

The image features a stylized, colorful illustration of a town or village. The buildings are rendered in various colors including red, yellow, green, blue, and orange, with simple black outlines for windows and doors. The town is set against a bright blue sky. A prominent decorative border with a repeating diamond pattern runs horizontally across the middle of the image, framing the title. The overall style is reminiscent of traditional Maori art or a folk-art aesthetic.

THE YALUKIT-WILLAM

The First People of Hobsons Bay

THE YALUKIT-WILLAM

The Aboriginal people who lived in what we now know as the City of Hobsons Bay are known as the Yalukit-willam, a name meaning 'river camp' or 'river dwellers'.

The Yalukit-willam are associated with the coastal land at the head of Port Phillip Bay that extends from the Werribee River, across to Williamstown, Port Melbourne, St. Kilda, and Prahran.

The language of the Melbourne people, includes three dialects, Daung wurrung, Woi wurrung, and Boon wurrung, and is part of a group of related languages collectively known as the Kulin group of languages, or the Kulin Nation. The three Melbourne dialects are referred to as the East Kulin area.

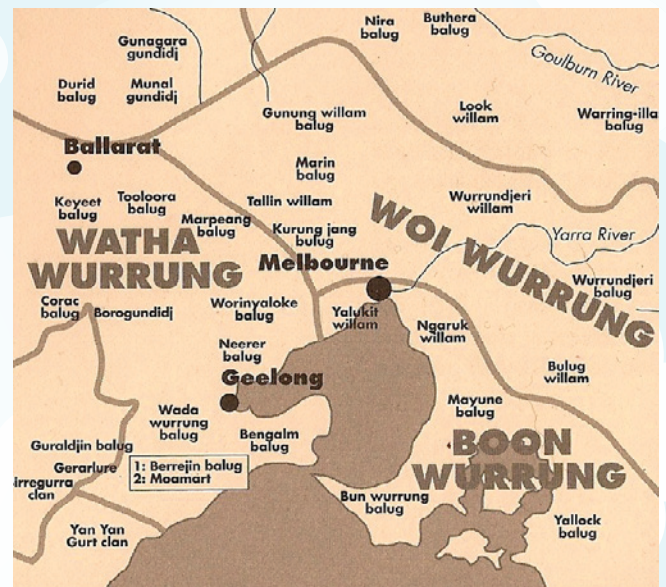
The Kulin people, even those who lived great distances from one another, understood each other's dialects and had an agreement about intermarriage. One of the bonds maintaining this agreement was "moiety affiliation": The Kulin divided their world into two halves or "moieties", with one half of the people known as waa (crow) and the other, bunjil (eaglehawk). Individuals were identified with one or other of these moieties and could marry only someone from the other moiety.

Belonging to this land were clans, comprising one or two extended families who hunted and gathered together. These families moved through the landscape using their knowledge of the environment and the seasons. The clans were sometimes distinguished by the names of their leading men. Two such leaders of the Yalukit-willam were Benbow and Derrimut.

The neighbouring group to the Boon wurrung were known as the Woi wurrung and one of their clans, the Wurundjeri-willam were the neighbours of the Yalukit-willam and as such had custodial obligations and shared rights. For the past fifty years the Wurundjeri have looked after the sites of significance within the City of Hobsons Bay.

Boon wurrung country was described by an early colonial writer as:

...a strip of country from the mouth of the Werribee River, and including



what is now Williamstown and the southern suburbs of Melbourne, belonged to the Bunurong, a coast tribe, which occupied the coast line from there round Hobson's Bay to Mordialloc, the whole of the Mornington Peninsula, and the coast from Westernport Bay to Anderson's Inlet. ¹

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THE FLOODING OF PORT PHILLIP BAY

The Boon wurrung have a rich oral tradition that contained memories of the cataclysmic floods of 10,000 years earlier when Port Phillip Bay was formed. Fortunately, some of these memories have been recorded.

The last Ice Age was at its peak about 18,000 years ago. This cooling lowered the sea level since much of the earth's water was frozen. Tasmania was part of the mainland and the rivers that now drain into Port Phillip Bay joined to form a river that emptied into the sea off the northwest corner of Tasmania.

15,000 years ago the sea level rose as a result of an increase in temperature. About 10,000 years ago, Tasmania separated from the mainland. Port Phillip Bay, which had been a plain for over 10,000 years, was flooded again by the rising seas. The seas continued to rise and about 5,000 years ago, the sea was higher than its present level, and the area at the top of the bay including the bayside suburbs of St Kilda and South Melbourne were submerged.

It is interesting to note that the Yalukit-willam's territory with its long, narrow extension running around the head of Port Phillip Bay as far as the Werribee River corresponds with the area that was submerged 5,000 years ago, Georgiana

McCrae, an early settler on the Mornington Peninsula, recorded the following account in her diary:



Robert Russell says that Mr Cobb talks to the blacks in their own language, and that the following is an account, given by them, of the formation of Port Phillip Bay: "Plenty long ago ...gago, gego, gugo ...alonga Corio, men could cross, dry-foot, from outside of the bay to Geelong." They described a hurricane – trees bending to and fro – then the earth sank, and the sea rushed in through the Heads, till the void places became broad and deep, as they are today. ²

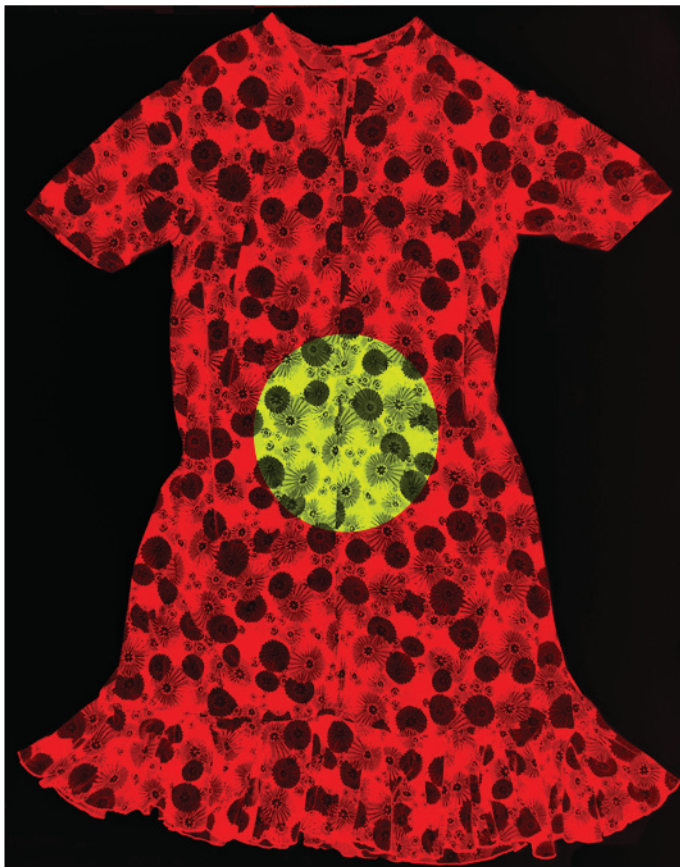
The clinching evidence that the Yalukit-willam have an oral tradition that embodied memories of the events of 10,000 years ago is found in other records:

Me, 200 Years Ago
Megan Cadd, 2010

...our shared history

Old Bembo, recalled that his grandfather, 'recollected when Hobsons Bay was a kangaroo ground; they say, "Plenty catch kangaroo, and plenty catch opossum there;" and Murray assured me that the passage up the bay, through which the ships came is the River Yarra, and that the river once went out at the heads, but that the sea broke in and that Hobsons Bay, which was once hunting ground, became what it is. ³

THE YALUKIT-WILLAM WAY OF LIFE



One Dress, So Much History
Megan Cadd, 2010

The Yalukit-willam people were semi-nomadic hunter gatherers who moved around within the limits of their territory to take advantage of seasonably available food resources. As Gary Presland described in his book:

Their way of life ...was adapted to their environment in a number of ways. Their hunting equipment and techniques had been developed over a long period and were suited to the purpose. They had an intimate and detailed knowledge of their landscape. This knowledge was passed from one generation to the next. So well did they know their territory, and so efficient were they at getting all they needed, they had to work only about five hours a day. ⁴

The Yalukit-willam might spend a few days or a few weeks in the one place, depending on the local supply of fresh water and the available food resources. Major camps were usually set up close to permanent streams of fresh water leaving evidence as an indication of the places where they lived. These places are called archaeological sites. The types of sites found in the City of Hobsons Bay include surface scatters, shell middens, isolated artefacts and burials.

The people hunted kangaroos, possums, kangaroo rats, bandicoots, wombats and lizards; caught fish and eels, and collected shellfish. JH Tuckey, the First Lieutenant of HMS Calcutta, and part of the 1803

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Sorrento settlement on Boon wurrung country, published his impressions of Port Phillip Bay;

*The kangaroo ...inhabits the neighbourhood of Port Phillip in considerable numbers, weighing from 50 to 150lb; the native dog, the opossum, flying squirrel, and field-rat make up the catalogue of animals we observed. Aquatic birds are found in abundance on the lagoons, and are black swans, ducks, teal, black and pied shags, pelicans, gulls, red-bills (a beach bird), herons, curlews, and sand larks; the land birds are eagles, crows, ravens, quail, bronze-winged pigeons, and many beautiful varieties of the parrot tribe, particularly the large black cockatoo; the emu is also a native of this part of the country, its eggs having been found here. Three varieties of snakes were observed, all of which appeared venomous.*⁵

The hunting, especially kangaroo hunting, was left to the men, while the women concentrated on gathering. Among the vegetable food collected was murnong, commonly called the yam daisy, the gum of the black wattle, the pulp of the tree fern, wild cherries, kangaroo apples and various fungi.

Murnong was a favoured food. This small plant with a yellow flower that looks like a daisy, has an underground tuber, something like a yam. It grew all year round but was particularly good to eat in spring. The women collected the tuber in great quantities in their string bags and took it back to camp. When at its freshest it could be eaten raw,

but otherwise it was roasted or baked in an earth oven. In the early years of European settlement murnong grew profusely along the Kororoit Creek and other creeks in the area, and covered the plain to the west.

In the Williamstown and coastal and swamp areas, the Yalukit-willam had ample bird life to hunt, including ducks and swans. There were abundant eels, yabbies, and fish in Stony and Kororoit creeks, and the Yarra River. In March 1840, Robinson saw Dindo, Derrimut's mother, feasting on tadpoles.

*Saw Deremart's (sic) mother and other women eating tadpoles. They had a large heap of them and was roasting and eating them. They laid them on grass and put hot coals on the top of them. The rocky coast line also provided them with salt-water fish, mussels, cockles and small crabs.*⁶



When The River Runs
Ben McKeown, 2010

Robinson's diary describes how the Yalukit-willam caught the emu and restrained their wild native dogs;

when the natives want to kill emu they get up a cherry tree before daylight with a large spear, and having put a quantity of cherries in a certain spot under the tree, conceal themselves above with a clear place for them to thrust the spear down. At day dawn the emu is heard coming by the noise it makes, and if this is a tree they have been at before they are sure to come again, when they begin eating, and then the native thrusts the spear through them. ...Saw several wild dogs on the settlement belonging to the country. ...The aborigines tie up the fore foot of their dogs to prevent them going astray, instead of roping them round the neck as we do. At the native encampment, I saw two dogs thus tied.⁷

In January 1841, Robinson watched the father of Benbow and a youth catch eels in the Tromgin waterhole.

This afternoon two native blacks of the Boongerong tribe – Niggerernaul and a lad named Doller, came to my office and went to the lagoon about 1/4 mile distant in the paddock and in a very short time caught about 40lbs of eel. I saw them catching or rather spearing them at which they are very expert.

THE LANDSCAPE OF HOBSONS BAY

Information on the area has been passed down by Aboriginal people from one generation to the next, and descriptions are also recorded in the writings of the early settlers and administrators.

In the summer of 1802-3, Acting-Lieutenant Charles Robbins in the ship *Cumberland* was sent by Governor King to investigate Port Phillip Bay. With him were acting surveyor-general Charles Grimes, and James Flemming, a gardener. Flemming's journal for February 1803 records brief impressions of an excursion from Point Gellibrand to Point Cook.

The land for two or three miles is a gentle rise from the beach, which is muddy, with large stones; the land stiff clay, the stone



Sunshine and Lollipops
Ben McKeown, 2010

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appearing at the top; a little further, near the beach, a swamp light black sand, white shells at bottom. There is a slip of trees about half a mile from the beach, then a clear level plain to the mountains, which I suppose to be fifteen or twenty miles Passed two inlets of salt water, Kororoit and Skeleton creeks. ⁸

There are also descriptions of the land management practices of the original inhabitants. They regularly burnt off the grasslands to encourage the growth of new grass that would attract the kangaroos and emus for hunting. Wedge's field book provides an account and makes clear why the area was so attractive to Europeans:

*The whole is thickly covered with a light growth of grass the soil being in general stiff and shallow... the plains are quite open... and I have no doubt they will become valuable sheep stations for breeding stocks.*⁹

When John Batman explored the area in 1835 he noted that the country between Point Wilson and the Yarra was a grass-covered plain. The point at the river mouth - now Williamstown - was thinly timbered with she-oak and covered with kangaroo grass. Here Batman saw great numbers of pelicans and swans and scores of ducks and teal.

When George Robinson, visited the Port Phillip settlement in December 1836 he wrote;

"Saw nothing but grassy country, open forest, plenty gum and wild cherry. Saw where the natives had encamped, plenty of trees notched where they had climbed for opossums. ... There are herds of forest kangaroo immensely large, a short distance from the settlement, also flocks of emus on the western plains fifty and sixty in a drove. ... The country through which I travelled to the Salt Water (Maribyrnong) River had a park-like appearance, kangaroo grass being the principal, the trees she-oak, wattle, honeysuckle. Saw a blue flower, thorny appearance. Numerous old native huts." ¹⁰

INITIAL EUROPEAN CONTACT 1802 - 1834

The Boon wurrung were amongst the first of Victoria's Indigenous peoples to have contact with Europeans. In October 1803 Lieutenant-Colonel David Collins arrived at Port Phillip Bay from England with 300 convicts and 50 marines and established a settlement on Boon wurrung land at what is now Sorrento, on the Mornington Peninsula. Amongst the passengers were convict William Buckley and 11-year-old John Pascoe Fawkner. When William Buckley escaped from the Sorrento settlement in 1803, and eventually settled with the Wathawurrung-balug clan near Geelong, he travelled around the Bay on Boon wurrung land and is almost certain to have passed through Yalukit-willam country. Buckley and Fawkner later figure prominently in the history of the Yalukit-willam people.

Aboriginal people along the southern coasts of the continent had to cope with repeated incursions by sealers and whalers between 1800 and 1830. Fights with Aboriginal men and rape of the women was common. In one known instance in 1833, four women were seized at Point Nepean by sealers who took them to their permanent camps on one of the Bass Strait islands. They were the wives or close kin of the head man, Derrimut, his brother and his sister's

...our shared history

son. Nan.jer.goroke, Derrimut's wife was one of the abducted women. Descendants of these women have very recently returned to their country.

The personal diary of Assistant Protector James Dredge contains an interesting account of these abductions;

During the week, a young man from the Boonworrongs arrived in the Edina from Adelaide. About five years ago this tribe was on the coast of the bay near Arthur's Seat, when a vessel came in, and having anchored the crew went ashore. Early one morning they induced nine women and two boys to go into their boat, and took them aboard and sailed out of the harbor. One of the women escaped and returned to her own people. The others were taken to Preservation Island in the straits where they were used cruelly. The young man after a time was taken to Launceston whence he escaped in a vessel he thought would take him home. Its destination, however, was Swan River settlement where he lived amongst the Europeans, made himself useful as a stock-keeper and eventually obtained £1 per week wages. An opportunity offering, he took his passage in a vessel bound for Adelaide, for which he paid £9, and then hired himself on board the Edina, to work his passage to Port Phillip, where he joined his relatives and friends, whose joy at his arrival was unbounded. He is a fine youth and speaks English pretty well. The blacks say that many years ago a vessel put into Western Port and attempted to carry off some of the women, who saved themselves by running away; the whites, however, fired upon them, killed two and wounded others. Some of them carry the shots in their flesh to this day. Under these circumstances, would it have been at all surprising if, when the first settlers came, they had all been cut off by these people in revenge for the cruelties inflicted upon them by the treacherous villains alluded to.¹¹

EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT AFTER 1835

Batman had supposedly acquired 600,000 acres of country near Melbourne in a 'treaty' with Boon wurrung and Woi wurrung clan-heads in 1835. This 'treaty' with the leaders of both the clans, including the Yalukit-willam, could demonstrate how permission for temporary access could be granted in a ritual exchange of gifts and formal presentation of tokens (soil, plants, water, food) symbolising the owners' hospitality. Batman's treaty overtures were probably perceived by the Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung clan-heads as an amateurish attempt at initiating the required tanderrum (freedom of the bush) ritual. It is interesting to note that even the Government and authorities of the day did not recognise Batman's treaty.

The Yalukit-willam's cordial relationships with Europeans continued with the arrival of John Pascoe Fawkner and his party in July 1835. Local leader Benbow spent time with both John Batman and John Pascoe Fawkner. In 1836, he regularly went fishing with Fawkner and others ¹² and in July 1836, both Benbow and Derrimut worked as trackers in the search for the Aboriginal killers of Charles Franks and his servant, Flinders ¹³. When Benbow was employed by John Batman, he built a hut on Batman's land where he lived with his wife Kitty ¹⁴. In January 1845, he retrieved the body of eight year old John Charles Batman, son of John and Eliza Batman, who had drowned at the Yarra Falls. ¹⁵

The relationship between Derrimut and Fawkner was so significant that Derrimut warned Fawkner on two occasions of

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an impending Aboriginal attack on Fawkner's party. The first was a general warning of intention on 28 October 1835, when wrote Fawkner '*The Blacks we learnt intended to murder us for our goods*'.¹⁶

The second, on 13 December 1835, was more specific. '*Derrimut came this day and told us that the natives intended to rush down upon us and plunder our goods and murder us, we cleaned our pieces (guns) and prepared for them ... I and two others chased the Blacks away some distance.*'¹⁷ Derrimut's warnings ensured that Fawkner's party was able to arm themselves in time to prevent the attack. Fawkner later recalled: *I do not believe that one of us would have escaped. But fortunately for us the Melbourne party of Aborigines were favourable to us. They felt thankful for the things we gave them, and the lad Wm Watkins that belonged to us, took kindly to the Blacks and they to him, he taught them words of our language and very readily learnt theirs, and two of these sons of the soil, named Baitbanger and Darrimart formed a friendship with him and the latter told Watkins of the plan to murder the whole party, in order to possess themselves of our goods etc etc etc. Watkins could not make out the words used by Derrimut, who appeared much excited. I therefore called Buckley to explain what information the boy Watkins could not make out. Buckley having been 32 years with these blacks understood their language fully, and he at once declared that the Aborigines had agreed to murder all the white people by getting two or more of their fighting men alongside of each of our people, and upon a given signal each of us were to be cut down by blows on the head with their stone tomahawks, and the half savage Buckley declared that if he had his will he would spear Darrimart for giving the information.*¹⁸



Nan, Can You Tell Me A Story
Megan Cadd, 2009

The entries in Fawkner's diary suggest the purpose of the attack was simply to acquire the goods brought by the Europeans. It has been suggested that the planned attack was a reaction to the fact that Fawkner's party had taken Aboriginal land without so much as a token payment. The land it seemed was to be stolen, and not shared, and the

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Kulin peoples may have decided to wipe out the Europeans before their numbers became even larger. Historians have suggested that a massacre would have caused the withdrawal of any possible survivors and the settlement of Port Phillip could well have been delayed for years. Derrimut may well have been guaranteeing Fawkner's safety in accordance with traditional Kulin access rights which gave visitors who had no familial ties to the country the opportunity to seek formal permission from clan-heads for temporary access. The safety of all approved visitors was guaranteed. Boon wurrung elders believe that Derrimut defended Fawkner because he had promised to help them rescue their women and children from the sealer who had kidnapped them.

In December 1836, George Robinson, the Commandant of the Flinders Island Aboriginal Settlement, visited the fledgling Melbourne settlement to learn more about abductions of Port Phillip Aboriginal women by sealers. He held conference with William Buckley and the 20 or so Port Phillip Aboriginal people at the settlement. He found the Aboriginal people 'dreadfully afflicted with venereal', which he attributed to the 'depraved whites'. He noted that some of the children were afflicted, and some of the old people could hardly walk. Robinson was appalled by the living conditions of the Aboriginal people at the Melbourne settlement. *The natives at Port Phillip are in a very wretched condition. The government ought to do something for them. One old woman was a mere skeleton and was lying with a wooden bowl with water in it by her side and nothing to shelter her from the weather. Some little children (girls) were sitting beside her and with great affection driving off the flies and assisting. ...Another old woman was also in a dying state.*²⁰ This illustrates the impact that the settlers had on the Aboriginal community in such a short time.

THE YALUKIT-WILLAM: OLD COLONISTS' MEMORIES

In the local histories of Williamstown and Altona, there are numerous recollections of the local Yalukit-willam clan, which are sourced from the reminiscences of early settlers. Some of these memories include:

- Large tribal gatherings at Williamstown Racecourse area took place after the earthquake shock March 1837, and on the night following the comet appearances March 1843 and September 1844. Eclipses were especially feared, and William Hall, the elder, recorded several of the few surviving local people dying, allegedly of fear, during the total solar and partial lunar eclipse on 3 September 1849.²¹
- Aboriginal people were remembered during the 1840s commandeering boats at Gem Pier, when the women would bathe at the site that later became the Yacht Club headquarters *'without any thought of one-piece or two-piece garments.'*²²
- The new European settlers were startled in Thompson Street in 1840, when Yalukit-willam approached the Woolpack Inn daubed in ochres, but Benbow quietened their fears by explaining that his people had come to hold a ceremonial dance to celebrate the birth of Ann Jordan, whose parents kept the Woolpack Inn.

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- Ceremonial dances were held in Cecil Street, under the massive she-oak [on what is now Gellibrand Point]. This was replaced by the Wilkinson Memorial Fountain, which has now been moved to the Commonwealth Reserve. Tribal councils were also held there when the elders meted out punishments and judgements. European settlers turned it into a 'Tree of Knowledge', upon which they affixed news bulletins, descriptions of missing friends, stock, goods for sale, and official orders. ...Chopping the old tree down in 1857 was one of the earliest acts of Williamstown Council.

PORT PHILLIP ABORIGINAL PROTECTORATE 1839 - 1849

As the population of European settlers and their grazing animals increased, the survival of the Aboriginal people became more and more difficult. The grasslands for hunting were fenced off for grazing and pastoral use, their camps were broken up and a variety of wildlife dwindled.

Concerned about the situation, a British House of Commons Select Committee in 1837 recommended the establishment of an Aboriginal Protectorate in the Port Phillip District. George Augustus Robinson was appointed Chief Protector and with him four Assistant Protectors including William Thomas. The Aboriginal Protectorate commenced operations in early 1839 with some Aboriginal Protectors sent from England with little experience or understanding of Aboriginal traditions. Much of Thomas' time was spent in attempting to break up the Aboriginal camps and discouraging the people from entering the town's vicinity. Those campsites that were on the south side of the Yarra River, at Yarra Falls and at Tromgin (now the Royal Botanic Gardens) were on Yalukit-willam land.

In September 1840, Benbow became frustrated that he was not allowed to pitch his camp wherever he wished in Melbourne. With Betbengai, he protested this injustice and recalled their cooperation with Europeans. The two men:

relate all their good services to white people in past days ... that he and the Port Phillip blacks kept the Barrabool blacks from killing all white men, and that he get blackfellows that kill first white men, now many white people come and turn



2 Store(s) House
Ben McKeown, 2010

...our shared history

blackfellow away... Big Benbow almost crying ...now [Europeans say] go away, go away ...soldier say no good that. I again tell them that they make willums [bark huts] on white man's ground, and cut off bark ...make white man sulky ... they say no [not] white man's ground, black man's. ²³

In 1842 Benbow joined the Native Police Corps, *because the authorities felt he was too important a man to keep out* ²⁴

William Thomas recalled that, although he was only in the Native Police Corps for a short time, he was 'seldom seen out of uniform.' From June 1842, Thomas was based at the confluence of the Merri Creek and Yarra River, where he visited Aboriginal camps in Melbourne. In June 1846, on government orders, Thomas removed the valuables from the willums (bark huts) of the Boon wurrung camp then wrecked and burnt them. He ordered the 51 residents to disperse. Thomas lamented that he had to order them to move every time a European objected. 'Poor fellows, they are now compelled to shift almost at the will and caprice of the whites'. Their hardship was intensified because there was no bark left in the district and they were now compelled to build 'mud huts'.

The Boon wurrung and Woi wurrung increasingly had trouble obtaining food in the vicinity of Melbourne, and they were suffering from introduced diseases. Europeans objected when Aboriginal people entered fenced paddocks to hunt and, consequently, they were forced to subsist by begging and cutting firewood for the intruders.

The breaking up of camps continued unabated in the latter part of the 1840s. In January 1849, at one Boon wurrung camp, Thomas was asked 'where were they to go, why not give them a station'. On 29 February, the Yalukit-willam came to Thomas and pleaded for 'a country to locate themselves upon'.

In March 1849, Benbow resolved to see Superintendent La Trobe to ask for a country for the Boon wurrung. Thomas tried to dissuade him, but Benbow insisted he 'would send up his brass plate (meaning a card)'. Benbow stood outside all day but was not admitted.

Opposition to the Aboriginal Protectorate saw the formation of a Select Committee in 1849 to enquire into the Protectorate. The Committee recommended its abolition and the Protectorate formally closed in March 1850.

YALUKIT-WILLAM LIFE AFTER THE PROTECTORATE: 1850 ONWARD

In place of the Protectorate, William Thomas was appointed 'Guardian of Aborigines' for the colony of Victoria. Thomas concentrated his efforts in the Melbourne district. By June 1852, he had secured 832 acres [367 ha] at Mordialloc, a favourite camping place of the Boon wurrung, and 1,908 acres [772 ha] at Warrandyte for the Woi wurrung peoples. The reservations were the result of a bargain he made with Governor La Trobe who wanted them kept out of Melbourne. Thomas was authorised to issue occasional supplies of food and clothing to the aged and ill.

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In 1858, a Victorian government Select Committee enquired into the condition of the Aboriginal people of Victoria. The Select Committee was told of the Yalukit-willam leader Derrimut's despair as the European settlers built homes on his land.

Hull records Derrimut's fatalism: ...

if this committee could get Derimut (sic) and examine him, I think he would give the committee a great deal of valuable information with respect to himself and his tribe, which would be very interesting; he speaks moderately good English, and I was told by a black a few days ago that he was still alive, and that he 'lay about in St. Kilda'. The last time I saw him was nearly opposite the Bank of Victoria, he stopped me and said "You give me shilling, Mr Hull". "No", I said, "I will not give you a shilling, I will go and give you some bread," and he held his hand out to me and said "Me plenty sulky you long time ago, you plenty sulky me; no sulky now, Derimut soon die," and then he pointed with a plaintive manner, which they can affect, to the Bank of Victoria, he said, "You see, Mr Hull, Bank of Victoria, all this mine, all along here Derimut's once; no matter now, me soon tumble down." I said, "Have you no children?" and he flew into a passion immediately, "Why me have lubra? why me have picanninny? You have all this place, no good have children, no good have lubra, me tumble down and die very soon now. ²⁵

Thomas fought every Government move to interfere with the Boon wurrung camp at Mordialloc. The 1858 Select Committee recommended that reserves be formed for the various tribes, on their traditional hunting ranges where agriculture was to be combined with the grazing of livestock. In June 1860, the Victorian government established a Central Board 'appointed to watch over the interests of the Aborigines'. Reserves were set aside in Victoria, and those people not served by a reserve were catered for by a second system, that of local guardians who functioned as honorary correspondents to the Central Board, and as suppliers of foodstuffs and clothing.

When Thomas visited the Mordialloc reserve in November 1862, Derrimut angrily asked why he 'let white man take away Mordialloc where black fellows always sit down'. The Lands Board had approved its sale and surveyors were already dividing it into allotments. The Boon wurrung feared they would soon see 'ploughs furrowing up the bones of their ancestors'. Thomas knew their dead had been buried there since 1839 and protested to the Central Board about the 'cruelty' of the Survey Department. These protestations came to nothing.

Some 2,300 acres [931 ha] of land at Coranderrk near Healesville were reserved on 30 June 1863 for east Kulin peoples, and within a week the sale of the Mordialloc reserve was announced. With this, the Boon wurrung had lost the last of their territory. Derrimut, half crazed with grief, drank himself to death within the year. The grave of Derrimut is in the Melbourne General Cemetery, on the headstone of which appears the following inscription:

This stone was erected by a few colonists to commemorate the noble act of the native chief Derrimut, who by timely information given October 1835 to the first colonists, Messrs Fawkner, Lancey, Evans, Henry Batman, and thier [sic] dependants; saved them from massacre planned by some of the up-country tribes of Aborigines. Derrimut closed his

mortal career in the Benevolent Asylum, May 28th, 1864, aged 54 years.

Derrimut's name persists in the Parish of Derrimut (proclaimed in 1860), in the west of Melbourne, and in Mount Derrimut, property north of the Truganina cemetery, and a street in Footscray and another in Sunshine.

CONCLUSION

This is a poignant history of a people who loved and respected their country and who were betrayed by not having a voice in this new world. The original inhabitants had no conception of the impact that the European settlers would bring to their environment and the changes that would result to their way of life. The European settlers had little awareness of the culture of the original inhabitants, and showed a lack of respect for their land management practices. In the end the brutality and lack of understanding and sensitivity by the European settlers had devastating consequences for the land and its original people.

The **Yalukit-willam** name for Williamstown is recorded as **Kert.boor.uc** and **Koort-boork-boork**, which has been translated as 'a clump of she-oak trees which stood on the site'. 'Kororoit Creek' is said to signify male kangaroo. Kororoit may be derived from **kure**, a word for kangaroo, however, it may be a variant of **Koroit** believed to signify volcanic activity, or 'smoking, hot ground'. The 'Truganina' pastoral run and the Parish of Truganina are commonly taken to be a variant of **Truganini** (meaning **barilla** shrub), the name of the Tasmanian Aboriginal woman who came to Victoria with Chief Protector Robinson in 1839 and who returned to Tasmania in 1842.

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LIST OF FLORA AND FAUNA

yam daisy	murnong	stingray	barbewor
fat-tailed possum	dunnart barruth	whale	betayil
native cat	yurn	flathead	dalum
grey kangaroo	djimbangurr	shark	darrak
red kangaroo	quoim	blackfish	duat
dingo	yirrangin	ant	booran
sugar glider	warran	fly	garragarrak
bandicoot	bung	butterfly	balam-balam
quail	tre-bin	bee	murnalong
pelican	wadjil	frog	ngarrert
emu	barraimal	tadpole	poorneet
water fowl	kor-rung-un-un	she-oak	tur-run
ibis	baibadjerruk	banksia, honeysuckle	warrak
swan	gunuwarra	yellow box	dhagurn
black duck	toolum	peppermint tree	wiyal
nankeen kestrel	gawarn	woolly tea-tree	wulep
black cockatoo	yanggai	sarsaparilla	wadimalin
peewee	dit-dit	clematis aristata	minamberang
eel	yuk	wattle	garron
oyster	u.yoke	yellow box	dhagurn
cockle	mur-yoke	buttercup	gurm-burrut
mussel	mur-bone	ring-tailed possum	bamu
periwinkle	pid-de-ron		

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FOOTNOTES

- 1 Howitt 1904: 71
- 2 G. McRae 30/10/1850 in McRae 1992: 2044.
- 3 Hull, 9/11/1852 in Victoria 1858-9:12
(Geological time seems to have been truncated
in the oral tradition
of Benbow's family)
Presland 1997:7
Tuckey 1805: 162-3
See Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate, 1839-1849
Plomley 1987: 410f
Shillinglaw 1972:29
Priestley 1988: 3
Plomley 1987: 407-11
Dredge Diary MS. 16 June 1841
Billot 1982:62
Cannon 1982:47
Campbell 1987:207
Campbell 1987:227
Billot 1982: 10
Brown 1989:65
Campbell 1987: 138-9.
Plomley 1987:410
Plomley 1987:411
Evans 1969:16
Strahan 1994:20
Fels 1988: 55
Victoria 1858-9
Campbell 1987: 227



Untitled Image
Ben McKeown, 2010

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ARTWORKS

BEN MCKEOWN

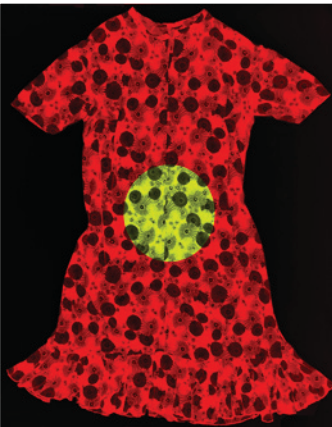


Ben McKeown is an artist and sometimes curator. A descendant of the Wirangu language group of the Far West Coast of South Australia he has works represented in collections including: National Gallery of Australia, State Library of Victoria, and The United Nations Collection, Geneva among others.

In 2011, Ben won the Deadly Art Award as part of the Victorian Indigenous Art Awards. From 2008 to 2009 McKeown was the Assistant Curator at Linden: Centre for Contemporary Arts, as part of their Indigenous Programs. In 2010 he curated 20 Years; Bold. Black. Brilliant for Ilbjerri Theatre Company's 20 year retrospective celebrations at Bunjikkala, Melbourne Museum.

One of his artworks is currently on the loom at the Australian Tapestry Workshop, commissioned for the State Library of Victoria. He holds a Master of Visual Art from the Victorian College of the Arts, The University of Melbourne.

MEGAN CADD



Megan Cadd, a Yorta-Yorta and Wotjabaluk woman, illustrates her quest to reclaim her spirit and identity amidst the impacts of colonisation in her life through her artwork.

Megan draws inspiration for her work from a range of sources: the loss of her Aboriginal grandmother, having contact with an emu feather skirt from the 1800s, her studies as a spiritual based counsellor, trips back to Yorta-Yorta country and her experiences working with the Melbourne Aboriginal community.

Megan is a self taught artist who has exhibited work across Australia and is currently preparing for her first international group exhibition to be held in China. Megan was highly commended in the 2011 Victorian Indigenous Art Awards and shortlisted in 2007, 2008 and 2009 and has collaborated on public installations and community art projects. Megan combines her lifelong art practice with raising a family, spiritual healing, community arts work and being an active part of her community.

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