

Yarra valley Aboriginal Sites of Significance

- **Aboriginal sculptures** at William Ricketts Sanctuary, Mt Dandenong. Melways ref. 52 h10.
- **Coranderrk Aboriginal Cemetery**, Barak Lane, Badger Creek, 300 *Kulin* graves. Melways 277 k9
- **Battle of Yering Memorial**. Site of battle between Border Police & *Wurundjeri* in 1840. Melways 275 b8
- **William Barak Memorial at Brushy Creek**. Stone monument plaque and tree. Melways 37 c7.
- **Buk-ker-til-ibul Dreaming Site**. Gorge at confluence of Brushy Creek and Yarra, created when Bunjil threw down a star; also birthing site where William Barak was born. Melways 24 k6.
- **Gawa Wurundjeri Resource Trail** 340 metre bushland walking trail at Watson's Creek with 10 resource markers along the way. Melways 272 d5.
- **Pound Bend South Memorial Rock** dedicated to Reserve & 1852 corroboree site. Melways 23 c12.
- **Pound Bend North Memorial Rock** dedicated to Reserve & 1852 corroboree site. Melways 23 c9.
- **Moor-rul Viewing Platform** in Kangaroo Ground. Interpretive panels, war memorial. Melways 271 e11.
- **Mia Mia Gallery** in Westerfolds Park. Art gallery, artefacts, meals, coffee. Melways 33 e2.
- **Scar Tree at Heide Museum of Modern Art**. Not just a canoe tree – it's also a Marker Tree at junction of five Songlines (walking trails). Melways 32 e5.
- **Bolin Bolin Billabong**. Eel and duck hunting site adjacent to corroboree ground. Melways 32 c8.
- **Domain Rock**. Burial site in King's Domain of 38 Aboriginal people. Melways 2F j9.
- **Bunjilaka Centre** Melbourne Museum Carlton. Melways 2B j9.
- **Birrarung Marr**, celebrating *Kulin* culture, displays along riverside walk. Melways 2F k6.
- **Koorie Heritage Trust**, 295 King Street Melbourne interactive displays, souvenirs. Melways 1A c2.

POUND BEND WURUNDJERI RESERVE WARRANDYTE

Two memorial plaques now mark this Reserve: one on the north side of the Yarra at its confluence with Stony Creek (Melway ref: 23 C9), and one on the south side at its confluence with Anderson's Creek (formerly known as Biel Yallock, Melway ref: 23 C12).

The plaques and this pamphlet were initiated by
Nillumbik Reconciliation Group
<http://www.vicnet.net.au/~nrgp/>
 and **Reconciliation Manningham**
<http://reconciliation-manningham.org.au/>
 in association with
Wurundjeri Elders

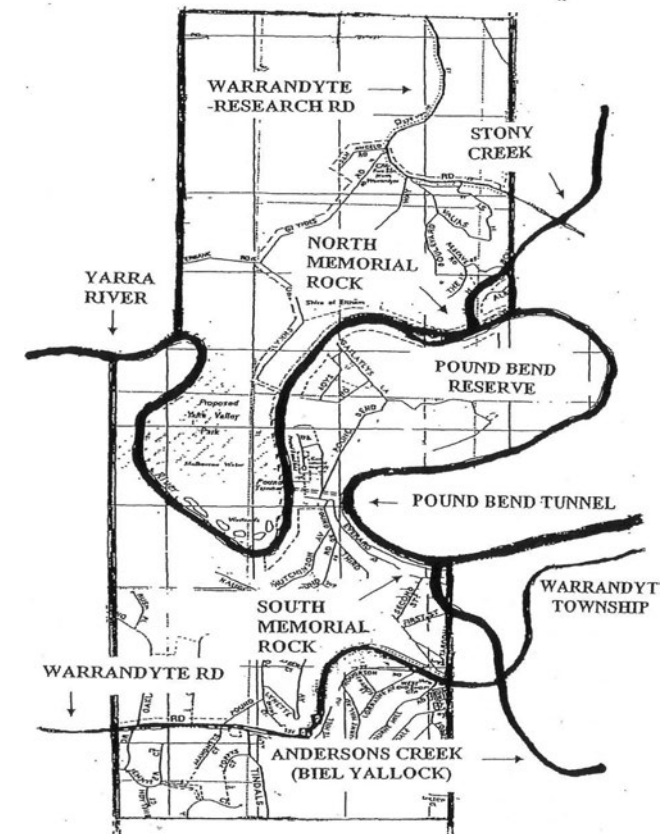
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WARRANDYTE ABORIGINAL RESERVE

Centred on Pound Bend, the Warrandyte Aboriginal Reserve was established in 1852. It covered 1,908 acres on both the north and south sides of the Yarra River at Warrandyte.

At the last great corroboree of the *Kulin* Nation, held at Pound Bend in 1852, many traditional games were played. One of these was marngrook, the traditional tribal football game played throughout Australia. The most exciting feature of marngrook was the way players jumped on each others' backs to mark the ball. Marngrook is now generally accepted as having been a precursor to Australian Rules football.



The Traditional Caretakers of the Yarra Valley Estate

The *Wurundjeri* people are the traditional owners and custodians of the Yarra Valley Estate. The word 'estate' is used advisedly because every square metre of every clan estate in Australia was known, farmed and managed by the Aboriginal people in an ecologically sustainable way.

All environmental signs and ecological relationships within each clan estate were symbolised in the totem system and coded into complex songs. It was through these songs that they memorised all travel routes, seasonal firestick farming schedules, species conservation, and land management practices, as well as the Dreamtime creation stories of each area.

Traveling through the bush was therefore a joyous occasion for Aboriginal families, because you were always 'Singing Country' to remind yourself of the wonders of creation that surrounded you and of your responsibilities for its stewardship.

Impacts of Colonisation

The impacts of colonisation were felt by the *Wurundjeri* and all other clans across Australia, usually long before they ever saw Europeans. Within one year of settlement at Sydney Cove in 1788, a smallpox plague swept across Australia killing 90% of the Aboriginal population. Their society was therefore in extreme stress with many traditional customs having to be modified in order to adapt to the massive depopulation.

This re-adaptation had scarcely begun when a second smallpox plague occurred again in the 1820's. When colonisation of Victoria began in 1835 then, it was initially welcomed by the *Wurundjeri* as there was plenty of good land to share. However they soon found that European people did not share their long embedded customs of balanced ecological management.

Jaga Jaga's Resistance War

After Batman's bogus treaty in 1835, settlement and dispossession of the *Wurundjeri* happened at a breakneck speed. The first settlers in the area near Pound Bend were Major Charles Newman at Mullum-Mullum Creek in 1838 and James Anderson on Beal Yallock (Anderson's Creek) in 1839. Both men were ruthless in their dispossession of the *Wurundjeri*, who fought back with guerrilla tactics, burning their paddocks and driving off their stock. The leader of these *Wurundjeri* men was Jaga Jaga.

In mid-January 1840 Jaga Jaga and some 50 *Wurundjeri* men stopped at Anderson's run whilst on their way to Yering. They helped themselves to some potatoes, 'whitefella yams' growing there. Anderson confronted them angrily but Jaga Jaga's men also possessed rifles and a purposely aimed shot whistled past Anderson's ear. It stopped him dead in his tracks and he wisely withdrew. He sent advice of the encounter to Captain Henry Gisborne, the commander of the Border Police.

The *Wurundjeri* men moved on to Yering station at Yarra Glen arriving on the 13th January 1840, but Gisborne made it there before them and set a trap. A bullock was killed by the station owner and Jaga Jaga's men were invited to a feast. It took four Border Police to subdue him but Jaga Jaga was captured, handcuffed and imprisoned. The *Wurundjeri* men retreated to decide their strategy, which was to at first advance with muskets and spears, but then strategically retreat into a wetland, whilst others circled around a hill to rescue Jaga Jaga. Gisborne later wrote in his report to La Trobe, 'I am unable to account for them never having hit us as they are capital marksmen'.

The 'Battle of Yering' was the major event in *Wurundjeri* resistance to white settlement in the Yarra Valley, yet still the settlers poured in. The situation was summed up by the *Kulin* Elder Derrimut when he sadly stated:

'You see...all this mine. All along here Derrimut's once. No matter now, me soon tumble down...Why me have no lubra? Why me have no piccaninny? You have all this place. No good have children, no good have lubra. Me tumble down and die very soon now.'

A Short-lived Reserve

The Chief Aboriginal Protector, George Augustus Robinson fought to secure land for the *Wurundjeri* people, noting in his diary on May 3rd 1839:

'Had a long conversation with surveyor Mr. Hoddle. Shewed me a map of the county, marked off into allotments comprising I think fully 30 square miles and not a single reserve for the blacks except the mission which I have no wish to retain. I said if that or a similar map was exhibited to the people of England they would at once see the way the natives are treated. Their lands sold from them and no provision made for their maintenance, and this by the government who are bound to protect them.'

It took until 1852 for a 1908 acre Aboriginal Reserve to be formally set aside at Pound Bend. However, gold had been discovered at Warrandyte in 1851 and the Reserve's future was doomed. The *Wurundjeri* knew this and decided to hold one last corroboree. They sent messages out to all the *Kulin* Nation clans and the Aboriginal Protector William Thomas described the event held in March 1852 as follows:

'They had not met for many years and wanted to have once more some corroboree together....and night after night for fourteen days they did indulge themselves.'

However after the corroboree some of the *Wurundjeri* decided to go on one last walkabout to Melbourne. Not having permission to leave the reserve they were arrested at Bulleen and sent to the Police Paddocks at Dandenong. Others continued to live on creek side encampments to work on local stations, while others moved to the safety of the Upper Goulburn until land was reserved for them at Coranderrk in 1863. Pound Bend served as a ration station until closed in 1862.