

# Invisible Places

Historical Aboriginal Reserves in the Eurobodalla Shire, NSW



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## NOTE ON CONTENT

This booklet is a much abridged version of a comprehensive report on former Aboriginal reserves in the Eurobodalla Shire prepared by Donaldson and Feary (2012) for the Eurobodalla Shire Council's Aboriginal Advisory Committee. The aim of this publication is to present the information in a more 'reader friendly' way, making it accessible to a wider audience.

Information contained in this booklet was understood by the researchers to be correct at the time of writing. The researchers apologize for any omissions or errors.

There is no intention, nor is it legally possible, for any privately owned land to be subject to land claims, native title claims or unapproved access by Aboriginal people as a result of this research. Where Aboriginal archaeological sites have been recorded during the course of this project, these sites will be registered on the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication was made possible with funding from Eurobodalla Shire Council and the Heritage Branch of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), the dedication of the Aboriginal community and the guidance of the Eurobodalla Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

Consultants Susan Donaldson and Sue Feary were engaged by the Eurobodalla Shire Council to investigate the history and current status of the twelve former reserves across the local government area. Further work was provided by OEH archaeologist Jackie Taylor, historians Megan Goulding and Laurelle Pacey, the Moruya & District Historical Society and Mrs Nielson.

It is important to acknowledge the efforts of the Aboriginal Elders who determinedly pressed to learn more about the former Aboriginal reserves across the Eurobodalla.

Their enthusiastic participation across all aspects of the research was undeterred.

Thanks to Georgina Parsons, Violet Parsons, Tom Butler, Gloria Carberry, Lionel Mongta, Trisha Ellis, Doris Moore, Iris White, Lorraine Naylor, Ivan Thomas, Ken Campbell, Glen Campbell, Paula Campbell and Maureen Davis for their commitment to sharing the past with future generations. Sadly we acknowledge the loss of Pam Flanders and Leonard Nye who also participated in this project. We dedicate this publication to Aunty Pam and Lenno; may their families enjoy the benefits of their work.

## WARNING

**Contains references (text and images) to Aboriginal people who have passed away.**



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# Background

## Eurobodalla Historical Aboriginal Reserves project and publication

This publication presents a history of twelve former Aboriginal reserves across the Eurobodalla Shire, from pre-contact times until today.

In 2010 the Eurobodalla Shire Council in partnership with the Eurobodalla Aboriginal Advisory Committee secured funding for an in-depth investigation of the history of use and occupation of former Aboriginal reserves in the Shire. The study was the fulfilment of one of the recommendations of the Eurobodalla Aboriginal Heritage Study completed in 2008. The study was completed in 2012 by Donaldson and Feary (2012) and this booklet is a summary of its contents.

## Gathering information for the reserves project

Research for the initial report involved a number of steps. Confirming the location of the twelve officially gazetted reserves across the Eurobodalla Shire was done by overlaying historical and modern maps. An assessment of the current condition and use of the former Aboriginal reserve land parcels was based on field inspection with members of the local Aboriginal community and aerial photographs, which showed the land use history to be highly variable across the former reserves. The amount and accuracy of information on each reserve obtained, depended on whether field inspections were done, how much historical information could be accessed and, the amount of oral history recording.

Most of the former reserves were occupied by Aboriginal people for thousands of years prior to their gazettal. The many layers of history present are shown by the archaeological sites recorded on the OEH Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS). People's memories of the former reserves are part of a previously untold history and given the reserves are not easily apparent in the landscape today, the risk of permanently losing information about this historical period is high.

## Value of this publication

The historical reserves project has been important for making the former historical Aboriginal reserves in the Eurobodalla Shire a visible entity. While the former reserves have always been part of the historical narrative, the links between this, pre-contact and current time periods has never been articulated. Today their historical, cultural and social significance and relevance to local Aboriginal people is more visible as a result of the historical searches and oral history research undertaken for this project. Linkage to traditional times is evidenced through the archaeological sites located in the former reserves.

Revealing the precise location of the former reserves to community members was an important part of the project. It revealed people's connected histories and clarified the difference between official reserves and unofficial camping areas, both very important.

# Introduction

## Historical Aboriginal Reserves in New South Wales

In 1788 when the British colonisers asserted Crown control over the new addition to their empire, they had little understanding of the complex land ownership system that Aboriginal people had operated under for thousands of years. The traditional Aboriginal land tenure system involved much more than the economic focus directed by the British administrators who, in 1816 ordered grants of land accompanied by seed for maize, wheat and potatoes, for Aboriginal people if they showed signs of becoming 'regular settlers'<sup>1</sup>.

In 1840 the Land and Emigration commissioners concluded that 'moderate reserves' should be set-aside for Aboriginal people to '*enable them to live, not as hunter-gatherers, in which case no good would be done, but as cultivators of the soil*'. The Land Act of 1842 enshrined these views and allowed Crown land to be reserved from sale for the use of Aboriginal people<sup>2</sup>.

In 1850, 35 Crown portions of 'one square mile' were gazetted across NSW as Aboriginal Reserves, selected by the Commissioner of Crown Lands based on a number of factors including requests made by Aboriginal people themselves in association with locations where they were already established and or '*chosen to allow some land within language (tribal) boundaries for each of the main surviving groups...*'<sup>3</sup>. One of these former reserves was located at 'Eurobodalla' to the west of Bodalla, in the centre of the Eurobodalla Shire. The 'Eurobodalla Reserve' was 640 acres, but was

never surveyed and the location was not able to be confirmed during this project. As a result of increased pressure on landholdings, minimal surveying and no supporting welfare policy, these 35 square portions 'slid into oblivion' whilst Aboriginal people continued to occupy whatever remained of their traditional land, or that of their neighbours.<sup>4</sup>

Following the passing of the 1861 Lands Act, Aboriginal demands for secure land tenure increased and 32 new reserves were established across NSW between 1861 & 1884<sup>5</sup>. In 1881 a Protector of Aborigines was appointed who recommended that land be reserved from sale throughout the state and that Aboriginal people should be encouraged to move to these 'reserves'. In 1883 the Aborigines Protection Board (APB) was established to manage reserves and control the lives of Aboriginal people across New South Wales and by the 1940s there were over 180 gazetted Aboriginal reserves and almost 300 by 1970. Twelve were located within what is now the Eurobodalla Shire.

The tenure of the reserves remained with the British Crown and the term of the arrangement usually accorded with an individual's lifetime or government policy changes. Revocation also took place as a result of external pressure, for instance following World War One, 35 reserves were revoked across NSW perhaps to provide land for returned soldiers. Another wave of revocations took place between 1954 and 1964 when the government policy shifted to assimilation and new reserves were created in or close to towns and again soon after 1983 with the introduction of the NSW Land Rights Act.



## Historical Aboriginal Reserves within the Eurobodalla Shire

Of the approximately 300 gazetted Aboriginal reserves in NSW between 1861 and 1970, twelve were gazetted within the Eurobodalla Shire between 1861 and 1923.

The south coast reserves were primarily located on 'sandy coastal land, intended as a residential based from which to fish.....' One of the first reserves surveyed in NSW following the passing of the 1861 Lands Act was the 'Native Reserve' at Dalmeny 'notified' and surveyed in 1861. Following this, the Moruya Reserve was set-aside for an Aboriginal man named William Campbell in 1875. During this period, three senior Aboriginal men, Richard Bolloway, King Merriman and Yarboro, made formal submissions to local officials for secure land around the entrance to Tuross Lake in 1872. Initially they were granted 'permissive occupancy' as the land was already within a coastal reserve. The men agitated for more secure title over the next 6 years and eventually had the land registered as Aboriginal Reserves in 1877, although not quite the inalienable freehold they were after. Within the next three years a reserve was gazetted for Neddy at Tuross Lake in 1878 and another for Benson at Turlinjah in 1880. The location of the former gazetted reserves around the Tuross and Tarourga Lake area may have more to do with the use of sea-going boats than as camping places, especially given these men are recorded as living or frequenting the nearby Turlinjah Reserve.<sup>6</sup>

The reserve at Turlinjah was to be the last of the small allocations made to an individual in this region, and the last reserve in the region gazetted prior to the formation of the APB.

In 1884, 40 acres was granted at Tomago River; in 1891, 330 acres at Wallaga Lake; in 1902 nine acres at Batemans Bay and in 1913, 14 acres at Narooma. The last reserve gazetted within what is now Eurobodalla Shire was granted in 1923 at Joes Creek, Catalina, near Batemans Bay.

Throughout the reserve era, Aboriginal people continued to use and occupy traditional places and lands beyond the reserve system. Movement between reserves across the broader region took place on a seasonal basis as guided by both cultural and commitments and working for white employers.

With the exception of a large portion of the original Wallaga Lake Reserve, all the reserves were revoked between 1886 and 1969, and reverted to vacant Crown land. Some were sold to become private land, which was subsequently subdivided in whole or part, while other land parcels remained as Crown reserves for public use, to become state forests or national parks. Of the original 330 acres making up Wallaga Lake Reserve, 21 acres was revoked on 22/11/1963 whilst the remaining 309 acres was transferred to Aboriginal ownership in 1984 under the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act and is today owned by Merrimans Local Aboriginal Land Council. Mogo Local Aboriginal Land Council successfully claimed the vacant Crown land which was formerly the Tomago Reserve.

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1 Goodall 2008: 48.

2 Op cit, 52

3 Op cit, 58

4 Op cit, 59

5 Op cit, 100

6 Per comm Laurelle Pacey 20.08.2012 Op cit, 52

# Native Reserve, Dalmeny

## Gazettal history

One of the first reserves surveyed in NSW following the passing of the 1861 Lands Act was the 'Native Reserve' at Dalmeny established in 1861. This reserve was not provided with a reserve number or advertised in the government gazette like the other reserves, but it was 'notified' and surveyed. The 'native reserve' of '180 acres north of the mouth of the Wagonga River, 8 miles from Bodalla and 24 from Moruya' was notified on the 24/12/1861 but not listed in the NSW Government Gazette at that time<sup>7</sup>. The reserve was revoked in 1895, 34 years after its gazettal.

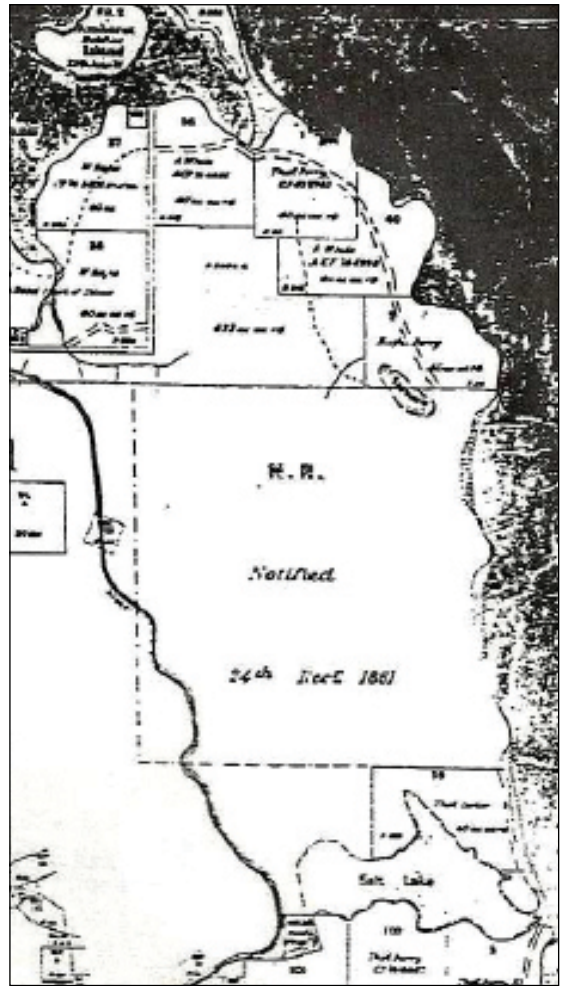
## Historical use

No records have been located on the early history of the former reserve. In 1883 the Aborigines Welfare Board reported on the status of the 'Native Reserve', noting that the 180 acres was "... bounded on the N by the property of Mr James Evans, on the W. & on the S. by Forest Reserve No 307, on the east by the Pacific Ocean. Notified 24 December 1861. Fairly grassed, not cultivated, not cleared ...' (AWB 1883)<sup>8</sup>.

In October 1885 one Thomas Carter who held a pre-lease of this Reserve, tried to obtain a conditional lease but was refused by the Moruya Land Board. On the 7th August 1890 the Aborigines Welfare Board filed another report on the status of the reserve noting that the reserve was '*....situated near mouth of Wagonga River, 8 miles from Bodalla and 24 miles from Moruya. Position excellent for cultivation. A great position enclosed, but fence is not very substantial. Bit cleared but none under cultivation. Unoccupied....*' (AWB 1890)<sup>9</sup>.

## Current land tenure

The land tenure is predominantly private land with a small section inside the township of Dalmeny. There is a small amount of State Forest in the south western corner. Council land (community land) is associated with the subdivision and the coastal strip. The remainder of the coastal strip down to mean high water mark is Crown land under Council control, used for public recreation.



*Map of Parishes of Bodalla and Wagonga County of  
Dampier, Southern Mining District, Wagonga Division,  
Cooma Land Board District, 15 August 1894.*

## Reserve description

Native Reserve comprises a steep hinterland, with flat ridgelines and small creeks flowing eastward, ending in small coastal lagoons. The hinterland is predominantly covered with natural vegetation comprising open eucalypt forest that has been previously logged.

Cliffs and prominent headlands dominate the coastal section of the reserve, most of which have been cleared of native vegetation.

## Archaeological evidence

Fourteen archaeological sites are recorded within the former reserve predominantly associated with the coastline; they comprise artefact scatters and middens, including a large headland midden complex at Duesberry headland. Two sites, both small artefact scatters are recorded further inland.





*South western portion of former reserve within State Forest.*

## Significance to Aboriginal people

The significance of the reserve to Aboriginal people today relates to the area being part of the broader history of the reserve system as well as pre contact archaeological values. The reserve was located on the track used for travelling along the coast.

*“...Kooris camped in the Dalmeny area years ago, people were still camping in my lifetime. The main camping area was around the Mummaga Lake area, it was used right up to when they began development. I even camped there when I was very young. Kooris always camped where they could get food and water and other things they needed. Some of the reserves were put on useless land as far as we were concerned...”*

*Vivienne Mason 29 8 2012*



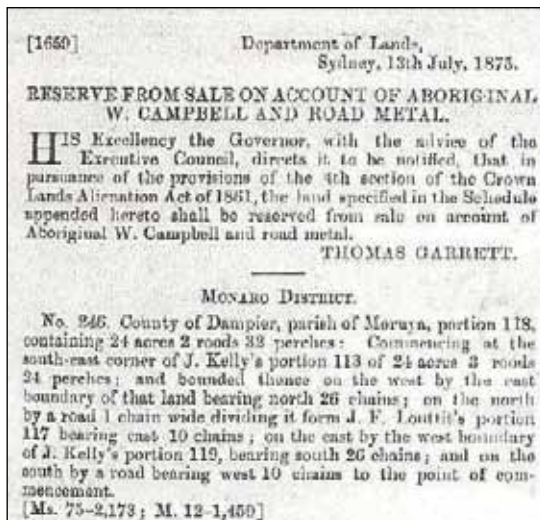
## Reserve location

This reserve was located 3 km north of the Wagonga Inlet entrance, south of Dalmeny, encompassing Yabbarra Point and extending westward almost to what is now the Princes Highway and east to the Pacific Ocean.

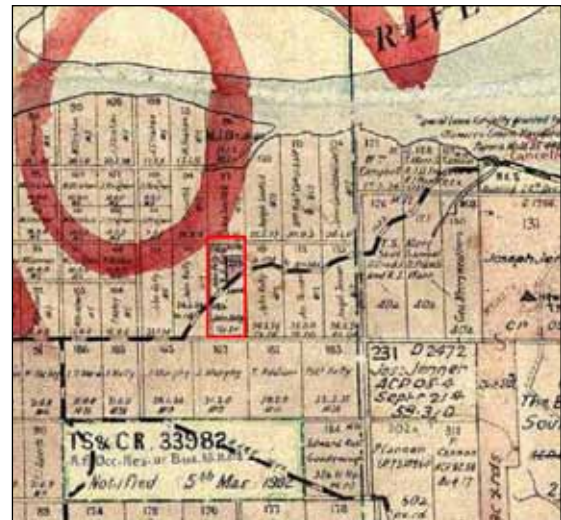
<sup>7</sup> Aborigines Welfare Board, Register of Aboriginal Reserves, State Records of New South Wales, SR Reel 2847 (File 2/8349), p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*

<sup>9</sup> *Op cit*



NSW Government Gazette, 13 July 1875, p. 2055



From Parish of Moruya, County of Dampier, Land District of Moruya, Second Edition, April 1893.

# William Campbell's Reserve, Moruya

## Gazettal history

On the 13th July 1875 an area of 24 acres near the Moruya Heads in the Parish of Moruya, County of Dampier was reserved for "... W. Campbell and road metal"<sup>10</sup>. The reserve was given the number 246. On the 18th December 1886 the reserve was revoked, just eleven years after its gazettal.

## Historical use

William Campbell worked on the construction of the Montague Lighthouse (built in 1881), basing himself at Bermagui. The Aborigines Welfare Board report for 1883 recorded that the area was unoccupied and that, "Neighbours cattle graze on it. Not used by Aborigines. They do not seem to require it".

In 1885 the Aborigines Welfare Board recorded that, "Campbell has not resided on this Reserve for many years & is supposed to be living in the Shoalhaven District" and revoked the reserve the following year. In 1901 the Moruya Examiner reported Campbell's death:

*'Death of an Aboriginal - Campbell, the well-known Aboriginal died suddenly on Monday at Coila. He has been in indifferent health for some time past....' The Moruya Examiner Friday March 22nd 1901.*

## Current land tenure

The land tenure comprises mainly Eurobodalla Shire Council land reserved for community use, with small portions of private land occurring within two subdivisions on elevated ridges on the northern and eastern boundaries.

## Reserve description

The former reserve consists of wetlands surrounded by elevated ridges, within the broader landscape of the Moruya River floodplain. The wetlands are partially disturbed and the ridges have been partially cleared for subdivision. Casuarina forest occurs on gently sloping land surrounding the wetlands, while the remainder of the area is open eucalypt forest. The community Crown land has minor clearing for informal access to wetlands.

## Significance to Aboriginal people

The Aboriginal cultural heritage values of the former Campbell Reserve relates to its place in local and regional history and family connections made between Campbell and his descendants. The area is also valued for archaeological heritage, demonstrating Aboriginal people's occupation existed prior to British settlement.





North western section of former reserve.

## Archaeological evidence

There are no recorded archaeological sites in the former reserve, although large numbers are recorded immediately adjacent. The large numbers of sites demonstrate the importance of the wetlands and adjacent forests in the subsistence economy of pre-contact Aboriginal life. Radiocarbon dating of archaeological sites in the Congo area show that occupation began more than 2,000 years ago in the local area<sup>11</sup>.

One additional site was recorded during field inspection for this project consisting of a low density scatter of stone artefacts adjacent to the wetland.



Artefacts record within the former Moruya (Campbell) Reserve.

*‘...I thought the reserve was down at Newstead Pond, but the map shows it close to The Anchorage. The school was where Newstead Pond is and down further under the coral trees, great granny Duren lived there and her kids went to Newstead School. I went to school there too when I was 8. Newstead School goes back to the 1800s. So it is good to really know where people lived back then...’ Doris Moore 2012*

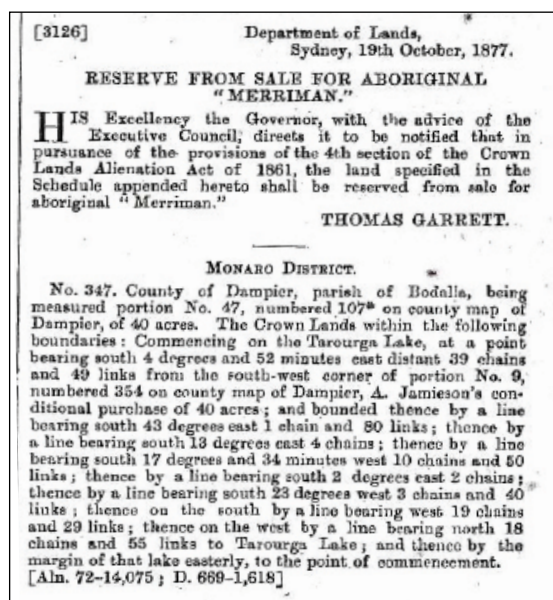


## Reserve location

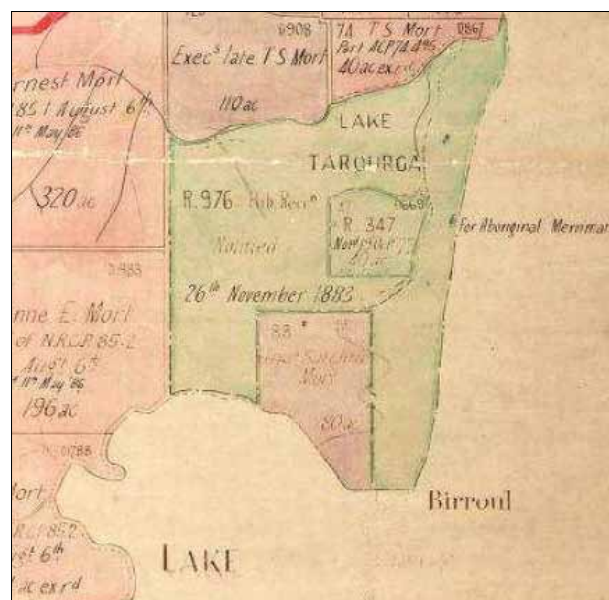
The former reserve is south of the Moruya River, east of the township of Moruya and is bisected by South Head Road.

<sup>10</sup> NSW government Gazette, 13th July 1875, p. 2055.

<sup>11</sup> Allen 2004



NSW Government Gazette, 19 October, 1877, p. 4159



Part of Parish of Bodalla, County of Dampier, Land District of Moruya, Third Edition, Map ID 13809704.

# Merriman's Reserve, Tarourga Lake

## Gazettal History

On the 19/10/1877 "40 acres on Terouga Lake 5 miles from Bodalla, and 22 from Moruya. Parish of Bodalla, County of Dampier..." was reserved for Merriman<sup>12</sup>. The reserve was given the number 347. Reserves for Bolloway and Yarboro were granted at the same time.

It is unknown if Merriman lived on this reserve at the time of its formation but certainly by 1880 he didn't do so. At this time Merriman, along with his wife Narelle, John Pittman and Cambo (Hawdon) were recorded as spending some time at Turlinjah Reserve. In 1883 the Aborigines Protection Board recorded that the reserve had, "Not been resided upon for past 3 years, Merriman always residing at Wallaga Lake, generally working for the settlers in and around Tilba Tilba"<sup>13</sup>.

The reserve was revoked on the 23/5/1969, 92 years after its gazettal.

## Current land tenure

Tarourga Lake reserve lies entirely within Eurobodalla National Park. The current Plan of Management for the park recognises the Aboriginal values associated with the national park but has no specific management requirements for the formerly reserved lands<sup>14</sup>.

## Reserve Description

This description is based on aerial photos and observations of the lands from outside the reserve, as it has not been inspected. The lands comprise coastal dunes on the eastern boundary, backed by undulating forested terrain. Apart from previous logging operations and a few informal vehicle tracks, the area appears to be relatively undisturbed.

## Archaeological Evidence

No sites are recorded from within the former reserve, although it is unlikely that any surveys have ever been conducted. Large numbers of sites recorded in vicinity, including extensive shell middens, artefacts scatters, scarred trees and burials<sup>15</sup>. Nearby Brou Lake has been recognised for its cultural significance to Aboriginal people and it has been assessed for designation as an Aboriginal Place under the National Parks and Wildlife Act.

<sup>12</sup> NSW Government Gazette, 19 October 1877, p. 4159

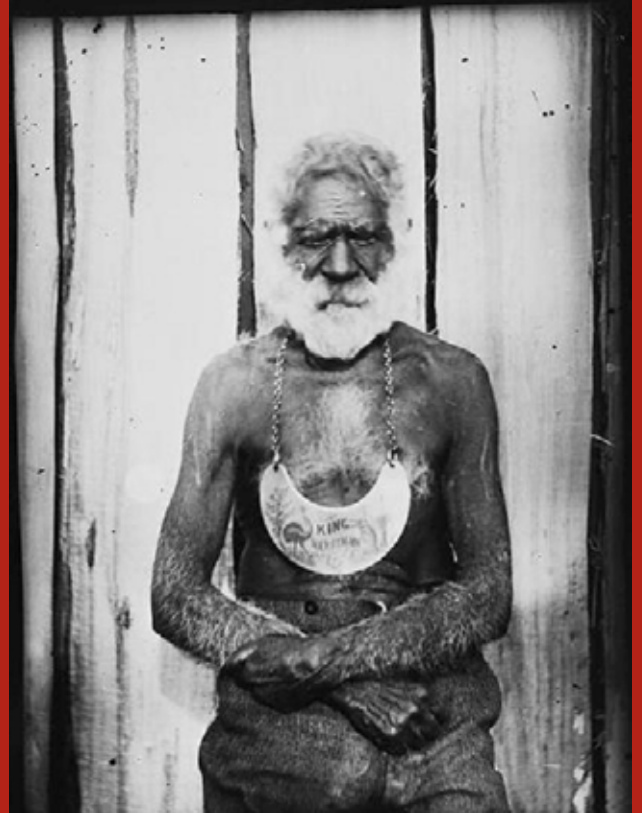
<sup>13</sup> Register of Reserves, p.1. Laurelle Pacey and Norm Hoyer, Tilba Times, 1995, p.5.

<sup>14</sup> NPWS 2000

<sup>15</sup> Kamminga 2003; Feary 2008.



Right: Umbarra, also known as King Merriman, c.1900, photograph from the W.H. Corkhill Tilba Tilba Collection, held by the National Library of Australia. Photograph TT541, Reproduced with permission of the National Library of Australia.



## Written History

We do not know a great deal about use of the reserve set aside for Merriman at Tarourga Lake, but we do know something about the man himself.

It has been estimated that Merriman was born in the 1820s, given he was about 70 years old in 1895 when he provided cultural and linguistic information to A W Howitt<sup>16</sup>. Merriman's father Uridgeroo was killed at Wallaga Lake in a tribal battle when Merriman was a child and Merriman is recorded at blanket distributions at various places along the coast throughout his life including at Broulee in 1842 and at Brooman in 1845<sup>17</sup>. An article from the local newspaper gave a brief description of the economic conditions for the Wallaga Lake people in the late 1870s and includes a reference about Merriman:

*'...Here at Wallaga are the remains of the coast tribes, some two dozen souls; all along the shores of the lake are spots admirably suited for forming a mission station; but these poor people have to live in bark gunyahs and have no right to strip a few sheets of bark without a licence, and have not (sic) where to erect their miserable shelter. One of the tribe, Merriman, settled down on a pretty point, cleared a bit of garden ground and built himself a hut. He had no tenure of the land where he could remember his people the sole owners of the soil, and knowing that the land could be selected by anyone with (pound sign) in his pocket, Merriman became disheartened and went back to the waters of the lake to supply himself with sustenance. The only thing the Government ever did for these people was to give them a couple of boats. The first was obtained for them by the exertions of Mr. Love of Moruya, and the other is the boat that was to have come to Tathra. Merriman acts as skipper of the old one and Hawdon of the latest acquisition. If these people were supplied with a couple of nets they could ensure plenty of fish for their own use, and could probably find the means to purchase flour and other little necessities by the sale of salted fish. We saw some of the women and children doing the Waltonian business, mostly using lines of their own making, and they succeeded in getting a good lot of fish. At times the fish will not bite, and the blacks are dependent on some of the neighbors (sic) for meat. By the help of their boats they manage to earn money punting goods across the lake, and if their operations were properly directed, and they were encouraged to cultivate the soil and had some certainty of tenure to encourage them, a mission station could be made self-supporting, or nearly so. Here is work for the philanthropic. The Government will do nothing until they are shamed into action...'*<sup>18</sup>.

## Significance to Aboriginal people

The former reserve set aside for Merriman at Tarourga Lake was unable to be inspected so this project has not documented the specific Aboriginal values associated with it. In general, the cultural heritage values of the reserve reflect Aboriginal people's struggle to retain ownership of traditional lands, at a time when British settlement was increasing at a dramatic rate. The evidence of pre contact occupation in the area demonstrates Aboriginal people's occupation of the area prior to and regardless of British settlement and associated laws.



## Reserve location

Tarourga Lake (Merriman) Reserve is a coastal reserve, located on the southern shores of Lake Tarourga a coastal lagoon on the NSW south coast. Jemisons Point and the small township of Potato Point lie to the north with Brou Lake to the south.

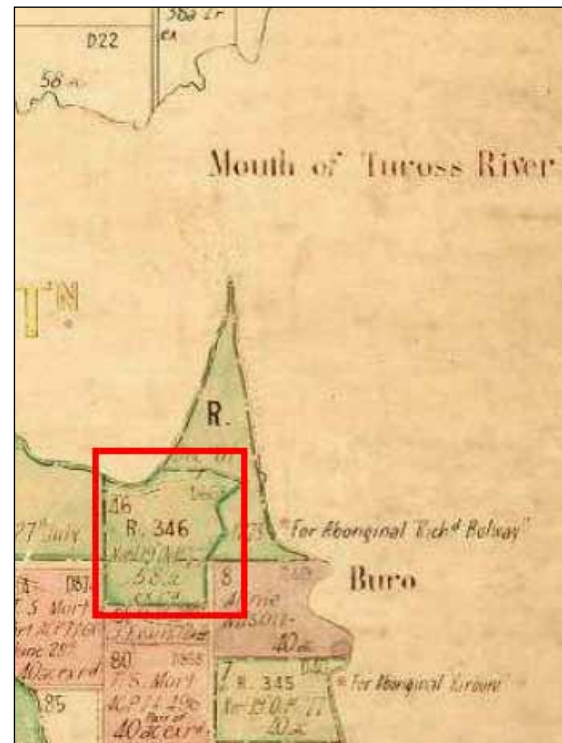
<sup>16</sup> Howitt MS 52 AIATSIS

<sup>17</sup> Scarlett P 2011 Return of Aboriginal Natives taken at Broulee 6th day of May 1842: some light on south coast Aboriginal personalities.

<sup>18</sup> Anon, 'Tilba Tilba District II', Bega Standard, 6th December, 1879, p.2.



NSW Government Gazette, 19 October 1877, p. 4160



Part of Parish of Bodalla, County of Dampier, Land District of Moruya, Third Edition, Map ID 13809702.

# Richard Bollaway's Reserve, Tuross Lake

## Gazettal History

On the 19/10/1877 56 acres on Tuross Lake, in the Parish of Bodalla, County of Dampier was reserved for Richard 'Bolway' (= Bollaway). The reserve was given the number 346. Reserves for Merriman and Yarbora were granted at the same time.

There are reports Richard Bollaway was at Turlinjah in the early 1880s. He died in 1886 and is buried at Moruya<sup>19</sup>. It would appear that in both 1883 and 1890, the two dates on which the APB recorded details for Richard Bollaway's reserve, it was unoccupied and uncultivated. However, by 1890 two acres had been cleared indicating that some use was probably being made of the area, probably by others. The reserve was revoked on the 16/12/1914, 37 years after it was gazetted.

## Current land tenure

The former Richard Bollaway's reserve lies entirely within Eurobodalla National Park. A small portion of land on the eastern boundary of the reserve lies within the Beachcombers Holiday Park lease area.

## Reserve Description

The former reserve is generally well vegetated with spotted gum and swamp mahogany forest on slopes and ridges and Casuarina fringing the lake. Rainforest patches occur in the deeper gullies. There is evidence of previous logging and some localised clearing, including cleared and grassed land within the caravan lease area. The landforms comprise flat ridgelines with moderate slopes and relatively narrow gullies. Steep cliffs back onto a flat raised bench on the edge of the lake.

Locations suitable for Aboriginal people to camp in the reserve were likely to have been limited; the lake edge, headlands and flat ground around the freshwater lagoon.

## Archaeological Evidence

No sites are recorded within the former reserve, although the surrounding area has been intensively surveyed for sites since the 1970s and many sites have been recorded, including middens, artefact scatters and burials.



*“... During the 1940s my family and I camped at Blackfellows Point, on the weekends if we weren't picking seasonal vegetables at Cadgee and other farms along the Tuross River. Tuross could be seen across the inlet from where we camped. My father Ben Cruse loved lobsters, when he ate them he left only the shell...” Linda Cruse 1.3.2006 in Donaldson.*

*Northern extent of the former reserve, on the southern shores of Tuross Lake.*



*Lionel Mongta with artefact located on the southern shores of Tuross Lake.*

Archaeological excavations have been conducted in the Beachcombers Holiday Park revealing dense localised artefact assemblages and midden deposits<sup>6</sup>. Field inspection for this project revealed archaeological evidence along the shores of Tuross Lake, the western edge on the lease area and a headland just west of the reserve boundary.

## Significance to Aboriginal people

The area including Tuross Lake, the headlands and beaches and immediate forested hinterland is rich in archaeological evidence. The historical record points to continuous and intensive use of resources by Aboriginal people. The existence of three reserves close together suggests ongoing Aboriginal associations to the area. There is anecdotal and real evidence for the presence of burials and places of cultural significance, including Blackfellows Point itself. The oral history clearly demonstrates that people were visiting and camping in the area, focussing on the lagoon, throughout the 20th century. Aboriginal people continue to visit the area today. This is an important cultural landscape when all its different values are brought together.



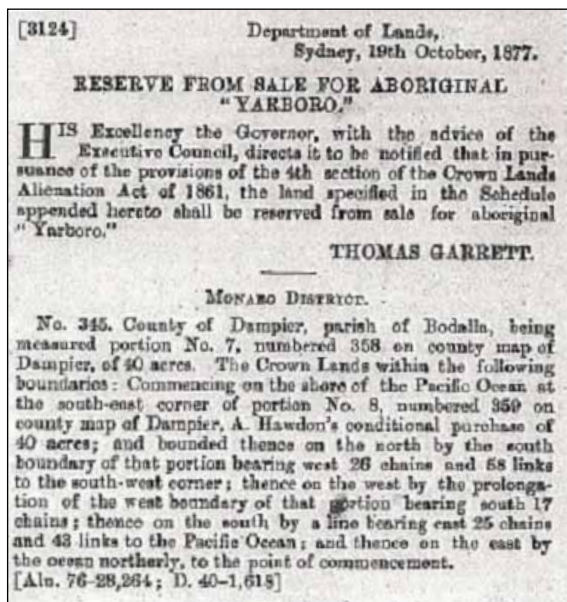
*Densely packed mud whelks in eastern end of midden*



## Reserve location

Tuross Lake (Richard Bolloway) Reserve extends from the southern shores of Tuross Lake southward to Blackfellows Point.

<sup>19</sup> Per comm Laurelle Pacey 20.8. 2012



NSW Government Gazette, 19 October 1877, p. 4160



Part of Parish of Bodalla, County of Dampier, Land District of Moruya, Third Edition, Map ID 13809702.

# Yarboro's Reserve, Potato Point

## Gazettal History

On the 19/10/1877 '40 acres on the sea coast 14 miles from Moruya, and 8 from Bodalla. Parish of Bodalla, County of Dampier' was reserved from sale for the use of Yarboro. The reserve was given the number 345<sup>20</sup>. Reserves for Merriman and Bolloway were gazetted at the same time.

APB reported noted that the area was 'unoccupied and uncultivated' in 1883 and 1890. The reserve was revoked on the 27/1/1922, 45 years after it was gazetted.

## Current land tenure

The former Yarboro's Reserve lies entirely within Eurobodalla National Park with the exception of the road, which is owned by the Eurobodalla Shire Council.

## Reserve Description

Only a small area of the former reserve was inspected due to inaccessibility. The reserve is heavily vegetated in cheese tress and Casuarinas, with many vines and an understorey of Ghania (see photo below). The ground is damp and covered with heavy leaf litter. Both ticks and leeches were in abundance. The terrain is flat and poorly drained

and is composed of sandy beach ridges. Apart from the cleared area at the junction of the main road with the rough track, which is used for pulling off the main road and informal camping there appears to be minimal use of the reserve today

## Archaeological Evidence

No sites are recorded in the former reserve and none were observed during field inspection. Various sites occur in the general vicinity.

## Significance to Aboriginal people

The area including Tuross Lake, the headlands and beaches and immediate forested hinterland is rich in archaeological evidence, although nothing specifically relating to the former reserve area. The historical records point to continuous and intensive use of natural resources by Aboriginal people across the area, although nothing specifically relating to the former reserve area. The oral history clearly demonstrates that people were visiting and camping in the area, focussing on the lagoon and Potato Point Creek, throughout the 20th century. Aboriginal people continue to visit the area today. This is an important cultural landscape when all its different values are brought together.





Vegetation at north eastern section of Yarboro Reserve



Lionel Mangta on the eastern banks of Potato Creek, to the south of Yarboro Reserve.

## Oral history

Oral histories and fieldwork identified an Aboriginal camping area south of the gazetted former reserve around Potato Point Creek. For many years it was assumed by members of the local Aboriginal community that the former Yarboro Reserve covered portions of Potato Point Creek where Aboriginal people once camped.

*“.....We always camped here close to the creek...In the past, if we never burnt the land and there was no grass, the roos moved away. So we put a bit of fire around to make the grass shoot appear, then the roos would come in to feed on the new shoots and we’d feed the camp on them! We survived on kangaroos as well as fish. We’d hang him up on the tree overnight and eat him the next morning. Beautiful they are, the tails make beautiful soup....” Lionel Mongta 28.11.2011*

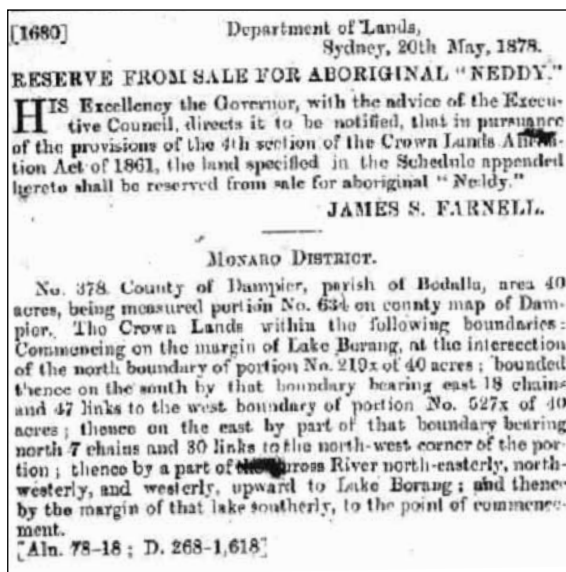


## Reserve location

The former Yarboro's Reserve is located, behind Potato Point Beach. Jabarra Point marks the north eastern corner of reserve. It is possible that Yarboro and Jabarra may be corruptions of the same name and be related to Yabba Point at Dalmeny.

20 NSW Government Gazette, 19 October 1877, p. 4159

# Neddy's Reserve, Tuross Lake



NSW Government Gazette, 20 May 1878



The APB reported that '3 acres were cleared, but uncultivated and unoccupied' APB 1890. A revocation notice has not been located for this reserve. By 1918, the land is in the name of C H Berriman.

## Gazettal History

On the 20/5/1878 40 acres on the south bank of the Tuross Lake, situated about 6 miles from Bodalla, and 15 from Moruya was reserved for 'Aboriginal Neddy'. The reserve was given the number 378<sup>21</sup>.

In 1890, the Aborigines Protection Board reported that '3 acres were cleared, but uncultivated and unoccupied'. A revocation notice has not been located for this reserve but by 1918 the land was held by C H Berriman.

## Current land tenure

The former Neddy's Reserve is all privately owned.

## Reserve Description

Not inspected during the project. The aerial maps show the area as partly cleared, partly vegetated.

## Archaeological Evidence

There are no recorded archaeological sites in Neddy's Reserve, probably because no surveys have been done. Numerous sites occur in the region associated with Tuross Lake and the area to the south. Numerous sites exist around Potato and Blackfellows Points and surveys have also recorded artefact scatters around Lake

## Significance to Aboriginal people

The area around Tuross Lake and immediate forested hinterland is rich in archaeological evidence, although nothing specifically relating to this reserve. There is anecdotal evidence for the presence of burials and other places of cultural significance in the former reserve. The oral history clearly demonstrates that people were visiting and camping in the area, focussing on Neddy's Point, throughout the 19th and 20th centuries.





## Reserve location

The former reserve is located on the south bank of the Tuross River adjacent to Borang Lake.

## Oral sources

Long-term resident of the land Estelle Neilson nee Berriman (born 1931) shared some old family stories about the area, as passed onto her by her father, James Berriman (son of C H Berriman). She reminisced that the family had a good relationship with the local Aboriginal people who caught fish off the banks off the point. The Berriman family shared oysters with those camped there. Mrs Neilson was told of a seasonal camp on 'Neddy's Point', where a group of Aboriginal people would seasonally stay.

Mrs Neilson's father had once recalled finding ancient stone axes and a breastplate engraved with the name 'King Billy of Wagonga' when ploughing in his paddock. The term 'King', or 'Queen' was often bestowed along with a metal plaque known as a 'gorget', 'king', 'breast' or 'brass' plate in honor of Aboriginal people who were considered to be leaders by the non-Aboriginal population in Australia during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Although there is no documentation linked to a breastplate for 'King Billy of Wagonga', similar ones have been identified across the region. Sometime on the 1830s 'Timothy Chief of Merricumbene', near Moruya, was awarded a breastplate and in 1912 'Biamanga, King

of Wallaga Lake and Bega district, born Bredbatoura' was also awarded one, as was 'King Merriman'. Images of other Breast plates relevant to this region can be found in the descriptions of Merriman's Reserve and Tomago River Reserve. Today 'gorgets' represent both the effect of the European culture on the Australian Aboriginal population, and a link to the land and history of specific Aboriginal groups across Australia<sup>22</sup>.

The objects were given to the principal of the old Turlinjah School. The whereabouts of the objects is presently unknown. Neddy was remembered as being 'too frail to walk' in Mrs Neilson's father's lifetime and when he passed away he was buried on 'the point'. The family recalled that Aboriginal groups stopped frequenting the point after Halley's comet passed in April 1910, so perhaps Neddy died before this time. Interestingly, Mrs Neilson's father always said that the local name of the area was 'Dulinjah Dulinjah', rather than Turlinjah. It is likely that these recollections relate to the period following the degazettal. Although no degazettal notice has been located, the area became under the ownership of the Berriman family by 1918, so it is assumed the reserve was degazetted sometime before then.

21 Supplement to NSW Government Gazette, 20 May 1878, p. 2016

22 Troy 1993





*"... In the early 1960s I attended Turlinjah School when we were living at Coopers Island. I remember catching the bus into Turlinjah each day. My Nan and Aunties would take me to the bus stop by the highway..." Trisha Ellis 4.2.2006.*



## Reserve location

Turlinjah Reserve is located on a broad headland on the northern side of Tuross Lake, north east of Smarts Bridge.



*".... occupied by the aborigines. It consists of good open country, is well grassed, and about 10 acres are suitable for cultivation. About a quarter of an acre is fenced in for a garden, and 2 acres have been cleared. A quantity of seed potatoes were supplied by the Board, and they have been planted by the aborigines. Galvanized-iron has also been furnished for them for roofing, and making them more habitable. They have a fishing boat, which is kept on the Tuross Lake. It is fairly well cared for by the aborigines, but they do nothing with it in the way of earning a living. Nine children are receiving instruction at public schools..."<sup>26</sup>.*

The reserve was revoked on the 7/9/1917, possibly as a result of the death of William Benson under the terms of the original reserve. Warner notes that the land was sold at auction, the five slab huts were demolished and burnt, and the area was ploughed over and put to crop. Percy Davis and others had indicated to Warner that the huts had been used by Aboriginal people for at least 35 years<sup>27</sup>.

## Reserve Description

Permission was not received to conduct a field inspection of the Reserve, but the aerial photo shows the land to be well vegetated in native forest with a cleared and grassed area in the north, although there are no substantial buildings. The land is elevated with moderate slopes down to the lake.

## Archaeological Evidence

No archaeological sites are recorded in the former Aboriginal Reserve, although its position on a prominent headland above the resource rich Tuross Lake gives it a very high potential for containing sites, particularly

stone artefact scatters and middens. The area was not inspected during this project. One site is recorded in the area and is likely to be a midden located on the small promontory on the western side of the Reserve

## Written History

The written sources indicate the presence of two burial grounds or cemeteries, in the Turlinjah area, one being located outside of the former reserve area within the southern grazing lot of Kyla Park and one within it, on the peninsula<sup>28</sup>.

## Significance to Aboriginal people

The historical record points to continuous and intensive use of resources by Aboriginal people. There is strong anecdotal and historical evidence for the presence of burials within the Turlinjah Reserve although these were unable to be inspected during this project.

The oral history clearly demonstrates that the reserve and other locations in the immediate area were highly used prior to, throughout and following the gazettal period. Aboriginal people continue to visit the area today. This is an important cultural landscape when all its different values are brought together.

23 Goulding 2005

24 Register of Reserves, p.1.

25 Legislative Assembly NSW, 1883 – 4 and 1889

26 Report of the Board for Protection of the Aborigines, 1890', Votes & Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, 1891-2, Vol.7.

27 Warner papers MS2303 AIATSIS

28 Warner papers MS2303 AIATSIS





*“....They would have camped all along here. This was their food, they’d fish just here, have a feed and leave the shells behind. We can see the shells now in the middens....” Gloria Carberry 30.11.2011.*

*Knowledge holders and consultants assessing sites in the former reserve.*



*Section of midden showing mud whelks and mud oyster*

## General description of reserve

The topography of the reserve is flat, built up with river deposited sand, probably of Holocene age. The tidal influence affects this section of the river. The landscape has been extensively modified with native vegetation remaining except for mangrove communities and a few stands of *Casuarina* along the river banks. The area retaining the greatest degree of naturalness, similar to what it may have been like when used as a reserve is a small creek that flows into the Tomago River at the extreme eastern end of the reserve.

The artificial water body next to the caravan park is linked to the river by a dug canal and the construction of George Bass Drive would have also affected natural systems. Clearing of vegetation and ground levelling for various developments have also occurred.



*Breast plate belonging to 'Thomas Tinboy, King of Nelligen'. Image from Milne Collection file 85/310 folio 169.*

## Archaeological sites

There is one site, a midden, recorded within the former reserve, adjacent to the artificial lake. It was not found during field inspection and may have been destroyed during formation of the lake. The midden occurs all along the north bank of the river, which coincides with evidence found during field inspection for this project. The newly recorded site may also be a northern extension of previously recorded site. The new site comprises an extensive, discontinuous stratified shell midden material is exposed above high water mark in a black sandy matrix, up to 40cm thick in places, overlaying sterile orange sand. It consists of densely packed fragmented and whole shell and contains the full range of estuarine species with *Pyrazus*, mud and rock oyster dominant with less amounts of *bimbula*.



## Reserve location

The former Tomago reserve is located on the northern bank of the Tomago River, immediately west of the small village of Tomakin, the village of Mossy Point is approximately 1 km to the south, south east.

## Significance to Aboriginal people

The Tomago River Reserve contains extensive archaeological evidence of Aboriginal use and occupation. Given the historical and oral record, family connections are made today to the people who occupied the reserve during the gazettal period. The area continues to be valued as a resource collection area, given its proximity to river resources.

29 NSW Government Gazette, 9 January 1884, p.260

30 Legislative Assembly NSW 1885

31 Milne Collection file 85/310 folio 169..

32 'Report of the Board for Protection of the Aborigines, 1890', Votes & Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, 1891-2, Vol.7.





NSW Government Gazette, 13 June 1891, p. 4425



From Parish of Noorooma, County of Dampier, Land District of Moruya, Fifth Edition, Map ID 10349701.

# Wallaga Lake Reserve, Akolele

## Gazettal History

The Aborigines Protection Board (APB) established the Wallaga Lake Reserve on over 330 acres of land on 13 June 1891. This portion of the reserve was numbered 13,939 and was the first station established by the APB in New South Wales<sup>33</sup>. It had a white manager so was classified as a 'station' and like the other reserves the Crown retained the title.

A further 75 acres were gazetted on the 16th September 1949 (#73,304) adding portions 17 and 361 to the north east side of the reserve. On the 22nd December 1963, these portions (21 acres) were revoked to make land available for non-Aboriginal people's holiday cottages (now part of Akolele). This 1963 revocation was of particular concern to the Aboriginal community, as the revoked land is believed to contain burials. Aboriginal oral histories reveal that this land continues to contain high cultural heritage values, as noted below.

The remaining portion of the reserve was transferred to Aboriginal Ownership in 1984 under the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act and is today owned by Merrimans Local Aboriginal Land Council. Between 85 - 95 Aboriginal people live at Wallaga Lake Aboriginal community today

## Historical Use

In the 1870s groups of Aboriginal people, including Umbarra (King Merriman) lived around the shores of the Wallaga Lake and on Merrimans Island, within Wallaga Lake. It is evident from the archaeological record that people had occupied this area for thousands of years before the present. Tobin describes Wallaga Lake at this time as 'a large camp for the old people'. They lived along the beach where there was plenty of thick shelter and down near the water near 'five different feeding grounds' (Tobin n.d.). Aboriginal people were fishing, and doing a small amount of farming and 'by the help of their boats they manage to earn money punting goods across the lake'<sup>34</sup>.

King Merriman and others worked on the property of Henry Jefferson Bate who took up residence at Tilba Tilba in 1869 and had a great interest in the culture and living conditions of the local Aboriginal community. HJ Bate obtained land from the Crown which was eventually to become part of the Wallaga Lake Aboriginal Reserve. The area had been a camp for years before that, but this formal recognition was instigated largely by Bate<sup>35</sup>.

In response to separationist ideologies, Aboriginal schools were established on reserves throughout New South Wales. Wives of local white farmers urged the establishment of an Aboriginal school at Wallaga Lake in 1877. The school at Wallaga Lake, was the first Aboriginal School in NSW and was established 12 years prior to the gazettal of the Wallaga Lake Aboriginal Reserve.

*“...In the early 1900s when the police came to Wallaga Lake to take the children away to institutions, families ran away, and hid near the waterhole at the base of Gulaga Mountain...”*

*Georgina Parsons 31.5.2006*

Aborigines at Wallaga Lake ca. 1900. Part of William Henry Corkhill Tilba Tilba photograph collection held by the National Library of Australia. [nla.pic-an2511484](https://nla.pic-an2511484)



The population figures suggest that the presence of the school and later the Reserve were a strong attraction for Aboriginal people to reside close by or in the reserve. The first school inspector at Wallaga Lake School observed that the influx of people can be partly attributed to the 'attraction of schooling and the school rations' (Cameron 1987: 87).

The early years at the reserve appear to have been reasonably harmonious but the situation deteriorated over time, possibly as a result of influxes of people from elsewhere in NSW and Victoria. People were brought into the reserve from La Perouse in 1900 and in 1914 a large group came down from Batemans Bay. There was another influx in 1937, putting a strain on accommodation. The Wallaga Lake population fluctuated annually depending on the nature and extent of available work but between 1891 and 1904 was never less than 86 nor more than 177<sup>36</sup>.

The Wallaga Lake Aboriginal School closed in December 1964 and the children transferred to local schools and the Wallaga Lake Station became part of the Nowra Welfare District.

## Current land tenure

That portion of the reserve revoked in 1963 forms part of the present day settlement of Akolele. The 'Wallaga Lake Koori Village' is situated on the remaining portion which is freehold title held by Merrimans Local Aboriginal Land Council.

## Reserve Description

Other than the residential development at Akolele and Wallaga Lake Koori Village including Umbarra Cultural Centre, the land has remained naturally vegetated, although the area has been cleared in various places over the past century.



## Reserve location

Aerial image of Wallaga Lake Reserve, showing 1891 boundary, which includes the present day Akolele. Also shown is Merrimans Island Reserve within Wallaga Lake and Snake Island Reserve along Naira Creek, both within Bega Valley Shire.

## Archaeological Evidence

There have not been any systematic archaeological surveys of the whole of the former reserve as outside of the village area, much of it is steep and heavily vegetated. Nine sites are recorded from the southern end of the former reserve including scarred trees, burials, middens and several places of spiritual and ceremonial significance. A large shell midden containing densely packed bimbulas was recorded at the south eastern corner of Cemetery Point, during a previous project to map all marked and unmarked graves in the cemetery (Donaldson and Feary 2012). It is likely that further archaeological investigation will reveal additional sites along ridge lines and around the edge of the lake.

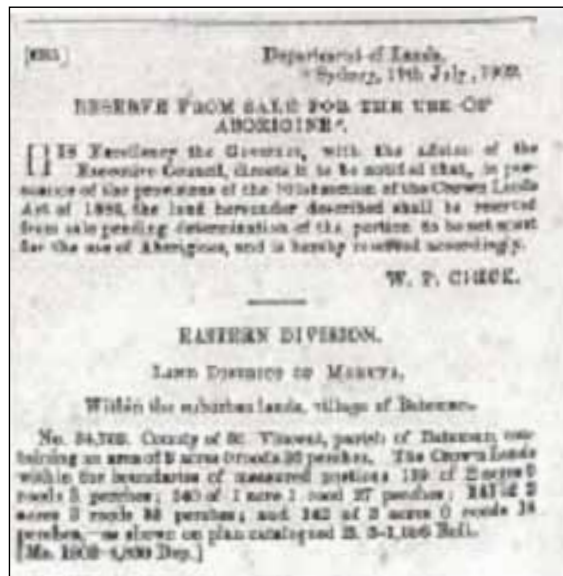
33 Prior to this the reserve were developed by the Aborigines Welfare Board.

34 Goulding and Waters 2005.

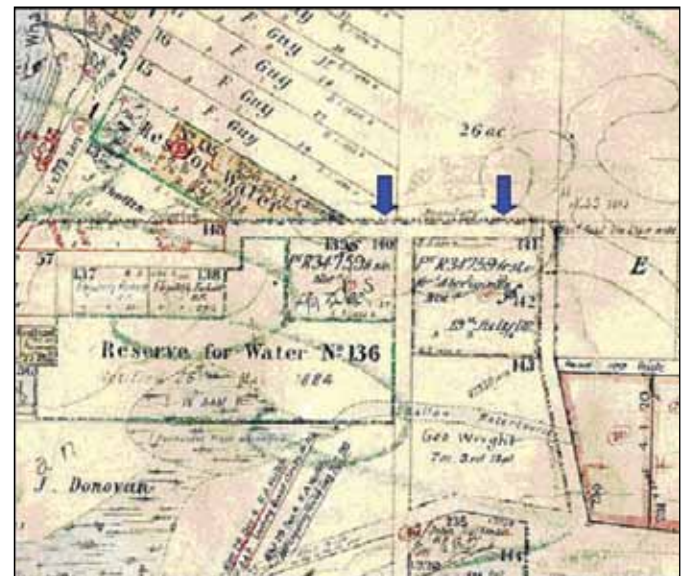
35 Pacey and Hoyer, Tilba Times 1995.

36 Wesson 2002





*NSW Government Gazette, 19 July 1902*



*Map of Bateman's Bay Reserve 34759*

# Batemans Bay Reserve, Batemens Bay

## Gazettal history

In 1902, an area "...9 acres situated in the Parish of Bateman, County of St. Vincent..." was reserved on the edges of Bateman's Bay township. The reserve was given the number 34759<sup>37</sup>.

## Current land tenure

The two parcels of land comprising the Aboriginal Reserve were originally Crown land, and are now within the Batemens Bay Township. They have been subdivided into residential blocks which are all privately owned. At least one of the blocks of land is owned by the Batemens Bay Local Aboriginal Land Council.

## Reserve Description

There is little resemblance to what would have been the original Aboriginal Reserve. The once forested ridgeline has been totally cleared and subdivided into residential house blocks, all of which have got buildings on them, except one which used to be the site of the old sawmill house, where Aboriginal people who worked in the sawmill lived. Sealed roads make up the remainder of the reserve land.

## Archaeological Evidence

No archaeological sites are recorded from within the Aboriginal Reserve, although its position on a prominent ridgeline above major wetlands gives it a very high potential for containing sites, particularly stone artefact scatters. Other sites in the general area include middens near the marina and a burial found in sand dunes within the Catalina Golf Course. The Hanging Rock area is culturally significant to local coastal Aboriginal communities.

The private lands were not inspected for sites. An inspection of land behind the houses on the west side of High St, and the Crown lands of the water garden and access reserve did not reveal any archaeological evidence, due to thick grass and previous disturbance.

## Written History

The area around South Street in Batemens Bay was a permanent camp for Aboriginal people in the township in the late nineteenth century<sup>38</sup>. Heather Goodall describes the conflict over access to public education and the continuing existence of a town reserve at Bateman's Bay in the early 1900s. Her account is based on archival material from the Aborigines Protection Board and the files of the Departments of Lands and Education:

*“...Every now and then I come for a walk along here. There is land council land with Aboriginal housing in the old reserve. We started to build a little community garden. I have not heard any stories from reserve times...” Violet Parsons 29.11.2011*

*Crown land west of the reserve*



## Reserve location

The reserve comprises two separate but adjacent parcels of land on a ridgeline above the Clyde River estuary in Batemans Bay Township. The blocks are dissected by High Street, with South Street along the southern boundary. Short Street is to the north and Pacific Street is the eastern boundary. The Water Garden which consists of forest and wetland is to the west and below the reserve lands.

*‘....As early as 1918... the Bateman's Bay Progress Association had informed the Protection Board that the reserve near that town was standing in the way of white residential development and requested its revocation and the removal of its inhabitants. The Board procrastinated until 1922, when it agreed to ‘encourage’ the reserve residents to move to a newly created reserve some miles out of town. The Koories of the town refused to move from the site where they had built their own houses and from which their children could easily attend the public school.*

*After further pressure from townspeople, the Board in 1924 agreed to revocation of the town reserve. This did not occur immediately because the Koori residents' total refusal to leave threw some doubt on the proposed development. The Lands Department now put pressure on the Board not simply to formalise the revocation but to remove the Koori community. The Board again capitulated, and issued removal orders in June 1925. The townspeople had by this time decided to take matters into their own hands: the local Parents' and Citizens' Association voted to segregate the school in order to force Koories to leave the town. School segregation's had become a well-trying tactic in the hands of white townspeople trying to force the removal of whole communities of Aboriginal people.... The Bateman's Bay school segregation left fifteen to twenty Koori children with no schooling at all. Rather than leave the town, however, their families mounted a sustained and well-coordinated campaign to have the segregation rescinded. Numbers of white supporters, who all stressed their ALP affiliation in writing to a Labor ministry, appealed to the government on the issues of the injustice of the segregation and the exploitation of Aboriginal school age children's labour in sawmills owned by some of the P & C members who had voted for the segregation.*

*It was the Koori protesters, however, who put the school segregation in its context, linking it with the attempt to revoke the reserve as a means of forcing them out of town. Prominent in this protest was Jane Duren, whose grandchildren were among those excluded from the school... As it did often when a situation became too difficult, the Education Department called in the Child Welfare Department, but in this instance its inspector declined to remove any children from their families and in fact supported Koori demands for readmission to the school. An assurance was given by this inspector to white parents that ‘an influx’ of Aboriginal children from other areas would not occur and with State Departmental backing withdrawn, the two-year segregation collapsed....<sup>39</sup>*

Despite the protests, the reserve was revoked on the 16 September 1927.

37 NSW Government Gazette, 19 July 1902

38 James, A M 2001, p.10.

39 Goodall 2008 , pp.147-8.





*From Parish of Noorooma, County of Dampier, Land District of Moruya, Seventh Edition.*

# Narooma Reserve, Narooma

## Gazettal History

On the 24th December 1913 "...14 acres situated in the parish of Noorooma, County of Dampier..." was reserved for the use of Aborigines. The reserve was given the number 49561 and was defined by the high water mark along the banks of the Wagonga Inlet.

No revocation notice for this reserve has yet been found.

## Current land tenure

The area comprises residential development and a small portion of parkland.

## Reserve Description

The former reserve is located on the north eastern shores of Forsters Bay, Wagonga Inlet, opposite Shell Point. The area now consists of residential development and park lands.

## Archaeological Evidence

No sites are recorded from the former reserve and the area was not inspected for this project as the high level of modification has reduced the likelihood any sites still being present.

## Significance to Aboriginal people

The area continues to be valued as a cultural meeting and resource collection place, regardless of the reserve history.



North western extent of the former reserve. View to southwest along the southern shores of Wagonga Inlet.

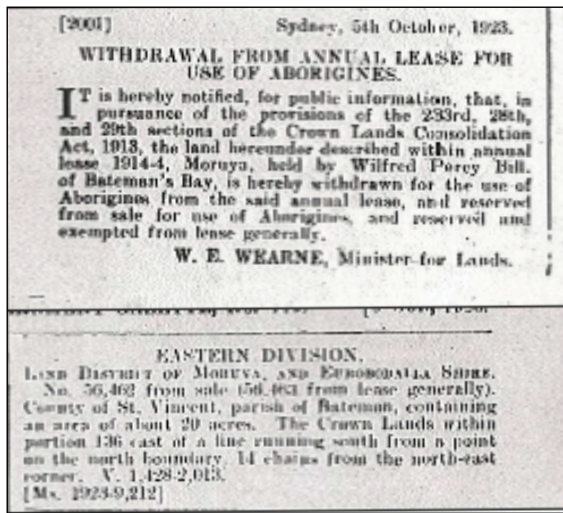
*“...Forsters Bay is a traditional meeting and gathering area, they use to come here and eat bimbullas. We still get them there from there today. I imagine the reserve was put there because people lived and used that area in traditional times. Governor Stewart and his brother were living further up Wagonga Inlet, there were people around at the time, I just don't remember their names. They used old fish traps and went out to Montague Island to gather eggs...that is all recorded...” Vivienne Mason 29 8 2012*



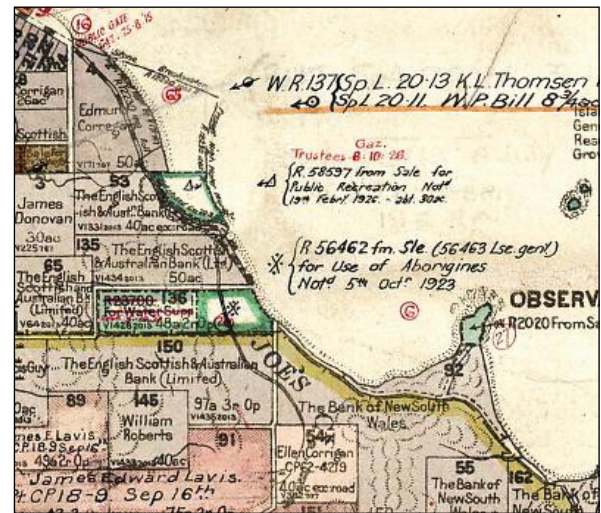
#### Reserve location

The former reserve comprises residential development and parkland and is bounded by Riverside Drive and McMillan Road.





NSW Government Gazette, 5 October 1923



Parish map showing reserve. Source: <http://parishmaps.lands.nsw.gov.au/pmap.html> Image ID 10351701)

# Batemans Bay Reserve, Catalina

## Gazettal history

On the 5th October 1923 an area of 'about 20 acres' was reserved from sale for the use of Aborigines and given the number 46562. This was to be the last reserve gazetted within what is now Eurobodalla Shire was located at Joes Creek, Catalina near Batemans Bay just north of Observation Point. At the time of the gazettal it was surrounded to the north, west and south by land owned by the English, Scottish and Australian Bank Limited, and to the east by the shores of Corrigan's Beach.

Portion 136 was originally gazetted as a Water Reserve 23700 1st February 1894. W P Bill regained 35 acres of this portion gazetted on the 29th September 1944. This could coincide with the revocation date, although no revocation notice has been located.

## Current land tenure

Part private land within residential subdivision, part Council owned community land along Joes Creek and around the water reservoir, and the Batemans Bay High School owned by the Department of Education.

## Reserve Description

The former Aboriginal Reserve is known locally as Joes Creek, after the creek which runs from north to south in the eastern section of the reserve. The reserve is dominated today by residential subdivision along the ridgeline, the grounds of the High School and two small patches of bushland associated with Joes Creek and the water reservoir. Joes Creek which flows out to Corrigan's beach was diverted in 1995 to allow construction of The Manor, an aged care home on the eastern side of the creek.

## Archaeological Evidence

A number of burials are known from the immediate area, including anecdotal reference to burials near Joes Creek. Traces of shell midden exist within the sand dunes in the school grounds, but the previously recorded scarred tree has been revaluated as non-Aboriginal in origin<sup>40</sup>. Two sites comprising midden remnants are recorded in the vicinity of the bus stop on Glenella Road. The area of Hanging Rock/Joes Creek is highly significant to local Aboriginal people, as identified during the Eurobodalla Aboriginal Heritage study and evaluated further during the Connecting with Country project.



*Violet Parsons along the western banks of Joes Creek, within the historical Aboriginal reserve.*



## Significance to Aboriginal people

The Catalina area contains a complex of highly significant Aboriginal heritage places. These places are, in the main, meeting, living and natural resource collection places, and together comprise some of the most important places for Aboriginal people throughout the region, at least over the past half a century. The focal point within this area is Hanging Rock Creek, named after the iconic, Hanging Rock. Closely linked to Hanging Rock Creek are the nearby Joe's Creek, Corrigans Beach and Observation Point. Together, these places formed the basis of social and economic life for Aboriginal families living in the area throughout the 1900s.

*"...I was born in the 'Batemans Bay bush hospital' in 1939. I think they meant Hanging Rock where my family was living at the time of my birth. Joes Creek was an important feeding ground for Aboriginal families residing in the Hanging Rock area. Mud Crabs were plentiful. The Creek was named after Uncle Joe Chapman, he used to go along there fishing, he used a three pronged spear..." Georgina Parsons 14.12.2006.*



## Reserve location

The Aboriginal reserve is located in the Batemans Bay Township. It comprises a thin rectangle stretching from west of Beach Road at Corrigans beach, across flat land then up a steep slope to the top of a prominent ridge containing housing, then sloping gently in a northwesterly direction towards the golf course. The Parish map shows the reserve as extending to the coast, but not extending as far westwards.





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