

# The Wurundjeri Willam

*The Original Inhabitants  
of Moonee Valley*



# Cover illustration: Destruction of the Land The Red River

Marlene Young-Scerri,  
Brabralung Dreaming

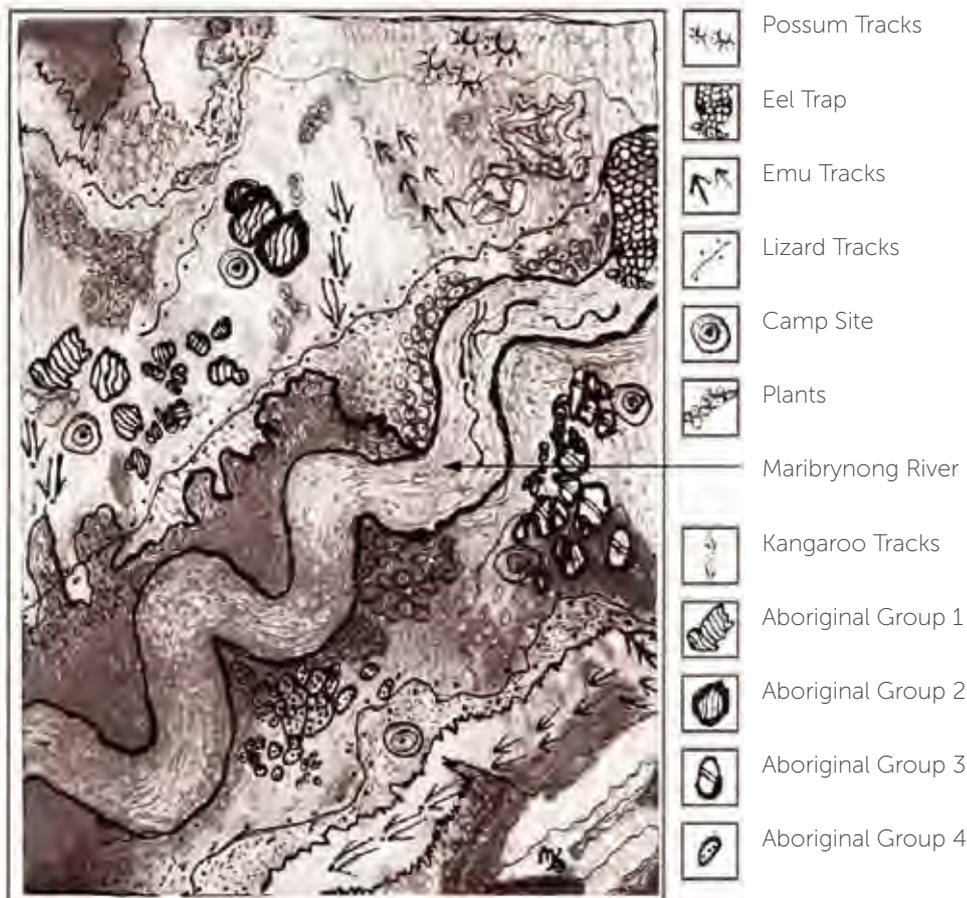
After reading the brief you sent me I was quite saddened to learn how the land was abused and destroyed with no thought given for future generations. Plant and animal life was lost for good and this drove the Aboriginal people to slaughter sheep to survive.

This painting is of the Maribyrnong River, and the surrounding area. The red is the blood that flowed in the river, while the colours on the outer side of the riverbank are from the tanning process that polluted the river. The animal tracks are kangaroo, possum, emu and lizard, and there is also an eel trap. The Aboriginal people hunted all these animals for food and clothing.

Four different groups are depicted here with different markings. This land was once plentiful and well cared for by the people and they had their own system of burning off to encourage new growth for the next season.

Many of the plants have been destroyed for good now, and the animals are not living in the area any more except for perhaps some possums.

Aboriginal people only hunted what they needed to eat, and the skins were used to make cloaks and to wrap babies. They respected the animals, the land and the plant life, only taking what was needed, and they always gave back to the land.



# Contents

The Earliest Inhabitants of the City of Moonee Valley	<b>2</b>
Kinship Structure	<b>4</b>
Way of Life Pre-contact	<b>6</b>
Initial White Contact	<b>10</b>
Settler Impact	<b>12</b>
The Personalities	<b>15</b>
Historical Sites within the City	<b>17</b>
Bibliography	<b>20</b>
Acknowledgements	<b>21</b>

Warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are warned that this publication contains names and/or images of people who are now deceased.

# The Earliest Inhabitants of the City of Moonee Valley

The Aboriginal people who lived in the area which now includes the City of Moonee Valley were not confined by current city boundaries, but lived by complex cultural and traditional movements which were intimately understood by each clan.

These early inhabitants of the region were known as the Woi wurrung and formed part of the East Kulin nation of Aboriginal people who lived in part of what we now call Victoria and included five language groups. The Woi wurrung people inhabited a large area which is drained by the Yarra and Maribyrnong Rivers, from Healesville, Kilmore and Kyneton down past Dandenong, and over to the Werribee River.

The clan that lived within the current City of Moonee Valley boundaries and beyond were known as the Wurundjeri-willam (Clark, 1990). Wurundjeri-willam meaning "white gum tree dwellers" (Clark & Heydon, 1998).

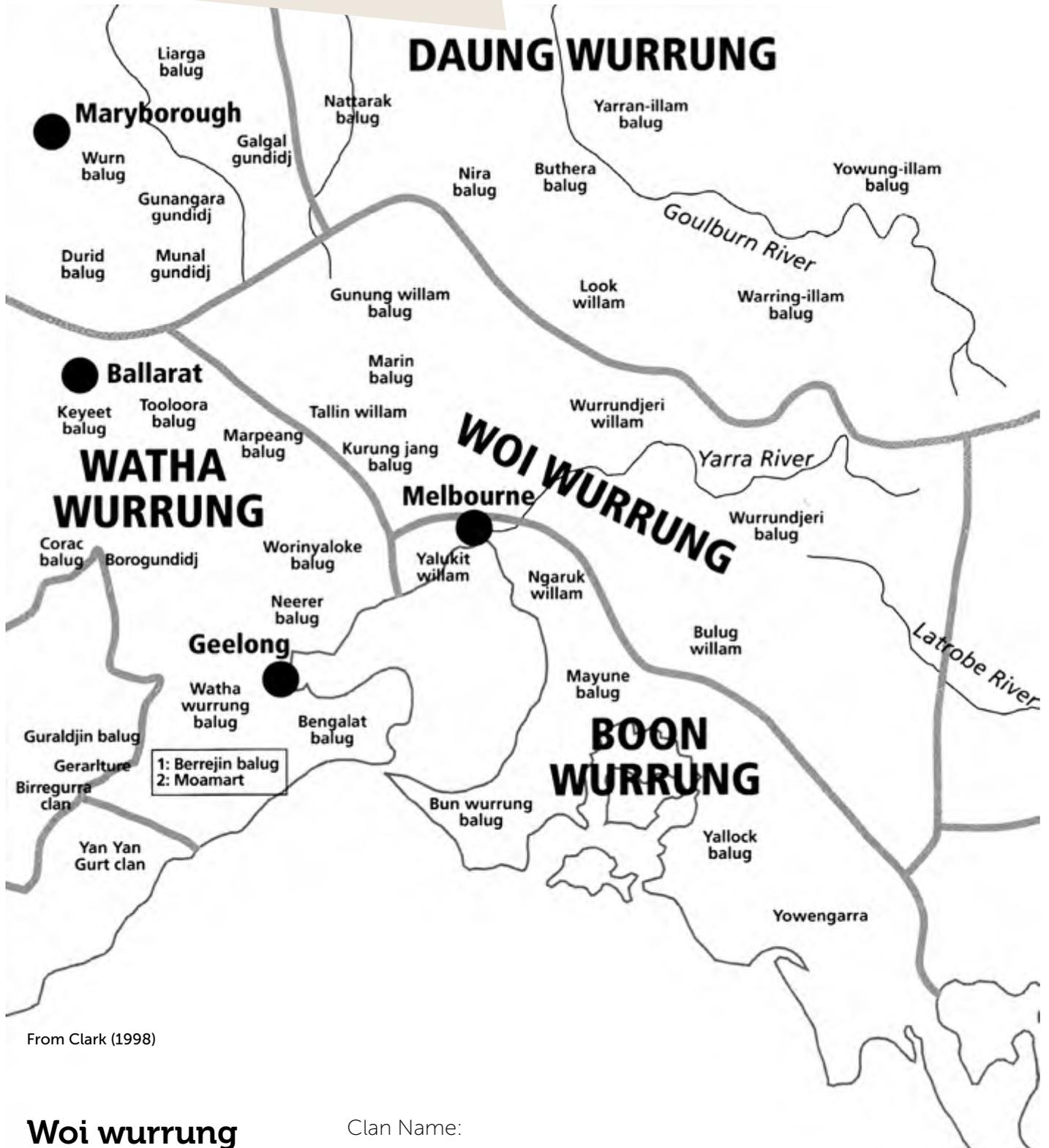
There were three subgroups of the Wurundjeri-willam, which were known by the name of their ngurungaeta, or clan head: Bebejan's mob, Billibellary's mob, and Jack Jacky's mob. Billibellary's mob was associated with the Maribyrnong River across to the Merri Creek and north to Mount William (Clark & Heydon, 1998).

These people enjoyed a traditional way of life, moving according to the seasons and the availability of food, or the need to visit ceremonial sites. They did not accumulate unnecessary possessions, and built their homes from available materials. They had a deep spiritual life that was passed down the generations and a strong understanding of land management to ensure their survival.



Wurundjeri Aboriginal Person ornamented for a corroboree, standing, full face, whole-length  
Reproduction rights owned by the State Library of Victoria. Library Record Number: 190902

# Kinship Structure



From Clark (1998)

## Woi wurrung Clan Organisation

Clan Name:

Gunang willam balug  
Mt Macedon

Marin balug  
Kororoit Creek

Wurundjeri willam  
Maribyrnong River

Kurung jang balug  
Mt Cottrell and  
Werribee River

Wurundjeri balug  
Yarra River

Bulug willam  
Koo Wee Rup swamp

# East Kulin Group - Clan Structure



Kinship structure showing the relationship of the inhabitants of the Moonee Valley region. (derived from Clark, 1990)

# Way of Life Pre-contact



**Aboriginal People & bark Canoe. Kruger, Fred 1831-1888, photographer.  
Reproduction rights owned by the State Library of Victoria. Library Record Number: 793472**

The Wurundjeri-willam belonged to the Yarra River from its northern sources at Mount Baw Baw to its junction with the Maribyrnong River in Melbourne. Within the clan structure were various family groups consisting of 30 to 60 people who lived, hunted and travelled together. Numbers would vary depending on family visitors to the group at any one time. The clan travelled within precise areas or territories, across land that was regarded as their own. They would only travel out of that area for ceremonial reasons, to join with other clans, to trade or if conditions necessitated, moving into another clan's area for survival.

These boundaries were not recorded in any formal sense, but were social in nature and understood by all the people. Clans were permitted to move into each other's areas where there were established family connections. The people of the Kulin nation married outside their clan and moiety. Each Kulin

person was either the bunjil (eaglehawk) or waa (crow) moiety, and each moiety had special totems, customs, hair styles and body ornamentation. Because clan members shared the same moiety, marriage partners had to be found from other Kulin clans. This arrangement would mean that the clans had the right to visit each other's territory, an advantage during times of drought or when there was an abundance of a food source in that area.

Aboriginal people built shelters known as willams by using available materials such as branches and sheets of bark placed over a sapling hung between forked posts. In warmer weather windbreaks were made using branches of trees. The type of shelter that was made depended on the weather and the planned length of stay in that particular area. This again would be dependent on the availability of food. There were strict rules governing the arrangement of huts



Group of Aboriginal People, sitting and standing, whole-length, full face, wearing animal skins, some holding weapons. Reproduction rights owned by the State Library of Victoria. Library Record Number: 190895

and shelters according to age, sex of the member of the family and the tribal affiliations of any visitors.

Campsites were usually close to water, to take advantage of the rich alluvial soil which supported fine grasslands, attracting kangaroos and wallabies for food. Hunting and gathering was confined to a 5 to 10 kilometre radius of the campsite with men and women responsible for different activities. Everyone would leave the camp in the mornings, the women and children gathering plants and fishing, while the men and teenage boys would hunt kangaroos, wallabies, emus, possums and wombats as well as trapping birds.

Plant foods were the main diet. In the Moonee Valley area, the murrnong, or yam daisy, was a staple food eaten raw or roasted. A potato-like root vegetable that needed soft soil in which to flourish, it grew prolifically along the Maribyrnong

River. Murrnong Crescent, Moonee Ponds is testament to the fact that this plant was found in abundance in the area.

Other foods included the roots of bracken fern, the rhizomes beaten into a paste and roasted in the hot ashes. The fruit of the wild cherry, the gum of the wattle and eucalypt, and honey were foods collected by women. Native bees were stingless, and in order to find the hive one bee would be caught and marked with a tiny feather-like seed to make the bee easier to see, then it would be followed until it led the people back to the hive.

In the early part of the afternoon the women would return to camp or set up the new camp, lighting or rekindling the fires to cook the main meal of the day. Buckets made from gnarled tree trunks would be used to gather water. If they were moving location, much of the food would have been collected along the way.



At the campsite tools and weapons were made and repaired; these included various implements for hunting and gathering such as axe-heads attached to wooden handles, digging sticks, spears, and boomerangs. There were also stone cutting and grinding implements that were used to make these tools and weapons.

Mount William was one of the best quarries for silicate, a hard stone ideal for making axes. This material was traded with the Murray River tribes for strong reeds that made excellent spear handles. Quarries within the Moonee Valley area include the hillside above the junction of the Maribyrnong River and Steele's Creek near the Lily Street lookout area and parts of Essendon.

Generally, Aboriginal people were not accumulators of possessions because all their goods needed to be able to be carried to the next campsite, although they did value the tools that they had made. Stone was a valuable resource for tool making and clans that had access to areas where stone quarries had been established were in an excellent position to trade with other groups.

In some areas canoes were built and used for fishing or transportation. They were especially useful along parts of the Maribyrnong where the cliffs are close to the banks of the river, restricting access by foot. Canoes were made by removing the bark from a large tree with a stone axe, heating the bark over the fire to make it pliable and sealing the ends with

clay or tying them up with reeds that had been chewed to make rope. The removal of the bark did not kill the tree but left a scar that today is an indicator of where traditional campsites were situated.

A mound or midden of the shells of freshwater animals shows us today that certain areas were significant campsites over a long period. Such an area has been identified at Steele's Creek in Essendon.

The riverside campsites meant ready access to river reeds and rushes that could be split into fibres, soaked and pounded to make rope, nets, fish traps and baskets. Aboriginal men carried reed spears and a spear thrower, a boomerang and a hafted stone axe, which was often worn on a string belt around the waist. Sharp stone knives and ceremonial objects were carried in grass string bags. Women carried food in reed baskets and string bags, and their favourite sharpened hardwood digging stick.

Aboriginal people in the Port Phillip and Moonee Valley area produced decorative clothing in the form of possum skin cloaks. Possum skins were pegged out on sheets of bark using fire-hardened pegs of wood. The stretched skins were left to dry then decorated using red and yellow ochre on the skin side. They were then sewn together using the sinews from kangaroo tails as thread to make warm weatherproof cloaks which were worn with the fur in or out depending on the weather.

# Initial White Contact

The first recorded white man to explore the area was Charles Grimes, the NSW Surveyor General, and his party who travelled up the Saltwater (Maribyrnong) River in 1803, as far as they could, to what is now known as Solomon's Ford at Avondale Heights, noting that there was a fish trap across this narrow and shallow section of the river. His diary notes that five miles downstream from the fish trap the country was undulating and lightly timbered, and at the horseshoe bend where the river cut its course through high cliffs the lower banks were covered in a thick belt of tea trees. They saw for the first time to the northwest the grassy Keilor Plains stretching out towards Mount Macedon.

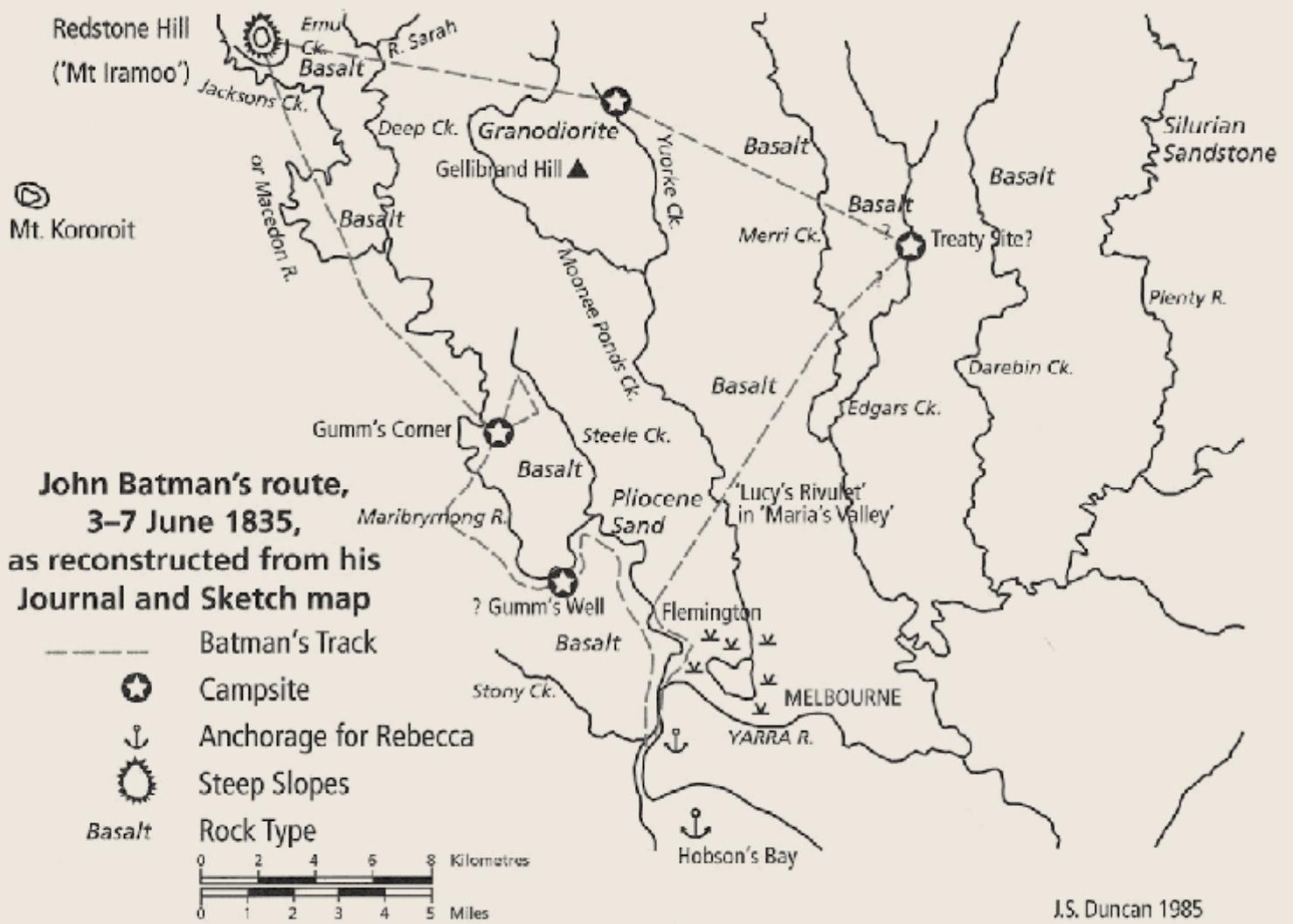
The next visitor to the region was to have the greatest impact, changing the course of history for the Aboriginal people forever. Batman and his party had come across from Tasmania in 1835 to discover for themselves what they believed to be good pasture for sheep. They proceeded to travel up the Saltwater River, exploring the region.

JS Duncan (1986) has described Batman's journey, with evidence taken from his journal, and made a careful study of his sketch map and of modern topographical and geological maps of the area and site visits. He references Billot's (1979) biography of John Batman who describes that fateful journey: "Batman landed in Footscray, following the west bank of the Maribyrnong River all the way upriver to beyond Keilor. His diary notes good grass on the west bank and 'several rich flats about a mile wide ... covered in kangaroo grass above my knees'. Fairburn Park, Ascot Vale and Maribyrnong and Aberfeldie Parks, Moonee Ponds now occupy sites that fit Batman's description."

On the second day they camped at Gumm's Corner, now known as Horseshoe Bend at Keilor. From here Batman reached a hill he called Mount Iramoo, an "isolated volcanic hill". Duncan suggests that Batman crossed Jackson's Creek, lately renamed Macedon River, east of the Organ Pipes and then recrossed it twice to reach Redstone Hill. Batman notes in his journal that from the summit they observed the smoke of Aboriginal fires away to the east and set off towards them. The next day they met an Aboriginal family and later a larger group of 45 people.

Duncan notes, "In return for an assortment of goods the Aboriginal people 'signed' the treaty, ceding to Batman 500,000 acres of land." Batman described the site as being, "alongside a beautiful stream of water", which he named Batman's Creek, "after my good self". Many scholars now dispute there was ever a treaty signing. There was no one in the party who could speak the Aboriginal dialect, and the document that Batman subsequently produced was signed with quill pens and ink, a very difficult task to complete neatly if one had never used a quill pen before!

The next morning the party headed south-west, crossing Batman's Creek and two others before reaching the Maribyrnong. Travelling down the left bank, they discovered the Yarra flowing down from the east. Here they joined up with their boat the 'Rebecca'.



# Settler Impact

Initially the Aboriginal people accepted the visitors. They had come bearing gifts and were a fascination, until the full impact of their arrival began to threaten their very survival, then the conflicts began.

## Colonisation

Colonisation now came very fast to the region. In 1836 a total of 40,000 sheep were unloaded at Port Phillip Bay from Tasmania. Within five years their numbers had swelled to 100,000. Graziers took up the grassy plains to the west of the Maribyrnong River and north to Mount Macedon.

The area now known as the City of Moonee Valley was described in these times as "suitable for gentlemen's homes!" (Gross, 1947) and development came quickly, forcing the original inhabitants away from the settled areas.

The European history of this area began in 1840, with settlers like Fawkner, Evans and Jackson establishing themselves along the Upper Maribyrnong. In 1843 an Englishman known as Raleigh arrived and set up home at Moonee Ponds, where he established his boiling down works.

The land that these settlers came to was natural grasslands including kangaroo, wallaby, spear and red-leg grasses, associated herbs and lilies. Some of this vegetation can still be seen in the rail reserve at East and West Esplanade, St Albans and the western side of Steele's Creek in Essendon. The area between Moonee Ponds Creek and the Maribyrnong River would have been red

gum woodland, but remnants can be found in Napier Park in Essendon. Along the eastern side of the Maribyrnong River grew yellow and grey box gums as well as river red gums, but lower down the river the area became swampy and tea trees flourished.

The early settlers regarded the Aboriginal people as "an unchanging people in an unchanging land", and the attitude that they were poor environmental managers of the land still prevails in the minds of some today. Nothing could be further from the truth. Chrissy Dennis in her 1996 book, *Landscapes Recycled*, states that the environment the new settlers found was a direct result of the practices of these people over centuries. The ways in which the Aboriginal people had affected the environment were very slow and subtle, as opposed to the dramatic changes made by the white settlers.

## Aboriginal Land Management

When the first white explorers arrived, the area was covered in native grasses which reminded them of the southern downs of England, perfect for raising sheep. What they did not realise was that the environment was to a large degree a creation of the original inhabitants. For thousands of years the Aboriginal people had been using fire to control the vegetation. By setting fire to the vegetation at regular intervals they had controlled the growth patterns of the flora while driving out small game for food. The resulting surface covering of ash promoted new growth that attracted larger animals such as kangaroos, wallabies and emus. The planned burning also assisted the growth and reproduction of much native flora and



fauna. It also encouraged the growth of manna, a sweet substance exuded on the leaves of the eucalypts by insects.

This land that was so ideal for sheep and cattle could no longer maintain, under the hooves of these grazing animals, the native flora that sustained the Aboriginal diet. The small murrnong was decimated, while the livestock ate the native grasses down to the ground, rather than nibbling the tops as the native fauna had done. This set the scene for erosion, while river banks and waterways became quagmires, trampled underfoot by these introduced species.

Kangaroos and wallabies were hunted for sport by the new settlers, directly competing with the original inhabitants for food. Domestic cats and dogs preyed on the smaller mammals reducing further the food sources of the Aboriginal people. There was no alternative but for a starving people

to turn to hunting what was available, sheep. This of course brought about an instant reaction and the Aboriginal people were hunted as poachers on their own land!

After the new settlers arrived blankets were distributed and substituted for the waterproof possum skins, and as the settlement developed Aboriginal people were forced to wear clothing. They had no concept or understanding of the need to change out of wet blankets and clothes, and possibly did not possess another set of clothes to change into. Consequently many died of bronchial illnesses caused by wearing wet garments.

With wool production booming associated industries flourished, bringing pollution to the Maribyrrnong River and local creeks, including Moonee Ponds Creek. Wool was washed in the river with soap, prior to shipping to the Yorkshire mills for processing. This pollution

affected the ecology of the river and creeks and made the water undrinkable. The waterways became drainage systems and the establishment of boiling down works along the banks added to the problem. These works produced tallow from sheep carcasses to be exported for the production of soap. In the early 1870s over 2000 tonnes (nearly 2.5 million litres) of blood flowed into the Maribyrnong from these works.

So within a few decades of settlement the land had been severely altered and, along with the effects of land clearing and overstocking, the combination was disastrous for the new colony when drought struck in the 1880s.

Not only did the new population change the land, but they were intent on forcing change on the original inhabitants. With this objective and the need, as time went on, to protect the Aboriginal people from the new settlers as well as retaliation from some of the more aggressive clans, mission stations were set up.

## Trespassers On Their Own Land

Aboriginal people came into conflict with the settlers as their traditional country was invaded and they were treated as trespassers on their own land. Langhorn formed a mission at the present site of the Royal Botanic Gardens in 1837. In the same year De Villies was appointed to form a Native Police Corps, a band of Aboriginal troopers to be used as a police force in the new settlement. In 1842, in an attempt to revive the force, Captain Dana requested the assistance of the ngurungaeta of the Wurundjeri-willam,

Billibellary. Initially Billibellary encouraged the men of his mob to volunteer, but later when he realised the influence of the Europeans and the dilemma the men faced when having to arrest their own and bring them in for punishment he withdrew his support. The Corps was disbanded in the early 1850s.

In 1839, the Government established an Aboriginal Protectorate, following the failure of Langhorn's mission. The Chief Protector, George A Robinson, was a man of experience in dealing with Aboriginal people, having been instrumental in moving the Tasmanian Aboriginal people to Flinders Island between 1829 and 1835. He had four Assistant Protectors, sent from England in 1838, with no previous experience in the colony or with Aboriginal people. William Thomas, who was to deal with the Melbourne area, recorded much of the written information about the Woiwurrung and the changes to their way of life. The Protectorate failed after ten years, mainly due to the inexperience of the Protectors and their inability to prevent clashes between the settlers and the Aboriginal people.

Following the abandonment of the Protectorate systems government policy was to keep all the Aboriginal people together on mission stations, which meant that many were taken away from their traditional places and sacred sites and even families were broken up. In 1886 the Aboriginal Act was passed that barred anyone other than full blood Aboriginal people and "half-castes" over 35 years of age from all reserves. This broke up Coranderrk in Healesville that had been a haven for orphans of mixed parentage and so those least able to support themselves became fringe dwellers on the edge of society.

# The Personalities

## Thomas Bungeelene

Bungeelene was born at the end of 1846 in Gippsland at a time when his people lived in fear of their lives. It had been reported that a white woman was being held by the Kurnai tribe of which his father was chief. Hunting parties, official and unofficial, were slaughtering the people in an attempt to have the woman returned.

The ngurungaeta was captured and held as hostage, taken to Narre Warren and chained to a tree. He was eventually released, but his wife and two boys had been taken off and he died of a broken heart aged 56. His wife Parley suffered at the hands of the Native Police and she and her two sons were taken to the Aboriginal School at Merri Creek.

Wurrabool was aged five and Tommy was two when their father died. Their names were changed to Harry and Thomas when they were relocated. In 1850 Parley remarried and left her boys with the Headmaster Mr Edgar. They were treated as racially inferior, an attitude that would haunt Tommy throughout his life.

In 1851 the school was closed and the boys were handed over to John Hinkins and his family. It was noted that Tommy aged four was morose and sulky! The boys were baptised: Harry now John, after Mr Hinkins, and Tommy now Thomas, after William Thomas, then Assistant Protector of Aboriginal people, and now his godfather.

In an article written in 1884, John Hinkins talks of his two boys, John and Thomas Bungeelene, and the family's move to Moonee Ponds in 1853. He describes an incident in June 1854 when Sir Charles Hotham arrived in the colony and Hinkins took his two boys to greet the new Governor:



Thomas Bungeelene; portraits; Australia; Victoria; Newsletter of Australasia. Reproduction rights owned by State Library of Victoria. Library Record Number: 1788042

"Believing that the Aboriginal people of the country had a right to be represented I had a large white silk banner made with the figures of the kangaroo and emu, and the words 'Advance Australia' painted on it, fixed on two poles and fitted into the two lamp irons of my gig, myself sitting driving with my two black boys standing one on each side of me holding the banner and waving their straw hats."

John died in January 1855 aged 12, and Thomas' behaviour then deteriorated further, although he studied hard and learnt to read, sing hymns and recite poetry. He had a deep complex of racial inferiority and was white in all but his skin. He was known to have asked his father if after constant washing of his hands he was getting any whiter. After the death of his brother there were no other Aboriginal people in his world that he could relate to. Tommy became enamoured with the theatre after he was taken to a Christmas pantomime and he would often run away and be found there.

After a time he became so unmanageable that the government arranged for him to work in the office of the Commissioner of Lands. He took up with bad company, causing both his 'parents' and the government grave concern. Finally he was placed on board the steamer 'Victoria' under the supervision of Captain Norman.

Tommy did not enjoy ship life but when his father suggested that he obtain his discharge he replied, "Father I will not accept my discharge, for I have sworn to serve on board the 'Victoria' for three years and I will not break my oath." After the crew was disbanded, he returned to Melbourne to office life in the Ministry of Mines office.

In 1864 he became a member of the Loyal Albert Lodge, Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows. He died just one month later in January 1865 of a gastric fever.

His educational achievements showed that he was an intelligent young man and despite his traumatic childhood he overcame prejudice and achieved success in his life. His 'father' always thought of him as "a poor little black boy" and he never overcame his own feelings of inadequacy, a product of attitudes that surrounded him as a child.

## Billibellary

Billibellary, the clan head or ngurungaeta of the Wurundjeri-willam whose country covered the current Moonee Valley area, was used by the authorities to communicate with the Aboriginal people. Billibellary is recorded as having used his influence in 1842 to assist Captain Dana to recruit a group of Aboriginal men to form the Native Police Corps. Billibellary, having been asked to help, needed seven days to consider the request and spent every evening addressing the people. On the seventh day he and 21 men 'enlisted'. As ngurungaeta, he declined to ride a horse or go out of his 'country' on police business (Bridges, 1971).

Billibellary subsequently withdrew his support when he realised the influence that the close contact with Europeans was having on his people. The crisis came to a head when the Native Police Corps were called on to arrest and bring other Aboriginal people to punishment, even to shoot those who resisted. Instincts were too strong for the principles of abstract justice; justice of the overlords (Gross, 1956).

There are many recorded examples of Billibellary's ability to work with the new authorities where he believed he could help his own people in their struggle for survival. There was an attitude of trust between Billibellary and Assistant Aboriginal Protector William Thomas. In 1844 he assisted in moving a camp from Heidelberg Road, alleviating the need to involve the police and the conflict that would have resulted (Clark & Heydon, 1998).

When Thomas had interfered in an Aboriginal matter and had some cause to fear for his life, Billibellary offered him his hut to hide in. Later when Thomas was away travelling with the Aboriginal Protector George Robinson, Thomas left the keys to his office and stores with Billibellary.

Towards his death Billibellary rejected the European ways, Thomas regretted what he felt was a change in heart in Billibellary, from exhibiting a conciliatory nature towards Europeans to being overtly oppositional. Billibellary died in August of 1846 at the Merri Creek Government Reserve. His death caused great distress to the people and they moved away from the Merri Creek area as they feared the place would be affected by the death of this most prominent ngurungaeta (Clark & Heydon, 1998).

# Historical Sites Within the City

## Lily Street Lookout

The Lily Street Lookout is situated on the hillside above a junction of the Maribyrnong River and Steele's Creek in Essendon West. Below the lookout is a quarry site which was used as a source of silcrete to make flaked stone tools by the Woi wurrung clans. Aboriginal Affairs Victoria class this area as a significant site.

## Steele's Creek

Aboriginal Affairs Victoria note on their map of significant sites that in the area of Steele's Creek there is a quarry site as well as a site where artefacts have been found. This indicates also that the area was used as a campsite.

## Solomon's Ford Fish Trap

Charles Grimes first discovered this working Aboriginal fish trap in 1803 when he travelled up the Maribyrnong River. This ford was an important crossing place for the Aboriginal people as well as a source of food. Eels were a staple part of the diet of Aboriginal people and would be caught in this ingenious trap. Eels spend most of the year inland, migrating back to the sea to breed. In early spring young eels would return upstream where the fishermen would be waiting. A scarred tree and quarry site have been recorded in this area, an indicator that this was a significant Aboriginal campsite.

## Campsites After White Settlement

Following the influx of white settlers to the Moonee Valley area, clans of Aboriginal people would travel back into the region to meet with other clans for ceremonial purposes. Many older residents recall as children watching these gatherings and witnessing corroborees being held in Lincoln Park and Buckley Park, where the groups would camp. Windy Hill and the property Ailsa were other areas where groups would camp for short periods.

In an unpublished paper written in 1908 George Bishop recalls Lincoln Park:

"... a rough post and rail fence defined its boundaries. It was full of large red gum trees a few feet apart; full of undergrowth and bracken ferns, and like every other part of the district, very sandy. I have gathered many a tin of manna on that reserve, also what is known as yams with the yellow flower and they were very abundant and nice to eat. It was a favourite camping ground for the Aboriginal people. I have seen them take a possum out of their bag and throw in on the embers."

## Brimbank Park

Upstream adjacent to the City of Moonee Valley boundary in Keilor is Brimbank Park. As the Maribyrnong River has coursed its way to the sea over the centuries, it has created a 55-metre 'brim' of cliffs beside the banks of the river.

Archaeologists have uncovered 40,000-year-old human and animal remains within close proximity of this park. The area was actively used by Aboriginal people as a hunting ground and camping site and there is evidence of scarred trees, stone quarries, axe-heads and stone tools.

Nearby grasslands attracted game for hunting and the grasses and bark fibres provided a ready resource for the making of baskets and nets, while the river furnished fish, freshwater mussels, water birds and edible plants.

The park is a living reminder of the peace and tranquillity that pervaded the area before settlement.



# Bibliography

**Bishop, G. C., 1908**, Essendon from a village to a city. Sam Merrifield Library.

**Bridges, B., 1971**, The Native Police Corps, Port Phillip District and Victoria, 1837-1853, *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Vol 57(2), pp113-142.

**Clark, I. D. & Heydon, T. G., 1998**, The Confluence of the Merri Creek and Yarra River: a history of the Western Port Aboriginal Protectorate and the Merri Creek Aboriginal School. Heritage Services Branch, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria.

**Clark, I. D., 1990**, Place names and land tenure – Windows into Aboriginal landscapes: Essays in Victorian Aboriginal history. *Heritage Matters*, Melbourne.

**Clark, I. D., 1998**, Aboriginal Languages and Clans: An Historical Atlas of Western and Central Victoria, 1800-1900. Monash Publications in Geography, Clayton.

**Clark, I. D., 1998**, The journals of George Augustus Robinson, chief protector, Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate, 1839-1845. *Heritage Matters*, Melbourne.

**Dennis, C., 1990**, Landscapes recycled: the changing environment of Melbourne's West. Melbourne's Living Museum of the West.

**Duncan, J. S., 1986**, John Batman's Walkabout. *Royal Historical Society of Victoria*, Vol 57(2), pp1-12.

**Hinkins, J. T., 1884**, Life amongst the native race: with extracts from a diary.

**Barwick, D. E., 1984**, Mapping the past: an Atlas of Victorian Clans 1835-1904. *Aboriginal History*, Vol 8(2), pp100-131.

**Cannon, M. (ed.),** The Aboriginal People of Port Phillip, 1835-1839. State Library of Victoria.

**Eidelson, M., 1997**, The Melbourne dreaming. Aboriginal Studies Press.

**Frauenfelder, P. & Sellwood, C., 1997**, Aboriginal communities: the colonial experience, Port Phillip District. State Library of Victoria.

**Gardiner, D. S., 1947**, A brief history of Thomas Bungelene. *Victorian Historical Magazine*, Vol 22.

**Presland, G., 1985**, The land of the Kulin: discovering the lost landscape and the first people of Port Phillip. State Library of Victoria.

**Walsh, L., 1996**, Still Here Exhibition Catalogue. Living Museum of the West.

# Acknowledgements

## First edition:

**Peter Haffenden – Director**  
Living Museum of the West

**Larry Walsh – Aboriginal Liaison Officer**  
Living Museum of the West

**Karen Milward – Koorie Officer**  
Municipal Association of Victoria

**Bill Nicholson – Cultural Development Officer**  
Galena Beck

**Margaret Gardiner**  
Mirimbiack Nations Aboriginal Corporation

**Annette Xiberras**  
Aboriginal Affairs Victoria

**Steven Avery**  
Aboriginal Affairs Victoria

**Esmail Manahan**  
Arts Victoria

**Kerrie Paton – Senior Curator**  
Koori Heritage Trust

**Ian Clark**  
Historical Geographer

**Sandra Smith – Project Officer**  
Bunjilaka Aboriginal Centre

**Melbourne Museum**

**Lorenzo Iozzi**  
Royal Historical Society of Victoria

**Produced by –** Moonee Valley City Council

**Author –** Janet Schultz, Victorian Centre for Conservation of Cultural Material

**Editing assistance –** Tracy Green

**Design –** d-lin E8 Design Pty. Ltd.

**Researcher –** Lenore Frost

**This publication was reproduced by Moonee Valley City Council, 2012.**

Editor – Peter McQuinlan

Design – Johanna Villani Design

Cover image – Marlene Young-Scerri, Brabralung Dreaming

