to "engage in discussion, addressing issues relevant to Wurundjeri culture, rights, place and identity. This activity will take place on two levels under a primary theme of the development of 'Wominji-Ka' (welcome to this our land)" (Moreland Council Archives, File 030/020/19 Part 1: Reconciliation Week proposal from Ian Hunter and Moreland City Council to Ceres Committee of Management).

## Date/s

1981 to date

## Location – Primary Study Area

8 Lee St, Brunswick East

## Source/s

### Oral Information Sources

Ian Hunter Interview, IH1

### Written Sources

<http://www.ceres.org.au/>

Moreland Council Archives, File 030/020/19 Part 1: Reconciliation Week proposal from Ian Hunter and Moreland City Council to Ceres Committee of Management

### Theme/s

5.0 Work

14.0 Recreation

15.0 Self Determination

### Significance Assessment

Ceres Environmental Park is of local significance for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association as a place of education where Aboriginal culture and traditional living practices can be taught to the wider community. Wurundjeri Elder Ian Hunter regularly teaches primary school age children and young adults about Aboriginal culture at Ceres. Ceres has also hosted activities for reconciliation week including the dance performance of the Woiworung waterways creation myth by Ngarragee dancers which was commissioned by Moreland City Council.

## Indigenous Place 32

# The Hideaway Club, Moreland Hotel

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### History/ Association

In the early and mid 1980s many local Aboriginal people met and socialised at the Hideaway Club part of the Moreland Hotel:

All the blackfellas would meet there... (Allan Thorpe Interview AT1).

The Hideaway was an important place as it was one of the only gathering places outside of Fitzroy:

The hideaway what a ripper that one, we used to gather, that was the only pub in Brunswick we would meet at... On a Friday night they used to come down... (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

Everybody from Fitzroy...used to go there when the pubs used to close. heaps of Aboriginals used to go there... Used to be a riot, used to be good...everyone mixed. Used to be for free (Lionel Norris Interview LN1).

Often the community gathered earlier in the evening at pubs in Fitzroy and moved on in the night to the Hideaway which was open very late and was more welcoming than other pubs at having Aboriginal people drink there:

I think everyone just about went there... It was a meeting place because of the opening hours and there was acceptance that people would gather there... They would start at the Royal Hotel in George St Fitzroy and then Albion Hotel on Lygon Street on to Hideaways... It was regular outing, usually probably Thursday or Friday (Troy Austin Interview TA1)

That's where you went after the Builders (Builders Arms, pub in Fitzroy) ... Like a Wednesday, Thursday, Friday night, yes... That was one sleazy place, you'd walk in, ....Clarke he was a chairperson on the Aboriginal housing board, he's from the bush, hey, he come down he said, I went to that place, what's that place... I went to this place he said, 'oh, I walked in and I walked out of my thongs, cause the carpet was all', and we all said 'Hideaways', he said 'yeah that's the place', because we knew straight away...

We'd only go down there because it was open until 2 or something, because back then they'd be closed about 11, unless you went to one of the flash discos, and who had money for that, plus it was about who would have a bunch of drunken black fellows you know, in various sort of outfits and that, so we all went there...They'd got there, because that was open until late, if you wanted to kick

on...you knew you could get in, there wasn't someone on the door who was going to look you up and down and check you, what you had on... It was a very rough pub, you know they had great music there, so you'd go there, have a drink and dance, so yeah it was great, and that's all we'd want, somewhere you could go, other black fellows there, have a dance, yeah, that was good, no hassles. It was funny there's still this thing about a group of blackfellas together people look at them, oh, what are they going to do (Bev Murray Interview, BM1).

A bit of a hangover from the old days when blackfellas used to not get in drunk (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

## Date/s

c. 1980s

## Location – Primary Study Area

Formerly part of Moreland Hotel, corner Moreland and Sydney Roads, Brunswick

## Source/s

### Oral Information Sources

Troy Austen Interview, TA 1  
Allan Thorpe Interview, AT1  
Jo Narbaluk Interview, JN1  
Lionel Norris Interview, LN1  
Bev Murray Interview, BM1

## Theme/s

14.0 Recreation

## Significance Assessment

The Hideaway Club is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association as a place where many Aboriginal people from the Moreland area would socialise in the 1980s. It was one of the few gathering places outside of Fitzroy for Aboriginal people.

## Indigenous Place 33

### Brunswick City Football Club, Dunstan Reserve

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#### History/ Association

The Aboriginal football club, Fitzroy Stars merged with the Brunswick City Football Club in the early 1980s for one season, playing in the Essendon District Football League. Troy Austin can remember that the year they played for the Brunswick City Football Club they reached the grand final playing Gladstone Park (Troy Austin Interview TA1). The home ground of the Brunswick City Football Club is Dunstan Reserve.



Plate 28: Dunstan Reserve.

This brief association with another club is often not remembered in the history of the Fitzroy Stars.

"The Fitzroy Stars [Australian rules football club] grew out of the "mainstream" Westgarth football team... By 1973 the Fitzroy Stars football club had been started up through the work of Jono Jonson, Jock Austin, Ronnie Smith and Ross Barnerson" (Bunj Consultants 2002: 25).

#### Date/s

1900s – 1910s

#### Location – Primary Study Area

Dunstan Reserve, Peacock Street, Brunswick West. Melways Reference 29B4

## Source/s

### Oral Sources

Troy Austin Interview TA1

### Written Sources

Bunj Consultants 2002: 25

## Theme/s

14.0 Recreation

## Significance Assessment

The Brunswick City Football Club at Dunstan Reserve is of heritage interest for its social value because of its use by Aboriginal people in the early 1900s to play football.

## Indigenous Place 34

### Bridges Reserve, Coburg

#### History/ Association

Aboriginal man Terry Young played for the VFA Coburg Football Club in the 1980s (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

In the early 1990s the Aboriginal football club the Fitzroy Stars played a grand final match at the Coburg Football Ground – Bridges Reserve (Troy Austin Interview TA1).

“The Fitzroy Stars [Australian rules football club] grew out of the “mainstream” Westgarth football team... By 1973 the Fitzroy Stars football club had been started up through the work of Jono Jonson, Jock Austin, Ronnie Smith and Ross Barnerson” (Bunj Consultants 2002: 25).

Bridges Reserve is currently protected as a Heritage Place in the Moreland Planning Scheme (Bridges Reserve and City Oval) HO31, Heritage Overlay – Schedule).

#### Date/s

Early 1990s

#### Location – Primary Study Area

Harding Street, Coburg. Melways Reference 29J1.

#### Source/s

##### Oral Sources

Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1  
Troy Austin Interview TA1

##### Written Sources

Bunj Consultants 2002: 25

## Theme/s

14.0 Recreation

## Significance Assessment

The Bridges Reserve is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association as a place where Aboriginal men played football in the 1990s.

## Indigenous Place 35

### Coburg Basketball Stadium, Coburg

#### History/ Association

The Coburg Basketball Stadium is home to the Thornbury Basketball Club, an Aboriginal basketball club. Previously the team played at Banksia but have been part of the Coburg Basketball Association for four to five years now:

Coburg basketball stadium has a good affiliation with the Indigenous community, John Brown and Pam Brown have been there...encouraging Indigenous people to play sport and participate in a sport (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).



Plate 29: Coburg Basketball Stadium

The team was started up 15 years ago by Aboriginal man, John Brown and his wife, Pam Brown. John and Pam spend all of their spare time running the club and each Saturday games are played all day at the Coburg Basketball Stadium. Their passion for the under-resourced club is motivated by their desire to get Aboriginal children to participate in sport for health and for social reasons:

It's not about whether you win, it's how much you have fun out there (Pam Brown Interview PB1).

The majority of the children playing for the Thornbury club are Aboriginal, coming from Preston, Reservoir, Northcote, Thornbury and Fawkner.

They come from you know the City of Darebin, I mean all over just to participate because they think, well, you know we're involving ourselves in community issues by representing our community, you know, so yeah, it's quite good, I mean there's a lot of people participating (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).



**Plate 30:** Thornbury Basketball Club, Grand Final 2005, Coburg Basketball Stadium (Photo courtesy of John and Pam Brown)

The Browns play an important role in the community by taking responsibility for the children each Saturday when parents drop them off. In addition to basketball some of the kids participate in the Fitzroy Stars Little Athletics team at the Harold Stevens reserve, behind the basketball stadium:

It makes it hard for parents to get the kids to basketball, it's just really hard as I said. They have something like 40 odd kids playing, playing basketball, and then some of them also too where it is you've got have the little athletics behind them so some actually zip, you know play basketball in the morning and little athletics in the afternoon, which Fitzroy Stars is actually got a club there (Gary Hansen Interview GH2).

The Thornbury Basketball Club now have seven-a-side teams with the majority of the children playing in the under 8s to under 20s. Some of the kids have been selected to play representative basketball playing for the home team the Coburg Giants.

The kids have got so much talent (Pam Brown Interview PB1).

## Date/s

c. 2000s

## Location – Primary Study Area

25 Outlook Drive, Coburg

## Source/s

### Oral Information Sources

Gary Hansen Interview GH2  
Pam Brown Interview PB1

### Written Sources

<http://www.coburggiants.com/>

## Theme/s

14.0 Recreation

## Significance Assessment

The Coburg Basketball Stadium is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use as places of recreation where Aboriginal children are involved in sports.

# Indigenous Place 36

## Gronn Place Flats, Brunswick West

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### History/ Association

People have lived in public housing in Brunswick for short periods of time. Joe Narbaluk lived in public housing in Barkley Street for a while in the 1970s. He recalls some Aboriginal people living in housing in Shamrock Street and the Gronn Place Flats in Brunswick West (Place No. 36):

A lot of Kooris been checked in, over the years, at the Flats without support... Too many people from too many backgrounds (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

The Gronn Place Flats are high density, housing commission walk up apartments. Lionel Norris lived at the Gronn Place Flats for eight years in 1995 to 2002 (Lionel Norris Interview LN1).



Plate 31: Gronn Place Flats

It was only me there. I just used to stay home... One of my friends was Maltese – used to get together and play cricket (Lionel Norris Interview LN1).

Before Lionel lived at Gronn Place, the only other Aboriginal people who lived there were the Chessells family who were placed there temporarily in the 1990s while their Victoria Street home was being renovated:

They kicked us out into a bodgy little flat in West Brunswick (Ted Chessells Interview TC1).

### Date/s

Pre 1995 – 2002

### Location – Primary Study Area

Gronn Place, Brunswick West. Melways Reference 29 B4.

## Source/s

### Oral Information Sources

Lionel Norris Interview LN1  
Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1  
Ted Chessells Interview TC1

## Theme/s

4.0 Living Places

## Significance Assessment

The Gronn Place flats are of heritage interest for their social value because of their contemporary Aboriginal use as a place of residence for Aboriginal people in the Moreland area.

## Indigenous Place 37

### Chessells family house, Brunswick

#### History/ Association

People have lived in public housing in Brunswick for short periods of time. Joe Narbaluk lived in public housing in Barkley Street for a while in the 1970s. He recalls some Aboriginal people living in housing in Shamrock Street and the Gronn Place Flats in Brunswick West (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

It's not usual for Koori families to...you know, stay in the one area, because of economic circumstances, basically... But because of the pressures placed on [other families], and because of economic reasons they moved on (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Unlike the trend of most families to stay in houses for short periods of times and move often, the Chessells family have been living in the same commission house since 1974. The Chessells family moved from Fitzroy in 1974 into commission housing in multicultural Victoria Street in Brunswick:

Our little part of the street is wonderful... We got exposure to Lebanese people and Greek people... Me old man couldn't have picked a better place to live... We were the only blackfellas at the time, very multicultural (Ted Chessells Interview TC1).

For many years Jan opened her home up to members of the Aboriginal community visiting the Moreland area and local people from the non-Indigenous community needing somewhere to stay. The four Chessells boys Ted, David, Les and Ronnie were popular in the Aboriginal community and the wider community. Ted Chessells can remember his friends always coming to stay:

There was always people coming and going (Ted Chessells Interview TC1).

The Chessells house became a significant place at which Aboriginal people gathered. Jan Chessells had a reputation of opening her doors to anyone in the Aboriginal community who need a bed or a meal:

Right from '74 the house was always open. We were the only blackfellas in the area at the time... When we were growing up we even had people staying who just got off the boat. Migrants from Europe and Africa... Magnets, I think we are to nuts... Sundays we had big dinners on. Everyone would come... Everyone always had a feed (Ted Chessells Interview TC1).

Ted Chessells can remember young Aboriginal men at Pentridge ringing to talk to Jan just so they could make a connection with other Aboriginal people:

Young fellas goin' in and out of gaol... They'd ring up from prison. She'd get call sometimes two or three times a day. When they'd get out the first thing they do is come to our house and mum would make 'em a roast. Some people we didn't even know, but we got to know (Ted Chessells Interview TC1).

At one stage in the early 1990s the Chessells family were moved into public housing at the Gronn Place Flats while their house in Victoria Street was rebuilt (Ted Chessells Interview TC1).

## Date/s

c. 1975 – to date

## Location – Primary Study Area

198 Victoria Street, Brunswick

## Source/s

### Oral Information Sources

Jan Chessells Interview, JC1  
Ted Chessells Interview, TC1  
Shirley Firebrace Interview, SB1  
Allan Thorpe Interview, AT1

## Theme/s

4.0 Living Places  
14.0 Recreation

## Significance Assessment

The Chessells house in Brunswick is of local significance for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association as the home of the Chessells family since the 1970s. Jan Chessells is a prominent leader in the local Aboriginal community. The Chessells family opened up their home up to anyone in the community who needed a place to stay or a meal. The Chessells house is particularly significant as a meeting place outside of Fitzroy where Aboriginal people gathered and socialised. The Chessells house is of high social value to the wider Aboriginal community who met there in the 1970s and 1980s.

# Indigenous Place 38

## Merri Creek Waterhole, Brunswick East

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### History/ Association

The Chessells boys including Ted and Les Chessells, used to play at a waterhole on the Merri Creek near the Brunswick Velodrome:

There used to be a little waterhole at the creek, when I went there recently to a show a friend, it was gone and I got so embarrassed... We'd spend our summers at that waterhole. We would ride our bikes down there near the velodrome and explore. I used to collect snakes and lizards (Ted Chessells Interview TC1).

### Date/s

1970s – 1980s

### Location – Primary Study Area

Roberts Reserve, Harrison Street, Brunswick East

### Source/s

#### Oral Information Sources

Ted Chessells Interview TC1

### Theme/s

14.0 Recreation

### Significance Assessment

The Merri Creek waterhole near the Brunswick Velodrome is of heritage interest for its social value because of its use by the Chessells brothers as a place of recreation during the 1970s and 1980s.

## Indigenous Place 39

### Lake Reserve, Coburg

#### History/ Association

The Chessells boys including Ted and Les Chessells used to play at Lake Reserve:

We'd ride our bikes down there and swim, we had our own cubby there (Ted Chessells Interview TC1).

#### Date/s

1974 – 1980s

#### Location – Primary Study Area

Merri Creek, Coburg. Melways reference 17J10.

#### Source/s

##### Oral Information Sources

Ted Chessells Interview TC1

#### Theme/s

14.0 Recreation

#### Significance Assessment

The Lake Reserve at Coburg is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use by the Chessells brothers from 1974 until the 1980s as a place of recreation.

## Indigenous Place 40

### Kevin Coombs House, Pascoe Vale

#### History/ Association

Paralympian Kevin Coombs has lived in Pascoe Vale for many years (Kevin Coombs Interview KC1). Kevin is likely to have been the first Aboriginal paralympian. He competed in his first of five Paralympics in 1960. From 1960 to 1984 he competed in the Australian Men's Basketball Team and was captain of the team at the 1972 Paralympics in Heidelberg, Germany. In 2000 a street was named after Kevin at the Sydney Olympics complex at Homebush.

#### Date/s

c. 1995 to date

#### Location – Primary Study Area

Landells Road, Pascoe Vale

#### Source/s

##### Oral Information Sources

Kevin Coombs Interview, KC1

#### Theme/s

4.0 Living Places

#### Significance Assessment

The Coombs house in Pascoe Vale is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association as it is the home of Aboriginal paralympian Kevin Coombs a prominent figure in the Aboriginal community. Kevin Coombs, who was likely first Aboriginal paralympian, competed in the Paralympics from 1960 until 1984.

# Indigenous Place 41

## Edinburgh Castle Hotel

### History/ Association

The Edinburgh Castle Hotel, at the junction of Sydney Road and Albion Street, was established 1854 (Cunningham 1997: 25). It is the oldest original hotel in Brunswick (Cunningham 1997: 26).

Joe Narbaluk remembers drinking there with other Aboriginal people in the 1970s:

We'd drink at The Edinburgh Castle. A few Koories used to be in a bikees group, and they'd drink there too (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

### Date/s

c. 1970s

### Location – Primary Study Area

681 Sydney Rd, Brunswick. Melways Reference 29 H6.

### Source/s

#### Oral Sources

Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1

#### Written Sources

Cunningham 1997: 25-6

### Theme/s

14.0 Recreation

## Significance Assessment

The Edinburgh Castle Hotel in Brunswick is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association as a place where Aboriginal people socialised in the 1970s.

## Indigenous Place 42

### Union Hotel, Brunswick

#### History/ Association

The Union Hotel in West Brunswick, was built in 1859 (Cunningham 1997: 47).

When Joe Narbaluk lived in Barkley Street, Brunswick in the 1970s he used to drink at the Union Hotel Brunswick with other Aboriginal people (Joe Narbaluk Interview, JN1).

#### Date/s

c. 1960s - 1970s

#### Location – Primary Study Area

109 Union Street, Brunswick

#### Source/s

##### Oral Sources

Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1

##### Written Sources

Cunningham 1990  
Cunningham 1997: 47-48

#### Theme/s

14.0 Recreation



Plate 32: Union Hotel

## Significance Assessment

The Union Hotel in West Brunswick is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association as a place where Aboriginal people socialised in the 1970s.

## Indigenous Place 43

### Murray family house, Glenroy

#### History/ Association

Nora Murray, her husband, John 'Stewart' Murray and five of their children – Di, Steve, Gary, Brian and Marg, moved to their house in Glenroy about 50 years ago, around 1954. The remaining three Murray children, including Bev Murray, were born after moving to Glenroy. The Murray family were the second family to move into their street, and the back of their house was all paddocks when they first arrived:

...when we first come out here I suppose we would be the second family...that moved into this street, and the back was just all paddock but in no time houses started to go up everywhere (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Bev Murray explains that this was one of the housing estates established after the war to accommodate many of the factory workers employed in places such as Broadmeadows:

...this is one of the major public housing estates that were created after the war. And so you had the factories that were built in Broadmeadows and then all housing built around it for the workers, back then public housing were very different from what it is now... At that time people rented, so you had...the dad would go out and work, mum stays home look after the kids and people rented (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

The Glenroy house was very small for the eight children family:

Bev Murray: ...So it was a 3 bedroom house with...the front yard, big back yard (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Nora Murray: It's the same as the old commission houses that you see (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Bev Murray: You can imagine 10 people coming to a small, little... I don't know how we all fitted in here ma (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Nora Murray: It is amazing hey when you think back (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Bev Murray: 3 bedrooms for 8 kids, 3 bedrooms, for 5 boys, 3 girls (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

One of the main reasons the Murray family moved to the Glenroy area was for work. It was not easy for Nora's husband, Stewart to find a job, but he found employment working on the roads:

Well we were on a farm in New South Wales and that was flooded out, so we more or less moved back to Melbourne again. And we moved out here to Glenroy...Yes, that was for work but it was very hard for my husband to get a job in those days for any Aboriginal person to get a job really...but he worked with Reeves on the roads, making roads around here... For Reeves he worked for and also Uta, that was an American company...they moved out, right up the road and my husband, of course in those days we didn't have a car, and it was a bit hard so he had to leave. But he stayed on as long as he could (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

The Murray family were not very well-off, and Stewart Murray refused to take assistance from Welfare. He used to grow his own fruit and vegetables in their backyard:

Bev Murray: Well dad grew a lot of... (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Nora Murray: His own veggies and (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Bev Murray: ...We had the big backyard and he grew we had apple tree, plum trees... pear trees, he grew strawberries, pumpkin, tomatoes, at last stage he grew a whole heap of corn and I remember laying in it...Plus we had chickens. We used to hang out waiting for a chicken to lay an egg out, fight over it. Bantam chickens we had (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

The Murray's also had help from Nora Murray's parents, Pastor Sir Doug Nicholls and Gladys Nicholls, and friendly neighbours:

Bev Murray: We were lucky we had nan and grandfather they helped us a lot, you know (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Nora Murray: Yes they did, yes (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Bev Murray: Hall us through the tough times, and we had neighbours, I remember when, remember Hubbards, gave us all that food (Bev Murray Interview BM1)?

Nora Murray: Yes. He was wonderful he used to work in at the Coles and he'd bring us cakes and you know, which is wonderful... But my husband didn't know that of course (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Eventually Stewart Murray got a job with the Aboriginal Advancement League, through Nora Murray's father, Pastor Sir Doug Nicholls:

[Pastor Nicholls] made his name as a footballer for Fitzroy and that's where he become very famous because he as a good footballer, anyone will tell you in those days... Oh he was wonderful he really was. And then they got the Aboriginal Advancement League...that's where my husband got a job then

there...for the Koori community. And he also ran the funeral services (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

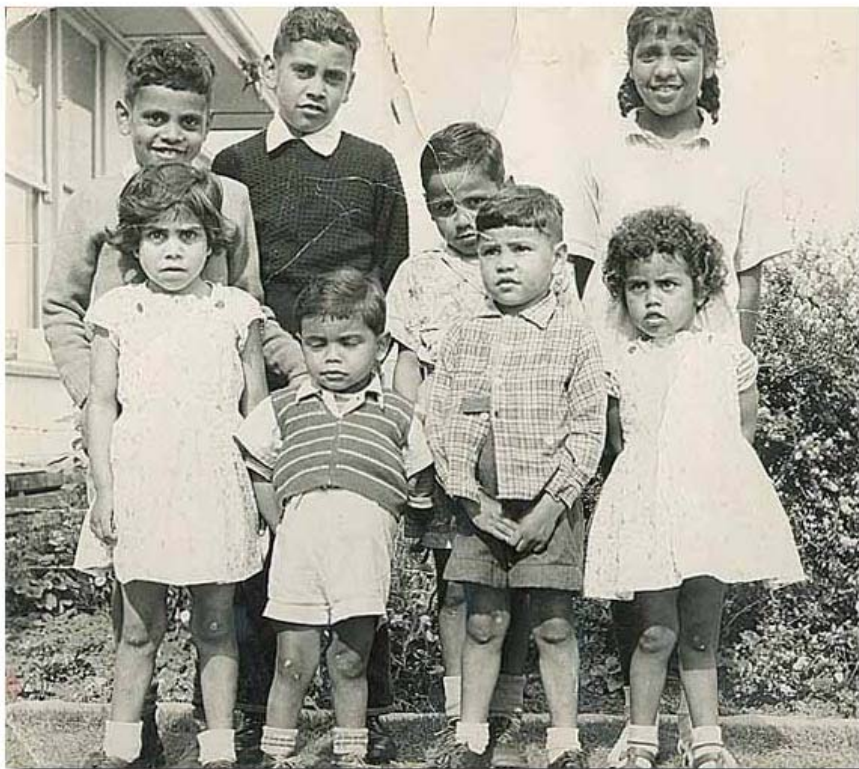
When the Murray's moved into Glenroy, it was a tough area made up of recent migrants from various nations. The Murrays were the first Aboriginal family in the area:

Nora Murray: Oh it was a very tough area, you know, yes... (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Bev Murray: it was everybody, everybody, you had Maltese, Germans, every nationality (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Nora Murray: Every nationality, yes... So it was quite a mixed race really, but we were the only second Aboriginal families (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Bev Murray: We were the first Aboriginal family to move out here (Bev Murray Interview BM1).



**Plate 33:** The Murray children at the Glenroy house (Front L-R: Margaret, Greg, Wayne, Bev. Back L-R: Gary Stephen, Brian, Diana; photo courtesy of Bev Murray).

According to Bev Murray, their family got along well with the migrant families in the Glenroy area. The Murray family experienced some racism but this usually came from white Australians, not from the migrants:

We got on better with the migrants...the ...family on the corner, we were very close to them... But you know the boys being boys, they were able to make friends, that was the other things too, being a big family, the boys were able to make friends anywhere and everywhere, so their friends become your friends (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Despite their financial difficulties the Murray family took a lot of foster children into their home. These children became part of the family:

Nora Murray: Although we were poor we still fostered a lot of kids, didn't we... dad was going to a meeting and I used to think, oh I wonder who's he going to bring home next... (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Bev Murray: ...there was Karen, there was Terry [Hood] and there was David (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Nora Murray: David, and there was little Eddie the baby (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Bev Murray: So...that's four... (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Nora Murray: ...We always shared didn't we, no matter what we had (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Bev Murray: That's one thing that dad taught us kids, sharing and caring, two principles... So those kids, you know they become a part of our family...It's cultural, it's a cultural thing, you welcome someone into your family then you know, into your home, then they become your family (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Another Aboriginal family who moved to the Glenroy area some time after the Murrays, probably in the 1960s, were the Edwards family. They were probably the second Aboriginal family to move to the Glenroy area, but they did not stay very long:

Bev Murray: ...the Edwards would have been after them...They were around this, in the next street right on the corner... So that would have been when I would have been in state school, grade 7 or something, no I've forgotten. I would have been about 10 or something, like that age, because remember they used to sit on your lap and we used to get jealous (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Nora Murray: Yes, the youngest one, Herbie, and he still comes to see us too... (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

There was also Lynn and Alice Young who used to live in Glenroy, but they also did not stay very long:

Lynn Young and Alice... They were just up here at Daley St, they had a house there...That's Glenroy... but they didn't stay there very long either (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Terry Hood, whom the Murray family fostered as a child, continued to live in the Glenroy area. His son Shannon Hood still lives in Glenroy (Shannon Hood Interview SH1).

Bev Murray: Terry was here, he met Joyce and they, they moved in together and they had the two boys... So that was, where did they go (Bev Murray Interview BM1)?

Nora Murray: Somewhere near Jacana Station, they're still living there (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Bev Murray explains that her family were fortunate to be able to stay in the same place as long as they have, and that many Aboriginal families moved out of the area because of economic reasons:

It's not usual for Koori families to...stay in the one area, because of economic circumstances, basically. We were lucky I suppose that...mum and dad stayed together, they weren't drinkers, they didn't have those sort of issues so the family stayed...as a family unit. And with this house mum and dad were renting and...back then you could chose to also buy your house...So it was unusual I guess, that we stayed here in the same place... (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

According to Joe Narbaluk, the Aboriginal boxer and cousin of Lionel Rose, Harry Hayes, also lived in and out of Glenroy and Broadmeadows for years. Harry had lived at one stage in Grandview St, Glenroy, which is the same street where Shannon's Hood family now live. Other Aboriginal people that have lived in Glenroy and Hadfield included Uncle Bob Lovett and Jimmy and Frankie Skerry, and some of the streets these families lived in were Hilton Street, Daley Street, Widford Street and Heather Court (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

The neighbouring suburb of Broadmeadows has many newcomer Aboriginal residents in public housing. Joe Narbaluk sees the community in Broadmeadows as one community including Aboriginal people living on and off in public housing in Glenroy and Hadfield.

This is diverse Aboriginal community, totally different to any other community. All the odd people have been pushed out here... In this community it's people from every state. This community down here includes Brunswick, Glenroy mob... There is a large hidden or suppressed Aboriginal community from Carlton through to Hume, these people never really know where they fit and public housing and the [Enmaraleek] co-op, that's structure for people who never really know where they fit (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

## Date/s

c.1954 – to date

## Location – Primary Study Area

Heather Court, Glenroy

## Source/s

### Oral Information Sources

Nora Murray Interview NM1  
Bev Murray Interview BM1  
Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1  
Shannon Hood Interview SH1

## Theme/s

4.0 Living Places

## Significance Assessment

The Murray house in Glenroy is of local significance for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association as the home of the Murray family for over fifty years. Stewart and Nora Murray were both prominent figures in the Aboriginal community since the early period of Aboriginal occupation in inner Melbourne in the 1930s. First occupied in the 1950s, the home is probably the first public housing place for Aboriginal people in the Moreland area. The Murrays raised eight children and some foster children in the small home but it was also an important place for many Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal to congregate. Nora Murray continues to live in home in Glenroy to this day and her large family is still very active in the Aboriginal community in Melbourne.

# Indigenous Place 44

## Tadpole spot, Moonee Ponds Creek

### History/ Association

The Murray family have lived in nearby Glenroy since the 1950s. The children of the Murray family played in a valley by the Moonee Ponds Creek where they caught tadpoles and frogs.

A few years ago they redeveloped the area, fixed up the creek, built some small bridges and put in some plants so that it looks great now (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

### Date/s

Late 1950s – 1960s

### Location – Primary Study Area

Moonee Ponds Creek. Approximate Melways Reference 6 E11.

### Source/s

#### Oral Sources

Bev Murray Interview BM1

### Theme/s

14.0 Recreation

### Significance Assessment

The tadpole spot on the Moonee Ponds Creek is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use as a place of recreation by the eight Murray children when they were young in the 1950s and 1960s.

# Indigenous Place 45

## Camp at Thomas's residence, Moonee Ponds

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### History/ Association

Aboriginal people camped at Thomas's residence at Moonee Ponds:

"In 1847 William Thomas was resident at Moonee Ponds (Sands and McDougall 1847), where, in February 1848, Aboriginal people from the west and northwest of Melbourne camped (Thomas 1/3/1848 in VPRS 4410, Item 104)" (Clark and Heydon 2004: 20).

### Date/s

February 1848

### Location – Secondary Study Area?

Moonee Ponds

### Source/s

#### Written Sources

Clark and Heydon 2004: 20

### Theme/s

1.0 Traditional/Cultural Places  
4.0 Living Places

### Significance Assessment

Thomas's residence at Moonee Ponds is of local significance for its social value because it is a documented example of early contact between Aboriginal people and Europeans. William Thomas was Assistant Protector of Aborigines and the use of his property as a camp by Aboriginal people is a reflection of the close ties he fostered with the Aboriginal people for whom he was responsible.



## Indigenous Place 46

# Kangan Batman TAFE

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### History/ Association

The Kangan Batman TAFE has a strong focus on Indigenous education and training. The Koori Programs Unit is part of the TAFE, and was established in 1994 to be a welcoming and supportive environment for Indigenous students at the campus. The Koori Programs Unit supports around 500 students, ranging from 14 year olds to people in their 50s. The Kangan TAFE has a variety of courses for Koori communities that encourage further education and employment opportunities. Such courses include business administration, IT, music, art and design and conservation and land management. From July to December 2001, trials of an Aboriginal Footballers Development Program commenced, and in 2002, there was a second intake of students. This course was aimed at 15 to 18 year olds who have the talent to play football at the highest levels or the potential to do well in the sport and recreation industry. It was a two year course, and students would complete Certificate 2 in Koori Education as well as certificates in sport based skills (Kangan Batman TAFE 2002).

The Gunung Willam Balluk Learning Centre is part of the Kangan Batman TAFE in Broadmeadows. The construction of this centre was completed in 2004, and it was built to house the Kangan Batman TAFE's Koori Programs Unit (Kangan Batman TAFE 2005). The Gunung Willam Balluk Centre was named after the Gunung Willam Balluk clan of the Woiworung:

"Named after the traditional owners of the area, the Gunung-Willam-Balluk Learning Centre aims to empower students by merging the cultural heritage and values of the Indigenous people with contemporary culture and cutting-edge learning technology to provide improved outcomes and pathways into advanced learning and employment" (Gunung-Willam-Balluk Learning Centre Brochure).

Wurundjeri elder, Ian Hunter, explained how his brother, Norm Hunter, named this learning centre, and was responsible for its establishment:

Gunung Willam Balluk is the learning centre that Norm named at Kangan Batman Tafe... He was responsible for that centre being built. Cause where that centre is actually built portions of that land was owned by Hume City Council...but Hume City Council actually gave that piece of land to another organisation, so it was a bit of a transfer, and with Norm's pressure...he got some of Hume City Council's ground given back and then the grants came in to assist the building of the Gunung Willam Balluk centre (Ian Hunter Interview IH1).

In September 2005, the Kangan Batman TAFE was recognised for its contribution to Indigenous education and training at the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) 'Wurreker' Awards (Kangan Batman TAFE 2003; Kangan Batman TAFE 2005).

## Date/s

Post contact

## Location – Secondary Study Area

Kangan Batman TAFE (Gunung-Willam-Baluk Learning Centre, Building W), Pearcedale Parade, Broadmeadows

## Source/s

### Oral Information Sources

Ian Hunter Interview, IH1

### Written Sources

Gunung-Willam-Balluk Learning Centre Brochure. Kangan Batman TAFE.

Kangan Batman TAFE. 2002. 'TAFE program nurtures future Aboriginal stars of the AFL'.  
<http://www.kangan.edu.au/news/media-release/2002/02-06-xx-koori-football.htm>

Kangan Batman TAFE. 2003. 'Construction commences on new Koori learning centre'.  
<http://www.kangan.edu.au/nes/media-release/2003/03-06-27-kooricentre.htm>

Kangan Batman TAFE. 2005. 'Indigenous Learning Centre recognised in VAEI Awards'.  
[http://www.kangan.edu.au/news/media-release/2005/05\\_09\\_07\\_indigenous.htm](http://www.kangan.edu.au/news/media-release/2005/05_09_07_indigenous.htm)

## Theme/s

1.0 Traditional/Cultural Places  
11.0 Education  
15.0 Self Determination

## Significance Assessment

The Kangan Batman TAFE is of local significance for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use as a place of Indigenous education and training. The Koori Programs Unit, housed in the Gunung Willam Balluk Centre offers a variety of courses for Indigenous students. The Gunung

Willam Balluk Centre was named after the Woiwurung clan on whose traditional land the centre was built.

# Indigenous Place 47

## Enmaraleek Co-op

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### History/ Association

During the past 20 years increasingly more Aboriginal people have lived in the Glenroy, Hadfield, Broadmeadows and Roxburgh Park areas. Joe Narbaluk and some other Aboriginal people founded an Aboriginal community organisation to help the many people coming into the area:

There was a group of us who had been established in the area and we noticed more and more Koories coming into Broadmeadows and Glenroy... And we were watching these people not knowing where to go or what to do and we thought 'we'll try and pull something together to help these people. In the c. 1985 we set up a group called the North West Koories in a Scout Hall in Bindi Street, Glenroy but we struggled and fell for funding so it only lasted about 12 or 18 months (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

After a failed attempt in c. 1985 the group established the Enmaraleek Cooperative in West Meadows in c. 1988. The co-operative has been based at Central Grove, Broadmeadows since 1998. Joe Narbaluk feels that there is a large, hidden Aboriginal community that is scattered northward from Carlton to the City of Hume local government area. The cooperative aims to help the diverse community by providing a support network for to newcomers to the area, including Glenroy and Hadfield:

People never really knew where they fit... Up until the '70s and '80s if you were coming from out of town [Fitzroy] was the meeting place if you were looking for someone. Now everyone comes to Broady... All the odd people have been pushed out here. Dandenong has similar amounts of Aboriginal people... but in Broadmeadows its people from every state... Diverse Aboriginal community which is totally different to any other people or community The Co-op is some structure for people who didn't know where they fitted (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

Enmaraleek assists Aboriginal people with employment, housing and encourages people to be involved in sport and recreation activities:

We're mainly a CDEP (Community Development Employment Program) organisation... That's our main source of income and through that we provide other services like welfare, a strong sport and recreation program, we do a small housing program... We own five houses that we rent out to Aboriginal people. We work closely with the Aboriginal Housing Board and the Office of Housing in Broadmeadows. We've been encouraging people to go into public housing for 3 or 4 years... We've got bloody good initiatives and good priorities (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

The cooperative plays an important role giving Aboriginal people who might ordinarily feel isolated the opportunity to interact with other Aboriginal people in addition to providing the opportunity for Aboriginal people to access basic necessities such as housing:

We try to encourage applications for public housing. Most people don't even know they're eligible for public housing and they won't go down to the housing office, but they'll come here 'cause they know we'll help them... Around here there's always a bed (Joe Narbaluk Interview JN1).

## Date/s

1998 - present

## Location – Secondary Study Area

Central Grove, Broadmeadows

## Source/s

### Oral Information Sources

Joe Narbaluk interview JN1

## Theme/s

15.0 Self Determination

## Significance Assessment

The Enmaraleek Co-operative in Broadmeadows is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association as a place where housing, employment and recreation services are provided to local Aboriginal people. The Co-operative provides a valuable support network for Aboriginal people from Victoria and interstate.

# Indigenous Place 48

## Plenty Road Camp

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### History/ Association

In 1847 Aboriginal people from the Woiworung, Taungurong and Bunurong tribes camped at Plenty Road:

" On the 25th [May 1847] on going round the neighbourhood I find about 150 Gouldbourn and Devils River blacks in 2 enclosures on each side of the Plenty Road. I immediately insist on their removal, finding a hut at the extremity of one, who had the charge, the party suffer them to remain that night, and on the 26th they left..." (Thomas to Robinson 31/5/1847, VPRS 4410 Unit 4 Item 97).

### Date/s

May 1847

### Location – Secondary Study Area

Plenty Road

### Source/s

#### Written Sources

Thomas to Robinson 31/5/1847, VPRS 4410 Unit 4 Item 97

### Theme/s

4.0 Living Places

### Significance Assessment

The camp on Plenty Road is of local interest for its social value because it is a documented example of an Aboriginal camp during the early contact period between Aboriginal people and Europeans.

## Indigenous Place 49

### Darebin Road Camp

#### History/ Association

In 1847 Aboriginal people from the Woiworung, Taungurong and Bunurong tribes camped at Darebin Road:

'...March...On the 15 several blacks leave the E encampment and the encampment Sth of the Yarra was broken up, there was now but one encampment of 85 blacks, one dangerously ill from the Sth of the Yarra was brought near my quarters who was more usefully attended to. On the 17th some of the Gouldbourne blacks arrive with the noted Billy Hamilton who had not been in Melbourne for the last 18 months. On the 18th many of the blacks returned and the encampment is greatly enlarged...

May...On the 3rd most of the Devils River blacks leave, I think they were terrified at the awful exhibition they had witnessed. I assure them that they need not fear as long as they kept from doing wrong, the encampment is reduced to about 290. On the 4th a party of Yarra and Goulbournes leave...On the 6th more Gouldbourne blacks leave and the encampment is reduced to 184. On the 11th Billy Hamilton the Gouldbourne black is again captured drunk and sentenced to 3 days solitary confinement, this punishment has had more effect than any punishment yet inflicted. On the 15th, a body of Yarra Western Port and other blacks arrive. On the 16th 17th 18th and 19th blacks arrive daily and the encampment is enlarged to 436 so great a body required more than ordinary looking after, their position on each side of a public road was likely to bring them into trouble, tho' it is much to their credit, that notwithstanding their number no personal annoyance was given. Their dogs 700 (?) at least however were so troublesome to cattle and passengers that I heard daily complaints and was under the necessity of removing them.

On breaking up the encampment there were Gouldbourne Blacks 136 Devils River 130 Mt Macedon & NW 82 Yarra & Western Port 88 Total 436. They felt no disposition to remove to the Government Paddock by my quarters so I directed them to a private nook Nth of the Merri Creek. On the 25th on going round the neighbourhood I find about 150 Gouldbourn and Devils River blacks in 2 enclosures on each side of the Plenty Road. I immediately insist on their removal, finding a hut at the extremity of one, who had the charge, the party suffer them to remain that night, and on the 26th they left...

...Considering so great a body during this quarter there have been but few complaints. I may say more if not for white people enticing them to drink that, no body of the same number of whites could be more orderly, the attempt at the bakers shop arose from being in a state of drunkenness. Mr Grant the baker assured me that the Yarra black who was the most outrageous on the occasion was one of his most favourite blacks and who was a daily customer. My being compelled to

remove them from the Darebean Rd arose more from the annoyances of their dogs than any misconduct of them. The principal failures of our laws and the punishment attending the varied crimes in outline are often explained (??) in the encampment by Melbourne" (Thomas to Robinson 31/5/1847, VPRS 4410 Unit 4 Item 97).

## Date/s

1847

## Location – Secondary Study Area

Darebin Road

## Source/s

### Written Sources

Thomas to Robinson 31/5/1847, VPRS 4410 Unit 4 Item 97

## Theme/s

4.0 Living Places

## Significance Assessment

The camp on Darebin Road is of local interest for its social value because it is a documented example of an Aboriginal camp during the early contact period between Aboriginal people and Europeans.

## Indigenous Place 50

### Gathering place at Merri Creek

#### History/ Association

Aboriginal people from the Woiworung, Taungurong, Bunurong and Wathaworung tribes would gather and camp at Merri Creek, at the confluence of the Yarra. Many ceremonial proceedings took place at this camp site:

Gathering at Merri Creek, February, 1844 with Aboriginal people from north and northwest, and Campaspe and Loddon Rivers for judicial proceedings against Worruck (D'Villiers) and Poleorong (Billy Lonsdale) (Broome 1987: 26).

This junction was an inter-tribal meeting place for ceremonies, arrangement of marriages, trade, conflict resolution (Broome 1987: 13-14; Goulding 2004: 33).

There is also evidence of ceremonial activities at this site:

"In 1843 on the Merri Creek five miles from Melbourne, McCabe 'saw a huge and rude Temple of stringy bark, covered with various hieroglyphics in white chalk. The only natives present were old men, and the ceremonies [were] altogether of a very impressive character'. William Thomas also reported ceremonies lasting ten days near present-day Templestowe. 'Huge and strange figures' on bark were used in the proceedings, but when he returned shortly afterwards to collect them some settlers had already taken the bark away for roofing purposes" (W. Hull, 1846 in Broome 1987: 10).

#### Date/s

Post-contact 1840s

#### Location – Secondary Study Area

Merri Creek, at confluence of the Yarra River

#### Source/s

##### Written Sources

Broome 1987: 10, 13-14, 26

Goulding 2004: 33

## Theme/s

1.0 Traditional/cultural Places

4.0 Living Places

## Significance Assessment

Merri Creek is of local significance for its social value because it is a documented example of early contact relations between Aboriginal people and Europeans. It is a place where traditional cultural practices and ceremonies took place.

# Indigenous Place 51

## Ryder Oval, Parkville

### History/ Association

The Aboriginal football club the Fitzroy Stars played some matches at Ryder Oval Parkville in 1984 to 1986 (Troy Austin Interview TA1).

"The Fitzroy Stars [Australian rules football club] grew out of the "mainstream" Westgarth football team... By 1973 the Fitzroy Stars football club had been started up through the work of Jono Jonson, Jock Austin, Ronnie Smith and Ross Barnerson" (Bunj Consultants 2002: 25).

### Date/s

1984-1986

### Location – Secondary Study Area

Royal Park, Parkville

### Source/s

#### Oral Sources

Troy Austin Interview TA1

#### Written Sources

Bunj Consultants 2002: 25

### Theme/s

14.0 Recreation

### Significance Assessment

Ryder Oval is of heritage interest for its social value because of its contemporary Aboriginal use and association as a place where the all Aboriginal football club, the Fitzroy Stars, played some of their matches in the mid 1980s.

# Indigenous Place 52

## Canteen, Broadmeadows

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### History/ Association

Nora Murray's mother and the wife of Pastor Sir Doug Nicholls, Gladys Nicholls, ran a canteen for labourers on Camp Road on the corner of Daley Street in Broadmeadows (Nora Murray Interview NM1):

Nora Murray: My mum she used to run a canteen up on the corner there, you know where the doctor is now, she had a canteen going then... Yeah, and she used to make sandwiches and sell pies and all that sort of stuff (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Bev Murray: That was for all the workers (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Nora Murray:...Yes, all around here. That's going back, gee that's going back a long time... She lived in Northcote...and she used to come over (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

It is likely that Gladys' canteen was one of the first businesses to be owned by an Aboriginal woman. Geraldine Briggs, another important figure in the Aboriginal community, worked with Gladys at the canteen:

Bev Murray: And she created her business. That was her business, so she was one of the first Aboriginal women to have her own business (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Nora Murray: ...You wouldn't believe it. She was wonderful, she was a real business woman... Gladys Muriel Bucks Nicholls. She married a Nicholls (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

### Date/s

Late 1950s? – 1960s

### Location – Secondary Study Area

Camp Road, Broadmeadows

## Source/s

### Oral Sources

Nora Murray Interview NM1  
Bev Murray Interview BM1

## Theme/s

5.0 Work

## Significance Assessment

Gladys Nicholls' canteen in Broadmeadows is of heritage interest for its social value because it was one of the first Aboriginal woman's business enterprises in Melbourne. Gladys Nicholls and Geraldine Briggs, who worked at the Canteen, were prominent figures in the fight for Aboriginal rights in the 1930s and 1940s. This place holds great social value for the Murray family and other members of the Aboriginal community.

# Indigenous Place 53

## Camp Pell, Royal Park

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### History/ Association

In the post-war period there was a great demand for public housing, as many could not afford to stay in the Fitzroy area and while more people moved from the country to Melbourne. A distribution centre at Royal Park, Parkville was established as a makeshift camp called Camp Pell using army tents to accommodate people waiting for public housing.

The reason they came here (to Glenroy) was because this was where the public housing estate was created, this was where people, because mum and dad ended up at Camp Pell, yeah that was emergency housing that was created, I guess you could call it, back in the, back in the, straight after the war and it was army huts that were created around the Royal Park area, so around the zoo, so that's where you had to go first in order to get into public housing... There were some Aboriginal families there the same time mum and dad were there. The Lovett's were there... Mum and dad...they were homeless basically, and you had to go in there to get public housing (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Nora and John Stewart Murray were among some Aboriginal families who lived at Camp Pell in the early 1950s. They lived in a tent there with five to six children for 20 months before being relocated in public housing.

Nora Murray: And the people...Very rough people (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

Bev Murray: Army huts, you know the refuge army huts, that's what they put them in, so it wasn't a house (Bev Murray Interview BM1).

Nora Murray: And you could hear next door, everything that was going on when they'd, oh my gosh... shocking people (Nora Murray Interview NM1).

### Date/s

Early 1950s

### Location – Secondary Study Area

Royal Park, Parkville

## Source/s

### Oral Sources

Nora Murray Interview NM1

Bev Murray Interview BM1

## Theme/s

1.0 Living Places

## Significance Assessment

Camp Pell at Royal Park is of heritage interest for its social value because of its use by Aboriginal families such as the Murrays and Lovetts as temporary accommodation following their move to Melbourne after World War II. The families lived for a time in army tents while they waited for public housing to become available to them in the early 1950s.

# Indigenous Place 54

## Batman's treaty

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### History/ Association

In 1835 John Batman met with a number of Woiworung Ngurungaeta and persuaded them to sign a document which he called a "treaty". Batman asserted that this gave the Port Phillip Association control over 600,000 acres of the surrounding land. The site where this treaty may have taken place is said to be situated close to the present-day Norris Bank Reserve by the Darebin River.

### Date/s

1835

### Location – Secondary Study Area

Norris Bank Reserve, Darebin River? Approximate Melways Reference 9 E12. May have been on the Merri Creek in the Primary Study Area.

### Source/s

#### Written Sources

Batman 1985: 19-20  
Campbell 1987: 94

### Theme/s

1.0 Living Places

### Significance Assessment

The site of Batman's treaty is of high significance for its social value because it is the site of the exchange between John Batman and Woiworung Ngurungaeta (Headmen) that led to the settlement of the Melbourne area and the breakdown of Woiworung culture and society.



## Appendix 6 – Commonwealth & State Heritage Legislation & Policies



## Statutory Framework for the Protection of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

Aboriginal heritage places and archaeological sites in Victoria are protected under Commonwealth and State legislation as administered in Victoria by Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV). Where there is a conflict the Commonwealth legislation will take precedence over the State legislation. In the case of disturbance to Victorian archaeological sites, application for consent must be made to the relevant Aboriginal group as indicated in the Schedule to Part IIA of the Commonwealth *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act* 1984. The relevant group pertaining to the Moreland LGA is the Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation & Cultural Heritage Council Inc. The following information on Aboriginal heritage legislation has been compiled from information provided by Aboriginal Affairs Victoria.<sup>301</sup>

### **Victorian *Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act* 1972**

Except for human remains interred after the year 1834, this Act provides 'blanket' or automatic protection for all Aboriginal 'relics' (including individual archaeological sites, artefacts and human remains) relating to the Aboriginal occupation of Victoria, both before and after European settlement.

Powers and responsibilities under the State Act are assigned to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and administered by Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV).

Under this Act it is an offence to damage or interfere with a relic. Any person who finds a site, burial or artefact must report the discovery to AAV.

The Act also established administrative procedures for archaeological investigations such as:

- ❖ Notification of intent to conduct an archaeological survey (Form D) be lodged with the Heritage Services Branch of Aboriginal Affairs Victoria prior to conducting an archaeological survey which does not have the potential to disturb Aboriginal archaeological sites.
- ❖ Consent from the Heritage Services Branch of Aboriginal Affairs Victoria be obtained before archaeological fieldwork involving disturbance to an Aboriginal site (i.e. excavation, sub-surface testing) is carried out (Form C). Aboriginal Affairs Victoria will not usually issue consents for archaeological fieldwork involving disturbance to an Aboriginal site without prior written permission from the relevant Aboriginal community.
- ❖ Information on all Aboriginal sites and/or places identified during an archaeological assessment must be provided to AAV in the form of completed site record cards and associated documentation.

The Act requires the keeping of a register of identified Aboriginal 'relics'. This register is maintained by AAV.

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<sup>301</sup> AAV. 1997. *Guidelines for Conducting and Reporting upon Archaeological Surveys in Victoria*. January 1997 Revision. Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, Department for Victorian Communities; Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Legislation & Consents to Disturb Information Sheets.

The Act prohibits the sale of Aboriginal artefacts without a permit (excluding items made for commercial purposes). It also restricts the possession, control or display of Aboriginal skeletal remains.

### **Commonwealth *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984***

In 1987, the *Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* was amended to provide specific protection for Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria. These amendments form Part IIA of the Commonwealth Act. Part IIA operates separately from the rest of the Commonwealth Act and is administrated by AAV. It operates in conjunction with the State legislation.

While the State Act provides legal protection for the physical evidence of past Aboriginal occupation, the Commonwealth Act is based on a much broader definition of Aboriginal heritage. The Act deals with the protection of Aboriginal "cultural property", which can include any places, objects and folklore that are "of particular significance to Aboriginals in accordance with Aboriginal tradition". This Act may apply to contemporary Aboriginal cultural property as well as ancient and historical places.

Part IIA grants significant decision making powers to local Aboriginal communities listed in a Schedule to the Act. Part IIA provides for the appointment of inspectors to assist in the enforcement of the Act. It also establishes procedures for emergency, temporary and on-going declarations of preservation to further protect endangered or especially significant cultural heritage places.

### **Powers of Local Aboriginal Communities Listed in the Schedule of the Commonwealth Act**

The Schedule of the Commonwealth Act lists over 20 local Aboriginal communities, most of which hold decision-making responsibilities within a defined community area. The Wurundjeri Tribe Land and Cultural Heritage Council Inc. is the local Aboriginal community listed in the Schedule for the area that encompasses the Moreland LGA. The Wurundjeri can grant or refuse consent to interfere with an Aboriginal place situated within its community area.

In addition, the Wurundjeri can:

- Request emergency declarations to protect cultural heritage places and objects at risk.
- Advise the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs on appointment of inspectors.
- Enter into agreements with anyone who owns or controls Aboriginal cultural property.
- Determine action to be taken in relation to the discovery of Aboriginal remains.

Local Aboriginal communities can also make direct recommendations to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs relating to cultural property in Victoria and on the operation of Part IIA.

### **Consents to Disturb**

Under Section 21U of the Commonwealth Act, a local Aboriginal community can grant or refuse consent to 'deface, damage, otherwise interfere with or do any act likely to endanger' an Aboriginal place or object within its community area. In circumstances where an Aboriginal site or

place is determined to be at risk a 'Consent to Disturb' may be required. Any such application should be made in writing to the relevant local Aboriginal community stipulating the reasons for the consent. Consents may be issued subject to terms and conditions. Examples of such conditions have included requirements for monitoring during disturbance, salvage excavation and/or payment of an administration fee. These requirements need to be fulfilled for the Consent to be valid.

If a local Aboriginal community does not grant or refuse consent within 30 days, or if the project affects an area for which there is no functioning local Aboriginal community, the applicant may apply to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs for consent.

The granting of 'consent to disturb' in relation to an Aboriginal place or object on Crown land needs to ensure compliance with the Commonwealth *Native Title Act* 1993.

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## Other Legislation

### *Victorian Planning and Environment Act 1987*

The *Planning and Environment Act* 1987 applies to Victorian planning schemes and aims "to establish a framework for planning the use, development and protection of land in Victoria in the present and long-term interests of all Victorians".<sup>302</sup>

An objective of Victorian planning as specified in the Act commits local planning schemes to recognising heritage places: "to conserve and enhance those buildings, areas or other places which are of scientific, aesthetic, architectural or historical interest, or otherwise of special cultural value". The Act has also been called upon in the protection of archaeological sites (Section 173).

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<sup>302</sup> *Planning and Environment Act* 1987. Version No. 074. Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents: 1.

### Victorian *Heritage Act* 1995

Heritage Victoria administers this act through the maintenance of two lists: the Victorian Heritage Register, which contains cultural heritage places (sites, buildings, gardens, shipwrecks etc.) and objects that have been assessed as being of State significance; and the Victorian Heritage Inventory, which is the list of known historical archaeological sites and places in Victoria, regardless of significance. Different sections of the Act and the accompanying regulations relate to each list. Disturbance of a site without appropriate Consent to Disturb can lead to prosecution and a fine. It is the responsibility of the proponent to ensure that a proposed development does not pose a risk to cultural heritage values, whether previously known (as in the case of a registered or listed item) or undocumented, possibly through a lack of previous investigation.

### Commonwealth Legislation: National Heritage

In a 2003 overhaul of heritage and environment legislation in three new legislative acts were created, replacing the *Australian Heritage Commission Act* 1975 and the Australian Heritage Commission.

#### ***Environment and Heritage Legislation Amendment Act (No. 1) 2003***

In addition to amending the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* 1999 the Act provides guidelines on the process of nominating places for inscription on the National Heritage List and Commonwealth Heritage List.

The Act protects heritage places of national significance "using the Commonwealth's constitutional powers and managed co-operatively with State and Territory governments and private owners where appropriate".<sup>303</sup>

#### ***National Heritage List***

This list consists of "natural, historic and indigenous places that are of outstanding national heritage value to the Australian nation".<sup>304</sup> "Each place in the List would be assessed by the Australian Heritage Council as having National heritage values which can be protected and managed under a range of Commonwealth powers. Listed places are protected under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999 (EPBC Act).<sup>305</sup>

#### ***Commonwealth Heritage List***

This list consists of natural and cultural heritage places "owned or controlled by the Australian Government".<sup>306</sup> "These include places connected to defence, communications, customs and other government activities that also reflect Australia's development as a nation. As with the National Heritage List, heritage places on the Commonwealth Heritage List are protected by the EPBC Act, which means that "no-one can take an action that has, will have or is likely to have, a significant

<sup>303</sup> Environment and Heritage Legislation Amendment Act (No. 1) 2003 No. 88, 2003.

<sup>304</sup> National Heritage List, Department of Environment and Heritage – criteria for the National Heritage List.

<sup>305</sup> National Heritage List, Department of Environment and Heritage – implications of listing.

<sup>306</sup> Commonwealth Heritage List, Department of Environment and Heritage – criteria for the Commonwealth Heritage List.

impact on the environment of a listed place, including its heritage values, without the approval of the Minister" and "that it is a criminal offence not to comply with this legislation".<sup>307</sup>

### ***Australian Heritage Council Act 2003***

This Act established the Australian Heritage Council (AHC) to replace the Australian Heritage Commission. The AHC:

- ❖ assesses nominations in relation to the listing of places on the National Heritage List and the Commonwealth Heritage List;
- ❖ advises the Minister on specified matters relating to heritage;
- ❖ promotes the identification, assessment and conservation of heritage;
- ❖ keeps the Register of the National Estate (RNE, first established under the *Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975*);
- ❖ performs any other functions conferred on the Council by the EPBC Act.

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<sup>307</sup> TerraCulture 2004: 11.

