

The City of Charles Sturt
Kaurna Meyunna Cultural Mapping
A People's Living Cultural Landscape



by

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Cover Image: Paitya dancers at Grange, 2010

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1 Introduction

There is a generic understanding of Kurna culture before colonisation, and its decimation and then missionisation after colonisation. However, there is little detailed understanding of the dramatic change for Kurna meyunna (people) over the first twenty five years of colonisation; the individual stories, and the loss of the traditional way of living. The Kurna narrative may conflict with the dominant colonising narrative of a benign and peaceful settlement process with the loss of the Aboriginal culture of place inevitable because Aboriginal people were less developed and uncivilised. They were considered incapable of adopting the superior cultural norms of the incoming culture.

This research mainly examines the first contact and early post-colonisation period but follows some issues through into the Twentieth Century. It outlines not only the loss of Kurna meyunna from the Adelaide Plains but also the loss of their cultural landscape, the ecological systems and land management practices that were integral to the ceremonial practices and beliefs of their culture. Of the colonisation of Australia, historian Bill Gammage has written: ‘... an ancient philosophy was destroyed by the completely unexpected, an invasion of new people and ideas. A majestic achievement ended. Only fragments remain. For the (Aboriginal) people of 1788 the loss was stupefying. For the newcomers it did not seem great. Until recently few noticed they had lost anything at all. Knowledge of how to sustain Australia, of how to be Australian, vanished with barely a whisper of regret’ (2011:323).

In the same manner that cultural memory is being utilised to rebuild and adapt Kurna culture for contemporary urban based living, so too landscape memory is integral to that process. There are Kurna descendants who have been walking their Country from a very young age, and who have an inner sense and are strong in feeling Country and spirit. This feeling of Country opens at times a portal where the old spirits come back to embed knowledge while sleeping. How can one understand a cultural practice if it is not put into a context of place? To state that Kurna utilised the coastal regions for summer living is incomplete without an Aboriginal understanding of the coastal region of Wongayerlo, part of Gulf St Vincent, and how their feeling for Country or system of living was integrated into that living ecological system.

This research therefore starts to reveal the layers of the Aboriginal cultural landscape immediately before and after 1836 and outlines the landscape changes that have occurred on Country in the City of Charles Sturt area since then. Paintings and colonial memoirs are a major source of information to assist in looking into this picture because ‘If a scene was painted before Europeans changed it, as these scenes were, it can be immensely valuable in showing how Aborigines shaped Australia. It can show where to look and what to see. So do early survey plans’ (Gammage, 2011:19).

The research also outlines the loss of the Kurna traditional living and sleeping places. This is also now understood in terms of the loss of ecological systems in the region and the contemporary appreciation that remnants are to be protected. Others are to be restored to the extent possible, given the constraints of the urban space but must be integrated in urban renewal. As historian Bill Gammage has summarised ‘We have a continent to learn. If we are to survive, let alone feel at home, we must begin to understand our country. If we succeed, one day we might become Australian’. (2011:323)

1.1 Structure of this Report

Cultural mapping is the bringing together of a circle of knowledge systems about a place, and conducting further research, to understand its ‘cultural landscape’, the coming together of the physical and the cultural topographies. Human geographer Carl Sauer outlined (1963:343) that *‘The cultural landscape is fashioned from a natural landscape by a cultural group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape the result’*.

Cultural mapping is intended to document the diverse meanings and histories of place and culture in order to provide individuals and communities with an intimate understanding of place. It can be understood as a detailed exploration of a place and its histories. Cultural mapping canvasses the various disciplines of knowledge in an interconnected and holistic way. This can inform personal, community, institutional and government responses to, and management practices for, a place. It provides a sound basis for cultural presentation, cultural development and interpretive and educational story telling.

Because of the importance of land, this report uses the known Kurna regions as a primary structure. Kurna themes of relevance to the Charles Sturt Council area are also introduced in order to enhance the narrative. Primary sources are referenced wherever possible so that the narrative can be further reviewed, presented and built upon over time.

1.2 Report Limitations

This report provides an overview but is not a fully comprehensive historical, anthropological, archaeological or linguistic study of the region. Its objective is to provide an understanding of the Kurna meyunna cultural landscape sufficient to inform broad (i.e. general) cultural presentation, site management and planning, and importantly, to assist the re-imagination of an Aboriginal Adelaide. What is able to be presented here is not the full story, it will be expanded over time as knowledge and understanding grows, and others, Kurna and non-Kurna, are able to contribute to the Kurna narrative in the City of Charles Sturt. Ongoing Kurna cultural research and cultural mapping is required to further elaborate on the regions and themes presented here. It is also to be noted that the Kurna language is a language in revival and various spellings and meanings are used and continue to evolve.

This report does not engage in detail with the process of the colonisation of the Kurna meyunna and their Country by the British Crown/Government in 1836 but provides an overview and some particular and relevant aspects of that process.

2 Kurna Meyunna - An Overview

The Kurna are the Aboriginal people of the Adelaide region. Their traditional land, or Country, extends from Cape Jervis to the south of Adelaide to Crystal Brook to the north, and from the Mount Lofty Ranges to the coast of Gulf Saint Vincent (Figure 1). Captain Matthew Flinders gave the European naming for Cape Jervis, the Mount Lofty Ranges and Gulf Saint Vincent in 1802. The explorer Edward John Eyre gave the European name Crystal Brook to a stream in the late 1830s and a town name later followed.

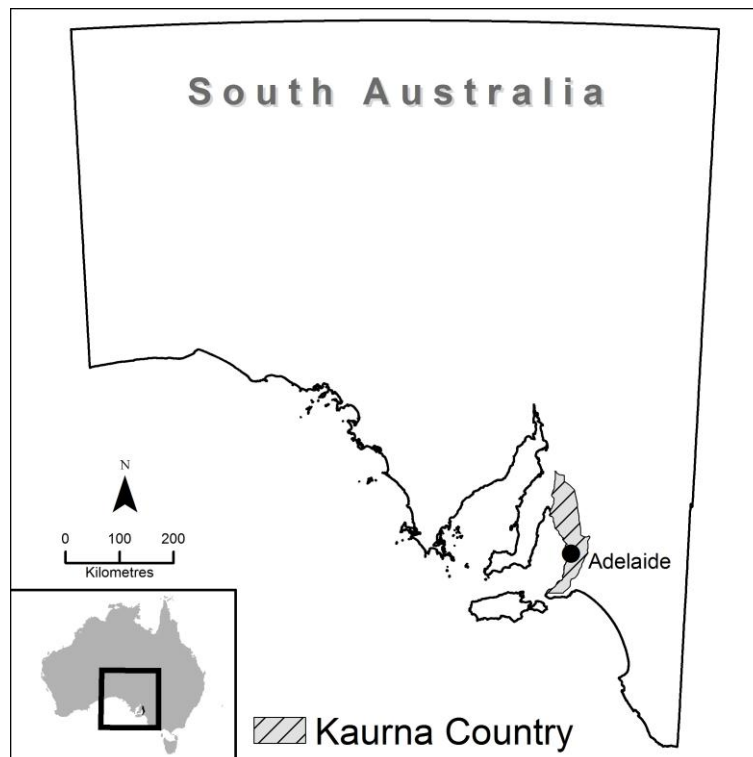


Figure 1 Kurna Country

The Kurna Country geographic region was defined in the Kurna People's Native Title Claim, Tribunal No. SC/001, lodged 25 October 2000. The Claim was accepted for registration by the responsible Minister, 22 August 2001. There is broad community acceptance of this definition of Kurna Country¹.

The Lutheran missionary Christian Teichelmann observed that 'Each tribe has a certain district of the country as a property received by their forefathers, the boundaries of which are fixed.' He and Clamor Schurmann,

¹ At times there may be challenges to this definition of Kurna Country but as at the date of this report there has been no accepted alternative claim. A claim by a Ramindjeri group to part of Kurna Country is before the Native Title Tribunal at the time of this report finalisation but is not expected to succeed. The process of defining traditional Aboriginal cultural/language group land title is part of broader contemporary cultural renewal for Aboriginal groups. It is a process that may take some time to settle through the current structures of the Westminster law system.

sent by the Dresden Mission Society in Germany, arrived in Adelaide in 1838 and the following year established a school for Kurna children at Piltawodli, the Native Location. The nineteenth century journalist, J. D Woods, also outlined Aboriginal connection to Country in 1879, in the introduction to the book 'The Native Tribes of South Australia':

Each tribe had its own country distinct from that of any other tribe. Its boundaries were known, and could have been accurately defined. The right of occupying, parcelling out and disposing of the soil, was asserted as the first principal of the colonisation of the country, without the slightest regard to any rights, except those which were exercised by the Crown. Without land the Aboriginal native could not exist; the land was taken from him and he ceased to exist (Woods, 1879:xxv).

The Kurna Meyunna as a nation, still do not have legal title to any of their ancestral lands. Access to land (ownership in the contemporary sense) is pivotal for Kurna cultural and spiritual renewal and for a full conciliation between the incoming and existing cultures in Australia.

The length of occupation and utilisation of the Adelaide region cannot be given precisely. From a Kurna perspective, their ancestors have lived here from the time when light first came into the world. From an archaeological perspective, occupation of the Adelaide region is currently estimated to be circa 25,000 years and it is believed it may be up to 40,000 years. The archaeological record is considered to be incomplete with sites on the Adelaide Plains mainly dating to the mid to late Holocene (Smith, 2010:15, Harris, 2009:55) and the early Holocene, 10,000 years BP (Walshe, K., Pers. Comm. 2012).

An appreciation of the contemporary cultural construct of Kurna meyunna assists in facilitating what can be termed the re-Aboriginalisation of place to provide a contemporary Aboriginal presence within the public and social spaces of an urban environment. A better understanding of the culture that is to be included, its history, how it has been fractured and dislocated and how it is undergoing renewal, will assist the governance processes and formulation of recommendations on how to achieve further Kurna recognition and inclusion through truth and reconciliation co-policy development. Understanding these issues is part of understanding the territory of civic and public space inclusion, the transitional nature of some Aboriginal political and cultural structures which are in the process of renewal, and how, in turn, these structures may have a bearing on Kurna and other Aboriginal input into public space representations. This is part of the cross-cultural social dynamics of public space representation. As well as some challenges, this can provide great rewards for the community.

3 The Colonisation of Kurna Country



Figure 2 Two Aboriginal males on hill looking at ship in the distance, W. A. Cawthorne (SLNSW)

Kurna meyunna quickly suffered the full impact of colonisation following the founding of Adelaide in 1836. Within a generation, twenty five years, they had been dispossessed of their lands, their population and culture had been decimated and survivors became fringe dwellers or were relocated to missions some distance away. The traditional camping areas of Yerta Bulti, the Port Adelaide area, continued to be occupied by Kurna meyunna (and other Aboriginal peoples) as fringe living places for many decades. The main missions were the Anglican Church mission at Poonindie near Port Lincoln (Figure 3 & Figure 4),

founded in 1855, and Point McLeay (now Raukkan) near the Coorong, founded by the Aborigines' Friends Association in 1859. The Yorke's Peninsula Aboriginal Mission, later called Point Pearce Mission, was founded in 1867 and became home to many Kurna meyunna, particularly after the closure of Poonindie in 1894.



Figure 3 St Mathews Church and outbuilding, Poonindie



Figure 4 Aboriginal farm workers, Poonindie Mission (Church in background)

Writing just forty years after colonisation, Woods (1879:xxiv) noted that:

The process of extermination, in fact, began as soon as the white men took possession of the soil. The fencing in and occupation of the territory deprived the natives of the wild animals which constituted the principal part of their daily food. Kangaroos, emus, etc., were killed and driven further back into places where they could remain undisturbed. The wild-fowl were scared away by the fire-arms of the settlers. The destruction of the trees consequent upon the clearing of the ground for tillage, drove away the opossums, and left little shelter for parrots and other winged creatures which resorted to them, and the people who had been disappointed were thrown back on the hunting grounds of their neighbours, or compelled to become dependent on the bounty of the white men.

It is to be noted that the Colonial Office had set out rights for Aboriginal people. British Colonial Secretary Lord Glenelg advised the South Australian Commissioners on the issue of Aboriginal land rights and that settlement would be confined to 'those limits within which they can show, by some sufficient evidence, that the land is unoccupied and that no earlier and preferable title exists' (Pope, 2011:3). As Pope (2011:3, 10) pointed out 'the colony would not proceed until assurances were given that Aboriginal land rights were respected, land would be purchased from Aboriginal people, and that a Protector of Aborigines would oversee Aboriginal interests and all land transactions'. This intent was not brought to fruition by the Colonising Commissioners or the administration of the early Governors of the Province of South Australia. The boundaries between the authority of the Governor and the Resident Commissioner were also to cause problems in the settlement process.

Underlying the colonisation were the terms set out in the *Letters Patent* authorised by King William IV, and issued on 19 February 1836 creating the Province of South Australia (Berg, 2010:1). The Letters defined the precise boundaries of the province and included an outline of Aboriginal rights. The final paragraph read:

PROVIDED ALWAYS that nothing in those our Letters Patent contained shall affect or be construed to affect the rights of any Aboriginal Native of the said province to the actual occupation or enjoyment in their own Persons or in the Persons of their Descendants of any Lands therein now actually occupied or enjoyed by such Natives. (Berg, 2010:1)

The *South Australian Act 1834* had made no reference to Aboriginal people and there are differing views as to the intent and application of the *Letters Patent*. This continues to be an unresolved issue in terms of land tenure in South Australia and is subject to ongoing debate. The book *Coming to Terms: Aboriginal Title in South Australia*, (Berg (ed), 2010), comprehensively sets out the arguments. One quandary is that if the *Letters Patent* are not applicable, South Australia has no boundaries, as it is the *Letters Patent* which defined the geographical area of the province. If they are applicable, why is their no 'occupation or enjoyment ... of any Aboriginal Native ... in the Persons of their Descendants' of their lands? These matters linger for Kurna meyunna (and others); they are an unresolved moral, if not legal, issue. They mar the process of Reconciliation and the evolution of social, political and economic equity for Kurna Meyunna and other Aboriginal peoples.

Woods further noted (1879:xxv-xxvi):

The Anglo-Saxon colonists of South Australia are perhaps not more to blame for the catastrophe than any other races of men who have supplanted savages in their birth-places. The process seems to be invariably the same everywhere. The land is the prize for which emigrants leave their homes, and in no cases that are known have aboriginal races been able to survive its loss.

The confusion over whether or not and how British law applied to Aboriginal peoples upon colonisation of their lands is another point to be noted. In the colonisation of New South Wales it had been ambiguous. In 1805 the New South Wales Deputy Judge Advocate, Richard Atkins, advised Governor King that he did not believe Aboriginal people could be called on to plead before a court, despite their being 'within the pale of Her majesty's protection'. In 1829 in Sydney an Aboriginal man killed another Aboriginal man and the Supreme Court advised that it would be unjust to apply British law in the circumstance (Pope, 2011:7).

In South Australia there was meant to be clarity. Aboriginal people would be subject to British law (whether they wanted to be or not) and be regarded as subjects of the Crown. The extreme penalty, death by hanging, was applied to Kurna/Aboriginal men within a few years of colonisation. There was no regard for Kurna law and lores.

3.1 Kurna Cultural Heritage and Cultural Presentation

Kurna cultural heritage is a combination of the earth and sky, the waters and the sea, in an integrated and interconnected way. Kurna meyunna are part of this complex integration of the past, present and future, along with the Creator Beings and other ancestors. It is also to be understood that this cultural heritage has been severely dislocated by the process of colonisation; the dispossession, forced removal and missionisation of Kurna meyunna. The continuing Kurna culture is a culture in renewal, drawing on the knowledge of the past held in Dreaming narratives and song-lines, in the spirit of the cultural bearers and custodians and importantly, in the land. It is a culture that is adapting to contemporary urban living. However, adaptation needs to be reciprocal: the incoming culture also needs to adapt to aspects of the Aboriginal way.

Through the processes of colonisation, dispossession and dislocation, Kurna cultural tradition and knowledge has been severely fractured. The culture is now in a process of actively moving from survival to renewal. This process of renewal surfaces a range of social, cultural, political and economic challenges for what was a hunter-gatherer culture to adapt to contemporary farmer-city dweller urban living, as well as the challenge of overcoming the systemic disadvantage wrought upon them since colonisation. There is a large gap, philosophically, practically and economically, between the ways of the hunter-gatherer and the ways of the farmer-city dweller. Broad community support, facilitated by the various levels and activities of government and community, is required to assist with Kurna political, cultural and spiritual renewal activities.

Since the 1960s and '70s, when migration by Aboriginal people from mission living to urban living gained momentum, Kurna has been a culture in renewal. That renewal has been happening within the context of a capital city and contemporary urban living. Before the 1960s and the granting of full citizenship, there were

few Aboriginals living in Adelaide. Kurna were amongst the first Aboriginal people to return to Adelaide (Amery, 2000:70-71). The Kurna are adapting to contemporary society after coming out of mission living and the assimilation policy. Following the suppression of cultural activities and language for several generations and with the more recent move to urban based living on their ancestral lands, contemporary ways of cultural expression based on the remaining knowledge of traditional cultural practices are evolving.

For Kurna, the loss of cultural sites and the loss of intimate contact with Country, earth, sea and sky, necessitates the evolution of a contemporary urban identity, cultural activities and cultural expression. This requires new ways of seeing oneself reflected in public spaces and the public consciousness. As Georgina Williams, Nganke burka (Senior woman), outlined:

We looked into the eye of the storm, and gradually we began to understand that to survive, our reflections of ourselves would have to be translated into the new world that we were now living in ... that is something that I began to realize very young. The challenge was how this could actually be done in the new circumstances, when our country had been built over – this was the challenge of translation from the old ways of reading every topographical feature and mark on our land, when it was pretty well all covered over with buildings. (Williams, 2007a)

Within this context it is sometimes unclear as to what contemporary urban Aboriginal expression might be, particularly in three-dimensional forms - there having not been a strong sculptural tradition in Kurna traditional culture. As Williams has eloquently stated, 'The stories that are reflected in the statues of the western world were in the dance, song and paintings [for our culture]' (Williams, 2007b). The definition and understanding of cultural heritage and inheritance from an Aboriginal perspective requires the incoming, or settler culture, to think differently. This change is critical to meaningful cross-cultural reconciliation and the evolution of a bi-cultural society. In essence the difference between a hunter-gatherer cultural tradition compared to a farmer-city dweller paradigm impacts on perceptions of heritage. Knowledge of cultural traditions will also underpin moving towards a cultural synthesis that respects and understands both cultural traditions, now (co) existing in the same geographic and social space.

When the word 'heritage' is used there can be an assumption that the built environment (buildings, monuments, civic spaces and so on) are being referred to; something that is made within the constructed landscape, the intervention of humans. This is the way of the incoming culture and its way to commemorate or interpret its people, whom they are and what their ideologies and beliefs represent. This is expressed through the monuments and other commemorations of heritage dominating the cultural landscape. Until relatively recently there was not any acknowledgement or inclusion of the pre-existing Aboriginal cultural heritage. Aboriginal heritage is a land based heritage that has all the layered meanings of the definition of the word 'land'. This heritage is dynamic, complex and totally integrated; it incorporates Country, people, beliefs, knowledge, lore, language, symbols, objects and sites of significance. There is not any part of Australia that is not Aboriginal Country where the continuum and the connectivity of natural and cultural heritage from the beginning of time has evolved. There has been an Aboriginal heritage since the first sunrise in what is now commonly referred to as the time of Dreaming or Creation and continues to the present day. The community at large must also be aware, or needs to recognise, that the re-created or renewed culture and land relationship for Aboriginal people must always remain with the people of this land.

What is being increasingly understood is that the landscape itself that so attracted settlement was not by the hand of 'nature' alone, Kurna meyunna land management practices contributed. In his book *The Biggest Estate of Earth: How Aborigines made Australia*, Gammage comprehensively outlines Aboriginal land management practices throughout Australia and how there was such a consistent reference to the temperate lands as having the appearance of a 'gentleman's park', with open grassed woodlands and areas of forest eminently suited for colonising agricultural purposes. For example, Charles Sturt observed of South Australia:

As regards the general appearance of the wooded portion of this province, I would remark, that excepting on the tops of the ranges where the stringy bark grows; in the pine forests, and where there are belts of scrub on barren or sandy ground, its character is that of open forest without the slightest undergrowth save grass ... In many places the trees are so sparingly, and I had almost said judiciously distributed as to resemble the park lands attached to a gentlemen residence in England. (Sturt, 1849 in Gammage, 2011:7)

And South Australia's second Governor, George Gawler, according to a letter written by his wife on 7 December, 1838, declared of the landscape that it was 'just like a nobleman's park nicely wooded' (Cathcard, 2009:77).

But as the explorer, and later Protector of Aborigines at Moorundie on the River Murray, Edward John Eyre observed (and warned), 'The localities selected by Europeans, as best adapted for the purpose of cultivation or grazing, are those that would usually be equally valued above others, by the natives themselves, as places of resort, or districts in which they could most easily procure food' (Eyre, in Gammage, 2011:308).

3.2 Registered and Recorded Sites of Aboriginal Significance

The South Australian *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988* provides for the recording and protection of sites of Kurna (and other Aboriginal people) traditional significance and for the keeping of the Register of Aboriginal Sites. The Register is not a comprehensive record of all sites, rather the sites included are those that have come to attention and have been considered of significance for inclusion. There are six sites, four burial sites and two scarred tree sites (Figure 5), in the City of Charles Sturt included on the Register. The Register is administered by the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet. Access to this Register is restricted to those with a 'need to know'. The burial sites are recorded in the former dunal areas at Grange and Fulham and along Karrawirraparri, Tarnda-parri *River Torrens*. The scar tree sites are also along the river.



Figure 5. Scar Trees adjacent to the river

The identification of sites of significance to Kurna meyunna is an ongoing process. Whilst it may be thought that by now remaining significant Aboriginal sites in the urban area would have been located and recorded, this is not necessarily the case. One of the scar trees above was located through this research.

4 Kurna Places in the City of Charles Sturt

Fortunately, there are known Kurna places that cover the entire Council area. Some of these places also extend into and are shared with neighbouring councils. Because of this, the research and mapping outlined in this report is not limited to Council boundaries. The places identified show a range of Kurna landscape utilisation and cultural practices. The Kurna naming indicates the intertwined relationship between place, ecology and cultural practices. The Kurna places are (Figure 6):



Figure 6 Kaurna places in Charles Sturt region

- . Wongayerlo *Gulf St Vincent*
- . Witongga *Reed Beds*
- . Karrawirraparri, Tarnda-parri *River Torrens*
- . Yerta Bulti *Port River/Estuary*
- . Pathawilyangga *Patawalonga/Glenelg*
- . Mikawomma *The Plains (between Adelaide and Port Adelaide)*
- . Karraundongga *Hindmarsh locale*
- . Tarndanya *Adelaide*

There is a distinctive cultural relationship between Kaurna and the ecological systems they inhabited. Therefore, understanding the pre-European vegetation patterns also helps understand the Kaurna cultural landscape, the physical (and spiritual) world they inhabited pre-colonisation. A comprehensive outline of the 1836 era plant associations of the places is given in the map *Forests and Woodlands of the Adelaide Plains in 1836* (DENR) (Figure 7).



Figure 7 Plant Associations of the Adelaide Plains in 1836 (DENHR)

Figure 7 Legend

Dark Green: Mangrove low woodland	Lime green: River Red Gum
Light blue: Olearia and Acacia open heath	Dark blue: Reedbeds/Sedgeland
Dark yellow: Melaleuca low woodland	Light yellow: Grasslands
Grey: Sapphire low shrubland	Purple: Callitris, Sheoak and Banksia woodland

The first European map of the area (Figure 8), by founding Surveyor-General Colonel William Light, reflects the Aboriginal places. These places can readily be seen to underlay the 1882 map of the region (Figure 9) which assists our present understanding of the Kurna cultural landscape and the changes that have occurred.

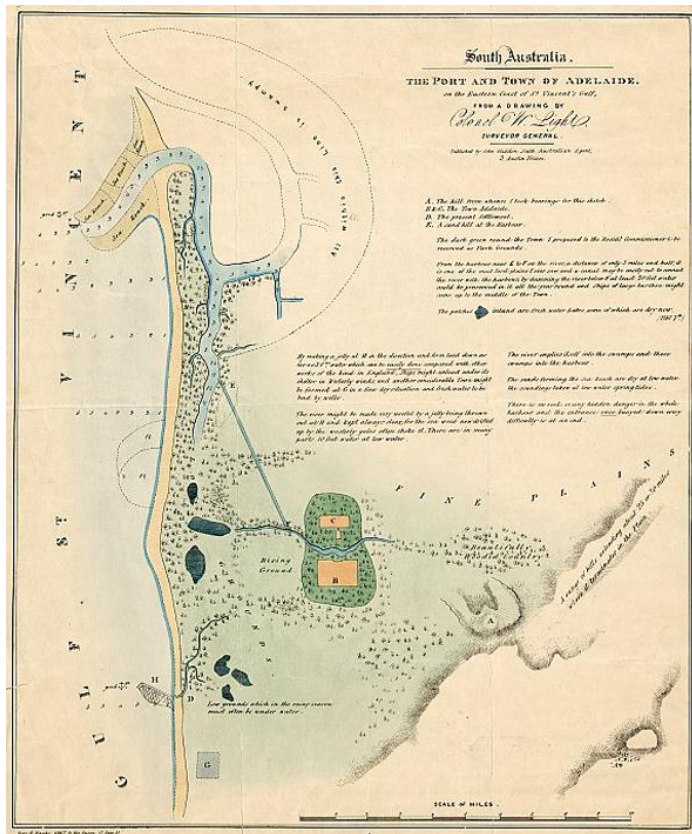


Figure 8 The Port and Town of Adelaide, W. Light



Figure 9 Topography as in July 1882, SA Dept. Lands (from Kraehenbuehl, 1986)

The 1838 map (Figure 10) drawn by Lieutenant Henry Nixon, an assistant in Light's survey team, from information from the Preliminary Country Surveys by Light, shows more detail of locations which are referred to in this report. Unfortunately the area of the Port River estuary is no longer clearly visible but the map clearly illustrates the water bodies and vegetation that once existed in the region.



Figure 10 Extract from Nixon's Map, 1838 (RGSSA)

4.1 Wongayerlo Gulf St Vincent

The Kurna have a strong connection to Wongayerlo; the sea, the foreshore and the sky. Wongayerlo is the place where the sand dunes rise straight up from the sea (Figure 11) like a headland (forehead) and run certain directions like veins down your arm. The coastal dunal systems were essential traditional cyclic living and burial places for the Kurna people during the time of Woltatti (Bush Turkey Totem and Constellation), the hot summer months when the north wind would come and the mosaic burn off time would begin.

Kurna have sustainably managed the natural resources of this environment through cultural practices for untold generations. Amongst the dunes, coastal plants were foraged for food and for materials to build nets, spears and fishing line. Harvesting of vulnerable plants and animals was carried out according to seasons to ensure that animals, plants and people could live in a harmonious balance.



Figure 11 Dunal system (Eyre Peninsula) reflecting the Wongayerlo shoreline

The coastline was a very productive seasonal area and many stories, songs and skills would be transferred and practised during these cyclic times of intentional movement. The dunal systems provided the ideal environment for Kurna meyunna to seek shelter from wind and the heat of the sun during the day. They used the sand dunes as their protected camping grounds and here they would prepare and mend fishing nets to catch the runs of fish between the sand bars running along the coastline. Kurna meyunna were highly skilled in and knowledgeable about the use of fibre and made a multitude of nets, string, baskets and mats for use throughout the seasons of movement to and from the known camp sites and food places. This acute knowledge of fibre, or deeper understanding of the culture of fibre, ensured that the makers knew how to best utilise their time within the natural environmental cycles to collect food and meet material needs.

In 1841 J. P. Gell recorded some of the activities undertaken by Kurna women:

She must learn to collect the different species of barti or grubs with the palya, a small hook, or with a rude spade (karko); also the kadngi, or native ants, which are frequently eaten. She must dig for roots with a stick called katta, prepare the kangaroo skins (kartando) by rubbing them with stones, and steep the tarnma or honey suckle blossom in water to make a sweet drink.

Their other arts are to spin [using] manga-tatta and manga-yainki [a cross shaped loom] the fibres of the warnpa and aquatic plant and the hair and sinews of animals, to make rush bags (tainkyedli), and bags of kangaroo skin (tando). To make the tapurro, or drum of stuffed opossum skin beaten by the women at the dances, to sew with the pointed kangaroo bone (wityo) and sinews (tainga) to make the wika or fishing net, the minde, or wallaby net, and the munta, a large hunting net, the fur cloak (watpa), and the hair girdle (gadlotti). (Gell, 1904)

Kurna meyunna would make fish hooks out of bone and shells, and line and string from the reeds. A contemporary bone fish hook Pirri kuya, made by Karl Telfer, is shown here (Figure 12).



Figure 12: Pirri kuya—Contemporary bone fish hook with reed string, 2012

These activities, along with fishing, hunting and food collection, would occupy only several hours or so a day and the rest of the time was taken up telling story and teaching the young about these ways. As Gammage confirms of the relationship between Aboriginal land management and cultural practices 'It made life comfortable. Like landowning gentry, people generally had plenty to eat, few hours of work a day, and much time for religion and recreation (2011:4).

Anthropologist Philip Clarke also outlined Kurna utilisation of the area:

Large numbers of Adelaide Aboriginal people gathered along the coast in the summer months, taking advantage of marine and sand dune belt food resources, such as coastal berries, shellfish, crustacean, fish, turtles, nesting sea birds and occasional stranded whales. (Clarke, 1996:74)

The intersection between rivers and ocean, salt/fresh water mixed estuaries, were hotspots of plant and animal diversity that the Kurna utilised to collect food and other resources. Kurna meyunna hunted sand goanna and their eggs, snakes, kangaroo rat and various birds and their eggs. They also picked a range of vegetable foods, medicines and gums/resins for use and trade.

The utilisation of the coastal area is evident by the numerous traditional living, cemetery and midden sites that have been found along the metropolitan coast and remnant dunal systems. For instance, the remnant sand dunes at Port Noarlunga hold significant midden sites, exemplars of Kurna occupation and utilisation of dunal systems.

The shallow sand bars and seagrass beds of Wongayerlo allowed the Kurna hunters to walk offshore to hunt fish (Kuya) and crustaceans along the channels between sandbars and amongst the seagrass. They harvested a wide range of crustaceans, which included various molluscs and razor fish on low tide. They would also fish and hunt with fire by night. An aerial image of the Charles Sturt coastline (Figure 13) shows the sea grass beds and deep channels in the near shore sand bars. Spears, nets and fishing line and hooks were all used to catch fish, e.g. whiting (superfamily *Percoidea*), bream (*Acanthopagrus spp*), mullet (family *Mugilidae*), flathead (*Platcephalus spp*), flounder (family *Pleuronectidae*), mulloway (*Argyrosomus japonicus*), garfish (*Hyporhamphus melanochir*) and butterflyfish (dusky morwong, *Dactylophora nigricans*), and crabs; sand (*Ovalipes australiensis*) and blue swimmer (*Portunus pelagicus*).



Figure 13 Charles Sturt Coastline 2008, (D. Wilcock)

Hunters could set nets across sand channels to trap fish and use their spears to capture larger fish as they rested or patrolled the inshore sand bars and channels. The seagrass that would wash up on the coastline provided a habitat for seagrass worms that could be collected by the Kurna fishermen to use on their hooks and line. A scene of Kurna men net fishing further down the coast at Second Valley was painted by G. F. Angas in 1847 (Figure 14).



Figure 14 Coast Scene near Rapid Bay, Sunset Natives Fishing with Nets, 1847, G. F. Angas (AGSA)

Sea snails (wariners, periwinkles) and abalone were an important component of the diet of Kurna people and could be found congregated on exposed rocky reef amongst the expanse of seagrass and sand. Once eaten the warriners shells could be used to make sharp and fine hooks. The natural curves of the snails shell, thin but strong, were able to be broken, shaped and edged into small and large fishing hooks. These hooks were tied onto line woven from grasses and reeds and used to catch fish patrolling the shallows of the coastline.

Amongst the dunes and nearby fragmented coastal plains grew important terrestrial food sources, e.g. fruits of the pigface *Karkalla* (*Carpobrotus*), wild cherry (*Exocarpus*), muntrie (*Kunzea pomifera*), quandong (*Santalum acuminatum*) and nitre bush (*Nitraria billardierei*). As Woods noted (1879:xxxiv):

The food of the South Australian tribes, in their wild state, included an immense variety. Animals, birds, fishes, reptiles, insects, grubs, seeds, and roots, were alike prized by them; and from the fertility of the Adelaide plains and the surrounding country, the supply, for the numbers of natives which occupied them before the white settlement, must have been practically unlimited.

Early colonist and naturalist Abraham Hopkins Davis (usually referred to as A. H. Davis), who arrived in South Australia in October 1837, and established and lived at Moore Farm, a gracious old residence at the Reedbeds (Section 220, part section 192), wrote two papers which describe parts of the council area: *Leaves from the Note Book of a Naturalist – a ramble on the Beach and Sandhills* (1849)²; and *Leaves from the Note Book of a Naturalist – A Walk by the Torrens* (1849). Davis was a Fellow of the Linnaean Society and a successful publisher in London. The papers provide a snapshot of an area undergoing change but still retaining much of its pre-European character. Both papers are reproduced in Kraehenbuehl (1996).

Wongayerlo and the coastal 'edge' place between land and sea, was extremely important for Kaurna meyunna. Wongayerlo is also known as the place where the sun sets (Figure 15).



Figure 15 Sunset, Wongayerlo

Changes to the Coastal Dunes

Historian Tom Gara described the coastal dunal system at the time of settlement as follows:

When the first settlers arrived on the Adelaide Plains, coastal dunes up to 10 metres high lined the shores of Gulf St Vincent from Brighton to Outer Harbour, broken only by the outlet of Patawalonga Creek. The fore-dunes were vegetated with coastal heath and spinifex, while the more sheltered dunes inland were covered with acacia and tea-tree scrub (Gara, 2008:1).

The following images give some indication of the dunal areas prior to their urbanisation (Figure 16 & Figure 17).

² Davis's writings were published in *The Adelaide miscellany of useful and entertaining knowledge* which was published by John Stephens, August 1848 (no,1) – July, 1848 (no.52). See: <http://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/1806729>.



Figure 16 From the Sand Dunes 1899, J. White (AGSA Collection)



Figure 17 Foreshore & Henley Beach Hotel 1891 (SLSA B2233)

The 20th century saw dramatic changes to the coastal region. Noted Adelaide artist Sir Hans Heysen recorded the sand mining in the early 20th Century (Figure 18). Vegetation clearance and urbanisation, the building of roadways (Figure 19) and houses on the fore-dunes, has now almost completely obscured them.



Figure 18 Sand Carters, West Beach, 1906, Hans Heysen (Private Collections)



Figure 19 Foreshore, Henley Beach, 1930s (B18651_11, SLSA)

The City of Charles Sturt has care and custody of a significant section of the Adelaide coastline including the valuable remnant dunal systems, for example along the foreshore at West Beach, Henley Beach (Figure 20) and the Tennyson Dunes (Figure 21).



Figure 20 Foreshore, Henley Beach, 2000s



Figure 21 Tennyson Dunes, 2000s

4.2 Witongga The Reedbeds

(Includes parts of Fulham, Fulham Gardens, Grange, Henley Beach, Henley Beach South, Seaton, West Beach)

Witongga 'reed place' (Amery and Williams, 2002:264) was an ephemeral wetland system fed by Karrawirraparri, Tarnda-parri *River Torrens* lying between the coastal dunes and a system of red sand dunes to the east. Wittonga stretched from Pattawilyangga *Patawalonga/Glenelg* to Yerta Bulti *Port River/Estuary*. A sense of the wetlands landscape is given in three 19th century paintings (Figure 22, Figure 23).



Figure 22 Reedbeds, James Ashton, 1890 (White Collection)



Figure 23 (Extract from) Where reeds and rushes grow, 1899, James Ashton, (AGSA)



Figure 24 Sun Rising, Adelaide Hills, c1900, James Ashton (Private collection)

Wittonga was a prime traditional summer living area for Kurna meyunna, providing food and other resources. The area hosted 130 plant taxa (Kraehenbuehl, 1997:180). Gara described the area as follows:

Between the coastal dunes and these older red dunes, an extensive area of wetlands stretched from the upper reaches of the Port River southwards all the way to the Patawalonga and the Sturt River. Thick stands of teatree lined the Port River nearly as far as Grange, and much of what is now West Lakes were samphire flats and tidal marshes.

Waters coming down the Torrens River backed up behind the coastal sandhills into an extensive area of swamps and reedbeds, lined with red gums and patches of teatree, sheoak and acacia scrub. The reedbeds were rich in freshwater mussels and yabbies' and were home to abundant wildfowl and other birds and small mammals, and were a major resource area for Kurna people (Gara, 2001:8).

A visit in 1891 by the Field Naturalists Section of the Royal Society provides another detailed description of the area and this is provided as Appendix A. Gara provides a comprehensive outline of Wittonga and their loss in the paper *The Destruction of the Aboriginal Heritage of the Reedbeds*. This paper is provided in full in Appendix B.

The area described by Gara is known as the Greater Reedbeds, as distinct from the specific area at Fulham where the term 'the Reedbeds' is now applied. The Port Adelaide Kurna heritage survey (2007:9) also refers to the value Wittonga 'The wetlands at West Lakes/Wittonga acted as a natural filter for the River Torrens/Karrawirraparri outwash and along with the samphire flats, provided a rich source of food and reeds for basket weaving.' The reeds were also used for spear making. Archaeologist Valerie Campbell (1988) also outlined the significance of the area as part of Kurna coastal archaeology, and showed the extent of the wetlands (Figure 25).

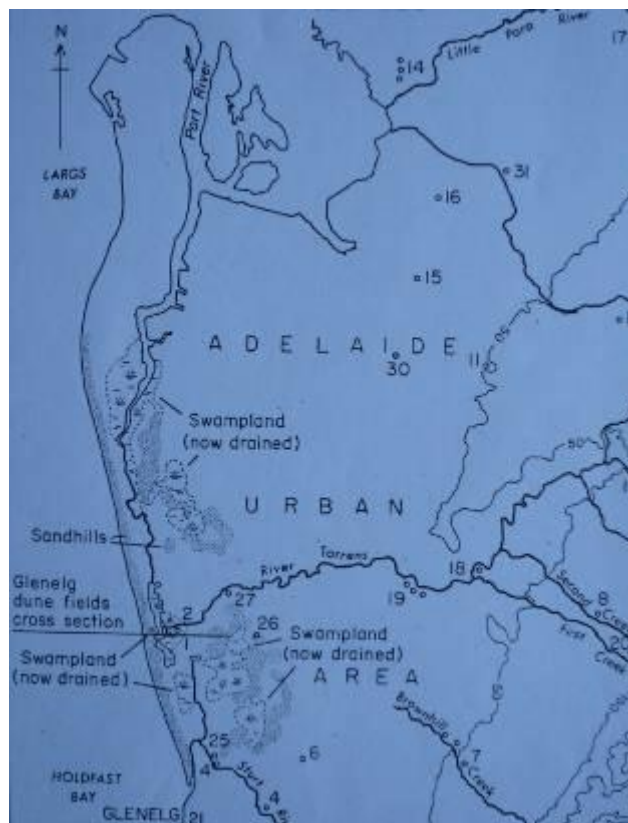


Figure 25. Former wetland/swampland areas (Campbell, 1988)

An Aboriginal method of snaring game is illustrated by colonial artist, G. F. Angas (Figure 26). It cannot be certain this was a Kurna meyunna snare as the exact location of the painting is undisclosed.

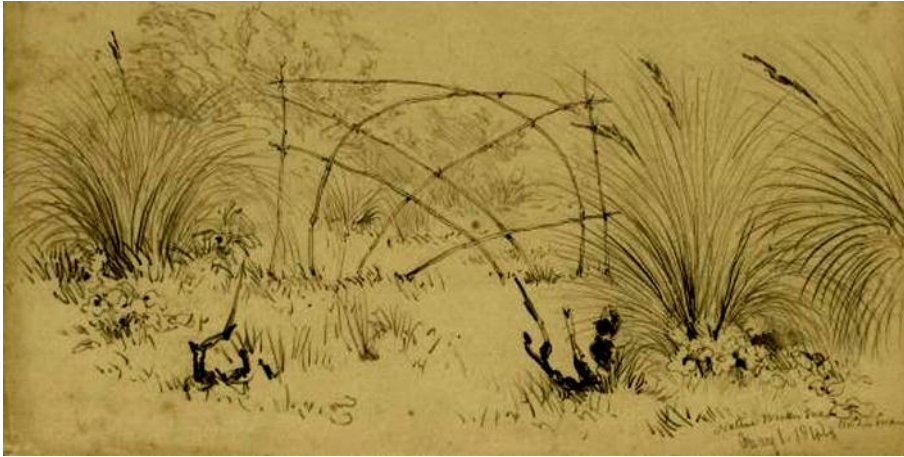


Figure 26 Native wicker snare in the swamp 1844 G. F. Angas (NLA 2892737)

Wittonga provided another food source, snakes. 'Yes, I have eaten them. The idea of eating snake flesh is enough to make some people shudder. The natives used to consider a juicy snake cutlet a delicacy. It is. I can recommend it. Like fish, only better' (J.J. Murray, *The Mail*, Saturday 17 November 1923, p. 3). Murray caught snakes in the Henley area for a living in the early 20th century:

For 16 years I have been catching them here at Henley, and I know of 110 places where they are more plentiful. If all the snakes I have caught or killed in that time were laid head to tail I think they would stretch from Glenelg to Henley and back again. I have, caught snakes, killed snakes, sold snakes, been bitten by snakes, and I have eaten snakes.

With the extent of urban development it is now almost impossible to fully imagine the Kurna landscape of Wittonga. A c1900 painting (Figure 27) and three early photographs (Figure 28, Figure 29, Figure 30) give an indication of the periodic inundation and vegetation.

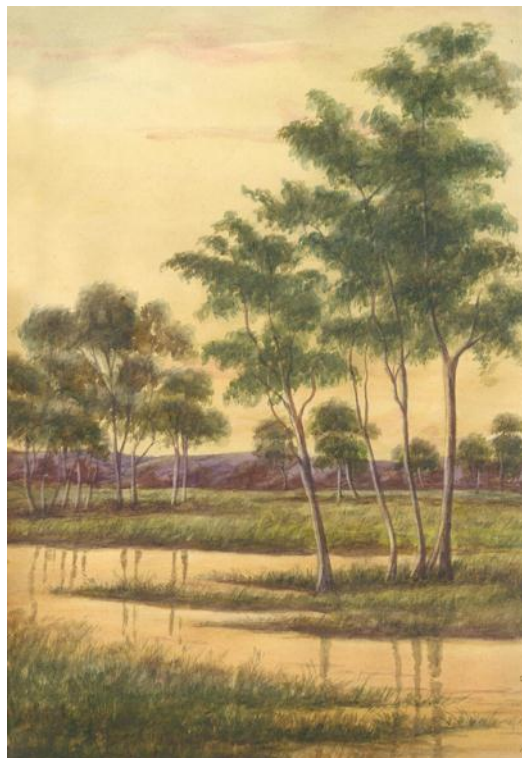


Figure 27 Henley Beach, c1900, C. Roper (Private collection)



Figure 28 Floodwaters, Ca. 1917, Henley Beach (B52985_13, SLSA)



Figure 29 Eucalyptus trees in paddocks inundated by floodwaters, Henley Beach (PRG280_1_36_305, SLSA)



Figure 30 'Jerusalem' White family private wild life sanctuary, Fulham (B17494, SLSA)

Wittonga Region and Burial Sites

The dunal systems that fringe Wittonga are a well noted location for Kurna meyunna burial places or what we may call, cemeteries. There are numerous citations and anecdotal stories, particularly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, of the discovery of human skeletal remains during farming, sand mining and building activity, or exposed by erosion, in the dunal system stretching from Queenstown to Glenelg. Early 20th Century Adelaide University geologist Walter Howchin noted that:

The banks of the lower reaches of the River Torrens, with the adjacent sandhills, must have been the chief camping grounds, as well as burial place, of the local tribe for generations. Many skeletons have been exposed at this spot by the erosive action of the wind, and in addition, the locality has proved to be the richest in the occurrence of stone implements that has come under the Author's notice in South Australia (Howchin, 1934).

Most burial places have now been destroyed or covered over by the built environment. Because the dunes had largely been removed before legislation was in place to protect or record Aboriginal heritage sites, the full extent of burials will never be known but more are still being disturbed and discovered. In the City of Charles Sturt the Register of Aboriginal Sites records three more recently discovered sites at Grange and Fulham, however the South Australian Museum holds a comprehensive collection of skeletal remains from the region.

In 1911 at least twenty Aboriginal skeletons were found at a sand mining site in Fulham (Gara, 2000:2). An investigation of those skeletons was undertaken by the Assistant Government Geologist, D. H Basedow and his report, along with other reporting, is provided as Appendix C. In 1927 a further five skeletons were unearthed in the locale and reported in *The Mail*:

ABORIGINAL BURIAL GROUND - Mr J. Horsley has lived at Fulham Park for many years. He was there when Mr W. A. Blackler owned the property, and has seen many aboriginal skeletons taken from its paddocks. In commenting on the find Mr Horsley said that some years ago half of the sandhill from which they were taken was removed, and many similar skulls and bones found.

Mr Horsley said there was little doubt that parts of Fulham Park in days past had been used by the natives as a burial ground. During the time he was residing at the famous stud farm scores of skeletons were found. He remembered the skeleton of a black fellow being found some years ago buried a few feet below the surface of a sandhill. It was in a sitting position, as if some unfortunate native in ages past had been buried alive.

Though the aboriginal remains which were uncovered on Wednesday at Fulham Park were found fairly close to the surface, many of the bones were crumbling with decay, indicating that they had been buried a long time (The Mail, 1927:1).

Burial Ground Uncovered

FOX HUNT AT FULHAM

Setting out to hunt foxes at Fulham Park, on Thursday, Messrs. J. Horsley, C Rowell and. W. Dixon, after killing a 5-ft. brown snake, shot three foxes, and then unearthed the crumbling skeletons of five aborigines. For some time foxes have been killing fowls at Sir Sidney Kidmans' stud farm at Fulham Park and many native birds have been destroyed by them. Armed with guns and picks and shovels Messrs. Horsley, Rowell, and Dixon, on Thursday, set forth to wage war on the foxes, which were known to occupy burrows in a paddock which adjoins the property of Capt. S. A. White.

Before they had time to begin digging for foxes a 5-ft. brown snake scuttled through the' grass at their feet.' It was killed. Once more foxes became the objective of the diggers. About six feet beneath the surface of a sandhill, however, one of the spades turned over a human skull and shortly afterwards five other skulls and other bones were uncovered.

Still; on the scent of the foxes the hunters continued to dig and eventually three half-grown, foxes were unearthed and shot.



Figure 31 The Mail, Saturday, November 5, 1927

Photograph Caption: 'DIGGING OUT FOXES AT FULHAM ON THURSDAY MEN UNEARTHED PART OF AN OLD NATIVE BURIAL GROUND'. In the illustration a close up photograph of a pile of skeletal remains and three foxes has been superimposed on a general descriptive picture. What appears to be a stick held by the man on the right is actually a snake. Further early newspaper reports of Aboriginal burials in the Charles Sturt Council region are provided in Appendix C.

During the course of this research one Charles Sturt resident relayed this story:

My mother and her family lived in Military Road Henley Beach for many of her young years. She was the youngest of three children and born in 1910. Her brother Melville was born in 1904 and was a surgeon and later a heart specialist. In his student days he collected various species of fauna and reptiles from the wetlands situated immediately behind the dune system that collected most of the Adelaide storm waters. This was before the Breakout Creek was constructed in 1934. These collections were given to the White family who resided in Fulham. My mother told stories of her brother and her walking through the wetlands and picking up anything they thought that Mr White would have an interest in. She told me that this collection could be bones and stones that had grooves in them. Mr White encouraged my Uncle to find more bones and bring them back for his collection.

In my early years my father was a freight manager for John Martins. During school holidays he would take me to Fort Glanville and drive south along Military Road at a place named Ticklebelly Flat. I could never work out why it had this name as it was a stand of dunes of perhaps three swales and high enough for us kids to sit on a piece of linoleum and slide down the dune. I also cleaned stables for a trotting horse owner who had horses stabled in his back yard or agisted in the wet lands now known as West Lakes. The horse owner and his mates would tell us some great stories about things that they had found in this wetland such as human bones and they were sure were Blackfella bones. They also said that they knew that Blackfellas met at Ticklebelly Flat and in these wetlands. I still don't know how a stand of Dunes were named Ticklebelly Flat but I am sure there is a story to that.

Aboriginal ancestral remains continue to be found in the region and further discoveries are likely in the former dunal system. In past times there was no Act to protect either Aboriginal people or their places, and many more Aboriginal ancestral remains continue to be discovered in urban areas where the burial or sleeping places are, and still exist to this day. The potential to uncover burial sites during the redevelopment that is occurring along the coastal region is an issue to be aware of. Any Aboriginal sites located are to be dealt with under the provisions of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988*. Kurna meyunna have become more active in leading the repatriation and cultural practices for ceremonial reburial reflecting traditional customs in parallel to archaeological methods.

In the old times Kurna meyunna would see Wilto *Eagle* in the sky; during the day and night these appearances would announce the arrival of the seasonal cyclic movement (Winter/Autumn) from the cave and other shelters in the lower hills down to the plains and further to the coast. They travelled, usually following the rivers and creeks, using the knowledge and dingoes to smell where the freshwater springs, waterholes and other resources were along the way. To give an example of the relationship of the people to

their burial/sleeping places, they would re-step and follow the pathways to their ancestors, which were never far from water sources; there they would not just simply place a flower at the site, they would make fire and sleep in that place with them.

Introduction of European Agriculture to Wittonga

The resources of Wittonga, the fertile soils and water, were quickly recognised by the settlers and a turbulent change commenced. The first female prisoner in the Adelaide Gaol was the (Kurna) Aboriginal woman Wariato who was convicted of stealing potatoes from the property of Thomas Payne at the Reed Beds. She was sentenced to 14 days hard labour, committed on 19th March 1841 and released 1st April 1841 (Adelaide Goal on-site interpretive plaque). As their own food resources and gathering places were disappearing at an alarming rate Kurna meyunna turned to what was then available. Kraehenbuehl (1996:2) noted that in the early period of colonisation the ecology of Wittonga was affected by agricultural pursuits like potato growing that flourished there for many years. This new form of agriculture became a resource for Kurna:

Local Intelligence

The Reed Beds are woefully flooded, and it is feared the damage to the orchards, gardens, vineyards, and growing crops in general, will be unprecedentedly severe. The natives were seen to be busy enough on Monday at different points of the river in collecting stray winter melons, and pumpkins, tobacco, palings, rails, and larger timber (South Australian Register Saturday 11 July 1846).



Figure 32 Market Gardens in the region, farmhouse previously owned by J. W. Mellor (B63787, SLSA)

A vineyard at the Reedbeds was one of the first planted in South Australia, according to a paper written for the Federal Viticultural Congress in 1923 by Mr. H. M. Martin, of Stonyfell.

'The first vineyard I can find any record of is that of A. H. Davis, of Moore Farm, at the Reedbeds, about three miles west of Adelaide, on what is now the Henley Beach road,' wrote Mr. Martin. 'Mr. Davis had 25 acres of black alluvial soil, and five acres were planted in 1839-40 with vine cuttings imported from New South Wales. The remaining 20 acres were planted gradually with orchard fruits — hence the origin of the Moore Park apricot — the whole 25 acres being completed by 1850. So runs the legend.

I remember Mr. Davis in the early fifties as a fruit supplier, and heard talk of the excellence of his wines. Mr. Davis died long ago, and his orchard and vineyard have disappeared' (The Mail, Saturday 6 August 1938, p. 9S).

And the construction of infrastructure was enabling further settlement.

The Opening of the Moore Farm Bridge, Reedbeds

The Moore Farm Bridge was formally opened for public traffic on Tuesday, May 17. A large number of gentlemen and ladies were present, including the Hon. J. Morphett, M.L.C., Mr. H. B. T. Strangways, M.P. (Mayor of Glenelg), A. Stow, MP., Mr. A. H. Davis, Dr. Wheeler, and the members of the West Torrens District Council and many others. The event proved highly successful, the weather being propitious. In another column will be found a report of the proceedings (South Australian Register, Wednesday 18 May 1864, p. 2)

As an early settler Davis had a direct relationship with Kurna meyunna. This relationship was outlined on his death in 1866. Part of an obituary for Davis read:

After his arrival he commenced business as a merchant, and his talents and active habits of mind soon pointed him out as eminently qualified to take a prominent part in the affairs of the infant colony. In the various discussions that took place during the first few years of our settlement respecting the treatment of the natives, has always appeared as the warm advocate of merciful and generous treatment of the aborigines (The South Australian Advertiser, Tuesday 5 June 1866. p. 2).

After Davis's death Moore Farm was to become the home of Samuel White (1835-1880), the noted ornithologist. In the early 1870s Samuel White built the home 'Weetunga' on higher ground on Moore Farm, the locale of which is an important place in documenting the Kaurna history and ecology of the area. Samuel White, who arrived in South Australia in 1842 as a young boy, was the son of John White (1785-1860) who had arrived earlier in December 1836 to establish his farm and home (Figure 33). He was aboard the Tam O'Shanter, disembarking from the Port River (Port Misery) with materials to build his home (wtcc.sa.gov.au). He was one of the first settlers in the Reedbeds calling his home Fulham Farm (Section 194) and farming the land with oats, barley, potatoes etc. It was from his farm that the suburb received its name (wtcc.sa.gov.au).



Figure 33 John White's home at the Reed Beds, Fulham, c. 1855 (RG335_17_1, SLSA)

The Reedbeds was also a source of reeds for thatching elsewhere in Adelaide, as outlined in the reminiscences of Henry Breaker, who arrived on H.M.S. Buffalo as a child, describing their first house 'we were moved up to our allotment, which my father had bought amid the gumtrees and scrub. Our first residence was made of reeds from the Reedbeds.' He also described an encounter with Kaurna:

The Adelaide tribe of natives was then numerous. I may here mention that when we were in our reed hut a native woman came along, and with an authoritative manner demanded food. She was refused, because my mother resented her manner. The woman threatened to fire the hut, but my mother stood her ground, and nothings came of it. When cattle were brought to the country father's first purchase was a bullock's head, for which 10/ was paid, and with which soup was made. The natives came around, and joined in the feasting, which of course, was quite a new thing with them, and an agreeable change for us. One of the blacks ate too much, and rolled on the ground in distress, and got his lubra to tread on his stomach to lessen the tension (The Register, Wednesday 29 December 1915 p. 4).

Henry Breaker was later to spend 12 months at the Point Pearce Aboriginal Mission on Yorke Peninsula where many Kaurna meyunna lived (The Advertiser, Wednesday 22 October 1924, p. 13).

Controlling the Water: the Draining of Wittonga

Wittonga was subject to regular inundation, up to some metres deep, and as land use changed from Kaurna utilising the natural landscape of Wittonga for food gathering and hunting to the settler's agricultural production and urban settlement, the periodic inundation became a problem. No longer was the inundation the source of life it had been for Kaurna. Figure 34 shows the area subject to inundation (in the early 20th Century) superimposed over the urban landscape of the 1980s indicating the extent of the ongoing problem for the settler culture.

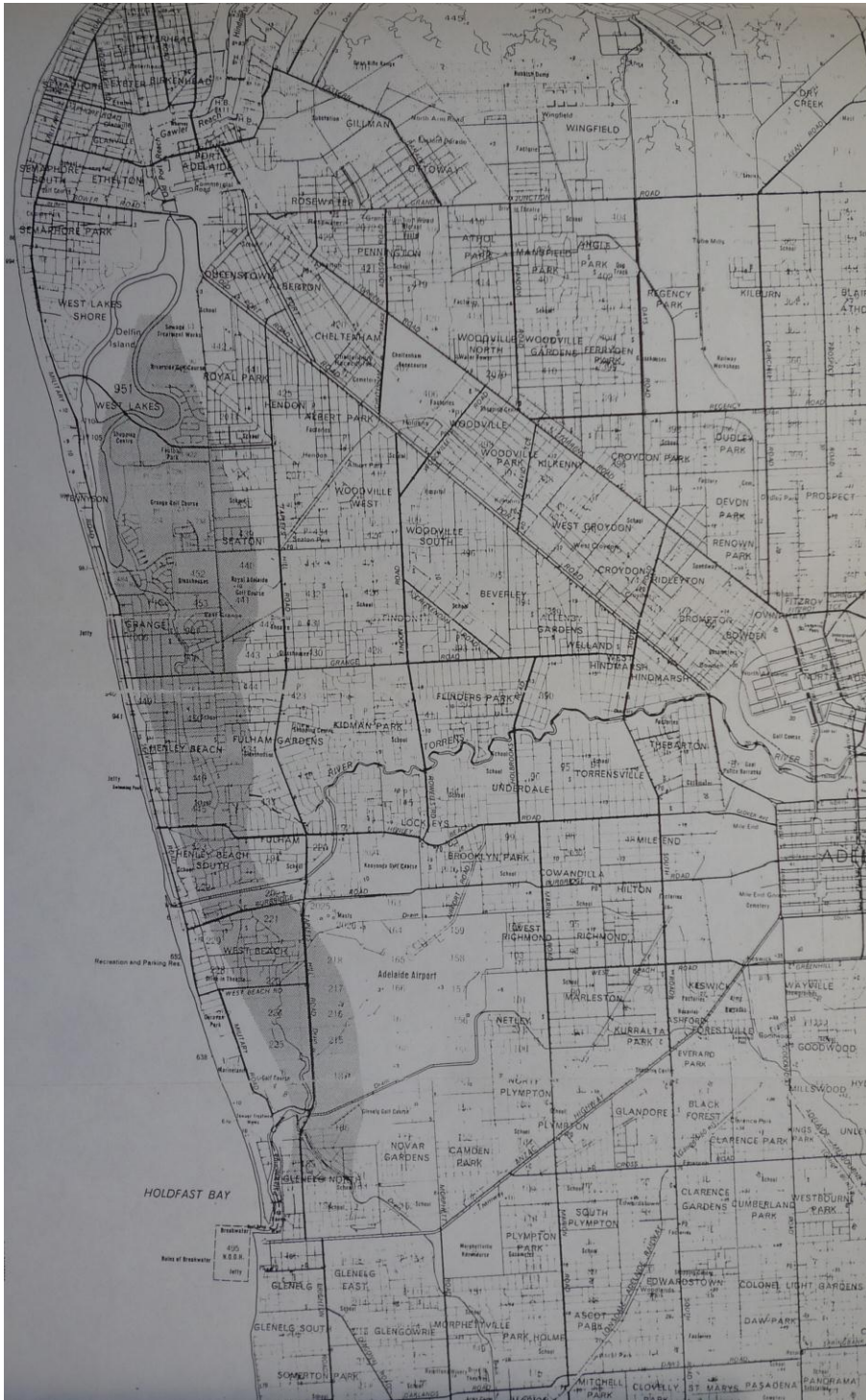


Figure 34 Area of inundation, early 20th Century (Source, Smith & Twidale, 1989)

The river channel and banks, rivulets and the water's edge were re-forming as flow patterns changed due to the agricultural activity and developments up-stream since settlement. A report in *The Register* in 1847 comprehensively outlined the colonising perspective which set the tone for the next 75 years of the settler-river relationship. What the Kurna thought of the damage and dramatic change to their Aboriginal landscape can again only be imagined.

We have been favoured by a correspondent with some particulars of the deplorable condition of the Reed Beds, resulting from the floods of the last week. The experience of the previous year induced most of the persons on the Torrens to erect banks to defend their sections from probable inundation. This, of course, pent up the channel of the river, which, having derived unusual force from the additional contributions of its tributaries, forced its way through at the north-eastern extremity of Moore Farm. It broke in, at first, with considerable force on the Monday night, scooping out a small gully in the garden some fifty yards from the river. On Wednesday it worked on the gully to the width of twenty feet, and still retrograding, it fell with great

effect into the gully, with a fall of twelve feet at least. The excessive rains of Wednesday night produced a heavier flood on Thursday, greatly exceeding in force and volume any previous one. About three p.m. the river had risen to the very edge of the new banks on each side, which where everywhere yielding to the pressure— everyone expected them momentarily to give way, in which case the loss of property, and most probably, life, would have been great.

Suddenly the barrier at the gully we have named was destroyed, and the river at once formed a new channel, into which it passed with an impetuosity which was irresistible; that part of the garden was speedily destroyed, and the opening, at first about twenty feet in width, rapidly crumbled down the bank, until, by ten at night, the breadth of the new stream was at least sixty yards, and, inclusive of the river, at least one hundred yards broad. The latter stream now passes along tolerably quiet; and, below its old banks, the great mass of the water pouring into the new channel, which spreads over nearly the whole of the sections, finding apparently two outlets through the sand hills on to the salt-water plains.

The rush of water was tremendous: a large gum-tree fell, and was carried, branches and all, far down the section; and waves of no mean height foamed along with destructive effect, tearing up the soil, carrying away the fences, and completely destroying the road. The families of Mr Davis and Mr John White are cut off from all communication, the entire section being insulated. Mr Davis has suffered the entire loss of his hay crop, and a great part of the pasture land is a deposit of sand. The fences, except on one side, may be said to be utterly demolished, and the sections are evidently cut up into many channels. The apprehension of personal danger, at one period very imminent, created considerable alarm. They are still encompassed with the flood and the new river will apparently form, for many weeks, an insuperable barrier to all carriage communication from that quarter. The banks of the river on both sides are much weakened, and large portions continue dropping into the stream, after having been under mined by its force. At Dr. Addison's, on the opposite side, a large excavation has been made by the current, which threatens a similar catastrophe to that on Moore Farm, should there be again very heavy rains. The accumulated waters on Sunday were not able to find a sufficiently rapid vent, and rose still higher up, the river being over the banks on both sides. We much regret to say we have heard it stated that £500 would not place Moore Farm in the condition in which it stood on the 1st June last (South Australian Register, 26 July, 1847 p. 4).

From early after colonisation, farms, roads, and later tramways disappeared under water during regular inundations (Figure 35, Figure 36, Figure 37), crops were lost and buildings and infrastructure were damaged.



Figure 35 Floods on Henley Beach Road. Henley Beach, c.1910 (B64084, SLSA)



Figure 36 Flooding of the Torrens River on the Henley Beach Road, c,1918 (PRG280_1_17_133, SLSA)



Figure 37 A 'scrubber' car on the viaduct (now Henley Beach Road), Reedbeds, Fulham (B70935_16 (SLSA)

The winter volume of water was so problematic to the settlers that fundamental landscape changes were being imagined in the early 20th Century, the draining of Wittonga became an imperative. The end of the ephemeral wetlands and the complete loss of an Aboriginal landscape were nigh. *The Advertiser* records the need and the mood in 1908:

Fulham and Floodwaters - A Drainage Scheme Required

The fourth heavy flood of the present season rushed down the Torrens on Wednesday, and reached the flats in the Fulham district at about noon. Each inundation of the low-lying country in the neighborhood is accompanied by a spreading of the flood waters over new land. In course of time, as the depositing of silt goes on year after year, unless precautionary measures are adopted, land which is now above the level of the highest flood on record, will become liable to be submerged, and the question of adopting means of preventing damage to property is a serious one, which should be solved without delay.

A representative of "The Advertiser" visited the locality on Wednesday, and as the result of enquiries learned that although in years gone by the land-owners regarded the floods as a blessing, because they brought down fresh soil and deposited it on the grazing fields, they considered the time had come when something should be done to control the waters which at present escape whenever the river is swollen and destroy the winter grass crops. It is felt that some practical scheme should be adopted to carry off surplus water. At present when the Torrens reaches a certain level a proportion of the water enters what is known as the Breakout Creek, at the junction of the properties of Captain White and Mr. W. Blackler, and by a tortuous course makes its way to the Reedbeds, and finally to the Patawalonga. This creek is a narrow and shallow watercourse, and if it were widened and deepened a little it would afford material relief. Not only would landholders nearer Henley Beach and Grange and at Lockleys benefit by such a method, but the Government would rear a considerable advantage by preventing the flow of a tremendous volume of silt-bearing water into the Port River, and the inevitable deposition of the soil in the bed of that stream. Immense

sums have had to be spent on deepening the Port River, and a large percentage of the silt is carried into the river by the floods which come down the Torrens and enter the Grange stream, which is a continuation of the Port River. If the Breakout Creek were remodelled, the sharp curves removed, and provision made at its junction with the Torrens to facilitate the floodwaters entering it, silt which now goes to the Port would be carried to the Patawalonga, and would do no harm there.

The West Torrens District Council has long recognised the necessity for doing something, because, apart altogether from the damage which the floods do to private property, the roads, bridges, culverts and gutters under their jurisdiction constantly need attention. With the assistance of the landowners concerned the council some time ago cleared the bed of the Breakout Creek on the southern side of the Henley Beach road. It had become blocked by drift sand and debris. The value of this small work has been amply demonstrated this year, as it has enabled a large body of water to find its way to Reedbeds flats and the Patawalonga. The Fulham and Lockley's districts are fast becoming popular residential centres, but while there is a prospect, and almost a certainty, of the land being submerged two or three times a year it is not likely that the place will grow as it otherwise would.

It would cost a considerable sum of money to put the Breakout Creek in proper order, and it is thought that the Government ought to combine with the district council and the owners of property within the present flood area for the purpose of making the channel wider, deeper, and as far as possible straight. It might be urged that the owners of the land and the council should do the work themselves, but those concerned argue that as the making of the escape channel would prevent the silting up of the Port River to a large extent the Government are more deeply interested than anyone else, and therefore should bear a fair share of the cost. In whatever is done provision might have to be made for allowing a proportion of floodwaters to follow in present course of the river, and the summer flow could not be diverted from its proper route without interfering with the riparian rights of the landowners. At all events, the matter is of sufficient importance to justify consideration by the Government, particularly in view of the opening of the electric tramway to Henley Beach and the probable settlement of a comparatively dense population in the neighborhood (The Advertiser, 9 July, 1908, p. 7).

Draining Lockleys Township.

The West Torrens District Council is still carrying out works to drain the flood waters at the Reedbeds. In addition to partially opening up the Breakout Creek near the Moore Farm bridge, on the Henley Beach road at Fulham, the council is constructing a dyke, with the permission of Mr. W. A. Blackler, across the Fulham Park paddocks to carry off the waters that submerge the Henley Beach road near Lockleys township. This, it is thought will greatly relieve the trouble caused by heavy floods (The Advertiser, Friday 10 June 1910, p. 6).

The ultimate solution was to cut a channel to Wongayerlo (Gulf St Vincent) in the 1930s (see p.46) as an outlet for the river water, by widening, straightening and extending Breakout Creek. This brought to an end the ecological system of the river and the reed beds and enabled the closer urban settlement predicted above. The extent of subdivision in 1927 is given in Figure 38, the Breakout Creek locale is indicated.

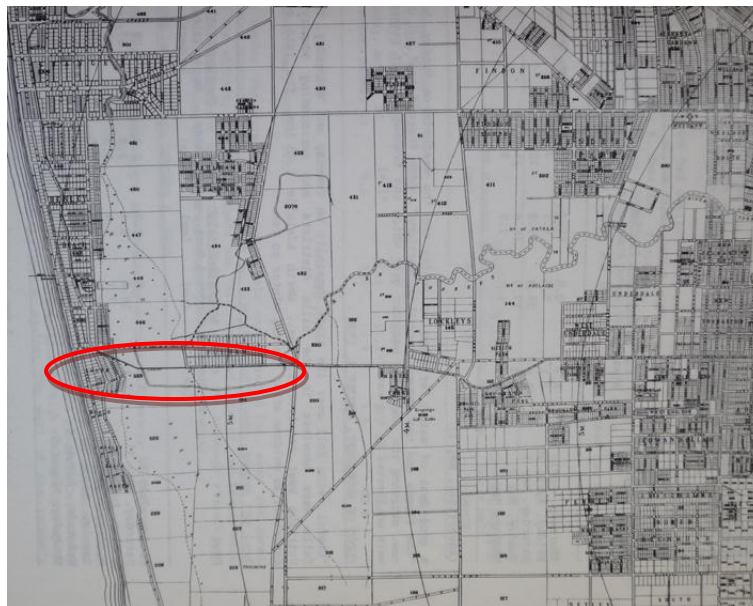


Figure 38 Subdivisions in Western Suburbs in 1927 (Source, Smith & Twidale, 1989)

Of the 130 plant taxa known to the area, 79 (or 60%) have become extinct since colonisation (Kraehenbuehl, 1997:180). Kraehenbuehl (1996:180) provides a poignant summary of the fate of the Reedbeds:

The Reedbeds must have presented a wondrous sight to early observers: there was probably a close resemblance then to some of the surviving coastal swamps in the lower part of the South East region of South Australia. Yet hardly any vestige of this vast area remains – surely an indictment of the activities of our forebears. Any chance to conserve the old Reedbeds has more than likely gone forever.

And gone forever is the wonderfully rich traditional Kaurna cultural landscape, something which can now only be reimagined in new ways. There is a small reflection of the former greater Reedbeds (Grange Creek) adjacent to Charles Sturt Cottage, Jetty Street, Grange (Figure 39, Figure 40).



Figure 39 Greater Reedbeds Remnant, Grange



Figure 40 Greater Reedbeds Remnant, Grange

But even these remnants are far removed from the samphire lined creek that was once there (Figure 41).



Figure 41 The Grange, n .d. (Barrow Collection, Flinders University)

An indication of the extent of the water body, as the annual rains made their way from Karrawirraparri, Tarnda-parri to the Port River, is given in the 1923 photograph of the inundation of the area adjacent to the Grange railway track (Figure 42) a few hundred metres to the north of Sturt's cottage.



Figure 42 Floods by the railway track at Grange, 1923 (PRG 280/1/41/170, SLSA)

The Inland Dunes

Wittonga was bordered to the east by a system of red sand dunes:

There used to be, several kilometres inland from the coast, a belt of high red sandhills, vegetated with dense stands of native pines, eucalypts, sheoaks and acacia scrub. These older consolidated dunes – formed about 150,000 years ago - once stretched almost unbroken from Port Adelaide and the western side of Torrens Island to the Sturt River at Novar Gardens. There were extensive areas of these dunes in the area formerly known as the Pinery at Grange and at Royal Park, through the suburbs of Seaton, Findon, Fulham and Lockleys and in a long arc stretching from Netley through Plympton to Novar Gardens. Today you can see surviving remnants of these dunes, with some of their original vegetation still intact, in the Kooyonga, Royal Adelaide and Grange Golf Courses. If you are driving west down Grange Road, you drive over several prominent dune crests between Findon Rd and Tapley's Hill Rd (Gara, 2008:1).

The remnants are illustrated in Figure 43 & Figure 44.



Figure 43. Red Dunes, Royal Adelaide Golf Club, Seaton



Figure 44. Indigenous vegetation, Royal Adelaide Golf Club, Seaton

Kraehenbuehl (1996:7) outlined that one of the casualties of the post-war urban expansion of Adelaide was the old red sand dunes on the western side of the city. Thousands of tonnes of sand from these dunes were used to fill its swamps and grade areas in the construction of the Adelaide airport at West Beach. In the 1950s at the Pinery (Grange) sand companies obtained the contract to remove those parts of the dunes stretching between Queenstown and the football stadium at West Lakes. In the 1950s there were still groves of native pines in between the sand dune swales and it was possible to 'pick up the occasional native stone chippings'.

The golf clubs occupy part of that system and the red sands and some remnant vegetation can be seen there. Unfortunately there was little understanding of the value of the vegetation and in the 1960s large numbers of ancient Banksia marginata were pulled up to construct a fairway. The trees were heaped up and burned (Kraehenbuehl, 1996:7).

4.3 Karrawirraparri, Tarnda-parri River Torrens

(Includes suburbs of Hindmarsh, Allenby Gardens, Welland, Flinders Park, Kidman Park, Fulham)

Karrawirraparri, the redgum forest river, *River Torrens* is the main river on the Adelaide Plains, rising in the Adelaide Hills in Peramangk Country (Figure 45). The river has also been referred to as Tandanjapari (or Tarnda-parri) by anthropologist N. B. Tindale, which translates as the Red Kangaroo River (Hemming & Harris, 1998:18) which links to the City of Adelaide area having sites related to the Red Kangaroo Dreaming. Victoria Square has the dual naming of Tarndanyangga, place of the Red Kangaroo in Kaurna, which was bestowed on 22 May 2003.

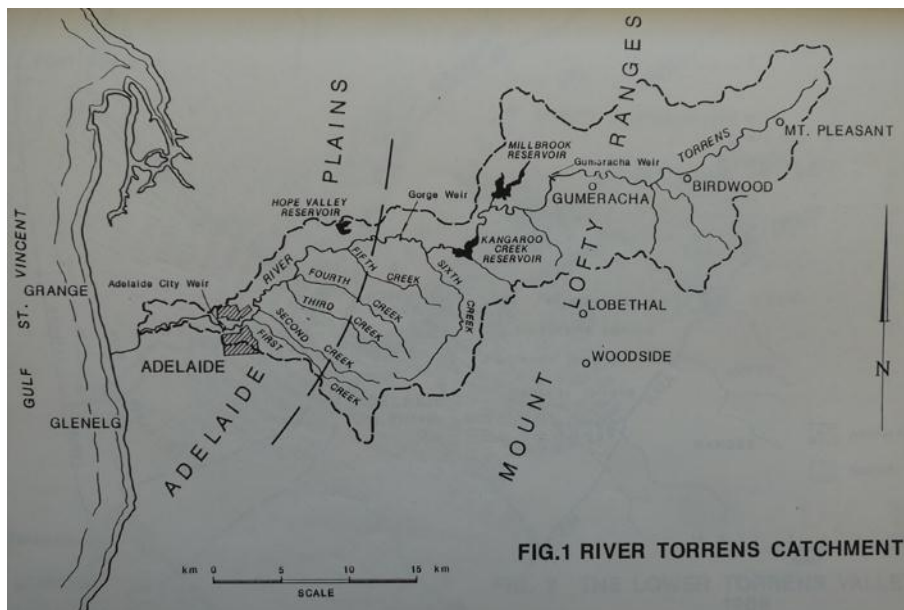


Figure 45 Karrawirraparri, Tarnda-parri River Torrens catchment (Smith, 1989)

The river was another prime traditional living area and movement corridor for Kaurna meyunna. The Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division notes that land within 200 metres of a watercourse, in particular, may contain Aboriginal sites and objects. Therefore, any activities that disturb the land along Karrawirraparri, Tarnda-parri should be cognisant of this.

Early colonist A. H. Davis noted that 'A native track runs on either side of the Torrens, and pretty well trodden too', an Aboriginal forerunner to the contemporary walking and cycling paths along the Torrens Linear Park. Captain Charles Sturt had a similar observation in New South Wales on his arrival at the river he named the Darling. In 1829 he recorded that 'The paths of the natives on either side of it were like well trodden roads; and the trees that overhung it were of beautiful and gigantic growth (Cathcart, 2009:111).

The memories of the settler Thomas Day, in the period prior to 1847, provide one account of Kaurna life along the river (Hemming & Harris, 1998:43):

[Aboriginal] Women and children spent most of their time at the Torrens River – children bathing and practicing with spear and small waddy – women crabbing and going in the river with a net bag and picking up cockles. I have seen them go down – And I thought they would never rise again, They got many cockles And rose again on the other side after being under water A long time. The river torrens was A chain of water holes very deep When not in flood. It was full of timber Very dangerous to go amongst. Their time was also employed making mats, nets and rope clothes lines ... they would then sell or exchange for food from the settlers ...

Anthropologist Norman Tindale recorded many food sources in the river such as fresh water cockles (*Unio dubia*), ngampa (edible roots) and kar'li (crayfish) (Hemming & Harris, 1998:44). Yabbies were another fresh water food resource. Davis noted another form of food harvesting along the river by Kaurna:

Observe, there is a native searching for this caterpillar [Cossus larva]. How cleverly he ascends the trees, first displacing with his wooden cuttah (a pointed stick of hard wood, which he holds in his right hand) a small apiece of bark, he thrusts the same weapon firmly into the tree considerably higher, and raises himself by it as to plant the ball of the great toe in the hole he first made, then clasping the trunk with his left arm, he renews the process until he reaches the fork of the tree. There, now he is examining for the "strong indications" of the caterpillar. They are pretty plain; for as the animal feeds within, the sawdust and excrements are forced upwards by his onward progress to the hole by which he first entered. The native again applies the pointed wood, the bark falls in very small pieces and, mark him, he takes from behind his ears a very small, nicely cleaned-up, hard piece of wood, and about as thick as a crow quill, and about eight inches long in length; tightly fixed by the sinews of the opossums at one end is a piece of bone barbed on one side; he inserts this into the hole, and withdraws it with fine, fat, fleshy monster of a caterpillar dangling upon it; if he is hungry, he will forthwith make a bonne bouche of it, but if not, he will secure it in a little grass for his evening meal at his wurley. Ah! see, his head is thrown back, and the larva is swallowed. (Davis in Kraehenbuehl, 1996:39)

Examples of the toe holds cut by Kurna meyunna mentioned by Davis are evident in scar trees identified along the river. The climbing method is exemplified in the sketch by the early South Australian colonist William Cawthorne (Figure 46). Note that the Aboriginal climber is using an axe, the utilisation of a new material technology, as well as the traditional wadna, a sharp pointed hardwood stick used as a multi purpose hand tool.



Figure 46 Native method of tree climbing, W. A. Cawthorne, 1855 (Mitchell Library)

Davis outlined that the Romans considered the *Cossus larva* a great delicacy and saw 'no reason why it should not be better than those molluscs which are eaten with zest by every one'. The species referred to by Davis as eaten by the Romans was probably *Cossus cossus* (the cossid or goat moth) which is found in the northern hemisphere. The local species, *Endoxyla leucomochla*, is different to *Cossus* but still in the same family. It is likely Aboriginal people used the larvae of any Cossidae, a well known example being the witjuti grub of central Australia (Edwards, pers. comm. 07.05.2012).

The river was the principal reason for locating the city of Adelaide where it is. The river is often referred to in colonial writings and newspapers. These references provide a commentary on the original state of, and the profound changes to, the river. The city of Adelaide was:

... laid out on both sides of a very small stream of excellent water ... In the summer season this stream is found running only for a short distance below the Town, where it disappears beneath its gravelly bed ... the scenery around is very pleasing. Towards the sea it consists of plains studded and intersected with belts of trees (Hawdon in Gammage, 2011 269).

One of the first detailed images of the river in early Adelaide is by Martha Berkeley (Figure 47). The hand of the settler is evident; it depicts the first bridge constructed, c1842 and the cutting of trees. The painting show Karrawirraparri River Torrens as an elegant stream within a channel and a broader grassy valley studded with Karra River redgums. This locality is now submerged under the Torrens Lake.



Figure 47 Torrens Bridge, c1842, Martha Berkeley (Private Collection)

George Hamilton, a colonist who arrived in Adelaide in 1839, wrote the following account of the river, after 40 years of living here:

The land in the vicinity of this river was timbered with noble trees, and its banks sloped down to the water in gentle undulations thickly clothed with grass. The river itself meandered through a tangle of tea-tree, rushes, reeds, and many flowering weeds, here and there almost hidden by vegetation, but at intervals opening out into pretty ponds or tolerably large waterholes; along its banks grew in profusion the wattle (acacia) with its golden sweet-scented blossoms,, as well as the noble eucalyptus, here at that time in great beauty. Towards the sea, to the westward, the land was flat, swampy, and not very picturesque (Hamilton, 1879 in Kraehenbuehl, 1996).

The painting by G.F. Angas, *The City of Adelaide from Mr Wilson's Section on the Torrens, June 1845* (Figure 48) gives another colonial view of the river. It depicts an area that is now Flinders Park/Lockleys viewed from the vicinity of Findon Road/Rowell's Road.



Figure 48. City of Adelaide from Mr Wilson's Section on the Torrens, June 1845, G.F. Angas (AGSA)

An engraving/lithograph from the 1870s (Figure 49) depicts an Arcadian scene downstream from Adelaide with a wide gentle river and sheep grazing contentedly on the valley pastures. This was an imagined riverscape as by the 1870s the river was severely degraded.



Figure 49 Adelaide from the River Torrens, 1874, J. Carse (NLA)

Former South Australian Museum anthropologist, Robert Edwards refers to the long occupation of the lower reaches of the river, where it meets Wittongga, by Kaurna:

The first clue to the early arrival of man on the Adelaide Plains was found at Fulham in 1893 when a series of large, rather crudely formed core tools was found three metres beneath the surface during excavations for an artificial lake (Edwards, 1972:3).

Davis, wrote of this area as part of his journey along the river:

Our ramble is conducting us rapidly to the point where the Torrens ceases to be a traceable river. This then, is the Reedbeds; but ere we pass this last belt of splendid gum trees, let us turn aside, and see what all the noise is about; methinks our sable fellow [Aboriginal] is only one of a company whom we shall find fishing there. Just as I thought! What a wild, laughing, merry set they seem! The women with their loads, and the younger children are seated on a dry sandbank; the bigger boys and the men occupied in the pools, disturbing the water, and frightening the unfortunate fish out of their propriety. Every now and then the spear hooks a victim, which is thrown to the women, who at once with their teeth decapitate the fish, and then deposit them in their little green baskets or rather nets. These fish are very delicate eating, and are very abundant; they take the bait generally very readily from the hook, nay even a bent pin, on which a blowfly or a slug has been impaled is effectual (Davis in Kraehenbuehl, 1996:39).

The River Area and Burial Sites

Areas along Karrawirraparri, Tarnda-parri *River Torrens* are also accepted as locations for burials. However, there is only one burial site along the river in the Charles Sturt council area included on the Register of Aboriginal Sites. Given the dramatic changes to the river since settlement many sites are likely to have been lost over the last 175 years. Some may still remain undisturbed and unrecorded, while some may be built upon without knowing.

Controlling the Water: Changing and Taming the River

The coloniser's relationship to the river was much different to that of Kaurna in terms of material resource utilisation and the understanding of its highly variable water flow. The Head of the Engineering & Water Supply Department reflected in the 1980s:

So far as the River Torrens was concerned the nineteenth century was very much a learning experience for South Australians. The colonists found themselves in a very strange environment in which rainfall, run-off and stream-flow presented a variability from season to season and year to year which was beyond their

experience. They knew not what to expect. Even the question of how high above 'normal' river level bridges needed to be constructed was leaned only by trial and (many) errors (Smith & Twidale, 1989:1).

A report in the local newspaper in 1845 bears out this predicament but also adds an Aboriginal perspective on the river's pattern of behaviour and the climate:

The river Torrens, notwithstanding the copious floods of rain which had fallen previously to Friday, was even so late as Saturday, only a small stream winding its gentle course over the new channels which the heavy flood of last winter had opened for it; but during Sunday this placid character had undergone considerable change, for at an early hour on Monday, its waters had risen to a great height, carrying heavy logs before them with great velocity and incredible force, and rendering all communication with the northern banks (except by the Frome Bridge), if not impracticable, at least highly dangerous.

This early rise of the river seems to bear out a sort of tradition prevalent among the natives, the older of whom especially, state that the ordinary course of the seasons of this colony proceeds in a cycle of twelve years, of which the first seven are comparatively dry ones, the rivers not rising to any great height; but that the latter five years of the cycle are distinguished by heavy rains and floods, causing the larger rivers, as well as their tributaries, to attain a great height and overflow their banks to a greater or less extent. According to their declarations, this is the fourth of the five wet years; and as far as observation of the state of the Torrens at a certain point may be expected to afford a just criterion of the accuracy of their system, it is so far borne out by the fact that, during the three last wet seasons, the river had risen on each succeeding year higher than the one which preceded it, and that on Monday morning last, it had already, at this early period, attained a height early equal to that of the great flood of last season.

The aged natives confidently predict, that this year the waters will be much higher than at any time last year, and that next year (being the last of the series of five in their meteorological system, if we may so call it), it will attain its greatest height, so that very extensive floods will be prevalent. If these calculations are such as may be relied on, and as far as our own observation goes, they seem hitherto to have been perfectly correct, they will go far to establish a most important point in the assumed climate of our adopted country; for, with the recorded experience of the several seasons which have already elapsed since the foundation of the colony, we certainly need not entertain any fears on account of those long continued droughts which are periodically so disastrous in the neighbouring colony. The subject of enquiry is an important one; and we entertain the hope that some of our readers who have facilities for observation, may have given the matter such attention, as to enable them to impart such results as they have arrived at for general information and benefit.

The mental reckonings alluded to, are not confined to the natives from the banks of the Torrens and its environs, but also prevail among those who come from the districts intersected by the Onkaparinga. Since Sunday, we hear that the latter river has risen from five to six feet, and is, at many ordinary places, impassable. A report of the like kind current yesterday about the Torrens, had little foundation. The Frome Bridge is in no way injured, the water having at no time been deeper beneath it than six feet; the same is the case with the foot-bridge near it. That built upon the tree near the old bridge has been a little twisted but is still passable, though it has an uneasy appearance and feels shaky. The foundation of the new stone bridge has been inundated, but as it is not thought that any earth has been borne into the excavation, the works are likely to be resumed to-day. The Wilkins Bridge, at Thebarton, has been somewhat shaken, but has not, as yet, been carried away. The fords are unsafe to cross: Mr W. W. G. Nicholls had a narrow escape yesterday morning in attempting that below the gaol—horse and dray were carried along by the tide, and it was only by the swimming of the former that the shore was gained (The South Australian Register, 18 June, 1845 p. 3).

It is unusual that the settlers were giving some credence to Aboriginal knowledge as a means to understand their environmental predicament. One colonist also observed in the 1850s:

Fire and Water: To the Editor of the Register.

Sir — Among other trifling objections to rivalling St. Cloud or Sydenham in our projected waterworks and fountains, is the perverse fact that within the last fifty years the river Torrens has been known to be quite dry for one whole season. The particulars of this occurrence I gathered from the natives before the extinction of the Adelaide and Cowandilla tribes, and I believe it. One rather original notion in the project is that of compelling our little river, even in ordinary summers, to swallow the last nine or ten miles of its own tail, thus forcing the farmers at the Reedbeds, and thence upwards, to cart their water from Adelaide (South Australian Register, Saturday 14 February 1857, p.2).



Figure 50 View of the River Torrens, 1907 (B45864, SLSA)



Figure 51 Dry river bed, Underdale, 1937 (B11671, SLSA)

The timber of the riparian valley and flood plain was also prized by the incoming culture but its utilisation also required its destruction (Figure 52).



Figure 52 Redgum from Fulham (PRG280_1_33_55, SLSA)

And the river itself had to be beautified, tamed and confined to suit the purposes of the incoming culture. In 1881 the construction of a weir and the formation of the Torrens Lake (Figure 53) in Adelaide changed both the function and aesthetic of the river in the city (and downstream). The Torrens Lake was formally opened on 21 July 1881 by His Excellency the Governor, Sir W.F. Jervis. The sluice gates were added in 1929 to prevent silting and control flooding. They were opened by the Lord Mayor, John Lavington Bonython on 23 May 1929.



Figure 53 Torrens Lake Weir, c1880 (SLSA)

But the river still carried large volumes of water and the image below (Figure 54) taken at the Hindmarsh Bridge in 1917 demonstrates its capacity and power in full flow.



Figure 54 Hindmarsh Bridge, Floods, July 1917 (B28169, SLSA)

The channel downstream of Adelaide was later partly lined and sections of the river valley reclaimed and filled. Substantial work was undertaken in the 1930s (Figure 55, Figure 56).



Figure 55 Torrens River, Lockleys, before 'improvement', 1937 (B11683, SLSA); Torrens River, Lockleys, after enlargement, 1939 (B11682, SLSA)



Figure 56 Improvements to Torrens River at Underdale, showing stone protection. 1938 (B11680, SLSA)

At the same time the loss of indigenous species and the Aboriginal landscape was being noted by some:

Native Flora of Adelaide Plains: Suggested Reserve

To the Editor. Sir—All lovers of our State and of its beauty must feel disturbed by Professor Cleland's statement that the natural flora of the Adelaide plains has been driven out by alien introductions. There is an irony in the fact that, as he states, West Terrace Cemetery is almost the only place in which it still flourishes. Surely, as we have a Botanic Garden for the cultivation of alien flora, it is time that we had a reserve for native flora. Otherwise, the generations to come will grow even further away from the history of the State than we ourselves have done. I can suggest no better place for such a reserve for our native flora than the banks of the River Torrens, which was known to the Kaurna, whom we dispossessed, as Karrawirraparri, or River of the Red Gum Forest. It would be a graceful gesture to the vanished tribe if the reserve were to be given that name.

I am, Sir, &c., Ian Mudie. Belair. (The Advertiser, 9 October 1937 p. 28)

Only glimpses of what the Aboriginal river may have been like, although degraded, remain. Not all images are from the Charles Sturt council area (Figure 57, Figure 58 & Figure 59).



Figure 57 Karrawirraparri, Tarnda-parri *River Torrens*, downstream of Adelaide



Figure 58 Karrawirraparri, Tarnda-parri *River Torrens*, riffle, upstream of Adelaide (AML NRMB, 2007)



Figure 59 Karrawirraparri, Tarnda-parri *River Torrens*, sandy reach, upstream of Adelaide

Naming of the River

The incoming culture knows the river as the Torrens, named by Colonel Light, founding Surveyor-General, after Robert Torrens, Chairman of the South Australian Colonisation Commission. The naming of the river, along with other places, and the retention of Aboriginal place names was topical as early as the 1840s. The loss of the Kurna naming of their cultural landscape was underway although the four Kurna place names mentioned in the article below have all been retained.

As a general rule, I think it highly undesirable, that the native names either of places or of rivers should be superseded by English ones; and especially as these names in many instances, are highly euphonious, and, as far as can be ascertained, have been given on account of some remarkable feature in the particular locality to which they apply. Nothing to my ear can be sweeter than the native names of Yankalilla, Cowandillah, No-orlunga, Onkaparinga, and a hundred others; and it seems a pity, that our colonial nomenclature should be vitiated by the introduction of such a list of British nomina obscurorum virorum as are beginning to find their way into all parts of the territory.

An exception, perhaps, ought to be made in the case of such persons as Colonel Torrens, from whom the ancient Karrau-Wirra-Parri, or High wooded river, has derived the name of the Torrens, or in the case of a few others to whom the colony is equally indebted for its prosperity and advancement; but, as a general rule, it seems preposterous, to consign to oblivion the really unexceptionable appellations, given to remarkable streams, or to peculiar localities, by the original possessors of the soil, in order to make way for the name of some obscure personage, who forms but an insignificant appendage to our colonial community, and who had nothing but a name to immortalise (South Australian Magazine, Vol, 1, No. 2, August, 1841, p.46).

Breakout Creek

The river originally fanned out into several branches as it flooded into Wittonga. The aerial image below (Figure 60) shows the river drainage pattern in 1936 before the construction of the Breakout Creek drain in the late 1930s. The drain was to provide a direct outlet to Wongayerlo for the waters of Karrawirraparri, Tarnda-parri and its construction (Figure 61, Figure 62 & Figure 63) largely spelt the end of the periodic inundation of Wittonga. It was the end of the wetlands and semi-rural character of the locality and the beginning of the development of new suburbs. The alignment of the drain approximates the creek before breaking through the coastal sand dunes.



Figure 60 Henley Beach, 1936

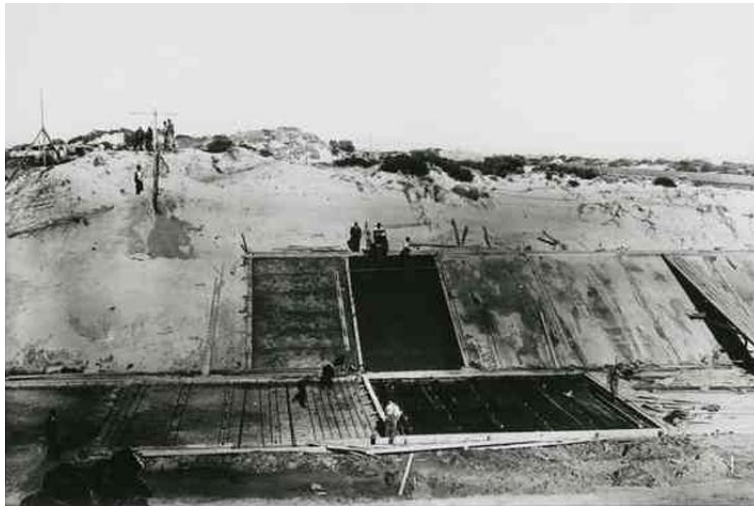


Figure 61 Construction of the sea-outlet for the Torrens River, c1937 (B18651_5, SLSA)



Figure 62 Construction of the bridge over the Torrens River outlet (B18651_9, SLSA)



Figure 63 Sand dunes at the outlet (B18651_12, SLSA)



Figure 64. Breakout Creek, Henley Beach South, 2009

4.4 Yerta Bulti Port River/Estuary

(Includes suburbs of West Lakes, Semaphore Park, Royal Park)

To the north of Witongga was Yerta Bulti, the Port River area and estuary. As outlined above this area was a continuous ecological system in terms of the fresh water flow from the hills, across the plains and to the sea pre-settlement. The Port River was, and remains, a complex environmental system. Unique to the region it is the largest estuarine mangrove forest river system in Gulf St. Vincent.

The Yerta Bulti region was an important food source for Kurna meyunna. Estuarine environments (Figure 65, Figure 66) are highly productive and are important nursery zones for many marine species. The networks of creeks, mangrove forests and saltmarsh floodplains provide a refuge for juvenile fish, crabs and prawns. The high concentration of these animals draws in larger predatory species to hunt and patrol along the deep channels throughout estuarine systems.



Figure 65 Mangroves, Upper Port Reach, 2011



Figure 66 Mangrove lined shore, Lower Port River, Torrens Island, 2012

Tides have a major influence on mangrove forests; during high tides the mangrove roots and trunks create a complex matrix that provides a refuge for juvenile fish and crustaceans. It is during these periods that larger fish enter the mangroves through the creeks and deep channels to feed. At the peak of the tide the Kurna hunters would place their fish traps and nets at the entrances of the creeks and channels to trap the larger fish as they were trying to leave with the receding water. As the tide lowered the fish were concentrated into small pools where drag nets and spears could be used to collect them. Today there are remnant Kurna fish traps located along the metropolitan coastline. These lasting examples showcase the ingenuity and deep understanding the Kurna people have of the marine and estuarine environment.

The mangrove area supported breeding seabirds that would gather and build nests amongst the mangroves, sand dunes and islands, some of which still occurs today. These sites provided a seasonal source of fresh

eggs and bird meat. Wirras (throwing clubs) were used to kill resting birds and nets tied between branches of trees fringing known nesting sites were used to catch birds as they fled the nest.

The mangroves are ideal places to find a range of shell fish, e.g. kakirra-small black river mussel, kulutunumi-periwinkle, kunggurla-river crawfish, kuti-cockles and large oysters. A recent trench excavation (near the Old Port) revealed a shell midden which held a number of the mentioned molluscs and camp fire hearth ashes (Figure 67). This site also had stones scattered on the surface.



Figure 67 Oyster Midden, Port River region, 2011

Accounts of the upper reaches of the Port River characterise it as an intertidal mud flat. Such a place would have provided a habitat for worms, crabs, mud clams and seagrass and an important foraging zone for fish. These areas could provide food at both high and low tides. During low tide the Kaurna could walk amongst the short leaved seagrasses and use their toes to feel for clams hidden in the mud. The shallow pools with longer seagrass are refuges for blue swimmer crabs; these are easily caught using nets or spears. During high tides hooks, such as the bone hook Pirri kuya, would be used to catch fish as they foraged through the seagrass and mudflats looking for worms and small crustaceans.

The Port River became the site of the colonising port (the Old Port, early 1837 until October 1840, now West Lakes; and the existing Port Adelaide) and early maps (Figure 68) show the waterways and vegetation. The founding of the port is discussed later, p. 53.

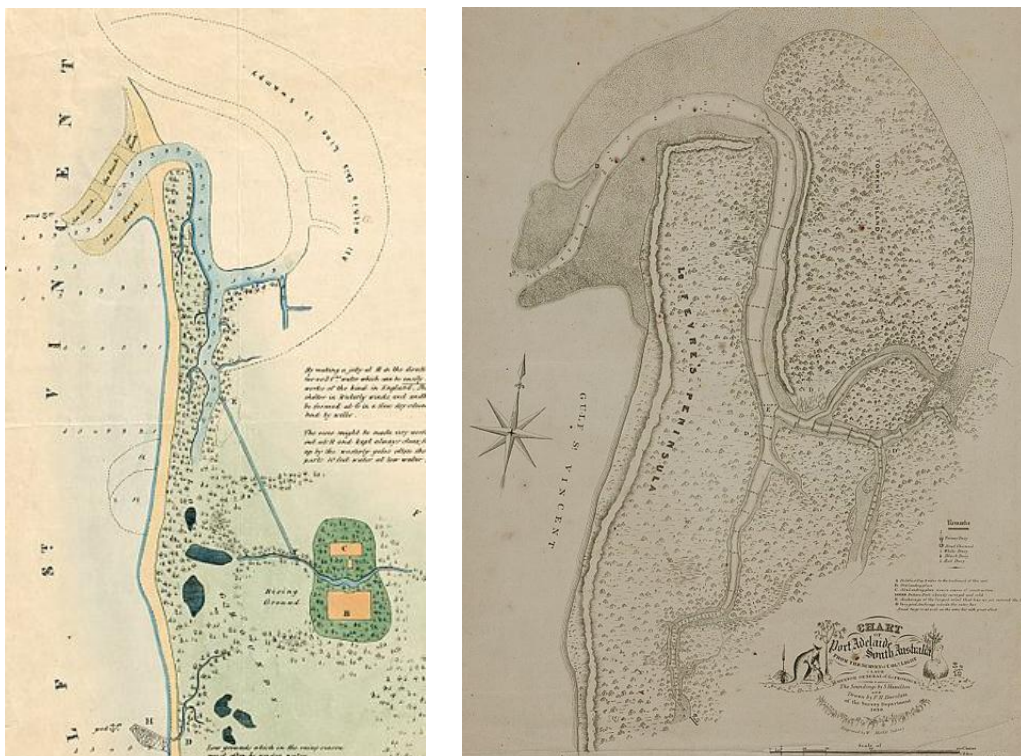


Figure 68 The Port and Town of Adelaide (NLA 1120). Plan & Chart of Port Adelaide, 1839 (NLA 1126)

Kraehenbuehl (1996:47, 48) outlined the observations of the naturalist James Backhouse who landed at the Old Port from the ship *Endora* in 1837. Kraehenbuehl provided the contemporary naming of the species mentioned by Backhouse and stated that 'the diary is remarkable for the additional information that is provided on coastal plants, which gives a much better understanding of early plant communities in samphire areas and in the red sand dunes'. Backhouse's diary entry of 30 November, 1837 described the locality as follows:

Vessels come to a large creek at Port Adelaide, and J. B. Hack is cutting a canal across a saltmarsh to the souther shore to bring goods to the wharf. The marsh is bordered next to the creek, which forms a good harbour with Avicennia tomentosa one of the mangroves of Australia; and the marsh is covered with two or more species of Salicornia and Frankenia of erect fruticose growth with pink blossoms the size of a silver penny, a prostrate inconspicuous species ... and some of the Chenopodeae [sic] of fruticose habit. There are several stores on the sandbank which skirts the marsh, two of them semi-cylindrical erections of corrugated iron belonging to the Governor and several temporary huts.

On this sandbank are some of the trees of the genus Callitris, somewhat like the Moreton Bay species in habit, and of which the piles have been cut for the canal, a Banksia near to B. australis, if not that species, Casuarina quadrivalvis supporting Kraehenbuehl (1996:48).

Narno, the Native Pine, Forest – The Pinery

The Pinery was a forested area just to the south of the Old Port site and its extent is outlined in the 1882 Department of Lands map (Figure 9 above). Kraehenbuehl (1996:189) noted that when he first saw the Pinery in 1954 it extended 4 km north from the Grange Golf Links towards Queenstown and that the northern part was then about 200m wide and almost solely covered with a Narno *Native Pine* (*Callitris Preissii*) woodland association and that 'In between were shallow swales where occasional Aboriginal stone flakes could regularly be seen' reflecting the Kurna utilisation of the area. In 1838 Colonial artist John Skipper depicted a small group of Kurna meyunna in a pine forest (Figure 69). It is not known if the pine forest depicted is of the Pinery as there was another large area of Native Pine several kilometres to the north of the town of Adelaide at the time of settlement.



Figure 69 (Extract) Pine Forest, J. M. Skipper, 1838 (AGSA)

Kraehenbuehl (1996:189) relays what he considers to be the best account of the Pinery flora. It was by Fenner and Cleland (noted botanists), who described the area as follows:

THE PINERY ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE PORT RIVER BETWEEN ALBERTON AND THE GRANGE.

The Pinery consists of a sandy, slightly raised ridge, a consolidated sand dune, stretching several miles close to the eastern bank of the river. It has a very interesting flora and contains a few plants which are rare. It also shows affinities with the mallee scrub in having Grevillea ilicifolia var. ililifolia. At one time there was quite a forest of Native pines (Callitris propinqua [now preissii] with Peppermint gums (eucalyptus odorata [mis-identity for E. porosa] and some black tea-tree (Melaleuca pubescens [now M. lanceolata], Eucalyptus leucoxylon and Sheoaks (Casuarina stricta [Allocasuarina verticillata]. Much of the timber has been cut out, though a considerable number of pines still exist and young ones are coming up.

Imagery of the Narno *Native Pine* and the Pinery follows (Figure 70, Figure 71).



Figure 70 Narno *Native pine*, Gutti *Quandong* & Minno, *Golden Wattle*, The Pinery, 1958 (Photo D. N. Kraehenbuehl)



Figure 71 Narno *Native Pine* grove in the Pinery, Grange, 1955 (Photo D. N. Kraehenbuehl)

The Dunal Area

A large dune stretched inland from the coastal dunes, traversing the southern area of the Yerta Bulti region and was part of the area utilised by Kurna meyunna. Now known as the Gillman Dunal system, its extent is outlined in the City of Port Adelaide Enfield (PAE) *Kurna Cultural Heritage Survey* (2007) (Figure 72). The PAE Council boundary is marked by the dotted line. Of the dune, the Survey stated:

Now almost entirely levelled or developed, [the dune] offered elevated locations extending well into the low lying, flood prone environments surrounding the southern edge of the estuary. The strategic importance of this feature is illustrated in the number of sites found along its length including camps that were maintained well into historic times in and around Port Adelaide/Yertabulti (PAE, 2007:11).

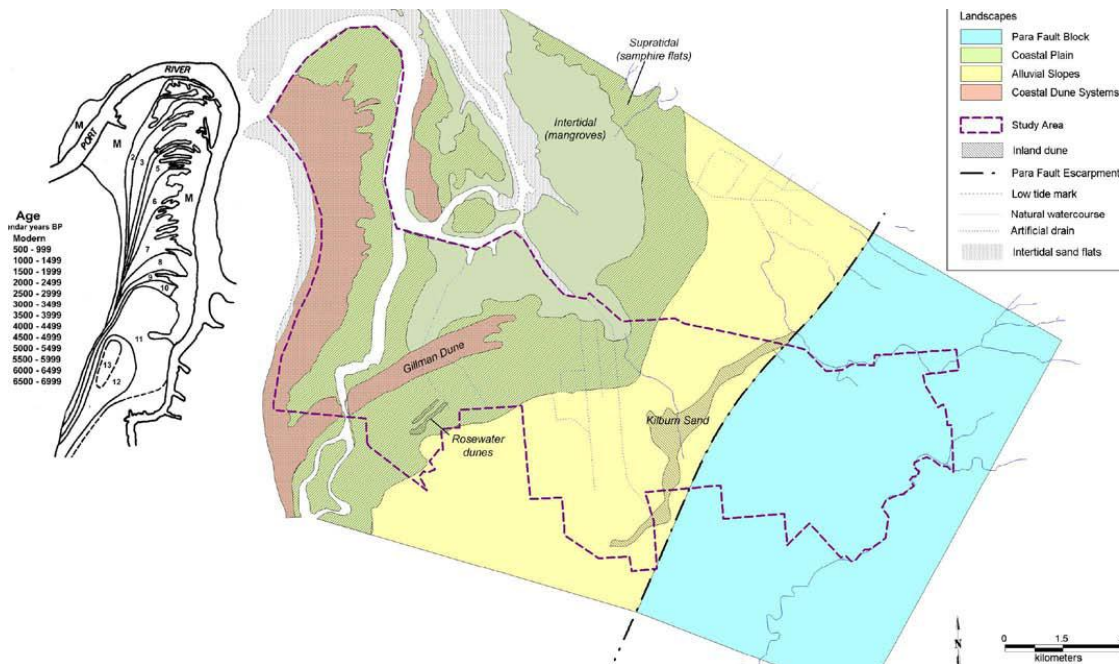


Figure 72 The Landscape of the PAE Study Area, KCHS

A reflection of what the area was like is provided by remnant dunes on Torrens Island, a few kilometres to the north along the lower reaches of the river (Figure 73).



Figure 73 Remnant Dunes, Torrens Island, Lower Port River, 2012

Yertabuttingga: Dunal Burial Sites, Cemeteries or Sleeping Places

Three burials in the Queenstown dunes, near to the Old Port, are recorded in the *Kaurna Cultural Heritage Survey* (2007:8). One early find at Queenstown was reported in *The South Australian Advertiser*, 7 February 1860:

Skeleton Found. On Sunday last, whilst some children were playing at Queenstown, on the ridge of sand hills between the Port-road and the Old Port, they picked up a human skull in a place where the wind had drifted away the sand. On this being made known, the spot was examined by some persons living in the locality, when a complete skeleton was discovered, supposed to be that of a native woman. It must have been buried there some years, as the bones were completely bleached.

Landscape Changes and the Loss of Kaurna Sites

Changes to this area commenced immediately upon settlement with the use of part of the estuary for Adelaide's first port. The landscape changes reflect and demonstrate the loss of the Kaurna meyunna traditional living sites and cultural landscape in the region.

The First Port

South Australia's first port, the landing site of the first settlers from early 1837 until October 1840, was located on the southern reach of the Port River - now part of the West Lakes urban development. Known as the Old Port, or Port Misery, as well as the Port Creek Settlement, the landing site comprised the mangrove lined banks of the river itself and later a canal cut through the mangroves to higher ground in the sand hills,

ending with a landing wharf on the corner of what is now Old Port Road and Webb Street/Frederick Street, Royal Park/Queenstown.

Founding Surveyor-General, Colonel William Light, having earlier examined the mouth and lower reaches of the estuary in September 1836, returned there in late November for a more detailed survey of the estuary and on the 22nd he wrote of 'The Harbour':

Yesterday we had beautiful weather, with a fine breeze. Mr Kingston [Light's deputy] accompanied me in the surveying boat to examine that creek taking a southerly direction which I had not had time before to look at carefully, and which has since been running so strongly in my mind that I could not rest until I had seen it again. We were more than delighted to see it running into the plains at such a distance, and I am now more than ever persuaded that it is connected with the fresh water lakes [of the Torrens], if not, it extends to within a couple of miles of them, and one of the finest little harbours I ever saw is now fairly known. ... The eastern coast of Gulf Saint Vincent is the most eligible [for settlement], if a harbour could be found – that harbour is now found – more extensive, safe, and beautiful, than we could ever have hoped for.

The next day Kingston reported that the (lagoons of the) fresh water river (Karrawirraparri/Torrens) and the south arm of the river (harbour) were definitely inter-connected.



Figure 74 Hatchboat in the Port River, 1836, Col. W. Light (NLA F512)
(From *South Australia: A survey of the east coast of St Vincent Gulf, 1836*)

On the 22nd December 1836, Colonel Light, in the hatch boat, proudly it would seem, led two ships, his own, the *Rapid*, and the emigrant ship *Tam O'Shanter* through the sand bars and mangroves of the estuary to the higher reach of the river. He wrote that:

It was really beautiful to look back and see the two British ships for the first time sailing up between the mangroves, in fine smooth water, in a creek that had never before borne the construction of the marine architect, and at which some future period might be the channel of import and export of a great commercial empire (Dutton, 1960:193).

An early map (Figure 75) provides the shape of the waterways and Colonel Light's 1839 watercolour *Distant view of the Landing Place and Iron Stores at Port Adelaide with the South Australian Company's storeship 'Sir Charles McCarthy' at Anchor* (Figure 76) gives a more descriptive pictorial view of the river estuary and vegetation.



Figure 75 Plan of the Old and New Ports, 1840 & Adapted Plan, 'A History of SA', R. M. Gibbs



Figure 76 Distant view of the landing place..., 1839, Col. W. Light (AGSA)

Brian Samuels, Principal Heritage Officer, State Heritage Branch, has said of the first port (pers. comm., 2011):

Colonel Light selected this site as a temporary one. He preferred a site at the North Arm of the River, but acknowledged that the new colony could not afford to build a road to it. This site was chosen for its accessibility, being the nearest to firm ground, where the mangrove belt was thinnest. During the first year a canal was cut through the mangroves to the foot of the sandhills and a small staging constructed. Full size vessels anchored downstream near the site of the modern Jervois Bridge.

At high tide passengers and cargo could be brought up the canal in small rowing boats. At low tide passengers had to wade or be piggy-backed ashore through the swamps. As a result the site earned the name 'Port Misery'.

In 1838, the canal cut through the mangroves was completed with 'a foreman and fifteen men at work' (Hack, 1837). It was 840 feet long and 20 feet wide at the top. The canal ended at the top of (now Old) Port Road and an area of 4 acres was declared a public wharf reserve. This area was also known as the Port Creek Settlement. The original canal and dock were described this way:

[a] channel was formed by hacking through the mangroves, and a primitive dock was made of black mud piled up on the bank of the river. Pine logs were driven into the water and enforced by interlaced tea-tree branches to prevent sand slides.

Geyer & Donovan (1996:2) elaborate: 'Adelaide's port was located in the Port Reach area of present day West Lakes. With its 'eerie tangle of mangroves, a black and viscous creek, banks and shoals of mud ... two hours in a bullock dray from Adelaide' it was quickly dubbed "Port Misery", yet it was the settlers' most vital link with the outside world'. Alexander Tolmer recalled his arrival in February 1840 in his *Reminiscences of an Adventurous and Chequered Career at Home and at the Antipodes*, London, 1882:

Never shall I forget ... the wretched night we spent on board in the creek, owing to the myriads of mosquitoes ... The next morning we again weighed anchor, and proceeded up the creek about a mile further, to Port Misery, a name which it well deserved. Of course, in those days there was no wharf or facility for landing passengers, who were each carried on shore on the sailors' backs and their luggage thrown promiscuously on the muddy beach, and unless promptly removed, frequently damaged by the rising tide ...

A similar view was expressed in the reflections of T. Horton James, recorded in *Six Months in South Australia*:

PASSENGERS LANDING AT THE PORT

The shore is an uninhabitable swamp, and the few people who are living in the wigwams at Port Adelaide are too busily engaged in landing boards and rolling up casks, to take any notice of a party of ladies and gentlemen up to their knees in mud trying to reach the shore. This is at last managed, without the loss of either life or limb, but it is certainly anything but pleasant. Arrived on the dry land—the party wash the mud off their legs, and put on their shoes and stockings, then carrying their trunks as well as they can, the sailors having all gone back to look after the boat and get her afloat, they all walk up the side of a little canal, as it is called, which brings them to the only spot of land at the creek free from inundations, which is called the sand hill, where one or two grog shops, made of branches of trees, are seen, a few native blacks stark naked, and a large iron store painted white belonging to the Commissioners. This is Port Adelaide! Port Misery would be a better name; for nothing in any other part of the world can surpass it in every thing that is wretched and inconvenient (South Australian Register, 29 November, 1839).

Evidence of the location of South Australia's first port and its history has become lost through urban development. In the 1970s the tidal basin of the Port Reach was dredged to become a 'lake' and land was reclaimed for housing in the West Lakes waterfront development. The connection between the upper and lower reaches of the river is now disguised by a causeway across the river (Bower Road). The old port is currently marked by an historic marker dedicated in 1986, South Australia's Jubilee 150 year, on the approximate location of the river site (Figure 77), and an old anchor (not from colonial times) marks the landing wharf site at the Port Road/Webb Street/Frederick Street intersection (Figure 78).



Figure 77 Settler's Landing Historic Marker, 2011



Figure 78 Site of end of Old Canal, 2011

Kraehenbuehl (1996:2) noted that ‘the removal of large mangrove trees at Port Adelaide for their timber, used in wharf construction, began the destruction of mangrove woodland along the St Vincent Gulf that continues into these modern days’. There is a small area of remnant mangrove forest just north of the Old Port site at Mangrove Cove *Patangga* on the north western side of Bower Road (Figure 65 above).

Early colonist A. H. Davis noted that the mangroves which lined the saltwater creeks were extensively burned to provide an alkali for soap making and were very efficient for that purpose and that the ‘pretty sprinkling of cypress trees ... were found so useful by the early settlers in building, that they have almost wholly disappeared; and it is rare thing to see any of them’.

Destruction of The Pinery

Fenner and Cleland (in Kraehenbuehl, 1996:189) outlined of The Pinery that ‘The land was bought by the government for soldier settlements but found to be unsuitable. As part of it is leased as golf-links, it is to be hoped that this interesting bit of country will be preserved in future more or less intact’. This did not occur. The area was gradually cleared and developed for fairways and greens between 1955 and 1970. Fenner and Cleland were astute in noting that ‘Its interest as a reserve is somewhat offset by the prevalence of mosquitoes’.

Kraehenbuehl (1996:189) explained that the area of The Pinery he had seen in the 1950s, referenced above, was ‘totally destroyed by sand contractors between 1955 and 1958’. Narno, the Native Pine, is now a rare sight in the area. There are some examples in the West Lakes Golf Course (Figure 79), about a kilometer to the south of the Old Port site.



Figure 79 Narno *Native Pine*, West Lakes Golf Course, 2012

Destruction of the Dunal System

Kraehenbuehl (1996:7) outlined that ‘about 1954 and 1955, sand companies obtained the contract to remove those parts of the dunes stretching between Queenstown and the vicinity of modern-day Football Park [at

West Lakes].’ One small reflection of the dune in the Queenstown area remains. It is immediately adjacent to the Old Port landing site and is topped by a house (Figure 80).



Figure 80 House on dune, Port Road, Queenstown, 2011

Destruction of the Estuarine Environment

After a gradual loss and decline over a century, the construction of the waterfront suburb of West Lakes in the 1970s dramatically and forever changed the estuarine, mangrove and samphire environment of the region. The following sequence of aerial images (Figure 81, Figure 82, Figure 83 & Figure 84) depicts the change to the locale.



Figure 81 Tennyson and the Port River, 1945 (SACPB)



Figure 82 Port River/West Lakes region, 1959 (SACPB)



Figure 83 Port River Middle/Upper Reach now West Lakes, 1959



Figure 84 West Lakes prior to filling the basin, 1974

As Kraehenbuehl noted:

One of the largest development projects after the war was the West Lakes Reclamation scheme which commenced in 1970; some of the best samphire flats and last coppices of Kangaroo honey-myrtle habitat were removed and levelled for the future West Lakes Shopping Centre and Football Park stadium. A consequence of this destruction of samphire habitat is that many plants of these areas have been given a rare-endangered status for the Southern Lofty region of South Australia (Kraehenbuehl, 1996:7).

The dramatic change to the region's ecological systems and the Kurna cultural landscape is shown in the following images (Figure 85, Figure 86, Figure 87, Figure 88 & Figure 89).



Figure 85 The Port River bordered by mangrove and samphire near West Lakes, 1960
(Photo D. N. Kraehenbuehl)



Figure 86 Comparable view, West Lakes, 2011



Figure 87 Kangaroo honey-myrtle (*Melaleuca halmaturorum*), site of West Lakes Shopping Centre, 1966
(Photo D.N. Kraehenbuehl)



Figure 88 West Lakes Shopping Centre and Football Park Stadium, 2010



Figure 89 Kangaroo honey-myrtle (*Melaleuca halmaturorum*) along the Port River, Grange, 1962
(Photo D. N. Kraehenbuehl)

This area has been the subject of a sister report, *Kaurna Cultural Mapping for a part of the Yerta Bulti region known as Old Port Adelaide 'Port Misery' and the Port Creek Settlement* which provides further bi-cultural writing. The relevant Kaurna information is repeated here. The City of Port Adelaide Enfield *Kaurna Cultural Heritage Survey* (2007) provides further information on the extended Port Adelaide region.

4.5 Pathawilyangga Patawalonga/Glenelg

(Includes suburbs West Beach, Glenelg North, Novar Gardens)

To the south of Witongga was Pathawilyangga where the waters flowing south eventually reached the sea. Although mainly outside of the Charles Sturt Council's area it was part of the interconnected river/wetlands ecological system of the western Adelaide region and part of the cultural system for Kaurna. The area is therefore included here. The 1837 drawing by Skipper (Figure 90) depicts Kaurna meyunna in the Pathawilyangga area.

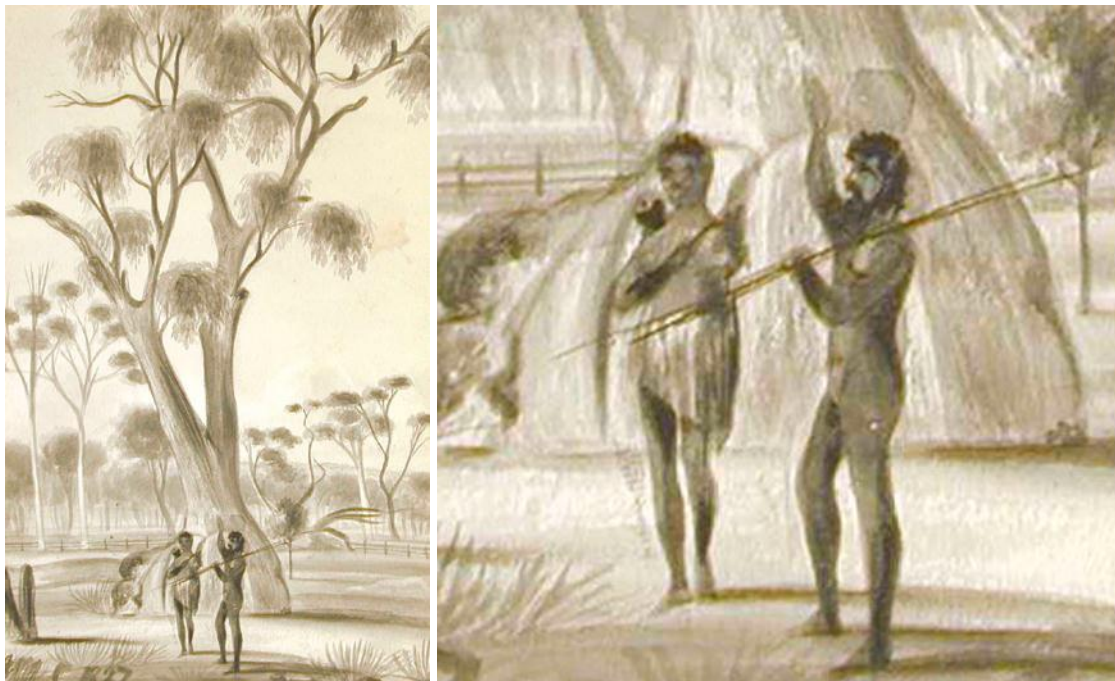


Figure 90 Kaurna alongside River Redgum, Glenelg, 1837, J. M Skipper (AGSA)

A Kurna description of the area is given through its naming, 'place of swamp-gum foliage', Pathawilya plus the optional suffix ngga 'at, place of' (Chester, pers. comm., 05.05.2012). The creek was marked as 'R. Pattawellya' on the Light/Finniss maps from 1839 and is now known as Patawalonga, which is the English spelling for Patha-wilyangga. There was an Aboriginal woman, who was providing local knowledge, on board Colonel Light's vessel, *The Rapid*, during his coastal exploration to determine the site of the colony. The early naming may have come from her but this would need to be verified through further research.

Colonel Light had engaged the Kangaroo Island based sealers George Bates and William Cooper to assist him with local knowledge and liaison with the local Aboriginal population. Sealers and whalers had been occupying the island since the early 1800s, with significant numbers based there at times. Cooper had two Aboriginal 'wives', the sealers had been kidnapping Aboriginal women from Tasmania and the south coast of the mainland near Kangaroo Island from the early 1800s to be treated as virtual slaves and often very inhumanely. It is uncertain as to whether these particular Aboriginal women were Tasmanian or Kurna but between them there was knowledge of the Kurna language and Country, of which Cooper also had some understanding (Amery, 1998:62-63).

The first European description of the area is by Light himself, from when he went ashore there on 3-4 October 1836 during his search for a river port site.

I cannot express my delight at seeing no bounds to a flat of fine rich looking country with an abundance of fresh-water lagoons, which, if dry in summer, convinced me that one need not dig a deep well to give a sufficient supply. The little river too was deep; and it struck me that much might hereafter be made of this little stream. After walking some distance through long grass and frequently through water, we returned to the beach at two a.m., on my part rather fatigued ... (Elder, 1984:70).

Light went on to record on 5 October that having sent two men to trace the river:

... these men returned, and said the river about four miles from the mouth was fresh, it was then a very narrow stream bending to the N. E., and appeared to have its source in the plains – a circumstance that led me to suppose that more of these lagoons existed in that direction; and as every appearance indicated that these lagoons would be dry in summer, I felt convinced that the torrents from the mountains must be the fountain from whence they were now filled. (Elder, 1984:70)

Light was describing Wittonga and the source of the water from the hills down Karrawirraparri, Tarnda-parri.

The 1908 painting *Swamp Lands* by John White (Figure 91), whilst it can not be definitively ascribed to Pathawilyangga, is typical of the area prior to development.



Figure 91 *Swamp Lands*, 1908, J. White (AGSA)

There is one small area of remnant creek and vegetation (Figure 92, Figure 93 & Figure 94), comprising about 80 Kangaroo honey-myrtle and associated flora, in the area, to the west of Tapleys Hill Road (Kraehenbuehl, 1996:263). The land is part of the Adelaide Airport landholding and the company recognises the importance of this area. There is a management plan to provide for its protection and rehabilitation and its conservation is being assisted by the Friends of Patawalonga Creek (FPOC), formed in 1998. Whilst this site 'provides an excellent insight into the type of habitat which used to exist behind the sandhills in the

western suburbs...it has no official protected status (<http://users.sa.chariot.net.au/~littoral/patck/gallery/cb15.htm>)'.



Figure 92 Swamp Paperbarks or Kangaroo Honey Myrtle *Melaleuca halmaturorum* (FOPC)



Figure 93 Remnant Section, Patawalonga Creek, 2012



Figure 94 Remnant Section, Patawalonga Creek, 2012

A sketch by Colonel Light (Figure 95) and a painting by John Skipper (Figure 96), both from 1836, provide a glimpse of the mouth of the creek and the extent of the coastal dunal system. This was the colonists' first landing site at Holdfast Bay. A 1890s painting looks back at the site over sand dunes to the north, showing the development of Glenelg (Figure 97).



Figure 95 Landing Place, Glenelg, c1836, Colonel Light (SAM/AGSA)



Figure 96 Holdfast Bay, South Australia 1836, J M Skipper (Patawalonga Creek outlet) (AGSA)



Figure 97 Panoramic view of Glenelg from a point North of the Patawalonga Creek, 1891, J. J. Christie, (AGSA)

Helen Mantegani, who arrived in the colony in 1838, published her reminiscences in 1902, and described the area as follows:

A little way inland were several large lagoons, formed probably from the overflow of the Sturt River, which was not far off. They were covered with tall reeds and splendid flooded gums grew on their margins, which were very swampy for a considerable distance. One of them was very lovely, just like a miniature lake, bordered by trees and reeds, and in its centre the bright water was the resort of wildfowl, making it a beautiful picture (Mantegani. 1902:70).

There are several depictions of the Patawalonga Creek from the 19th Century onwards showing the changing nature of its use and appearance (Figure 98, Figure 99, Figure 100 & Figure 101).



Figure 98 Boating Party on the Patowalunga River, 1875, J. D. Stone. (AGSA Collection)



Figure 99 Boating on the Patowalunga Creek, c1883 (B 23929, SLSA)



Figure 100 Patowalunga Creek, 1902 (B11752, SLSA)



Figure 101 Canoeing on the Patawalonga, 1948 (PRG1459_2_9, SLISA)

Controlling the Water: Locks and Weirs

As with Wittonga and Yetabulti, as early as the 1870s, there were plans to manage the waterway through engineering interventions and drainage systems. A Bill was introduced into the House of Assembly to:

enable the Corporation of Glenelg to improve the Patawalonga River in and near the town of Glenelg by the construction of a dam across the said river, with floodgates, sluice, and other works, for the purpose of scouring the entrance from the sea to the said river; for the purpose also of retaining the tidal waters for the use of yachts, boats, and other vessels as a dock; for the purpose of removing the nuisance caused by the present foul state of the bed of the said river; and for the purposes also of public recreation, amusement, health, and enjoyment (South Australian Register, Monday 7 August 1876, p.5).

By June 1886 the Glenelg Council had constructed the seawall, lock gates, upper weir and wharves. By June 1887 the lock gates had been destroyed by flood water coming down the Patawalonga Creek (*The Advertiser*, 10 October 1931, p. 16). The present weir was not constructed until 1960.

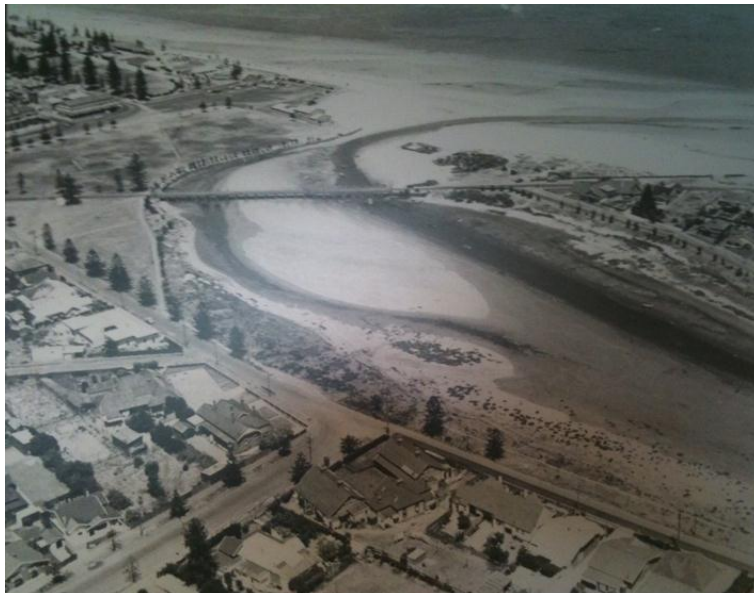


Figure 102 Patawalonga, 1956

The City of Holdfast Bay *Cultural map: Kurna yarta-ana* provides information of some sites discussed.

4.6 Mikawomma The Open Plains

(Includes the suburbs of Bowden, Croydon, Cheltenham, Dudley Park, Ferryden Park, Findon, Flinders Park, Kilkenny, Ovingham, Pennington, Woodville, Woodville North, Woodville Gardens, Renown Park).

Mikawomma is the plain between Yerta Bulti/Port Adelaide and Tandanya/Adelaide (Teichelmann & Schurmann, 1840:66) and includes parts of the Charles Sturt Council area. There is a reserve named Mikawomma in Woodville Gardens in the City of Port Adelaide Enfield.

Before human time, the area was once the alluvial floodplain of Karrawirraparri, Tarnda-parri when it formerly entered the gulf at Yerta Bulti. As is commonly the case with rivers depositing alluvial materials, the river choked and diverted to its present channel pattern. The water flow patterns are given in Figure 103.

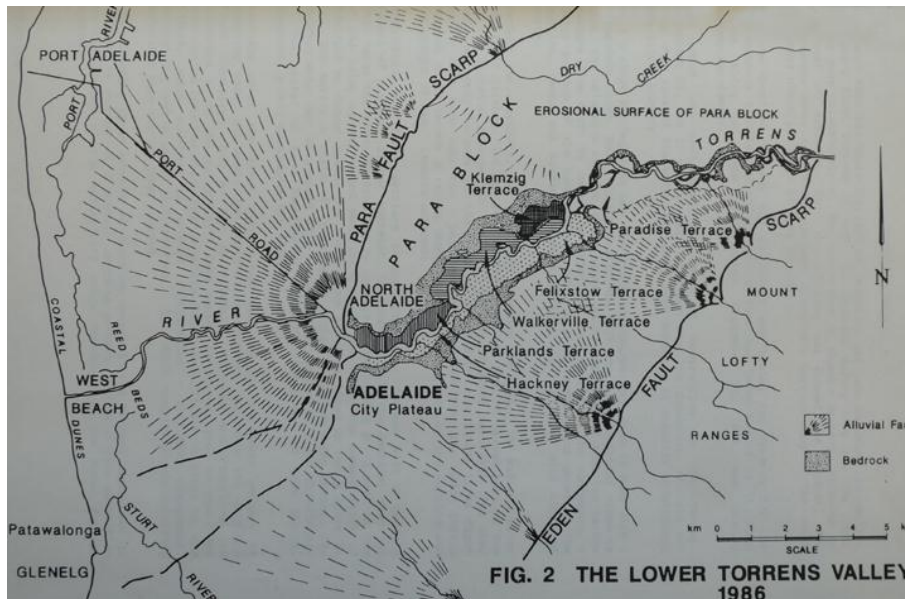


Figure 103 Geological river flow patterns (Smith & Twidale, 1989)

Little has been documented of Kurna meyunna use of the area but it can be assumed to have been suitable for hunting as an open, grassed area and for collecting various fruits and vegetables. Early colonist Edward Stephens later gave this description of making and using the midla for hunting, as would have taken place in Mikawomma:

The spears were thrown by means of the wommera or meedla, as most natives called it. This was a flat piece of wood about two inches broad at the middle, tapering off towards each end in rapid curves with knots at the ends. In the upper knot, and pointing towards the hand, was inserted the tooth of a kangaroo, securely fastened with the sinews from the kangaroo's tail. The other end was simply a knob to prevent the wommera from slipping through the hand when the act of projecting the spear was complete. The point of the tooth was pressed into a hole in the blunt end of the spear, the other end of the wommera was held by the third and fourth fingers of the right hand, resting on the palm of the hand and between the finger and thumbs. The first and second finger and thumb grasped the spear. The hand with the spear, being raised and drawn back – the distance almost instinctively judged – then the spear was thrown with all the force necessary, and being propelled by the wommera, which acted with the leverage of an additional and very long arm, the distance that could be covered was something enormous. These spears were but seldom, if ever, used in battle. (Stephens, 1890: 485-85)

Kraehenbuehl (1996:196-198) has pointed out that the Kurna name (open plains) offers the clue as to its pre-settlement vegetation, and thus cultural utilisation. He noted that the area is one of the more difficult to evaluate in respect of native plant communities as there are no significant remnant vegetation areas left on this part of the Plains and that 'Early settlers had very little to say about these plains except to note that there were areas of meadows with belts of scattered trees'.

Colonel Light made some comment on the area in the context of transport between the proposed city and harbour sites stating that the area was ... a plain that has not a rock, tree or bush in the way for six miles' and that Adelaide was connected to its port by '... a flat where carriages of any description could run at once without the trouble of making a road!' (Elder, 1974:99, 103).

The vicinity of Woodville was once a well known locality for Karra/River redgums *Eucalyptus (camaldulensis)* and the region might have contained *Eucalyptus porosa* (Mallee Box) open woodland, *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* woodland and *Danthonia* spp. – *Stipia* spp. herblands. One account by E. R. Nixon (in Kraehenbuehl, 1996:197) described that:

'... the plains, as we passed along, offered the most pleasing varieties in scenery. Clumps of trees in picturesque forms were scattered all around; the intervals being covered with the richest meadows. The course of the Torrens was easily distinguished by the continuous belt of luxurious foliage which bordered its banks.

Turkey (or bustards) occasionally made their appearance in the distance; while close to us other members of the feathered family, such as cockatoos, parroquets, and plovers darted by us in the hundreds.

There is little colonial imagery of the area, one (Figure 104) shows the area as viewed from Prospect in 1850, just fourteen years after colonisation, depicting the open plain with few trees.



Figure 104 View from the Leads of Prospect House, looking towards Hindmarsh, 1850, S. T. Gill (AGSA)

4.7 Karraundongga Hindmarsh

(Includes Hindmarsh, Bowden)

Karraundongga was a place on the river travelling route between the coast and the foothills but unfortunately little has been recorded about its cultural landscape. It is known to be a major burial site. Hemming & Harris (1998:34) record that:

Bishop Short in giving evidence to a Parliamentary Select Committee said that "The Adelaide tribe ... used to come down to Hindmarsh to bury". Lewis O'Brien was given similar information by Kurna Elder, Gladys Elphick.

The exact cultural meaning of Karraundongga can not be definitively stated. According to Chester Schulz, Kurna Warra Pintyandi, (pers. comm. 05.04.2012) the 'first morpheme is probably karra 'red gum'; the last one -ngga which is the normal locative suffix 'at, place of'; but the middle one is very doubtful'. Payne (1996:14) refers to the meaning of Karraundongga as 'red gum spear place' as the Hindmarsh/Thebarton area was a favourite locality for obtaining red gum branches used for making heavy fighting spears. The source of this meaning is not given and the meaning has not been verified. The Gibson Street Historical Markers project refers to the name as having 'a complex meaning for non-Kurna but it refers to the position of the area and the widening of the river after passing the area of higher ground'. The source of this interpretation is unknown Three variant spellings of the name were recorded in the colonial era as follows:

Korra oondungga Hindmarsh town. Wyatt (1837-9; 1879)

Cur-ra-young-don-gah: Hindmarsh Town. Williams (1839)

Karraündo-ngga: Hindmarsh Town. Teichelmann & Schurmann (1840 2:75)

Closer Settlement

The Karraundongga locality had very briefly been considered as the location for the capital on the insistence of Governor Hindmarsh who wanted the town to be closer to the port. But Colonel Light quickly ruled it out stating:

I agreed to walk with him by the river and see if another spot nearer the harbour could be found ... we determined at last on placing the capital nearer the river, about a mile and a half lower down the bank. ... On examining the following day some distance up and down the river, I saw evident marks of the river overflowing its banks, and this made me resolve on the first site I had chosen, ... (Elder, 1984:92)

Karraundongga was one of the first places outside of Tarndanya to be closely settled by the colonisers and therefore lost to Kaurna meyunna. Within a few years of colonisation the area felt the impact of closer settlement, Governor John Hindmarsh, as the first European 'owner' became a property developer. He established the first private township and the colony's first secondary town (Geyer & Donovan, 1996:3), (and contrary to the Wakefield Plan of orderly settlement). As Parsons has pointed out (1974:3) 'most of the privileged or "upper" classes who contemplated migrating were only doing so to improve their financials position' and that 'Therefore, those with money and/or influence immediately after arrival, Hindmarsh among them, commenced speculating in land.'

Governor Hindmarsh was one of the officials who had a right 'to select land and buy land over and above any they may have been permitted to acquire under the general rules applying to settlers' (Parsons, 1974:1). He selected Section 353 in a ballot on 12 May 1838, purchasing 134 acres of Aboriginal land from the Crown for £73. Within a short time (a few weeks) he on-sold the land for £1000 to several people who planned a sub-division to establish the village of Hindmarsh, incorporating two hundred half-acre lots. The area was prosperous for the first Europeans. Parsons (1974:38) stated:

To sum up the period from 1838 to 1852 – the foundation days of Hindmarsh – it is fair to observe that due to its geographical situation, and abundance of good water and clay, the closeness to supplies of firewood and the nearness of good farming land, the township progressed at a greater rate than most suburban villages in the vicinity of Adelaide.

The Kaurna cultural landscape was soon degraded and almost all traces lost. The Hindmarsh/Thebarton area was well known for its tanneries, one of which, Michell, continued operations adjacent to the river in Thebarton until the late 20th Century. In the 19th Century the tanneries utilised Karrawirraparri *River Torrens* for wool washing in the river bed, which required the construction of weirs in the river (Figure 105), leading to severe degradation of water quality and the river banks. Of the area it has been written:

Farmland servicing included the trade of fellmongering [wool-washing] which caused a great deal of pollution of the water of the River Torrens further down stream. Fellmongering caused the dissent of the property owners in the west of the district and this led directly to the formation of the District Council and the subsequent formation of the Corporation of the Town of Hindmarsh on 1st October, 1874 (Ross, 1986:9).

Kraehenbuehl (1996:4) noted that the large gums lining the river between the Morphett Street Bridge and Hindmarsh were reputedly cut down to fire the brick kilns at Hindmarsh and that the tanneries, fellmongeries and chemical plants located along the river between Hindmarsh and Underdale discharged waste products into the river causing irreparable damage to aquatic vegetation there and further west towards Wittonga/the Reedbeds (1996:6).



Figure 105 W. Peacock & Son's wool scouring plant on the Torrens at Hindmarsh, 1870 (B542, SLSA)

Within forty years of settlement the industrialisation of the Kurna land and river was complete. New technologies overwhelmed its ecological and cultural integrity. A history of the City of Hindmarsh Woodville (Geyer & Donovan, 1996:12) describes the Hindmarsh area in the 1870s as follows:

During the 1870s Hindmarsh industries included building, pottery, soap and candle making, brewing, shoemaking, the works of Adelaide Meat Preserving Company, tanneries and the production of alkali, rope and glue. Although there was a growth in population to approximately 5000 inhabitants by 1871, there was a decline in the number employed as farmers and farm labourers from 361 in 1856 to 138 in 1871, due to the growing mechanisation of agriculture and the increasing involvement of residents in the district in other industries.

In an ironic coincidence it is reported that in the early 1890s Hindmarsh had an Aboriginal population of about 280 people and an Aboriginal section was laid out to assist in housing them (Geyer & Donovan, 1996:17). These Aboriginal people would mainly have been from elsewhere, not Kurna meyunna. Further research is required to uncover the history of the Aboriginal section and what happened to it.

In the early 1840s it was reported that Aboriginals were sheltering under the new bridge (in the town) and there was an incident involving a woman from Hindmarsh outlined in *Kurna Meyunna - Colonist Relationships: Cross-cultural Interactions* (see p 79).

4.8 Tarndanya Adelaide

The area on the eastern boundary of the City of Charles Sturt is Tarndanya, which is occupied by the City of Adelaide. Tarndanya was a prime living area for Kurna and includes several sacred sites, including Tarndanyangga (Victoria Square) and Tarnda Kanya *Red Kangaroo Rock* (Adelaide Festival Centre site) and many other cultural heritage sites, including Pilta Wodli. The Kurna cultural landscape is physically and culturally linked into this locality through the river valley and the travelling corridor and cultural practices. Cultural mapping of the City of Adelaide has commenced and is anticipated to be conducted by Kurna meyunna (and associates) over several years in the lead up to the building and opening of Mullabakka, the Kurna Centre of Culture, in Tarndanyangga/Victoria Square.

The cultural mapping of the two council areas, Charles Sturt and Adelaide, will overlap and inform each other to provide a stronger narrative of the Kurna cultural landscape.

5 Kurna Themes in City of Charles Sturt

In the above section, this report has used the physical geography of the region to provide a narrative of place. In addition to this way of understanding the cultural landscape there are themes which extend beyond a particular place and time under which the cultural narrative can be expanded, more fully presented and understood. Several of the themes have been touched upon under the regions discussion but are further expanded here. An outline of the Kurna themes of relevance to the City of Charles Sturt follows.

Traditional Culture

- . Munaintya warra *Dreaming* narratives
 - . Songlines
- . Cultural practices and social relationships
 - . Ngayirda Ngulti *The Night Sky*
 - . Ritual, Dance and Ceremony
 - . Trade Routes
 - . Play
- . Ecological relationships and landscape values
 - . The seasons
 - . Vegetation Management: Burn off – summer, winter, autumn, spring

Post-Colonisation Culture

- . South Australian Aboriginal colonial history
- . Aboriginal individuals and their lives
- . Aboriginal resistance
- . Use of Aboriginal knowledge in the settlement process
- . Use of Aboriginal guides and trackers
- . Cross-cultural social interactions
- . Mission and fringe living
- . Urbanisation
 - . Migration to the city

- . Cultural and spiritual renewal
- . Cultural and political leadership, organisation and achievements
- . Cultural education
- . Social and sporting activities and achievements
- . Aboriginal relationships to colonising symbols

5.1 Munaintyerlo – In the Beginning

In talking about 'Munaintyerlo – In the beginning' or Munaintya, known today as the *Dreaming*, it is appropriate to first acknowledge the existence of Munaintyerlo in everything that lives above, below and within the sacred landscape. Munaintya is constant and continuous, it never sleeps, it lives through the people of the land and the land lives through the people, if the people are sick the land is sick and the opposite also applies. Munaintya is like string, it looks like one woven object, but every loop is different and in Munaintyerlo narratives we are all different but all tied to the spiritual identity within the land. Aboriginal people who still hold strong their traditional beliefs, say that the *Dreaming* is deeply personal. Individuals are connected to the dreaming by their totem design. Aboriginal people use the word dreaming because very often visions or insights into these two realities are received through dreams.

Munaintya is interconnected through, cultural practice and cultural knowledge layered throughout Country. The *Dreaming* is a continuum of sacred time, space and spiritual relationships; it is how Aboriginal people were taught to live in harmony with the land following the protocols of the lore makers which ensured respect for all beings who breathe and feel Country with you. Kurna/Aboriginal stories talk of the land with respect, for everything that is taken something must be given back, the concept of owning the land and taking without giving breaks lore and there are repercussions for all when this occurs. There are many explanations as to what the *Dreaming* is. Gammage (2011:123) outlined it this way:

All religions attempt two things: to explain existence and to regulate behaviour. Aboriginal religion integrated these by assuming the spiritual parity of all life, and by subjecting every aspect of it to overwhelming religious sanction. This pivoted on the Dreaming, a word tolerably conveying the sense of timelessness central to Aboriginal belief.

There are many stories with many meanings in Munaintya narratives. The surface meanings are made more accessible to children, outsiders and the uninitiated (Amery, 2000:37). More complex aspects are revealed to those who have 'earned' the right to know or have a 'need' to know. Aboriginal people are very generous in their sharing of their cultural ways, to evolve their thinking with others but it must be done the right way and in a respectful manner.

Multiple Munaintya narratives crisscrossed Kurna Country and still do. Unfortunately the historical records contain little information about them; it was not in the interests or beliefs of the early colonisers or missionaries to record them in detail. The continued living presence of the Munaintya is not always fully known and understood by the wider community. The Kurna cultural and spiritual renewal process has now been reviving itself in the urban construct for the past 30 years, knowledge has also been shared through ceremony from other cultural custodians from the traditional trade and songlines. A new, and urban, generation are expanding on what is remembered and passed down through oral traditional practise from senior Kurna cultural custodians. It is hoped that Kurna knowledge and writing about Munaintya will continue to become stronger in the coming generations.

Linguist Rob Amery (2000) consolidated knowledge of Kurna Munaintya from mainly linguistic sources, in the report *Kurna Dreaming Stories*. Kurna Aboriginal Community Heritage Association (KACHA) representatives Lewis O'Brien and Georgina Williams, who are senior Kurna cultural custodians, shared their knowledge with him. The report outlines over twenty narratives related to the Adelaide region; the land, sky and sea.

The *Kurna Dreaming Stories* report is not a public document and it is sufficient for the purposes of this report to know that the narratives are known of and that, when appropriate, aspects of narratives applicable to the Charles Sturt council region can be more fully elaborated in the public domain.

Lewis O'Brien, Yerloburka, Kurna, has explained that despite the overlay of the city of Adelaide onto Kurna land, the Kurna significance remains:

There is no way that an important Dreaming trail can be ignored, or simply wiped out by whiteman's developments. Even if they change the landscape and remove all the trees, it is still there. Tarndanyangga is living proof of that – in the middle of the city at Victoria Square. There we have a major site of the Red

Kangaroo Dreaming trail. It has always been a meeting place for Aboriginal people, and still is. (O'Brien, 2007:203)

Tjilbruke/Tjirbruki Munaintya

There is one Munaintya that does have a strong public presence in the Adelaide region, the Tjilbruke/Tjirbruki narrative. It is the most documented and well-known Munaintya for the Adelaide region and is the one most often referred to in the public realm.

The Dreaming extends geographically from the Adelaide Plains, down the Fleurieu Peninsula, south of Adelaide, across to Rosetta Head/The Bluff near Victor Harbor and back up through parts of the Adelaide Hills to Brukunga near Mt Barker (Figure 106). It is to be noted that the Munaintya extends into the Country of the Ramindjeri (Rosetta Head/The Bluff) and Peramangk peoples (Brukunga/Adelaide Hills).

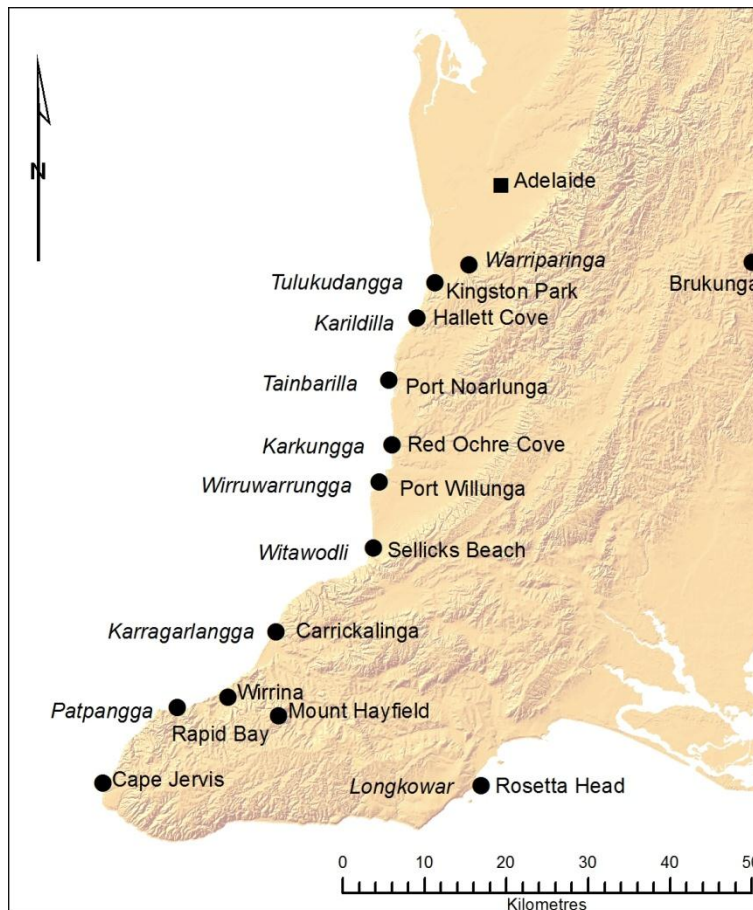


Figure 106 Tjilbruke/Tjirbruki Dreaming Sites

The narrative tells about the peace lore through the creation of many sacred places and species within Kurna Country, and elsewhere, and is now a 'core value' for Kurna people (Amery, 2000). Aspects of the narrative traverse the area of the City of Charles Sturt. An emu hunt occurred with the birds being driven towards the peninsula now known as Le Fevre where they would be trapped.

Kudlyo Munaintya Black Swan Dreaming

Kudlyo Munaintya *Black Swan Dreaming* has been noted for the Port River area (Melvin, 1994). The City of Port Adelaide Enfield *Kurna Cultural Heritage Survey* records that:

In the Port area, totems were often aligned with bird and sea life found in the river, the wetlands and along the coastline, such as pelicans, swans and other sea-faring animals. The Port River groups' totem was Kudlyo, the black swan. The Kurna groups today strongly encourage the revival of Indigenous culture and spiritual connection to ancestral spirits by identifying with a totem. For that reason, the protection of the Port River and its environs is of primary concern to the Kurna descendants that have returned to the area (PAE 2007:10).

The river peoples from that area were closely associated with the wirra meyunna *forest people*, the 'forest' relates to the dense growth of the mangroves along the rivulets and creeks all along and surrounding the

river region. Different clans gathered, each respecting individual and tribal associated sacred seasonal landforms, totems and ceremonies for hunting paru (meat) and farming mai (vegetables) as well as seafoods.

Songlines

Songlines hold knowledge and connect peoples and places over long distances. Gammage (2011:135) summarised songlines this way: 'Songlines show the Dreaming's grounding in the land and its creatures. In depicting the country it passes through and naming the creatures in it, a songline states its ecological associations.'

Kaurna songlines mainly extend through their Country to the north and north-west. As with Munaintya narratives, aspects of cultural knowledge can be elaborated as appropriate.

5.2 Kaurna Meyunna Traditional Cultural Practices

There is considerable traditional knowledge, held by Kaurna and other Aboriginal cultural custodians, non-Aboriginal scholars as well as in books, journals and reports, which details Kaurna cultural practices. This knowledge is too broad and detailed to include in this report. For the ongoing City of Charles Sturt Kaurna Meyunna cultural recognition and inclusion activities, relevant aspects can be elaborated when required. One fascinating story about Kaurna meyunna 1000 years ago, relevant to the Council area is told here. It outlines a caring and medically knowledgeable society.

Assoc. Prof. Brian Cornish, Royal Adelaide Hospital, Dr Lucian Solomon, University of Adelaide, and Dr Keryn Walshe, South Australian Museum, conducted a forensic study of the skeletal remains of a Kaurna man who was approximately 50 years old when he died, about 1000 years ago. The remains, unearthed at Fulham, are held by the Museum. The study was approved by the Kaurna Nation Cultural Heritage Association.

The man suffered severe leg and other fractures when he (likely) fell out of a tree (likely a Karra, River red gum), injuries that would most likely lead to death. However, he was given expert care and nursed back to health over a four month period by his clan/family group. This length of time would have required them to stay with him in one location. The man was entirely dependent on their care for his survival and then went on to lead a healthy life, although crippled in one leg, his foot out-turned. The man was likely to have been an important member of the clan/group. The researchers elaborate on the man's injuries and the social aspects of his care and recovery:

The injuries present in this skeleton would have been life threatening to the individual, initially from shock, blood loss and pain, later by pressure ulcers and infections, and ultimately by a decreased ability to provide for and defend himself.

On a conservative estimate this individual would have lost more than 2 L of blood at the time of his injury (approximately 1.5 L at the proximal femoral site, up to 0.5 L at the humeral fracture site and more at the distal femoral fracture site), which would have been close to half his overall blood volume. Such acute blood loss would have resulted in hypovolaemic shock. In the absence of modern resuscitation resources, the subject can only have survived because of his outstanding fitness and the standard of care that he received after his injury. This outstanding care is represented not only by a level of nutrition capable of overcoming the catabolic phase that follows severe injury, but also a level of care that was able to prevent decubitus ulcers during the 2–4 months of supine positioning that most likely followed until fracture healing. Clearly, if the proximal femoral fracture had become compound or decubitus pressure sores had developed, the infection that would have inevitably followed could have been fatal, or, at the very least, would have prevented the fractures from healing. This care would probably have been delivered at or adjacent to the location of the trauma because of transport limitations.

In the absence of fracture splinting, or effective fracture splinting, the ability to provide a level of care such that this subject survived these injuries raises questions about the carers' knowledge and use of very effective herbal antialgics or sedatives. It prompts recall of Hilton's thesis of 'rest and pain' as a basic tenet of tissue repair.

Indeed, from the sustained diligence required in this man's level of care provided by this man's community, it is not unreasonable to assume that there was, from the outset, an expectation of a successful outcome based on accumulated knowledge. The remodelling of the fractures and the development of new cortical bone connecting the main fracture fragments would have taken years to develop, especially if the injury happened towards the end of the subject's estimated 50 years of age. However, considering the severity of

the injury, it is more likely that the subject suffered his injuries at a much younger age in order to have adapted and survived as he did.

In order to have been able to walk (which he did based on his bony remodelling), the overall femoral deformity would have required that the subject internally rotated his right lower limb at his hip joint to have his knee and foot pointing forward. Interestingly, if his hip was internally rotated for the knee to point forward, the femur would then have been straight in a coronal plane. Given the severe flexion deformity of the femur, in order to walk, the subject's knee would have developed a severe procurvatum deformity and the subject would most likely have compensated for the leg length discrepancy by walking on an equinus foot.

In terms of his overall functional ability, such ambulation, although possible, would have been very inefficient and required a large increase in energy consumption. In addition, although the subject would have been able to feed himself using his right dominant arm by internally rotating his shoulder despite the severe humeral external rotation, overall use of his dominant arm would have severely affected his ability to hunt or gather. It is likely that the subject became totally dependent on his community from the time of his injury to his death, which demonstrates the community's ability to care and provide for such individuals.

The healed fractures of a life-threatening nature found in an adult Aboriginal male skeleton of known antiquity represent a successful outcome in terms of survival, reflecting very favourably on the social support mechanisms prevailing in the subject's community (Cornish, et al, 2010).

Cultural Artefacts

Very few Kurna portable cultural artefacts are held in museum or other cultural heritage collections. Kurna had been dispossessed of their lands before the South Australian Museum (founded in 1856 as part of a then library and museum) commenced its collection in earnest. The Museum does have a display of Kurna artefacts (almost its entire collection) in the Australian Aboriginal Cultures Gallery.

The Museum collection includes artefacts and skeletal remains found in the Charles Sturt council region. Locations where items were found include Fulham, Fulham Gardens, Fulham Park, Henley Beach, Henley Beach South, Hindmarsh, Seaton, Seaton Park, Welland and West Beach. Parts of the collection cannot be identified to a precise location but the collection includes examples of kootpi/cootpe, the reed spear (Figure 107) and a slate scraper found in a deep sandpit on Grange Road, Findon in 1934 (A 21339) (Figure 108).



Figure 107 Cootpe-a reed spear, 1855, W. A. Cawthorne (Mitchell Library)



Figure 108 Scraper, Findon, 1934 (SAM)

5.3 Kaurna Cultural Practices and Social Relationships

Ngayirda Ngulti *The Night Sky*

As important as the terrestrial landscape to the Kaurna cosmology was the night sky. This was named *wodliparri hut river*, and is where it was believed the ancestors would ascend to after death once certain funeral ritual cycles had been completed. Creation narratives and lore are expressed in the sky as well as in the earth.

The watching of the sky and stars would be indicators for the seasonal movements as well as on the ground, when flowers bloom. This understanding of place for the Kaurna meyunna clan groups clearly signified hunting, fishing, story time and ceremonies which were interwoven and part of their occupation of the living places through the cyclic movements. Once upon a time the stars above were people who turned into animals and through their life cycles were linked to the movements of the southern skies, both night and day. These stories and systems of knowledge are still being passed on today, not as they would have prior to 1836 but with the trade and song lines which are still open on Country, the language names are being passed onto the young people with their totem design, which marks their body. Clarke (1990 & 1997) and Curnow (2005) also give an introduction to the Kaurna night sky.

Ritual, Dance and Ceremony

Again, this is too large a subject to comprehensively include in this report. One well known dance, the Kuri, was captured by early colonial artists, Angas (Figure 109) and Cawthorne (Figure 110).



Figure 109 The Kuri Dance, 1847, G. F. Angas (AGSA)



Figure 110 Kuree Paltee, c.1894, W. A. Cawthorne (Mitchell Library)

Cawthorne, who drew this in 1894, would have done so from earlier sketches/memory as by 1894 it was not being performed in the Adelaide region by Kurna meyunna. Just twenty five years after colonisation the *South Australian Register* commented on the 'corroboree':

This dance in consequence of the scattered state of the Adelaide tribes of blacks, is rarely seen in the city, and even when performed is devoid of much of that unearthly appearance which is natural to it and which in the early days of the colony was a somewhat coveted sight. (South Australian Register 12 May 1862 p.2)

The Kuri dance, although having been dormant for some time, continues to this day, see p.84.

Trade Routes

Trading between cultural groups was part of the economic and social structure of Aboriginal Australia. Kurna trade routes extended mainly to the north and north-west of Australia and places in between. Artefacts from several hundred kilometres distant have been found in the Adelaide region. As an example, the construction of the first stage of the Southern Expressway through a traditional living site at Warripari (Bedford Park) unearthed stone artefacts from the Flinders ranges. Gara (Appendix B) outlines that:

One particularly interesting item in the South Australian Museum is a polished-edge axe from Henley Beach. These beautiful axeheads were quarried from volcanic deposits at Mt William in central Victoria, and traded far and wide across the continent. Examples have turned up at Port Augusta and even in Central Australia.

Play

Play is also a way of learning skills for survival and application throughout life. Ball, string and spear and club throwing play was part of growing up and the enculturation process for Kurna meyunna.

James Chittleborough, who arrived as a four year old boy on the *Buffalo* in December 1836, told of his youth:

The young natives got on well with the white children, and picked up English quickly. They were much more fond of dress than were their elders. We used to join them in their games of throwing spears and waddies. One of their pastimes was a mock battle, in which small fork shields were used, and teatree shoots about 3 ft. long were thrown to represent spears. These would do no serious injury though they gave a nasty blow. Another game was the practising of throwing the waddy to kill wallaby or game. A circular piece of burl; about 12 in. in diameter was stripped from a gumtree, and one of the native men who superintended the game would instruct the boys how to throw their weapons. The bark disc was then trundled past a line of boys by the man at about 15 or 20 yards in front of them. Each lad would aim at it with his waddy as it passed, and a yell of triumph would go up when any were successful in hitting the mark. Some of us white boys joined in the game, which we greatly enjoyed, and soon became nearly as proficient as the blacks themselves. (The Register, 27 December 1906 p. 6)

5.4 Ecological Relationships and Landscape Values

As outlined in the Kurna places discussion above, there was a big difference in the understanding and valuing of ecological relationships and landscape between the incoming and existing cultures of this place. As Gammage (2011:2) has outlined:

The Law prescribed that people leave the world as they found it. 1788³ practice was therefore conservative, but this did not impose static means. On the contrary, an uncertain climate and nature's restless cycles demanded myriad practices shaped and varied by local conditions. Management was active not passive, alert to season and circumstance, committed to a balance of life.

He further explained that

In its notions of time and soul, its [the Dreaming] demand to leave the world as found, and its blanketing of land and sea with totem responsibilities, it is ecological. Aboriginal landscape awareness is rightly seen as drenched in religious sensibility, but equally the Dreaming is saturated with environmental consciousness. Theology and ecology are fused. (2011: 132, 33)

This is a fundamental principle in recognising a Kurna cultural landscape. Although that landscape is much altered, or degraded, it is not to be overlooked in contemporary land management practices. Ways of developing a bi-cultural management approach to selected places which recognise both cultural systems, although challenging, has the potential to bring the cultures closer together in forging a common, rather than divergent, future.

Kraehenbuehl (1996) provides a comprehensive outline of the pre-European vegetation of Adelaide, including the Charles Sturt council area, which can guide conservation and renewal.

Vegetation Management: Burn off – summer, winter, autumn, spring

Vegetation management and the utilisation of fire were key to Kurna culture and viability. Vegetation management was largely achieved through what is now termed fire stick farming, the controlled burning of areas to promote or subdue particular vegetation growth to provide open pastures as well as areas of forest. As Gammage (2011:2, 3) explains of Aboriginal land management practice Australia wide:

The chief ally was fire. Today almost everyone accepts that in 1788 people burnt random patches to hunt or lure game. In fact this was no haphazard mosaic making, but a planned, precise, fine grained local caring. Random fire simply moves people's guesses about game around the country. Effective burning, on the other hand, must be predictable. People needed to burn and not burn, and to plan and space fires appropriately. Of course how a pattern was made varied according to terrain and climate: heath, rainforest, spinifex each required different fire. Yet in each the several purposes of fire remained essentially the same. A plant needs fire to seed, an animal likes a forest edge, a man wants to make a clearing. Means were local, ends were universal. Successfully managing such diverse material was an impressive achievement; making from it a single estate was a breathtaking leap of imagination ...

What plants and animals flourished where related to their management. As in Europe land was managed at a local level. Detailed knowledge was crucial. Each family cared for its own ground, and knew not merely which species fire or no fire might affect, but which individual plant and animal, and their totem and Dreaming links. They knew each yard intimately, and knew well the ground of neighbours and clansmen, sharing larger scale management or assuming responsibility for nearby ground if circumstances required.

Burning was a seasonal practice and in the Adelaide region:

Hill and plain were usually burnt in late summer. In February 1837 the hills were 'a mass of flame ... At the end of summer as this was, the natives had set fire to the long dry grass to enable them to more easily to obtain the animals and vermin on which a great part of their living depends.' These were controlled fires, 'lit generally... in January or February' meshing hill and plain into grass-forest templates. The plains were summer country, the time to burn, dig yams, fish in the warm coastal water, gather herbs and thistles, hunt possum and lure kangaroo. The hills were for winter and the hottest summer months (Gammage, 2011:268).

³ Gammage uses 1788 as shorthand to refer to the first contact period between Aboriginal people and Europeans (and the gradual occupation of the land continent wide by the colonists) and for the beliefs and actions of Aboriginal people at that time.

There are several accounts of the first settlers noting large fires, burnt areas and blackened tree stumps (Kraehenbuehl, 1996:1). One appraisal of the Adelaide regional landscape, managed by Kurna meyunna, which made it so attractive to the colonisers, described it this way:

The rich green plains, not covered by dense forest, but by stately trees, rising here and there from their green foundations in the same way as they do in the noble parks of England, the pretty streams, the broad lakes, margined with beautiful shrubs and flowers, and the gently undulating hills crowned with trees, forms altogether frequent scenes of interest and beauty (Moon, K. 1969:41-64).

Gammage gives a comprehensive account of Aboriginal land management in his book *The Biggest Estate on Earth: How Aborigines Made Australia*. An account of the Adelaide region titled *The Adelaide District in 1836* is given by Gammage in the book *Turning Points: Chapters in South Australian History* (Foster, R. & Sendziak, P., eds, 2012), published as part of the recognition of 175 years of European settlement in South Australia.

6 Kurna Meyunna - Colonist Relationships: Cross-cultural Interactions

The Aborigines who occupied the country in and around the site of the present City of Adelaide were neither numerous nor warlike. They offered no opposition either to the landing or to the settlement of the Europeans; indeed, their conduct was anything but unfriendly. A good understanding was readily established with them. Captain Hindmarsh, R. N., the first governor of the new colony, in his first interview with them in 1836, gave them clothes and blankets, with which they were apparently well pleased, and they generally lived harmoniously with the white settlers (Woods, 1879:viii).

This 1870s perspective is largely correct in that Kurna meyunna were not and are not a warlike or hostile. However, as Kurna meyunna began to realise the intent of the colonisers, the permanent occupation of their lands and the dispossession of Kurna meyunna, there was opposition. There was conflict and violent death on both sides, but it was in isolated incidents only, and a number of other incidents when minor or no physical harm occurred. There was also verbal or 'diplomatic' opposition by Kurna Meyunna. Senior Kurna man, Mullawirraburka, also known as King John, demanded in exasperation of the colonists after police had destroyed their shields and spears, preventing them from defending their Country against Aboriginal groups from Morundee on the Murray 'What for you no stop in England?' (South Australian Register, 24 April 1844, p. 3). Mullawirraburka also sang a protest song 'Wanti ninna ia kabba kabba, ngudluko kuma yerta. Why you stay here you should go back to your own country'. Fires were also set as a means of telling the colonisers they were not welcome or as a warning (as they were on Colonel Light's property, see p. 86), but there was little they could do to evict the colonisers.

Pope (2011:1) has outlined that the British Government policy at the time of colonisation was that the Aboriginal people within the colony of South Australia were to be considered as British subjects, they were to be both subject to British law and entitled to its protection. Kurna were subject to British law whether they wanted to be or not. Their laws and lores were given no consideration. But the protection provided was not equal to that provided to the British.

There were some incidents recorded about the Charles Sturt council area. As mentioned above, the first female prisoner in the Adelaide Gaol was the (Kurna) Aboriginal woman Wariato who was convicted of stealing potatoes from the property of Thomas Payne at Wittonga, the Reed Beds.

Another was an attempt to spear Captain Burns of the *Giraffe* in March, 1838 on the Port road. In Adelaide, the first white man killed by Aboriginals was Enoch Pegler on 8 March 1838, near the river in the city. Pegler had been a nuisance and offensive towards Aboriginal people and possibly interfered with women. Two Aboriginal men were apprehended for the murder but they escaped custody. Slee (2010:44-46) outlined that:

Smarting at the injustice of the arrests, a brother or near relative of the prisoners, nicknamed 'Captain Mitchell', angrily threw a spear at the first European he met. That happened to be Captain Hugh Burn of the Giraffe (261t), who was speared in the thigh while innocently walking on the Port Road, then a mere track across the plain. ... Several weeks later one of the brothers suspected of having murdered Pegler returned to the Aboriginal camp, near the scene of the crime ... the suspect surrendered and was handcuffed. Soon after, the other brother was arrested.

Deliberations then took place among officials as to the contradictions posed by applying British law to Aboriginals, as well as to glaring defects in the evidence. While this was taking place, 'Captain Mitchell', the Aboriginal that has speared Captain Hugh Burn, unexpectedly presented himself at Government House,

asking to be put in irons with his kin. On account of his voluntary confession, and his promises for future good conduct, he was released after four days. The two suspected murderers of Pegler could not be positively identified as the perpetrators, so were therefore released also.

The incident was reported in the *South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register* of 17 March, 1838:

The Natives.

Some excitement has arisen during the past week in consequence of the murder of a white man by the natives, and an attempt, supposed to have been committed by the same party, to spear Captain Burns of the *Giraffe*, on his way from the Port to Adelaide. From the enquiry we have made we have reason to believe that the parties who committed these atrocities were strangers belonging to a tribe at the head of the Gulf, and generally in a state of hostility to the friendly natives of our immediate neighbourhood. It was most properly considered by the Colonial Government important to repress any attempt on the part of individuals to retaliate on the natives generally for the misconduct of one or two misguided persons. The Governor's proclamation on this subject has been censured, at we think, with some degree of unnecessary asperity, because blame is therein imputed to "certain colonists" whose behaviour to the natives has been inconsiderate, to say the least of it.

The article further discussed the general tone of relationships between Aboriginal people and the colonists:

It is an undeniable fact that occasional instances of harshness to the poor blacks have occurred; but there is evidently no intention to charge the colonists generally with acts of aggression, nor would such a charge have been at all justified by the fact. Indeed the colonists as a body have been remarkably kind and prudent in their intercourse with the natives, and it is a duty we owe to truth to state this as our decided conviction that, happen what may, the colonists are not to blame. We think that it is now fully time to make an energetic effort to place our relations with the native population on some plain and distinct footing. We hear of a small patch of land being enclosed and huts erected for them [this refers to Pilita Wodli, the Native Location in the north parklands adjacent the River Torrens]; but we earnestly entreat the Protector of the Aborigines to lose no time in completing his arrangements - whatever they are.

In 1842 the Kaurna man Monitya/Munaitya was convicted of stealing a watch from Peter Cook, a local butcher, at Thebarton (just over the river from Charles Sturt council). One month's imprisonment and a public flogging was prescribed at the Adelaide gaol and at the appointed hour several hundred citizens who possessed, no doubt, strong stomachs and a sadistic bent, gathered before the flogging rack among whom, as suggested by the Editor of the morning press, 'we regretted to observe a number of women.' (www.slsa.sa.gov.au/manning/sa/aborigines/1858.htm). The event was reported as follows:

FLOGGING A NATIVE

Yesterday, at noon, Monitya, the native man who was sentenced at the late Criminal Sessions to one month's imprisonment and a public whipping for stealing a watch, the of property Mr. Peter Cook, at Thebarton, underwent the latter part of his punishment at a triangle erected in front of the jail. Several hundred persons were present, among whom we regretted to observe, a considerable proportion of women.

The culprit had, on different occasions during the term of his imprisonment, been warned of his approaching castigation, by Mr. Moorhouse the Protector of the Aborigines, and Mr. Ashton; but, on arriving at the place of punishment, although his countenance gave certain evidence that he knew what was about to take place, a feeling of surprise, at beholding the strong party of mounted and foot police and the concourse of people assembled, appeared for the moment to be predominant. C. B. Newenham, Esq., the Sheriff, Mr. Ashton, and Mr. Moorhouse, were in attendance; and Monitya, having been secured to the triangle, received fifty lashes of a cat-o'-nine-tails, which he bore with considerable fortitude.

The operator then gave him some water, dipped from a bucket provided for the occasion, of which the prisoner partook with eagerness. At this time his back presented no appearance of injury or suffering; the large and hard excrescences, caused by the process of tattooing, afforded him a protection from the lash almost equal to a coat of leather. At the command of the Sheriff, twenty-five more lashes were administered, making in all seventy-five, after which he was conducted away by two of his tribe.

Our reporter had subsequently an opportunity of seeing Monitya's back, and described the apparent effect of the whipping as one which, although it cannot by any means be called cruel, is, nevertheless, likely to produce a lasting impression upon the mind of the unfortunate culprit, if not upon his native companions who witnessed the infliction. A considerable number of the aborigines of both sexes were present.

The prevalent feeling amongst the white portion of the spectators appeared to be that, although the punishment of flogging per se savours of barbarism and revenge, in instances like the present it is likely to be far more effectual in the prevention of crime than any other penal chastisement that could be adopted. We would suggest, however, should its application be again necessary, that the natives, to whom either as a punishment or as a warning it can be impressive, should also be present. We think that the presence of the Protector might be dispensed with on such occasions as it is by no means clear that his interference is rightly understood or can be properly appreciated by the natives. (South Australian Register, 6 August 1842 p. 2)

A couple of other incidents are recorded, one an assault against a Kurna man and the other, a petty harassment against an elderly Kurna man:

Law and Police Courts, Friday 25th April, 1846

George Sidmon, farmer, of the Reed Beds, was charged with an assault upon Nanto Kertumara, alias Rodney, an aboriginal native. Mr Moorhouse, Protector of the Aborigines, conducted the case.

The following was the testimony of the complainant as interpreted by the Protector. "That man (prisoner) get too much drunk. That man say. "Go away!" I say "Yes" He say "You go away" He take up stone, that stone, (stone produced, a large pebble of about ten pounds weight). Throw it at me. I not far off. I put my hand up so (to guard his face). That man standing in store, me walk by, me going home, me go quite slow, me got two spears, one waddy, when be throw stone at me, me hit him on back with one little stick. He was coming to me so (with both fists clenched). He go to pick up another stone. Another one white fellow say, "No more stones". Other one white fellow take hold of him.

Mr W. W. G. Nicholls not being present to confirm the native, the case was dismissed (South Australian Register Weds 29 April 1846).

Police Commissioner's Court Wednesday 22nd July 1846

Old Tommy (one of the oldest of the Adelaide Tribe) was charged with stealing blankets and other articles, the property of Mr. Payne and Thomas Jackson.

His Worship understood that Mr Moorehouse had given him a blanket which he (prisoner) stated was it. If he were really innocent, and would be likely to come up again to-morrow (Friday) he would allow him to go.

John Chapness of the mounted police, stated, that on Tuesday night, from information he received of a blanket and rug, and an old mattress having been stolen from Mr Payne's, late of the Reed Beds, he went to Brownhill Creek where he learned the natives were who had been encamped at the Reed Beds at the time of the alleged robbery. He found the prisoner with the blanket produced in his possession. The blankets were described as being a double pair, stained with oil. The blankets produced had oil marks on them. Mr Payne had not been informed that the prisoner had been apprehended.

Mr. Moorehouse said he had spoken to the prisoner, and he was very desirous his son should be brought up as witness on his behalf. His Worship said he would remand the case until to-morrow (Friday)

Friday, 24th July, 1846.

Old Tommy was again placed at the bar on remand, charged with stealing a pair of blankets, the property of Thomas Jackson, of Brownhill Creek. The prosecutor described the marks whereby he could identify the blankets, and was thereupon allowed to examine those found in the prisoner's possession. The prosecutor stated they were not his, and the prisoner was allowed to go (South Australian Register Saturday 25 July 1846).

Another incident relates to a woman from Hindmarsh which demonstrates the varying social attitudes towards Aborigines.

THE NATIVES.

To the Editor of the Southern Australian.

SIR -In finding a somewhat exaggerated account of the "Case for the Protector of the Aborigines," I beg you to favor me by publishing my statement of the case, as I think that set forth in your paper of last Tuesday likely to create an unwarrantable bad feeling against the natives, and to frighten timid females, and make them believe danger when there is none.

The facts of the case are these: While I was lighting the bridge lamps, I noticed the woman with the bullock cart alone, from the cause you described. Thinking she was frightened in consequence of the approaching storm, I thus addressed her: "Don't fear, I think there will be no danger." She begged me to stay with her till her husband returned. I told her I had but one lamp to light on that tree (pointing to North Adelaide), and

should return in five minutes, which I did, and found her alone, neither black nor white people being with her. I sat on the rail conversing with her, when she told me about what the woman from Hindmarsh had said while I was lighting the lamp.

The storm was now increasing very fast: it came on to rain tremendously hard, and we both got underneath the cart. Not a soul could we see (no black had then been under the bridge), but presently about three or four came from the location to shelter themselves under the bridge, with firebrands in their hands. In passing us they said, "What name?" Before I could answer, they called me William, for they knew me by the name they always call me; "What got? sugar, potato, flour, &c.-your lubra William? you my lubra? William, no take." While talking more came down – I think more than the number you mention: all went under the bridge for shelter, and none offered to take anything, but merely felt to see what we had. I staid till the man and boy returned, and helped to put to the bollocks, and saw them on their way back to Adelaide, while I all that time was completely drenched with rain. Yours, &c., R. CHARLESWORTH, Adelaide, Feb. 28. 1842, Lamp-lighter (Southern Australian, 1 March, 1842, p. 3).

A CASE FOR THE PROTECTOR OF ABORIGINES

To the Editor of the Southern Australian

Mr. Editor, Sir-I beg leave through the medium of your valuable journal to call the attention of the proper authorities to the following facts, which, if allowed to continue unchecked, may have a tendency to produce fatal collisions between the white population and the natives.

On Wednesday evening, about eight o'clock, as a respectable man, his wife, and, son, had proceeded as far as the bridge, on their way home to Gawler, with a bullock-cart, partly laden with provisions, purchased in Adelaide, some part of the iron-work of the yoke had broken: the man and his son unyoked the bullocks, and returned to town with them, to have the necessary repairs done, leaving the female with the cart. Shortly after, a few blacks came from under the bridge, and examined the goods on the cart, saying-"flour," "sugar," as they handled them. In a little time there congregated from twelve to fifteen, and attempted to remove the goods, during which time the female was so overcome by terror, that she was nearly fainting. Fortunately for her, the man who lights the bridge lamps came up, when she requested his protection, which, was promptly given. They questioned him, was she (the woman) his 'lubra'. And on his answering in the affirmative, they retired.

The man who lights the lamps passed on towards North Adelaide saying he should soon return. During his absence, a woman from Hindmarsh came, to whom was related what had just occurred: she mentioned that the night previous, as she was proceeding to town, she was met by the blacks at the bridge, who demanded money from her; on replying she had none, they told her if she would not have some for them by the next night she came, they would "spear" her. She then showed a shilling of coppers she brought to distribute amongst them, lest they should put their threat into execution.

Again I repeat, that if such things are not nipped in the bud, they may lead to a deal of bad feeling between, the whites and the blacks, which may terminate in bloodshed.

I am. Sir. yours, &c R, Adelaide, February 24, 1842 (Southern Australian, 25 February 1842, p. 3).

In 1851 one correspondent to a local newspaper felt compelled to say:

Shame Upon Us! We take their land and drive away their food by what we call civilisation, and then deny them shelter from a storm ... What comes of all the hypocrisy of our wishes to better their condition? ... The police drive them into the bush to murder shepherds, and then we cry out for more police ... What can a maddened black think of our Christianity to deny him the sod on which he was born ... You grow hundreds of bushels of corn on his land but deny him the crumbs that fall from the table ... They kill a sheep, but you drive his kangaroo away. You now drive him away from his own, his native land - out upon it; how can God's all-seeing eye approve of this? (Adelaide Times, 24 May 1851, p 6e.)

7 Post-Colonisation Sites

There is a post-colonisation history of sites of significance to Kurna meyunna and other Aboriginal people, both 19th and 20th Century, that is to be included in an overview of an Aboriginal cultural landscape. Such sites include: the hanging site in the North Parklands where the first executions of Aboriginal people in Adelaide took place in 1839; Pilita wodli, the first Aboriginal location (or mission); the former Colebrook Home site at Eden Hills, a home for Stolen Generation children, as well as sites of Aboriginal achievement and social and political organisation through to the present. Further research is required to elaborate this theme but the following are some examples.

7.1 Nineteenth Century - Aboriginal Sections or Reserves: Woodville and Hindmarsh Districts

Aboriginal sections or reserves were set aside during the colonising period to provide land, in what is now in the metropolitan area, where Kurna people could settle, with the expectation that they would adapt to the ways of the incoming culture, including taking up farming and labouring activities. The scheme was a failure with no reserves being taken up in Adelaide and few elsewhere. A correspondent in the *South Australian* observed in 1840 after the dedication of the first reserves:

These reserves are not all occupied, neither are they likely to be for some time. We cannot expect to see a wandering race of people become fixed in their habits in the short space of time they have been in contact with Europeans (South Australian, 29 September 1840 p. 3).

The notable exception for Kurna was the land taken up by Kudnarto, also known as Mary Ann Adams after her marriage, and her husband Tom Adams at Skillogolee Creek (near Clare) after their marriage in 1843. On her early death in 1855 the land was lost to Kudnarto's two sons, Tom and Tim Adams. Kudnarto is an apical ancestor for many Kurna descendants in Adelaide today, including Karl Telfer, one of the authors of this report. Kudnarto was Karl's great, great, great grandmother.

Several Aboriginal reserves were in what is now the City of Charles Sturt with three in the former Woodville Council (Marsden, 1977:5). The reserves, in the Hundred of Yatala, were:

- . Section 411 (80 acres) to the north of Torrens Road in what is now the Renown Park, Woodville Gardens, Pennington regions (includes the site of the contemporary Centro Shopping Centre, Arndale - Burke & Weaver, 1999)
- . Section 2067 (71 acres) (adjoining Mr Thomas Cowan's Islington residence in the 1880s)
- . Section 2069 (43 acres) (includes the Challa Gardens Primary School site - Burke & Weaver, 1999)
- . Section 2174 (78 acres)
- . Section 2175 (86 acres)

The overall total was 358 acres. The South Australian Register reported (Weds. 6 May 1857 p. 2) five sections in the Hundred of Yatala totalling 348 acres, a slight discrepancy in acreage.

In 1853, by the time of the first Woodville Council assessment, Sections 411, 2067 and 2069 were under lease to two farmers who had built cottages there (Marsden, 1977:5). In 1864 the three Sections were being leased for an annual sum of £139 (*South Australian Advertiser* Sat, 26th Nov 1864 p. 6).

In the 1870's Section 2067 in Renown Park, bounded by Torrens Road-Blight St-South Road reverted to the Crown and was later cut up for sale as part of unemployment relief works in about 1886 as cheap housing blocks, the idea being that the holders could grow some food to support themselves. The area then became known as the 'Blocks' (Parsons, 1974:142, 151, Geyer & Donovan, 1996:17).

In 1886 a request by the Hindmarsh Corporation to use part of an Aboriginal reserve for recreational purposes failed:

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS. HINDMARSH. Thursday July 8. From the Commissioner of Crown Lands, stating that the request of the Hindmarsh Corporation to have 10 acres of the aboriginal reserve between Hindmarsh and Prospect for recreation purposes could not be complied with (*South Australian Register*, 10 July, 1886, p.6).

The reserves had been leased to farmers and were eventually sold off into private ownership or resumed for other purposes. There was no contemplation of how the land may be of use to Kurna or other Aboriginal people. The 358 acres (143 ha) reserved as Aboriginal land in the Charles Sturt council is a substantial area, equivalent to about 2000 contemporary housing allotments. Further research on the exact locations and fate of the Aboriginal sections in Charles Sturt Council is required to fully elaborate this aspect of post-colonial history.

7.2 Twentieth Century - Kurna Meyunna and other Aboriginal Peoples

The significance of some 20th Century built heritage is an area that has received little attention. The development of an urban Aboriginal presence, and the consequent political, cultural and social activities would have largely taken place in the buildings and public spaces of Adelaide, thereby creating places of

significance to Aboriginal people. Just as many buildings or places are recognised because significant events took place there for non-Aboriginal Australians, this ought to be the case for Aboriginal Australians.

8 Kurna Meyunna Urban Living

The majority of Kurna descendants are now urban dwellers, adapting to the ways of the city and contemporary living. There are Kurna people living in the City of Charles Sturt. At the same time they are re-engaging with the landscape from which their forebears were removed and trying to find a cultural and physical space in the contemporary urban environment. This continues to be a great generational challenge.

Kurna meyunna and Kurna culture have not become extinct, as was once popularly believed up until the 1980s. Kurna descendants are part of a cultural continuum, severely dislocated but alive. Culture did not end in 1836 and is not stuck in time, it is renewing and re-inventing itself to meet the exigencies of the day, building on a tradition, some of which has been outlined here, and blending with the new ways. For any culture to survive it must be adaptable.

8.1 Contemporary Cultural and Spiritual Renewal

What is the place without the people? What are a people without their practising of culture? The re-enactment, or re-awakening, of one of the oldest and most important cyclical cultural ceremonial dances of Kurna meyunna, the Kuri Palti–Emu Dance in 2007, was the first living cultural renewal of that story; told again after nearly 170 years of sleeping. Its telling embodied the spirit of generational cultural renewal through cultural practice. The importance of teaching the ceremonies to the young people, on Country, which links them back into the sacred song cycles from the beginning, cannot be overstated.



Figure 111 Kuri Palti by Paitya, 2007



Figure 112 Kuri Palti by Paitya, 2007

The British Parliament passed the South Australian Colonisation Act in 1834, and the first settlers arrived in 1836. South Australia was officially proclaimed on 19 February 1836 in England. The Old Gum Tree at Glenelg North, South Australia was the location of the reading of the Proclamation by Governor Hindmarsh on 28 December 1836. A proclamation day may also celebrate the independence of a country, the end of a war, or the ratification of an important treaty. We have just seen the amount of support, which was given to celebrate the 175th year of proclamation, but sadly there was no integrated inclusion or support for Kurna Meyunna to share their story of this place their way, a missed opportunity for reconciliation and understanding for all incoming cultures now living in Kurna Yerta – Kurna Country.

8.2 Kurna Language and Revival

Language is part of cultural heritage and an extremely important cultural asset. Kurna Warra–Kurna Language is in revival and many Kurna have some use of their language. The revival has been assisted by Dr Rob Amery, the linguist, Kurna Warra Pintyandi, the Kurna language group based in the University of Adelaide and members of the Kurna community. Kurna Warra Pintyandi is comprised of Kurna and non-Kurna members, and the group assists in the research, teaching and public use of language. There are also other Kurna meyunna who are using their language through land based cultural activities which sees language used more in ceremony and on Country.

Language is part of the cultural landscape; it is intrinsically tied with places, cultural practices and narratives. Language and place are together. Language will have an ongoing application in the understanding and presentation of a Kurna cultural landscape in the City of Charles Sturt. Place names in particular tell story and assist in the understanding of an Aboriginal cultural landscape. It is fortunate that Kurna place names are known that cover the whole of the Charles Sturt council area; it is probably the only council area in greater metropolitan Adelaide to be so fortunate. This is a cultural asset to be respected, utilised and built upon. More place names may come to light, a better understanding of those known may evolve, and new ones may be carefully applied to some places.

Woods (1879: xxxvi) observed of the loss of Aboriginal languages in the early years of colonisation:

Without wishing to censure those who ruled the province in the early days, it seems astonishing, in a scientific age, to find that nothing was done officially to preserve the native tongue from extinction, and that what has been done, has been done as a labour of love, by private individuals, without other encouragement than that which the love of science for its own sake could afford.

9 Colonising Figures

The relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the major figures of colonisation, for example those commemorated in many colonial era statues and/or place names, has been given little attention. How do Aboriginal people feel about these commemorations of people who contributed to, or were collectively responsible for, the colonisation and subjugation of their culture, loss of their lands and at times, the deaths of their forebears? There is not a straight forward answer to this question and it is therefore appropriate to briefly discuss the two colonising figures commemorated in the Charles Sturt council, Colonel William Light, founding Surveyor-General, and Captain Charles Sturt, explorer and Government administrator. The purpose of this discussion is to assist in providing a bi-cultural understanding of place, both topographical and symbolic, so that broader and bi-cultural histories of place can be recognised and told.

9.1 Colonel William Light

There is a strong connection between founding Surveyor-General, Colonel William Light, and the settlement of the Charles Sturt council area. His decision on the site of the settlement was to have an immediate and profound impact on Kurna and he was the first European to record many details of the landscape. He, or men under his command, were to be the first Europeans to set foot on much of Kurna Country, including Country which now lies within the Council area. Not much detail is known of his interaction with Kurna meyunna but Dutton & Elder (1991:271) commented that Light 'always respected and treated well' the 'original Australians' and that 'He had been on good terms with them, particularly those at Rapid Bay, but the tribe on the Adelaide Plain he found much less attractive' (Elder, 1984:49).

As outlined, there was an Aboriginal woman on board the *Rapid* during his survey of the 'Adelaide region' coastline but it is uncertain as to whether she was Kurna or Tasmanian. This may be clarified through research now being undertaken by others. Light's diary for 6 October 1836 records 'Light airs and cloudy. At six, got under way to run down the coast [from Pathawilyangga], as the native woman on board said there was still a large river more to the southward [Ngangkiparringga, the Onkaparinga], which we had passed in coming up (Elder, 1984:71). The river proved unsuitable for a port because of the sandy and shallow mouth.

Two years after the establishment of the colony, Colonel Light built his house on prime land adjacent the river in Thebarton, just outside of the Charles Sturt council area. He lived there from the end of February 1839 until his death, aged just fifty-three, on 6 October 1839. There is a commemoration of his house (Figure 113) adjacent to Karrawirraparri, Tarnda-parri *River Torrens* at Hindmarsh (within Council's area).



Figure 113 Colonel Light's House Plaque, Hindmarsh

In early March, 1839, Aboriginal people set fire to the grass around his house, lopped down and burnt his trees, tore down garden palings and stole a sack of potatoes belonging to his gardener. They then marched around with potatoes on the end of their spears. Light recorded in his diary 6 March 'Natives try to set fire to my house' and complained to Wyatt, the Protector of Aborigines but also said 'They have been some days encamped on my property where they were perfectly welcome as long as they conducted themselves quietly and did no injury' (Dutton & Elder, 1991:271). It is likely the Aboriginal people were Kurna but by this time other Aboriginal language groups were also in the Adelaide area. Setting fire to a place was an often used Aboriginal tactic to demonstrate their displeasure and to send a warning. By this time Kurna meyunna would have fully realised the intentions of the settlers and Light was one of their leaders. To express

displeasure towards him would have been understandable. Light would have been unable to properly deal with the Kaurna meyunna grievances, to perhaps listen to them and ascertain why they were setting fire to his property. It would likely have taken a well man looking to the future to come to terms with the Aboriginal grievances resulting from their dispossession and his role in that process.

Light wrote in a private letter that month:

I am often annoyed by them and I confess I feel no love whatever for them. I never saw less interesting people, they are exceedingly cruel to their women, and are certainly the dirtiest people I have ever beheld. The tribe I first met with at Rapid Bay were very superior. I do not think they can be made much of until the Colony becomes so populous that their living be taken away except they work for it (Dutton & Elder, 1991:271).

Light's words are perhaps also understandable. They are from a man now gravely ill with tuberculosis who consistently recorded in his diary that he was 'unwell' or 'very unwell'. He was to die just several months later. He had lost his position as Surveyor-General and sections of the community had been hostile towards him. He was also stressed financially. Elder comments (1984:47) that Light's diary is a sad document, revealing the decline of a terminally ill man with querulous comments on heat and mosquitoes [and the Aboriginal people].

The bulk of Light's personal papers and sketches were lost when his hut in the city was destroyed by fire in January 1839. Light recorded in his diary that nothing of value was saved and he had only the clothes in which he was dressed. No emotion or sentiment was expressed. Perhaps burnt with them were more of his private observations and reflections on Kaurna meyunna.

9.2 Captain Charles Sturt

Little is known of Sturt's direct personal interaction with Kaurna meyunna but his explorations helped enable the opening up of South Australia (and parts of the interior of Australia) for settlement which lead to the destruction of the Aboriginal way of life. His journey down the river Murray in 1830 provided a focus on the east side of Gulf St Vincent or the Murray mouth as places for European settlement.

Cathcart (2009:36) outlined that in 1827 'a young military officer named Charles Sturt arrived in Sydney aboard a convict transport. As formal and ambitious as a hero in a Jane Austen novel, Captain Sturt was intent on serving his God and making his name and his fortune in New South Wales.' To make his name and fortune, the exploration of Aboriginal lands unknown to Europeans became his preoccupation. Cathcart (2009:59) further outlined that the youthful Charles Sturt, when he first arrived in New South Wales, 'was delighted by the sounds of civilisation, assuring intending migrants from Britain that Sydney Cove was a place where "a flourishing town now stands over the ruins of the forest". Here "the lowing of herds has succeeded the wild whoop of the savage; and the stillness of that once desert shore is now broken by the sound of the bugle and the busy hum of commerce"'.

It is said that Sturt 'prided himself with some justice on his impeccable treatment of the Aboriginals' (Gibbney, n. d.) but his endeavours had a dramatic and negative impact on them. During his explorations Sturt attempted to maintain friendly relationships with the Aboriginal groups he encountered but he was still quite prepared to use force, and kill, to achieve his objectives as outlined below. His explorations commenced in New South Wales with his expeditions to the Macquarie marshes and Darling River, 1828-29, and then his journey down the Murrumbidgee and Murray in 1829-1830.

Of the Murray journey Sturt recorded that the Aboriginals:

... sent ambassadors forward regularly from one tribe to another, in order to prepare for our approach, a custom that not only saved us an infinity of time, but also great personal risk. Indeed, I doubt very much whether we should ever have pushed so far down the river, had we not been assisted by the natives themselves (SA Memory, n. d.).

During his journey down the Murray when Aboriginals were appearing to be 'hostile' towards him Sturt wrote of the incident in his journal:

I now explained to them [his men] that their only chance of escape depended, or would depend, on their firmness. I desired that, after the first volley had been fired, Macleay and three of the men would attend to the defence of the boat with bayonets only, while I, Hopkinson and Harris would keep up the fire as being

more used, to it. I ordered, however, that no shot was to be fired until after I had discharged both my barrels ...

I took up my gun, therefore, and cocking it, had already brought it down to a level. A few seconds more would have closed the life of the nearest of the savages. The distance was too trifling for me to doubt the fatal effects of the discharge; for I was determined to take deadly aim, in the hope that the fall of one man might save the lives of many. But at the very moment, when my hand was on the trigger, and my eye was along the barrel, my purpose was checked by Macleay, who called to me that another party of blacks had made their appearance on the left bank of the river. Turning round I observed four men at the top of their speed. The foremost of them, as soon as he got ahead of the boat, threw himself from a considerable height into the water. He struggled across the channel to the sand-bank, and in an incredibly short space of time stood in front of the savage against whom my aim had been directed. Seizing him backwards, and forcing all who were in the water upon the bank, he trod its margin with a vehemence and an agitation that were exceedingly striking (Cumpston, 1951).

Violence and killing was prevented by other Aboriginal people, not Sturt. He did not retreat from Aboriginal lands. Had Sturt shot dead the 'savage' on that occasion as he intended, the fate of his party and the 'discovery' of the Murray may have been much different.

Cathcard (2009:112-113) noted that when exploring the Darling, Sturt and his party:

... turned a bend and stumbled upon four Aborigines fishing with a huge net. The fishermen froze in horror. Sturt and his weary men stood still. No one moved. No one spoke. No one raised a weapon. Suddenly the Aborigines gave a "fearful yell" and ran into the scrub. Twelve other Aborigines leapt up from the river and ran screaming for cover. Sturt and his men scrambled on to open ground and prepared to defend themselves. Then they heard a crackling in the distance. The Aborigines had set fire to their country.

As the traveller's eyes began to sting with smoke. An old, naked man leapt screeching out of the burning scrub, and hurled himself towards the interlopers. He lunged and ducked. He crouched in the dust and lunged again. He shouted threats and abuse. And then the ultimate insult: he displayed his bottom. But Sturt and his men were armed – and they burst out laughing.

Fortunately the encounter ended peacefully. But Sturt soon became aware of something alarming. He saw that:

"the old chief" was in the grip of a deep despair: "his bosom was full even to bursting and he seemed to claim at once our sympathy and our affection". As other Aborigines stepped warily out of the smoke, the elder gazed on his people sadly, and tried to explain the tragedy that had scourged his village. Many of his tribe had developed violent boils and lesions all over their bodies. And now they were dead. The elder called over several young men so that Sturt and Hume could see their deadly sores. "Nothing could exceed the anxiety of his explanation," wrote Sturt, "or the mild and soothing tone in which he addressed his people, and it really pained me that I could not assist him in his distress". The tribe was dying of smallpox.

Kurna meyunna also suffered from smallpox before colonisation, the disease spreading down the Murray-Darling river system. Sturt was to later comment about Aboriginal people 'I could not contemplate without a feeling of melancholy the remnant of these unfortunate people. A new era was dawning, and a fearful change was coming upon them, whether for good or evil God only knows' (Cumpston, 1951).

10 In Concluding

The City of Charles Sturt incorporates a rich Kurna meyunna living cultural landscape which is to be actively valued, recognised, renewed and curated. In conjunction with Kurna cultural custodians, and associates, there is great potential to make aspects of this cultural landscape more understood and accessible to the people of the City of Charles Sturt and to others from elsewhere.

The cultural mapping presented here is drawn from many sources. However, what is still to be fully evolved is the participation of Kurna meyunna in the telling, writing and curating of their history, both their long-time history and their recent history. Since the 1960's Kurna descendants have been returning to their Country from mission and fringe living, over 100 years after they were dispossessed of their lands. They have returned to a place where much of the Aboriginal meaning traditionally invested, or inscribed, in the landscape has been distorted and some lost, particularly in the urban areas, through the political, military, economic and religious dominance of the colonisers. A century and a half after Kurna Meyunna, and South

Australia, were colonised a process of reconciliation has been initiated with them and other Aboriginal people; people who lost so much in the colonisation process. The story told here is a step in that process of coming to terms with our past and understanding our contemporary bi-cultural cultural landscape.

This cultural mapping t gives an introduction to the breadth, and depth, of the Kurna cultural landscape. It cannot however be read as the complete story. The narrative needs to be built on over time as further research, writing and oral history recording is able to be undertaken, and as 'hidden' information comes to light.

It is an evolving and fascinating story to be shared between Kurna meyunna, non-Kurna Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals together.

11 About the Principal Authors

Karl – Cultural Custodian and Designer

Karl Winda Kudnuitya Telfer is a Kurna man from the Adelaide Plains region of South Australia. He is a custodian of ceremony, a cultural educator and a designer/artist. Karl has been involved in Aboriginal cultural and spiritual renewal all his life, coming from a family of strong cultural and political activity. He is known in his, and the wider, community as a knowledge keeper for the fire in his Country.

In 1993 he co-founded the Tjilbruke Dancers (the first Kurna cultural renewal ensemble in Adelaide) and in 1996 founded the Paitya cultural ensemble, both of which entwine Kurna knowledge systems and culture through Kurna language, stories, song, ceremony and ritual. In 2001 he was invited as a Kurna cultural ambassador to participate in the *Tracking Project*, New Mexico, which was a forum of teachers and Indigenous elders from around the world to design a series of teachings, through a seven year program, which connect individuals and communities directly to the natural world. He was the inaugural Aboriginal Associate Director for the 2002 Adelaide Festival of Arts where he co-produced and co-directed the global ceremony of peace, *Kurna Palti Meyunna*, in Tarndanyangga/Victoria Square. This contributed to Victoria Square becoming a shared place with dual names and the public debate on the design and the bicultural usage of the Square.

Over many years he has collaborated with artists, landscape architects and architects on major public space art and design projects, in particular the Victoria Square/Tarndanyangga Regeneration Master Plan (2003-2010) with Taylor Cullity Lethlean. Karl was recently awarded the President's Prize by the SA Chapter, AILA, for his contribution to public space design through bi-cultural collaboration. He was a member of the Adelaide City Council's Reconciliation Committee (2000-03), member of the South Australian Aboriginal Advisory Council (to the Premier), and is a current member of both the South Australian Aboriginal Heritage Committee and the South Australian Country Arts Board.

Gavin – Cultural Geographer and Artist

Gavin is an artist, cultural geographer and teacher. His art practice includes public space art and design and he has been involved in several innovative projects, both permanent and temporary. He has worked collaboratively with communities, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, other artists, and design professions on public space projects ranging from cultural presentation to ecological rehabilitation. He taught Courses at the School of Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Urban Design, University of Adelaide and the Adelaide Centre for the Arts for several years. He and Karl regularly guest lecture at Adelaide's three universities and co-present a Master of Architecture Summer School for students from the University of Calgary, Canada.

He has worked with Kurna Meyunna for fifteen years on cultural renewal and presentation projects, public artworks and exhibitions. A major project with Sherry Rankine and Margaret Worth was *Tjirbruki Narna arra' The Tjirbruki Gateway* at Warriparinga, a place of particular significance to Kurna in suburban Adelaide. He and Georgina Williams, Nganki Burka Mekauwe (Senior Woman), Kurna, held a collaborative exhibition *Dislocation* in the Australian Aboriginal Cultures Gallery, South Australian Museum in 2002, also exhibited in the Living Kurna Cultural Centre (LKCC) at Warriparinga in 2003-04. He collaborated with Georgina and David Kerr (SA Museum) in developing and writing the content for the Interpretive Gallery for the LKCC. He also lived at Warriparinga for four years, interacting with a broad cross-section of the Kurna community.

In 2012, Gavin completed a PhD in cultural geography at Flinders University, his thesis being *The Phases of Aboriginal Inclusion in the Public Space in Adelaide since Colonisation*. He has published aspects of his thesis in *Geographical Research* (2007) and presented papers to the International Geographical Union Conference in Tunis and the Royal Geographical Society in London (2008).

12 Appendices

Appendix A: Field Naturalists Excursion (1891)

(Note: several plant names in article indecipherable)

On Saturday afternoon the Field Naturalists Section of the Royal Society made an excursion to the Reedbeds. At the close of a dry summer it is somewhat difficult for this society to find a profitable locality for exploration, but it was thought that the present time would be a good opportunity to examine the usually marshy region where the River Torrens empties itself in its vain endeavour to find its way to the sea.

Leaving Town in one of Hill & Co.'s drags, the party proceeded to within a few hundred yards of Henley Beach, disembarking at the spot where the river crosses the main road. A large quantity of sand, washed down by last winter's floods, is now lying here and the river itself is confined to a narrow channel of twenty or thirty feet wide, in which some anglers were trying their luck.

Not far from the road the reed (*Arundo*) was plentiful; whilst a little, further north the ground is covered with Bullrush (*Typha angustifolia*), the ornamental seed heads of which attracted the attention of the ladies, who secured a supply for decorative purposes. Each head contains an immense quantity of seed of a soft downy nature, which might be used for domestic purposes.

A few grasses were seen in flower. The most noticeable, perhaps, being *Papiophorii couilimc*. Very few plants were observed in flower amongst them being *Lobelia xxx* and *Sol* (nightshade), and the elegant climber *Olygtjiimn mimi*. In one place the *uttibfclliferoiis* plant *Kryngiuui*, with its small lavender-coloured flowers was seen growing in a patch, but the spiny bntvts with which it is armed, did not suggest the idea that the spot would be the most comfortable on which to recline. The shrub *Datura stramonium*, poisonous but useful in pharmacy, was growing luxuriantly, and showing its tubular flowers and prickly fruit.

Continuing the walk in the direction of the Grange, rich-looking soil now perfectly dry. but much divided by fissures, was passed over, the hoofmarks of cattle indicating its boggy nature when under water. Here a multitude of the common black cricket was seen, the nature of the ground forming a convenient place of retreat for these merry creatures. The furthest point which the water from the river reaches was viewed with some interest, a small trickling stream, which lost itself at the foot of a brush fence, being the last expiring effort of the Torrens in flowing seawards. A well defined channel, however, shows the course which it takes when swollen with winter rains, some of the water finding its way into the Port River, whilst some taking a southern course mingles with the waters of the Patawalonga. In the bed of the river course dead specimens of freshwater shells were found; species of *Physa* being the most numerous. Here and there along the walk pools of water were met, which gladdened the hearts of those on the look out for specimens for the microscope, and samples were bottled for future examination. At the extreme end of the channel a depression was observed covered with a saline incrustation-. The latter was explained to be the result of evaporation of water brought to the basin by the rains, and not the residue of sea water, as its proximity to the shore as first seemed to suggest. The depression in fact was practically an evaporating pan. The presence of salsolaceous plants on; its borders indicated the saline nature of the soil.

The party proceeded to a little beyond the Grange Railway line, and reached the head of the Port River, its course being indicated by the *Melaleuca* (teatree) fringing its margins. It being now somewhat late it was decided to follow the Port River on a future occasion. Although not a great deal was found in this excursion (which was the first made by the Section over this course) the walk possessed features of considerable interest and the party were not disappointed with the result. Mr. J. G. O. Tepper, F.L.S., acted as leader, and Mr. W. Howchin, F.G.S., was also present. The party returned to town shortly before ? o'clock.

(South Australian Register, 21 April 1891, p. 6)

Appendix B: The Destruction of the Aboriginal Heritage of the Reedbeds

*Paper presented to the Henley and Grange Historical Society on 4 September 2009
by Tom Gara*

When the first settlers arrived on the Adelaide Plains, coastal dunes up to 10 metres high lined the shores of Gulf St Vincent from Brighton to Outer Harbour, broken only by the outlet of Patawalonga Creek. The fore-dunes were vegetated with coastal heath and spinifex, while the more sheltered dunes inland were covered with acacia and tea-tree scrub.

There used to be, several kilometres inland from the coast, a belt of high red sandhills, vegetated with dense stands of native pines, eucalypts, sheoaks and acacia scrub. These older consolidated dunes – formed about 150,000 years ago - once stretched almost unbroken from Port Adelaide and the western side of Torrens Island to the Sturt River at Novar Gardens. There were extensive areas of these dunes in the area formerly known as the Pinery at Grange and at Royal Park, through the suburbs of Seaton, Findon, Fulham and Lockleys and in a long arc stretching from Netley through Plympton to Novar Gardens. Today you can see surviving remnants of these dunes, with some of their original vegetation still intact, in the Kooyonga, Royal Adelaide and Grange Golf Courses. If you are driving west down Grange Road, you drive over several prominent dune crests between Findon Rd and Tapley's Hill Rd.

Between the coastal dunes and these older red dunes, an extensive area of wetlands stretched from the upper reaches of the Port River southwards all the way to the Patawalonga and the Sturt River. Thick stands of teatree lined the Port River nearly as far as Grange, and much of what is now West Lakes were samphire flats and tidal marshes.

Waters coming down the Torrens River backed up behind the coastal sandhills into an extensive area of swamps and reedbeds, lined with red gums and patches of teatree, sheoak and acacia scrub. These wetlands stretched from Fulham to Henley Beach and West Beach, where the fresh-water swamps merged with the saltwater swamps of the Patawalonga. The Sturt River emptied its waters into the Patawalonga and, after heavy rains, flooded out into several large lagoons in what is now Novar Gardens. During the summer months, most of these wetlands dried out to become grasslands, but when winter rains or summer storms flooded the plains, the waters coming down the Torrens and Sturt Rivers backed up in these lowlands, creating an extensive tract of marshy swamps and reedbeds. Nowadays the term 'the Reedbeds' is applied specifically to an area at Fulham but in this paper I will be using the term to apply to what Darryl Kraehenbuhl calls the Greater Reedbeds, the whole system of wetlands between the Port River and the Sturt River.

The Reedbeds were rich in freshwater mussels and yabbies and were home to abundant wildfowl and other birds and small mammals, and were a major resource area for Kaurna meyunna. Even in dry summer months, people could have obtained water from permanent pools in the nearby Torrens or from wells or springs in the nearby coastal dunes. What would have been particularly attractive to the Kaurna people were the red sandhills on the inland side of the wetlands. Aboriginal people always preferred camping in sandhills – just as we do – they are well-drained, generally free of prickles, you can see easily if there are any snakes about, and there are usually sheltered hollows to camp in, and good vantage points to watch for game. There were once extensive Aboriginal campsites and burial sites in these dunes.

Dr Basedow, the Assistant Government Geologist, examined an Aboriginal campsite and burial site discovered during sand-mining at Fulham in April 1911. At least 20 Aboriginal skeletons had been found at the site, which was evidently located in sandhills close to the Torrens on Mr Blackler's Fulham Park Estate⁴ Basedow reported that there was considerable evidence of Aboriginal occupation at the site:

*The find was made on Mr. Skuse's property on the Fulham Park estate, while material was being carted from a sandhill situated close to the banks of the River Torrens. In the excavation an old land surface is apparent, upon which in former days the aborigines used to camp. The ashes of their camp fires, heaps of shell fragments, mammalian teeth, and crudely fashioned stone implements and chips mark the old camping ground, which is now about 4 ft. below the present surface. The trunk and roots of an old gigantic tree that came to light in the excavation alone remain to prove that in bygone days this tree served the camping natives with its welcome shade. Locally round this freshly-exposed trunk many ashes, charcoal and camp refuse were found.*⁵

⁴ Advertiser 20/4/1911, p. 6

⁵ Advertiser 22/4/1911, p. 20, see also Advertiser 21/4/1911, p. 6.

Basedow advised his Minister that despite arriving at the site as soon as possible after its reported discovery, little remained of the 20 or so skeletons that had been found there. The rest had apparently been souvenired by the large crowd of people that had gathered there.

A few months later, in late July 1911, the *Advertiser* reported that about nine more skeletons had been uncovered at the site. These skeletons, as well as several others uncovered at the same site in early August, were subsequently removed by staff from the Museum.⁶

Walter Howchin, a pioneer of South Australian geology and the Lecturer in Geology at the University of Adelaide around the turn of the 20th century, examined some Aboriginal sites in the sand-dunes near the Fulham Reedbeds in the 1910s and 1920s. In his book, *The Stone Implements of the Adelaide Tribe, now extinct*, he wrote:

The banks of the lower reaches of the River Torrens, with the adjacent sandhills, must have been the chief camping grounds, as well as burial place, of the local tribe for generations. Many skeletons have been exposed at this spot by the erosive action of the wind, and, in addition, the locality has proved to be the richest in the occurrence of stone implements that has come under the Author's notice in South Australia.

Howchin noted that Aboriginal artefacts and other remains were common along the belt of red dunes inland, but were most concentrated in the vicinity of the Fulham Reedbeds. Most of the artefacts, according to Howchin, were made from locally available pebbles of fine-grained quartzite, while others were made from quartz, probably from the Mount Lofty Ranges, or flint, chert or silcrete, obtained by trade from neighbouring tribes. Howchin collected 'several hundredweights' of stone artefacts from these sites, most of which remain in the South Australian Museum today. They include waste flakes and cores as well as identifiable stone tool types such as backed blades (small, carefully trimmed flakes probably used as spear barbs), adzes (affixed to the end of a spear-thrower and used as a wood-working tool), and 'pirri points', small symmetrical points of unknown use. It is now known that these small tools first appeared on sites across much of the continent about 5,000 years ago, and some types were still in use when the first European settlers arrived. Other artefacts found by Howchin at the Fulham sites include scrapers, hammerstones and grinding stones. He also obtained several Aboriginal skeletons from the sandhills.

Long before either Basedow's or Howchin's investigations at Fulham, some unusual stone artefacts had been found on the property of the noted ornithologist, Capt Samuel White, at the Reedbeds. In 1893 five large cores of quartzite and several hammerstones were found during earthworks about three metres beneath the surface. Capt White showed these artefacts to Howchin in 1919, who considered them to be of considerable antiquity, and certainly much older than the artefacts common on the surrounding sandhills.

After the construction of the Torrens Weir in the 1890s and the creation of the Torrens Lake, flows to the Reedbeds were greatly restricted and the wetlands gradually dried up. The rich soils were taken up by market gardens and pastures for horses and cattle. In the 1920s the ever dwindling Fulham Reedbeds were still a haven for numerous species of birds and there were many plants surviving in that area that had already largely disappeared from the Adelaide Plains. The area was a frequent destination for excursions by the Field Naturalists Club and the Ornithologists Club.

In an article in the *SA Naturalist* in 1920, Edquist reported the presence of numerous stone artefacts in the Fulham sandhills:

Nature students who desire to see this evidence for themselves will find, just behind the Fulham rifle range, traces of an aboriginal camping ground ... The workers have gone, the camp is deserted, but broken tools, chips of stone, and an occasional damaged spearhead [remain].

Edquist noted that some of the stone tools were made from exotic material such as chert and chalcedony that would have been obtained by trade with more distant tribes. He also noted that some of the tools were made from bottle-glass, evidence that Aboriginal people were using such tools after the arrival of Europeans. According to Edquist:

Of the camping ground ... evidence can be seen in the form of charred bones and shells of molluscs, which protrude from the wind-swept faces of dissected dunes, now covered with a carpet of grass.⁷

In October 1925 the Field Naturalists reported:

Many chipped flints were picked up by members of the party, evidently the cutting tools of aborigines. Shells of cockles and other molluscs were also found.⁸

⁶ 3 *Advertiser* 31/7/1911, p. ?; *Advertiser* 2/8/1911, p. 8.

⁷ Edquist, 1920, p. 60-1.

⁸ 5 *Register* 3/11/1925, p. 5.

In the mid 1920s Norman Tindale burst upon the scene. The Ethnologist at the Museum, he was instrumental in establishing in 1926 the Board for Anthropological Research at the University of Adelaide, which over the next few decades made invaluable recordings of Aboriginal life in central Australia. With other like-minded professionals and amateurs he also established that same year, 1926, the Anthropological Society of South Australia. During the late 1920s and early 1930s Tindale, Herbert Hale, Draper Campbell, Charles Mountford and other Society members examined rock art sites in the Flinders Ranges, the Mid North and the Murray River, investigated the mysterious large stone artefacts that had been found at a number of sites on Kangaroo Island, collected thousands of artefacts from sites around Adelaide and carried out excavations at Devon Downs rockshelter on the Lower Murray River. The excavations there in 1929, the first controlled archaeological excavations in Australia, led Tindale to postulate a three-phase sequence of occupation based on differences in stone tool typologies.

Between 1933 and 1934 Tindale, assisted by members of the Anthropological Society, bored a series of holes about three metres deep across the Fulham site to test the underground stratigraphy. From these investigations, Tindale concluded that the large stone artefacts unearthed by Capt White were similar to those he had found on Kangaroo Island and belonged to what he later termed 'the Kartan industry'. That industry, he believed, predated the rise in sea-levels at the end of the last Ice Age, about 12,000 years ago, which flooded Backstairs Passage and Gulfs St Vincent and Spencer and left Kangaroo Island, and its Aboriginal population, separated from the mainland.⁹ On the mainland, the Kartan industry was succeeded at some later point, Tindale believed, by the more recent industries he had identified initially at Devon Downs. Tindale's notions of a four-phase cultural sequence of Aboriginal occupation have largely been discredited over the last few decades. It should be remembered, however, that in the late 1920s and early 1930s it was still widely believed that the Aboriginal people were 'an unchanging race in an unchanging land'.

Throughout the 20th century, stone artefacts have continued to turn up during excavations and other earthworks in the western suburbs. Museum records indicate that a large campsite occurred near the Oxbow in the Sturt River and large sites are also known to have existed in the sandhills in what are now the Glenelg Golf Links. Extensive sites also occurred in the old red sandhills that once existed in the north-western corner of the West Beach Airport and along the airport's eastern boundary, in the Netley area. Campsites are also known to have occurred in the sand dunes that formerly existed in the suburbs of Novar Gardens, Camden Park and Plympton.

Slate-scrapers, which were kidney-shaped tools made from thin slabs of slate and are thought to have been used for preparing animal skins for use as cloaks, have been found at a number of sites in the western suburbs. One particularly interesting item in the South Australian Museum is a polished-edge axe from Henley Beach. These beautiful axeheads were quarried from volcanic deposits at Mt William in central Victoria, and traded far and wide across the continent. Examples have turned up at Port Augusta and even in Central Australia. Artefacts fashioned from bottle glass, as well as clay pipes, coins and other European items, have been found at other sites, indicating that Aboriginal people continued to camp there after European settlement.

Even older things have been found in the western suburbs. In March 1898 the bones of either a giant kangaroo or a diprotodon were found at a depth of about five metres when a well was being dug at Fulham and handed over to the SA Museum.¹⁰ In 1914 the tooth of a diprotodon and other fossil bones were found at a depth of about three metres in a gravel deposit at Findon. According to a report in the *Advertiser*:

*In the same neighbourhood the men discovered a number of implements made by the aboriginals. They are of hard stone, and bear the original markings.*¹¹

Aboriginal burial sites were once common in the coastal sandhills all the way from Glenelg to Port Adelaide, as well as in the line of older consolidated sand dunes further inland. Numerous burial sites have been found in the Glenelg area, and along the course of the Sturt River from Darlington to the Patawalonga. There were many burial sites in the Fulham and Lockleys area, some of them single graves, some of them, like the one investigated by Basedow at the Fulham Park Estate in 1911, containing a dozen or more burials. Other burials have been uncovered in the old red dunes in Plympton, Novar Gardens and Camden Park.

Burials continue to be found during earthworks or other excavations in Fulham and nearby suburbs. For example in 1959, at least 12 skeletons were found in sandhills on Frogmore Rd, Kidman Park. The owner of

⁹ To be located

¹⁰ Register 25/3/1898, p. 5.

¹¹ Advertiser 13/10/1914, p. 6

the property recalled that other bones had been found at the same spot in about 1937.¹² Most of the skeletal remains were retrieved by the SA Museum.

In 1963 human bones were uncovered during sand-mining at a sandhill at the northern end of Lancaster St, Lockleys, about 200 metres south of the River Torrens. The local policeman who investigated the discovery reported:

*It is common knowledge in the district that the above mentioned site and surrounding areas are old Aboriginal Burial Grounds. Over the years numerous parts of skeletons have been found by workmen and children playing around excavations.*¹³

In October 1965 children playing on a vacant block on Dartmoor St, Lockleys, found some human bones exposed in recent earthworks. Tindale visited the site several days later and retrieved the skeletal material for the Museum. He noted an undisturbed occupation horizon in the sandhill, consisting of ashy soil and food remains, as well as a number of stone artifacts.¹⁴

In mid 1974 the South Australian Museum recovered a number of Aboriginal skeletons from a sand quarry at Kidman Park. A few months later, more skeletons were uncovered but on this occasion, no-one noticed. Loads of sand, including skeletal material, were delivered to a number of sites across Adelaide. The police received phone calls from worried gardeners who had found human skulls or other bones amongst their lovely new loam. A man at Plympton called the police when he found part of a skull and other human bones in the loam delivered to him in August. In September a thigh bone turned up in loam delivered to an address at Henley Beach, and a skull at another address in Burnside.¹⁵ Burials continue to turn up on a reasonably regular basis. For example, burials have been uncovered from two sites at Glenelg, one in 1998 and one in 2002, from a site in Henley Beach in 1992 and from a site at Lockleys in 2003.¹⁶

The belt of red sandhills that stretched from Port Adelaide to the Sturt River was clearly a major burial ground for the Kaurna people. It is hard to tell how many skeletons have been recovered from that area. The Museum has probably about 150 collections from the sandhills, but some of these consist of multiple individuals, and some collections consist of just one or two bones. There are references in the newspapers to other finds, but the ones that are reported to the Museum (usually by the police) or to the newspapers are probably only a fraction of those that have been found over the last 150 years or so – many are not reported to the authorities.

It seems that little attention was paid to Aboriginal sites in the Adelaide area after the early 1930s. Tindale was frequently away on field trips to central Australia and served with the American intelligence forces during World War II. The Anthropological Society seems to have concentrated its efforts on sites further south, at Hallett Cove, Moana and Aldinga, although artefacts from sites at Fulham, Glenelg and Grange continued to find their way into Museum collections.

During the 20th century, most of the sandhills that formerly lined the coast from Brighton to Outer Harbour disappeared, carted away for landfill or building sand or lost through storms and erosion. Now only a few tiny and much degraded sections of dunes remain anywhere along the coast. The extensive campsites and middens that occurred throughout those dunes were lost. The inland sandhills were levelled and carted away and used for landfill, for garden beds and other purposes. The land was taken up by industrial developments and housing. The twentieth century also saw the reedbeds go. The Torrens River was realigned along its lower course and its waters diverted out to sea, the Sturt River was also realigned to a concrete drain for most of its course. Heavy rains, however, sometimes still caused the Torrens and Sturt Rivers to flood, and parts of low lying suburbs around the former wetlands - Henley Beach, Lockleys, Grange etc., - would be inundated. The Patawalonga's swamps were drained and the tea-tree scrub was cleared. The wetlands were progressively reclaimed, filled and sold off for residential developments. I remember playing hockey against Grange down there in the late 1960s, when the country to the north was vacant paddocks and swamps. During the 1970s that last remaining patch immediately north of Grange was transformed into the West Lakes and Delfin Island developments, and what were once tea-tree lined wetlands disappeared beneath the West Lakes Shopping Centre and Football Park.

¹² Advertiser 28/11/1959, p. 3, Advertiser 2/12/1959, p. 3. See also Advertiser 26/2/1937, p. 28. Look for previous account several days before that date *****

¹³ SA Museum Skeletal Collections Doc file Reg No 38981

¹⁴ Tindale Jnl of Campsites and Implements, vol 5, p. 1267; see also Advertiser 25/10/1965, p. 9

¹⁵ SA Museum Skeletal Collections Register (check**)

¹⁶ Information provided by Erin Walker, AARD

In the late 1940s the extensive area of sand dunes that formerly covered most of West Beach were levelled to establish the West Beach Airfield. At the time that it was acquired by the Commonwealth, the airport land was occupied by several piggeries, some market gardens, the Council rubbish tip, and a trotting track or two. The Commonwealth only had to pay compensation to eight families who occupied dwellings in that vast area.

Tindale at the Museum was very concerned about the potential for destruction of Aboriginal sites by the airport development and tried to ensure that some detailed surveys were undertaken. The Museum Director, Herbert Hale, wrote to the Commonwealth authorities in November 1946 alerting them to the fact there were likely to be important Aboriginal burials and campsites within the airport area, and requesting the opportunity to collect skeletal and cultural material when earthworks commenced at the site. The Commonwealth agreed to the Museum's request and in April 1947 Tindale inspected the southern part of the airport area, where the low-lying ground was to be filled. It seems that he didn't find anything significant in that area. Two years later Tindale examined the sandhills in the north-eastern corner of the airport site and recovered six skeletons. He noted that the skeletons were accompanied by clay-pipe stems, coins and other European items, indicating continued post-contact occupation by Aboriginal people. During the 1950s most of the sandhills along the coast and inland disappeared, quarried and trucked away for construction purposes elsewhere and houses, industries and commercial developments spread across the suburbs of Novar Gardens, Plympton, Lockleys and Camden. Today virtually nothing remains of the original landscape of the reedbeds or the rich Aboriginal heritage that formerly existed there.

In about 1963 Tindale paid a visit to the Fulham site he had investigated back in the early 1930s and found that it had been completely levelled a few years before. In 1965, shortly before his retirement from the SA Museum after more than 40 years service, Tindale investigated a burial site that had been uncovered during earthworks on a block on Dartmoor Ave, Lockleys. He arrived in time to gather a few damaged bones that had been left behind by the bulldozer, and noted that some occupation debris was visible in the side of the excavation. He observed sadly that the site had been destroyed, and all its valuable data lost.¹⁷

All we have today to tell the story of what had been for many generations the 'chief camping grounds' of the Kurna people are a few hundred stone artefacts and a handful of photographs in Museum collections.

Things are no different elsewhere on the Adelaide Plains. Museum records indicate that once upon a time there would have been Aboriginal campsites, scarred trees and other features all along the Torrens and Sturt Rivers, Brownhill and Keswick Creeks, and the other creeks that cross the plains. Once upon a time there were major Kurna burial grounds at St Peters, Marion, Clovelly Park and other spots, and other graves scattered here and there across the suburbs. All these sites are gone now, covered with factories, houses and roads. In Sydney, Melbourne and Perth one can still visit Aboriginal sites relatively close to the city centre, as areas of bushland, rugged coasts or steep river valleys have been preserved from development. On the Adelaide Plains, there was nothing to stop unrestricted development and everything was soon swallowed up. Little remains now of any of the sites that formerly dotted the Adelaide Plains except more boxes of artefacts and collections of skeletal remains in the Museum's store at Netley, and a few notes and photographs in the Museum archives.

By today's archaeological standards, the stone artefacts tell us little. In most cases, there is no data as to the site's original location other than the name of the suburb, or if you're lucky the name of the street. And of course the artefacts are entirely divorced from their archaeological and environmental contexts. Unless one day a campsite is found in one of the golf courses, we will never know much about the pre-contact lifestyle of the Kurna.

¹⁷ 14 Jnl of Campsites and Implements, vol 5, p. 1267 and photo in Tindale collection.

Appendix C: Early Newspaper Reports of Aboriginal Burials in the Charles Sturt Council Area

***South Australian Advertiser* Tuesday 7 February 1860 p. 2**

Skeleton Found.- On Sunday last, whilst some children were playing at Queenstown, on the ridge of sand hills between the Port Road and the Old Port, they picked up a human skull in a place where the wind had drifted away the sand. On this being made known, the spot was examined by some persons living in the locality, when a complete skeleton was discovered, supposed to be that of a native woman. It must have been buried there some years, as the bones were completely bleached.

***South Australian Register* Thursday 24 December 1874 p. 4**

Skeleton Found. - On Thursday, the 10th inst., while Mr. Charles White, in the employ of Mr. W. H. Gray, of the Reedbeds, was ploughing he came upon the bones of a blackfellow. The skull was found in a perfect state of preservation, the set of teeth being quite complete, also the jawbones. It is not often that these relics are discovered in such a condition.

***The South Australian Advertiser* Tuesday 27 March 1883 p. 4**

One of the scholars of the Archer-street Wesleyan Sunday-school whilst playing on the sandhills at the Grange on Easter Monday kicked up a human skull. As the rest of the skeleton is supposed to be buried in the neighborhood a mounted constable will be dispatched this morning to search and make enquiries.

***The Advertiser* Thursday 12 September 1889 p. 4**

While some laborers were employed in excavating the foundation of a woolen factory at West Thebarton on Wednesday afternoon they unearthed a human skull and some bones, supposed to be part of the skeleton of an aboriginal. In former years there was a natives' camping-ground in close proximity to the place.

***The Advertiser* Monday 14 July 1902, p. 6**

ABORIGINAL ART NATIVE ROCK DRAWINGS.

DISCOVERY ON THE SOUTH PARA. (By our Special Reporter)

(Extract from article) The burying grounds of the Adelaide tribe are said to have been at the Reedbeds, which were called "Witto-unga" (place of reeds) by the natives, and there Mr. Howchin obtained two native skulls. Mr. Howchin also possesses all the other relics of that tribe in the shape of spear and arrow heads.

***The Advertiser* 16 July 1902 p. 4**

ABORIGINAL BURYING GROUNDS

It was mentioned in an article published in "The Advertiser" on Monday regarding the native drawings on the banks of the South Para River, near Gawler, that the burying grounds of the Adelaide tribe of blacks were said to have been at the Reed Beds. Mr. Walter Mitchell, a native of Adelaide, states that the Adelaide tribe also had a burying ground on the south side of the banks of the Torrens, near Walkerville. He remembers that some 50 years ago the blacks used to bury their dead on this spot, which he believes was the property of the South Australian Company. The bodies were put in shallow graves, and various ceremonies were performed by the tribe. These ceremonies were of a most sacred nature, and no white man was allowed to witness them. The blacks subsequently visited the graves and lighted fires, which were kept burning for weeks. A large number of blacks were buried at this place, which ceased to be a necropolis about 47 years ago.

***The Advertiser* Wednesday 20 October 1909 p. 8**

AN INTERESTING SKELETON FOUND

A few years ago many aboriginal remains were found about Adelaide, and particularly in the Reedbeds district, which was once the "happy hunting grounds" of the blacks. Owing to the drifting of the sand dunes where the natives buried their dead, most of the skeletons have become exposed, and either fallen into the hands of scientists or become broken up by the cattle grazing about them. On Monday, while a few scientists who were in Adelaide in connection with the Australasian Ornithologists' Union Congress, were visiting the Reedbeds, they accidentally came across an exceptionally perfect skeleton of a male aboriginal on Captain S.A. White's property. Captain White permitted its removal by Mr. G. L. Barrett for scientific purposes in Melbourne. The skull and teeth were in good preservation, and will be presented to Mr. E. Brooke Nicholls, the eminent odontologist of Victoria, who has just issued an interesting book upon the teeth of the blacks and various animals. The International Odontological Congress opens in Melbourne at the end of the month, and Mr. Nicholls will bring the skeleton before the members for discussion.

The Advertiser Saturday 22 April 1911 p. 20

ABORIGINAL SKELETONS

THE FULHAM DISCOVERY. DR. BASEDOWS REPORT

The Assistant Government Geologist (Dr. H. Basedow) has furnished to the Government the following report on the aboriginal skeletons recently found at Fulham:

"The find was made on Mr. Skuse's property, on the Fulham Park estate, while material was being carted from a sandhill situated close to the banks of the River Torrens. In the excavation an old land-surface is apparent, upon which in former days the aborigines used to camp. The ashes of their camp fires, heaps of shell fragments, mammalian teeth, and crudely-fashioned stone implements and chips mark the old camping ground, which is now about 4 ft. below the present surface.

The trunk and roots of an old gigantic tree that came to light in the excavation alone remain to prove that in bygone days this tree served the camping natives with its welcome shade. Locally round this freshly-exposed trunk many ashes, charcoal, and camp refuse were found. All these traces and relics of a long extinct tribe lie buried beneath accumulated sand drifts that have since been superficially transformed by the growth of grass and other vegetation. Shells of marine and freshwater molluscs were found in great number, being principally of the cockle species, known scientifically as *chione* and *maetra*. The tooth of a dog was also among them. Fragments of quartz and broken pebbles lie buried in the sand, which is wind-transported. Consequently the former must have been brought there by native agency. The stone implements are principally an unfinished and simple type, which is the equivalent of that of one of the classical subdivisions of the Paleolithicum of the Old World. There are also a few sharp quartz fragments, resembling the ordinary cutting instruments, or stone Knives. Others are of the scraper type, with a convex chipped surface, used for making various wooden implements and weapons.

Despite the prompt action taken by you in dispatching me to the spot, I found no skulls, but was informed that about half a dozen had been taken away before I arrived. About twenty skeletons are said to have been unearthed in all. Of these only a few fragments of bone in a poor state of preservation were found. While examining the face of the excavation a calvarium of an aged female aboriginal was found, together with portions of the mandible, a collarbone, a kneecap, and a few vertebrae. The calvarium is markedly dolichocephala, which is the usual Australian form, and shows a considerable enlargement in the region of the inion of the occipital bone. Epypteric bones are interposed in the parieto-occipital suture, The-supraorbital region does not show any marked degree of development, a feature more characteristic of the male skull. The teeth of the lower jaw have been ground down very considerably. I have elsewhere described this excessive wear of the Australian aboriginal teeth as being due, in a measure, to the fact of their food containing an unusually large amount of sand and grit, derived principally through the prevalent method of cooking in hot sand. No sign of caries was noted in any of the teeth. This must, however, not be regarded as representative of the race. The percentage, of dental caries, as determined by Dr. G. R. Mummery and myself, is about 20 for the Australian aboriginal. The surface of the skull shows many broad and irregular furrows, which are often re-erred to as being the result of disease among the natives. This is not, however, always the case. In this instance, as in numerous other cases I have examined, the corrosion of the bone is entirely subsequent, and is produced by grubs and beetles long after burial, and is not of a pathological nature at all."

The Register Saturday 22 April 1911 p. 15

ABORIGINAL SKELTONS DISCOVERED AT FULHAM

RELICS OF A LONG-EXTINCT TRIBE

The Assistant Government Geologist Dr. H Basedow has furnished to the Government the following report on the aboriginal skeletons recently found at Fulham:

'The find was made on Mr. Skuse's property on the Fulham Park Estate, while material was being carted from a sandhill situated close to the banks of the River Torrens. In the excavation an old land surface is apparent, upon which in former days the aborigines used to camp. The ashes of their camp fires, heaps of shell fragments, mammalian teeth, and crudely fashioned stone implements and chips mark the old camping ground, which is now about 4 ft. below the present surface. The trunk .and roots of an old gigantic tree that came to light in the excavation alone remain to prove that in bygone days the tree served the camping natives with its welcome shade. Locally round this freshly exposed trunk many ashes, charcoal, and camp refuse were found. All these traces and relics of a long-extinct tribe lie buried beneath accumulated sand drifts that have since been superficially transformed by the growth of grass and other vegetation.

Shells of marine and freshwater molluscs were found in great number, being principally of the cockle species, known scientifically as *chione* and *maetra*. The tooth of a dog was also among them. Fragments of quartz and broken pebbles lie buried in the sand, which is wind-transported; consequently the former must

have been brought there by native agency. The stone implements are principally of an unfinished and simple type, which is the equivalent of that of one of the classical subdivisions of the Paleolithicum of the Old World. There are also a few sharp quartz fragments, resembling the ordinary cutting instruments or stone knives. Others are of the scraper type, with a convex chipped surface; used for making various wooden implements and weapons.

Despite the prompt action taken by you in dispatching me to the spot, I found no skulls, but was informed that about half a dozen had been taken away before I arrived. About twenty skeletons are said to have been unearthed in all. Of those only a few fragments of bone in a good state of preservation were found. While examining the face of the excavation, a calvarium of an aged female aborigine was found, together with portions of the mandible, a collarbone, a kneecap, and a few vertebrae. This calvariium is markedly dolichocephala, which is the usual Australian form, and shows a considerable enlargement in the region of the union of the occipital bone, Epypteris bones are interposed in the parieto-occipital suture. The supraorbital region does not show any marked degree of development, a feature more characteristic of the male skull. The teeth of the lower jaw have been ground down very considerably. I have elsewhere described this excessive wear of the Australian aboriginal teeth as being due, in a measure, to the fact of their food contains an unusually large amount of sand and grit, derived, principally, through the prevalent method of cooking in hot sand.

No sign of caries was noted in any of the teeth. This must, however, not be regarded as representative of the race. The percentage of dental caries, as determined by Dr. G. R. Mummery and myself is about 20 for the Australian aboriginal. The surface of the skull shows many broad and irregular furrows, which are often referred to as being the result of disease among the natives. This is not, however, always the case. In this instance, as in numerous other cases I have examined, the corrosion of the bone is entirely subsequent, and is produced by grubs and beetles long after burial, and is not of a pathological nature at all'.

The Advertiser 4 May, 1911, p. 7

THE ABORIGINAL SKELETONS

Anthropological Treasures

Sorting Specimens at the Museum

Towards the end of last month the Museum received notification through press paragraphs, and subsequently through the Police Department, that native 'bones were being found on some property belonging to Mr. Blackler at Fulham. Mr. Blackler was at once communicated with by letter, and Mr. R. Zietz was sent down to the spot on two occasions. Owing to some interference, in part similar to that which occurred at Swanport, Mr. Zietz was unable at first to remove the bones that had been unearthed; and when the difficulties having been removed Mr. Zietz again went down, some of the skulls had disappeared. What bones were left were secured for the Museum, and are now here. This lot of bones, at least those that the Museum has secured, are much broken or decayed; but a few of the skulls can probably be mended up to a state in which they will be of some scientific use. It is, however, much to be regretted that both at Swanport and Fulham we could not have had an official skilled in these matters earlier in the field.

The Advertiser Monday 10 June 1912 p. 10

HUMAN SKELETON FOUND.

Mr. Henry Pierson, a gardener, of Lockleys, has reported to the police that while he was digging in his garden on Saturday afternoon he unearthed a human skeleton.

He has lived there for about 40 years, and states that during that time no one has been buried there. It is believed that the skeleton is that of an aboriginal.

The Advertiser Wednesday 14 December 1921, p.11

A SKELETON UNEARTHED

On Tuesday morning Messrs W. Gordon and A.E. Dinham unearthed a skeleton at the red sandhills at Lockleys, which, on examination by a local naturalist was pronounced to be that of an aboriginal male, who in life must have been of fine physique, both tall and well-proportioned throughout. He was evidently an old man, as the teeth in the well-preserved skull were for the most part worn right down to the stumps in the upper and lower jaws, and in one instance a molar had tilted in life until the side had become the grinding surface. This in turn had also been worn away, but apparently no decay had set in, the remains of the teeth being solid and hard as flint. The skull is of exceptional thickness but unscarred through "waddlieing". A broken arm at the wrist, with a neat mend, while he was a younger man, seems to be all the injury the "old warrior" had suffered. The body had been buried at full length, and not doubled up, or "trussed," as in some cases. It was face downwards, with the head towards the setting sun with about 4 ft. of fresh red sand over it. From the nature of the surroundings, the man must have been buried before the white man took possession of the country.

***The Mail* Saturday 5 November, 1927, p. 1**
DEAD MEN'S BONES Burial Ground Uncovered
FOX HUNT AT FULHAM

Setting out to hunt foxes at Fulham Park, on Thursday, Messrs. J. Horsley, C. Bowell. and. W. Dixon, after killing a 5-ft. brown snake, shot three foxes, and then unearthed the crumbling skeletons of five aborigines. For some time foxes have been killing fowls at Sir. Sidney Kidman's stud farm at Fulham Park, and many native birds have been destroyed by them.

Armed with guns and picks and shovels Messrs. Horley, Rowell, and Dixon, on Thursday, set forth to wage war on the foxes, which were known to occupy burrows in a paddock which adjoins the property Capt. S. A. White. Before they had time to begin digging for foxes a 5-ft. brown snake scuttled through the grass at their feet. It was killed.

Once more foxes became the objective of the diggers. About six feet beneath the surface of a sandhill, however, one of the spades turned over a human skull and shortly afterwards five other skulls and other bones were uncovered. Still on the scent of the foxes the hunters continued to dig and eventually three half-grown, foxes were unearthed and shot.

Aboriginal Burial Ground

Mr. J. Horsley has lived at Fulham Park for many years. He was there when Mr. W. A. Blackler owned the property, and has seen many aboriginal skeletons taken from its paddocks. In commenting on the find Mr. Horsley said that some years ago half of the sandhill from which they were taken was removed, and many similar skulls and bones found.

Mr. Horsley said there was little doubt that parts of Fulham Park in days past had been used by the natives as a burial ground. During the time he was residing at the famous stud farm scores of skeletons were found. He remembered the skeleton of a black fellow being found some years ago buried a few feet below the surface of a sandhill. It was in a sitting position, as if some unfortunate native in ages past had been buried alive.

Though the aboriginal remains where were uncovered on Wednesday at Fulham Park were found fairly close to the surface, many of the bones were crumbling with decay, indicating that they had been buried, a longtime.

***The Advertiser* Friday 26 February 1937, p.28**
Old Aboriginal Bones Found At Lockleys

The bones, which were reported as having been found at Lockleys a few days ago, were sent to Adelaide yesterday to be examined by the Police Medical Officer, Dr. A. W. Welch. They comprised two parts of skulls, some legs and arm bones. It is understood that the bones were of aborigines and had probably been buried more than 50 years.

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