



# The Micro-toponymy of Mount Arapiles

This article follows previous work on Mount Arapiles, which is located in the Wimmera region of Victoria near the town of Natimuk. The first article, published in the March 2004 issue of *Placenames Australia*, covered the names from Aboriginal Australian languages applied to the mountain, and the names considered by Major Mitchell before he finally settled on Arapiles. In these articles I am trying to demonstrate how the toponymy of a particular geographic feature can be much more complex than a short entry in an explorer's journal. Many names have been attached to Mount Arapiles and its surrounds over time; each tells a story that allows us to better understand the mountain's cultural significance.

The pastoral frontier reached Mount Arapiles in the early 1840s, less than a decade after Mitchell had passed through the area. Major William Firebrace was amongst the early



*Mount Arapiles. Photo: Chris Richards.*

squatters, taking up a large sheep run that included Mount Arapiles within its boundary. Several local histories say that Firebrace named this run Vectis; this was the ancient Roman name for the Isle of Wight (England), where he was supposed to have been born. I have been able to trace this proposed origin of the station name back to an entry in *Pioneer Station Owners of the Wimmera* published by Dennys Lascelles in 1926, which states that, "Major Firebrace named Vectis after his native place in the Isle of Wight". However, I have recently come across a manuscript written in 1958 by high school principal I.T. Maddern, entitled *The Early Days of Horsham*, which states that the Firebrace family came from Duffield in Derbyshire. This of course opens up the question once again of how the Vectis name came to the Wimmera? In Latin, the word "vectis" means "lever".

Reaney, in his book *The Origin of English Placenames*, suggests

□ CONTINUED PAGE 10

## In this issue

The Micro-toponymy of Mount Arapiles .....	1
FeedBACK .....	2
Chris Richards .....	3
German Placenames in Victoria .....	4
Photo gallery: Aboriginal Placenames Workshops ... ..	6
Walgett: High Hills, Cracks in Ground or Meeting of the Water .....	8
I Quote .....	11
American Name Society Annual Meeting.....	11
Quiz No.11 Placenames and Occupations.....	12
Mailing List and Volunteer Research.....	12

## FeedBACK

Dear ANPS,

I always avidly read the contents of your newsletters as I have been obsessed with placenames since 1990. I am a monthly guest on ABC talk-back radio in Tasmania on nomenclature and the segment is immensely popular. I have an argument with your correspondent Dale Lehner who (in *Placenames Australia* June 2004) suggested that there are few Aboriginal placenames in Tasmania. On the contrary, possibly a quarter to a third of our names are of Aboriginal origin. Some examples are Ringarooma, Warrentinna, Triabunna, Raminia, Corinna, Karoola, Lunawanna, Allonah, Natone, Pateena and Premaydena that are all named after the native name for their respective areas. In addition, there are a plethora of town names that preserve Tasmanian Aboriginal words such as Taroona, Nubeena, Liawenee, Tarraleah, Wayatinah, Emita, Errriba, Eugenana, Kamona, Kaoota, Karoola, Kayena, Kellatier, Koonya etc.

In the same article, Dale correctly

assumed that Cradle Mountain was a descriptive name as it resembles a miner's or baby's cradle. Weindorfers Tower (on Cradle Mountain) was of Austrian origin. It is named after Austrian Gustav Weindorfer who was the catalyst for preserving Cradle Mountain as a National Park (in 1922). Weindorfer climbed Cradle Mountain in 1909, and he loved it so much that he decided to settle here. He purchased land on the mountain and built his home here. He called his dwelling 'Waldheim' after an Austrian connection. He used his extensive home in the wilderness as a guesthouse for visitors to the mountain. He died here and was buried on the mountain in 1932. Each year a memorial service is conducted on the mountain at his grave site. Kathleens Pool, a small tarn on Cradle Plateau was named after Weindorfer's wife Kate Cowle who lived with him at 'Waldheim'. Dale incorrectly suggested that Queenstown was probably named after a place in England. It isn't, it was given this name as the town was sited on the Queen River. Dale makes a correct assumption that Gowrie Park was connected to a place in Scotland. It is, but only indirectly, as the town name was taken from a local property of that name. The property was named after the landowner's birthplace in Scotland. Mole Creek was not named after a local animal, it was named by a mystified surveyor who found that the creek was running through a limestone area and the river kept disappearing underground and reappearing elsewhere (like the English mole). Dale also refers to some Biblical names as Tasmania has many names of this kind, reflecting the pious nature of many of the pioneers. For example there are towns named Goshen (land of plenty), Poriory, Beulah, Paradise, Garden of Eden, Walls of Jerusalem, Abyssinia, Lake Tiberius, Jordan River, Bagdad, Jericho and many more.

Despite the above minor criticisms, I heartily agree with the central thrust of the Lehner article that suggests that a study of placenames reveals the intriguing history of an area. Tasmania is blessed with a virtual potpourri of placenames derived from many languages including Aboriginal languages, English, Dutch,

French, Indian, Spanish, Chinese etc. Tasmanian placenames also reflect our heritage and many names derive from our early European navigators, convict/soldier past, bushranger activity, whaling activity, shipwrecks, religious background, mining ventures, British heritage, war-time heroes, early governors, Greek/Roman mythology etc.

Wayne Smith  
Lauderdale, Tas

## FeedBACK

Many thanks to those who contacted ANPS regarding a question I posed in the June issue of *Placenames Australia*. I had asked, 'Where, in Tasmania, are the placenames of Aboriginal origin?' I had kept an eye open for likely names during a recent visit but noted only Moonah, a Hobart suburb. I was amazed that there were so few.

Wayne Smith, John Cannon and Betty Murrell all pointed out that Tasmania has many placenames inspired by Aboriginal languages. They cited far too many examples to repeat here, including 'Hydro' power stations in the Central Highlands and settlements on Bruny Island.

This sent me back to the road map I had used on the journey from Hobart to Cradle Mountain via the Midlands Highway and Sheffield. Afterwards there was a short trip to Devonport as well. Surely I could not have been so entirely mistaken! A careful study of the route I followed has revealed only a few possibilities and all, I think, are tiny places: Conara, Powranna, Moltema and Moina. Pateena and Paloona were nearby but I couldn't have seen them.

With so many Aboriginal inspired placenames in Tasmania, I have wondered why there seemed to be fewer along the Midlands Highway. A plausible reason can no doubt be found in Tasmania's early history.

Dale Lehner

## AUSTRALEX 2004



*Clair Hill & Jan Tent*

In line with this year's theme of "Lexicon and Culture", the ANPS presented a special session at the biennial AUSTRALEX (Australasian Association for Lexicography) conference. The conference was held on Monday 12 July, hosted by the Department of Linguistics, University of Sydney and the Department of Linguistics and Dictionary Research Centre, Macquarie University. The ANPS session was a panel chaired by David Blair (ANPS, Director) and included presentations by Clair Hill (ANPS, Research Associate), Dr Jan Tent (ANPS, Research Associate) and Flavia Hodges (ANPS, Research Fellow).

Clair's and Jan's presentations outlined their current research projects and preliminary data, providing case studies of placenames in the indigenous network and names in the introduced system. Clair gave an overview of the ways in which placenames are formed and their range of meanings in two closely related indigenous languages from the east coast of Cape York Peninsula – Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u. Jan provided data and analysis on Dutch and Dutch-related names throughout Australia. Flavia reported on the current program of workshops, encouraging the investigation of placenames of indigenous origin in regional NSW by Aboriginal community members and linguists. David Blair talked about development of, and issues surrounding, the ANPS national database, facilitating the gathering of standardised information about the history, origin and meaning of both indigenous and introduced placenames.

To find out more details about this and previous AUSTRALEX conferences, see <http://australex.anu.edu.au/>

## Chris Richards

It is with sadness that we report the sudden and unexpected passing away of Christopher Richards. Chris has given his time freely and generously to the ANPS in numerous ways over the past few years. He has been a regular contributor to *Placenames Australia*, providing well-researched articles, based on archival maps and records and field trips to the sites he was writing about. This issue contains a second article by Chris on Mount Arapiles. His articles stimulated discussion amongst ANPS Research Friends and he was often behind the scenes, putting enthusiastic researchers in touch with the ANPS and with each other. For example Chris introduced the ANPS to David Nutting's research on German placenames (see article this issue). Chris was also deputy chair of the Victorian State Committee of the ANPS and did much to promote the ANPS in Victoria, with regular speaking engagements in many local historical societies, genealogical societies and other cultural organisations. The photo below was taken on 5 May 2003 during a field trip to the western end of the Black-Allan Line [the Victorian-NSW border].

*ANPS Directorate,  
Macquarie University*



*Greg Windsor (Secretary of the Geographical Names Board of NSW), Paul Harcombe (Deputy Chair of the GNB NSW), Scott Jukes (Surveyor, Office of the Surveyor General Victoria), Chris Richards.*

It is with much regret that we were informed of the death of the Vice-chair of the Victorian State Committee of the ANPS, Mr Christopher Richards. Chris was a founding member of the committee and a tireless researcher of placenames in Victoria. His passion was attested to by his numerous articles in this newsletter and others. Chris had recently begun to prepare for postgraduate studies at Monash University where he intended to pursue his interest in toponymy. The committee wishes to acknowledge its debt and gratitude to Chris and offer their greatest sympathy to his family and loved ones in this time of loss.

*Dr Ian D Clark & Ms Laura Kostanski  
Chair & Secretary,  
ANPS Victorian State Committee*



# German Placenames in Victoria

**G**erman-speaking immigrants played a considerable role in the development of Victoria. In 1891 the German-born in Victoria were the largest non-British ethnic group. According to the census of that year 10,764 people of German birth lived in Victoria, 60% of them in rural areas. This is reflected in the variety of placenames past and present of German origin in the state. Although many Victorians might find it harder than South Australians to name off-the-cuff a German placename in their state, there are in fact several names that have interesting origins and issues associated with them. Here are the origins of a few of them.

In the late 1840s some Melbourne entrepreneurs observed the success of German immigration in South

Australia and sought to get a piece of the action. William Westgarth, a prominent Melbourne merchant, played the leading role in facilitating the first group migrations direct to the Port Phillip District from Germany. Five ships arrived at Port Phillip with Germans between 1849-50. Of these Germans, eight families of vinedressers and wine-coopers had been contracted by Dr Alexander Thomson of Geelong to work at his vineyard. Their settlement just south of Geelong became known as Germantown, where German customs and language survived for many decades. Other immigrants on these "Westgarth" ships received help in buying land 16 kms north of Melbourne. Their settlement was commonly known as Westgarthtown by 1900, but prior to that it had been known for a while as New Mecklenburg (after

the north-eastern region of Germany from which many of them had come), and also as Germantown, which caused some confusion with the township near Geelong.

The gold rush brought a large influx of German-speaking immigrants to Victoria; the Germans were the largest national group on the gold fields after the British and the Chinese. Gullies were often named after the non-British nationality of either the diggers who worked in them, or of the first discoverer of gold there. James Flett's book *The History of Gold Discovery in Victoria* lists 16 places known as German Gully around the gold-mining regions of the colony, particularly in Central Victoria. Most of these are not marked now. The village of Sebastian just north of Bendigo owes its name to Sebastian Schmidt who found gold there. Germantown, German Creek and Freeburgh near Bright in the High Country acknowledge two Germans who mined there.

A substantial German-speaking community developed in the early 1850s in the Western District. Germans and

Sorbs (also known in English as Wends, a Slavic-speaking minority who have lived in Lusatia in the southeast of Germany for centuries) moved to the Hamilton area from the Barossa Valley in search of more spacious and better land. Their settlement initially had the Sorbian name Bukecy, the name of the town in Saxony near which many of them were born. This soon gave way to the German equivalent name Hochkirch. Close to Hochkirch other Sorbs and Germans established Neukirch and Gnadenthal (Valley of Grace), whose cemetery still carries that gazetted name.

In the early 1870s a large number of Germans settled in the Wimmera, establishing settlements such as Grünwald, Kirchheim, and Kornheim.

Apart from Victorian places being named after German settler families or after places in the home country that were dear to them, there are the German names bestowed by British-Australians, due to personal connection/affection for Germany, or in recognition of a prominent German. This seems to have happened almost exclusively in the area of metropolitan Melbourne. The first written reference to the present-day western bayside suburb of Altona occurred in 1843. Altona was the name of the property of Robert William Wrede. His father Hermann was living in London at the time of Robert's birth, but there was probably still a strong family connection to the north German port of Altona (now a suburb of Hamburg – see photo). R.W. Wrede was a member of William Westgarth's German Immigration Committee.

The name of the inner suburb Brunswick is the English form of Braunschweig, a city in northern Germany. The pioneer Thomas Wilkinson named his property Brunswick after Princess Caroline of Braunschweig; she was the wife of the British king George IV and had many fans among English commoners. In March 1870 another suburb gained a "royal" German name: the name Coburg honoured the Duke of Edinburgh, a member of the German royal house of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

Charles Hotson Ebdon, pastoralist, overlander, and later Treasurer of Victoria,

was born at the Cape of Good Hope to wealthy parents and educated in England and in Karlsruhe, Germany. He emigrated to NSW and his stock were the first to cross the Murray River. In 1837 he settled on the Campaspe River west of Mount Macedon and named the area Karlsruhe after the German city. Later, in Melbourne, he was also a member of Westgarth's German Immigration Committee. The suburb name Elsternwick is likewise due to him. He named his house 'Elster', the German word for magpie. The nearby creek became the Elster Creek and when a village grew up on the creek the Anglo-Saxon suffix 'wick', meaning village, was added.

The district centred on the present-day suburb of Heidelberg was named in 1839 by the flamboyant land agent Richard Henry 'Continental' Browne, after the

**... gold rush brought a large influx of German-speaking immigrants to Victoria; the Germans were the largest national group on the gold fields after the British and the Chinese...**

beautiful town in Baden-Württemberg of which he was fond.

As elsewhere in Australia (particularly in SA) the atmosphere caused by World War One forced name changes. Germantown near Geelong became Grovedale and many villages in rural areas were renamed, eg Hochkirch near Hamilton became Tarrington. In 1914 the "Brunswick and Coburg Leader" reported that the North Brunswick Progress Association had passed a resolution requesting that the names Brunswick and Coburg be changed. In the end this didn't occur, nor was Heidelberg renamed. Germantown and Freeburgh in the High Country were not affected either.

In late 2000 a group of Tarrington residents made a detailed submission to the local shire council requesting that the name be changed back to Hochkirch. This caused strong differences of opinion in the local community, both within the German-descended and the non-German community. The petitioners felt

that restoring Hochkirch would right a historical injustice and give a higher and appropriate profile to the German cultural heritage of the area. They pointed out that South Australia had restored some German placenames in 1935 to mark the pioneer work of the German settlers in that State's centenary year of 1936. After receiving several written submissions both for and against a return to the name of Hochkirch, the Shire Council decided to take no action. Fortunately the shire's large welcome signs at each end of the village acknowledge the former name. The sibling owners of two businesses in the area, Hochkirch Wines and Tarrington Vineyards, supported opposing sides in the name change debate. The owner of Hochkirch Wines, John Nagorcka, favours reinstatement of the original name. He told this writer: "Among the objectors to the proposal were residents of German descent who feel some unease about the

area's German heritage, an unease that has survived across generations since the First World War, when German-descended Australians in Hochkirch were treated badly. Fortunately that prejudice in the wider community is no longer present, however many locals of German descent continue to have an inferiority complex regarding their heritage and fail to comprehend the positive cultural, historical and commercial aspects of reinstatement of the original German name of our community."

The case of Tarrington/Hochkirch is a fascinating example of how important placenames can be to people's sense of their cultural identity. Perhaps the story of this placename is not yet finished!

You may view an extensive list of German placenames in Australia by visiting [www.germanaustralia.com](http://www.germanaustralia.com) and navigating your way via: Site Map > Names > Place Names.

*David Nutting*

# Photo gallery: Aboriginal Placenames Workshops

The series of workshops on Aboriginal placenames, outlined in the June 2004 issue of *Placenames Australia*, is well underway. To date workshops have been held in Yarrawarra (2-3 June), Canberra (12 June), Wellington (20-21 July), Armidale (28 July), Lightning Ridge (4 August). The workshops have been well-attended by Aboriginal community members, Elders, sites officers with the National Parks and Wildlife Service NSW, Local Aboriginal Land Councils and linguists.

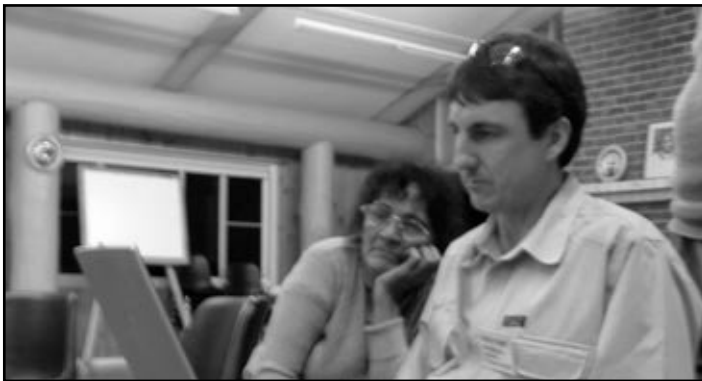
Each workshop involved discussions on researching placenames in various Aboriginal languages, archiving the information and proposing names for inclusion in the Geographical Names Register in NSW. Dr Jaky Troy (NSW Aboriginal Languages Research and Resource Centre) talked about placenames research in the context of language revitalisation. Greg Windsor (Geographical Names Board NSW) outlined the dual naming policy and Dr Michael Walsh (Linguistics Department, Sydney University) described the case study of dual names in Port Jackson. Flavia Hodges and David Blair described the work of the ANPS and how it can support community-based research projects. Dr Peter Orlovich gave a presentation at the Canberra workshop about various state and national archives.



*Peter Orlovich & Matthew Stewart*



*Sharon Anderson & Paul McLeod, looking at digitised images of manuscripts from the Royal Anthropological Society of Australasia.*



*Aunt Phyllis Darcy & Daryn McKenny, Awarbukarl Cultural Resource Centre*



*Suellyn Tighe, Sidney Chatfield & Maureen Sulter*



*Lesly Ryan, Nyngan LALC & Dulcie West, Wellington community member*



*Violet Lousick, Wellington community member*



*Michelle Torrens & Nick Reid*



*John Giacon, Don Lilliman & John Brown*



*Phillip Sullivan & Lawrence Clarke NPWS*



*Uncle Roy & Auntie June Barker*



*James Mitchell, Lightning Ridge community member & Greg McKellar, Muda Aboriginal Corporation, Bourke.*



*Johanna Parker, Murriwarri Artworks & Darlene Proberts, ANPS. Darlene has been the key co-ordinator of all of the workshops.*

*Many thanks to all of the local presenters at each of the workshops, including:*

- Dr Harold Koch – Australian National University – Linguistic Reconstruction of Placenames.
- Br Steve Morelli and Gary Williams – Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Cooperative – Gumbaynggirr Placenames.
- Suellyn Tighe, Sidney Chatfield & Maureen Sulter – Coonabarabran Language Program – Gamilaraay-English Bilingual Signage Work with the NPWS.
- Christopher Kirkbright – Alexandria Park Community School Aboriginal Languages Program – Wiradjuri Placenames and the Importance of Placenames to Local Communities.
- Michelle Torrens – Ngulling-gah Wundardun – The Work of the Bundjalung Culture and Heritage Centre
- Dr Nick Reid, Linguistics Department, University of New England – Creating Aboriginal Placenames in Armidale City.
- Amanda Lissarrague – Wonnarua Nation Aboriginal Corporation and the NSW ALRRC (Handbook project) – Borrowing Aboriginal words into English: lost phonemes, morphemes and meanings.
- John Giacon – Gamilaraay-Yuwaalaraay Language Program – Gamilaraay-Yuwaalaraay Placenames.
- Uncle Roy Barker – Elder – Aboriginal Placenames in the Lightning Ridge Area.
- Rohan Mason, Liz Smith, Rhonda Ashby – Goodooga & Lightning Ridge Central Schools – The Yuwaalaraay Language Program.

# Walgett: High Hills, Cracks in Ground or Meeting of the Waters

In Australia there are two systems of placenames – the introduced set developed by Europeans, and the underlying network of names traditionally used by Aboriginal people. This article is mainly concerned with placenames of Aboriginal origin that have been borrowed into the introduced naming system in the Walgett region of north-western NSW, and considers the process of investigating and reconstructing the original pronunciation and meaning of a very small selection of these placenames.

Colonists, explorers, settlers and surveyors often adopted Aboriginal placenames in their renaming of the Australian landscape. Many of the names for towns and geographical features and many, if not most, of the names of agricultural properties in the Walgett region are of Aboriginal origin. While these names are familiar to most residents and easily found on maps and signs, the placenames of the Indigenous network proper are not commonly known, but mostly remain only in oral tradition or in obscure documents and records.

The name Walgett is of Aboriginal origin, and the main roads to Walgett are through Burren Junction, Collarenebri, Brewarrina, Coonamble and Lightning Ridge – all except the last are of Aboriginal origin. If you take the minor roads you go through Cumborah or Carinda or Pilliga and Come-by-Chance – only ‘Come-by-Chance’ is definitely not of Aboriginal heritage. Along various roads you cross the Big Warrambool and the Namoi and Barwon River, and see roads to Gingie Mission - all these are placenames of Aboriginal origin.

Walgett is at the junction of a number of traditional Aboriginal language territories. To the east is Gamilaraay and to the north is Yuwaalaraay (both language names include the word for ‘no’, *gamil* and *waal*). These are closely related languages and have been well documented recently. To the south and west, along the Barwon River, is Ngiyambaa country. The language there is known as Wayilwan (from *wayil* ‘no’). This language is related to Gamilaraay-Yuwaalaraay

## PRONUNCIATION OF GY WORDS

Mostly pronounced as in English, except for:

a as in ‘**but**’,

aa as in ‘**cart**’

i as in ‘**bit**’,

ii as in ‘**peel**’

u as in ‘**book**’,

uu as in ‘**pool**’

ay as in ‘**say**’

aay as in ‘**eye**’ [sometimes as in ‘**boy**’]

dh is like ‘d’ but with the tongue between the teeth.

n.g only occurs in English in compound words such as **sun**glasses; it is an n sound followed by a g sound.

ngg is as in ‘**finger**’

ng is like the ‘ng’ in ‘**sing**’; English speakers generally find it quite strange to make this sound at the beginning of a word.

nh is like ‘n’ but with the tongue between the teeth.

rr is trilled [as in Italian ‘r’]

r as in English ‘**carry**’

w is often not pronounced when it begins a word and is followed by ‘u’

w is often not pronounced when it begins a word and is followed by ‘u’

(GY), but probably more closely related to Wiradjuri (from *wirra(a)y* ‘no’). There is little recent documentation on Wayilwan, so it is difficult to make informed comments about Wayilwan placenames. Accordingly most of the discussion below is about GY placenames.

Words in any language can change their meaning and pronunciation over time, and when languages (in this case Aboriginal languages and English) come into contact, words are often borrowed. Because of differences between the sound systems of the languages concerned, borrowed words typically include sounds, sound sequences and stress patterns that are altered when used by speakers of the receiving language. Often Aboriginal placenames were not heard clearly by non-Aboriginal people, who had difficulty in capturing unfamiliar sounds, or poorly remembered when it came to writing them down. As a result Aboriginal placenames adopted into the introduced system undergo a variety of changes, some sufficient to render them unrecognisable to a speaker of the source language. As a result, linguistic expertise is vital in interpreting placenames of Aboriginal origin.

For example, on the top north-west corner of the Walgett Shire map is a property called Tucki. It helps to know that it is pronounced ‘tuck-eye’. It is also important to know that in most Aboriginal languages there is no distinction between ‘t’ and ‘d’ (or between ‘p’ and ‘b’ or ‘k’ and ‘g’, i.e. no distinction between voiced and voiceless consonants). The spelling system that has been established for GY has chosen to use *d*, *b*, *g*, rather than *p*, *t*, *k* to represent this set of sounds. All languages have particular rules about how sounds are used to form words and in GY ‘d’ does not occur at the beginning of a word; the only ‘t/d’-like sound which does is ‘dh’. So (skipping over some of the details) in reconstructing the original Aboriginal placename ‘tu’ becomes ‘dha’ (remembering that ‘u’ in the first syllable is generally the ‘a’ as in ‘but’ sound), ‘ck’ becomes ‘g’, ‘i’ becomes ‘aay’ and the original name is probably *Dhagaay* referring to the ‘yellowbelly’ fish.

It also often happened that the meanings of Aboriginal words and names were narrowly or incorrectly recorded, and any special significance or association with a story not properly understood. In some



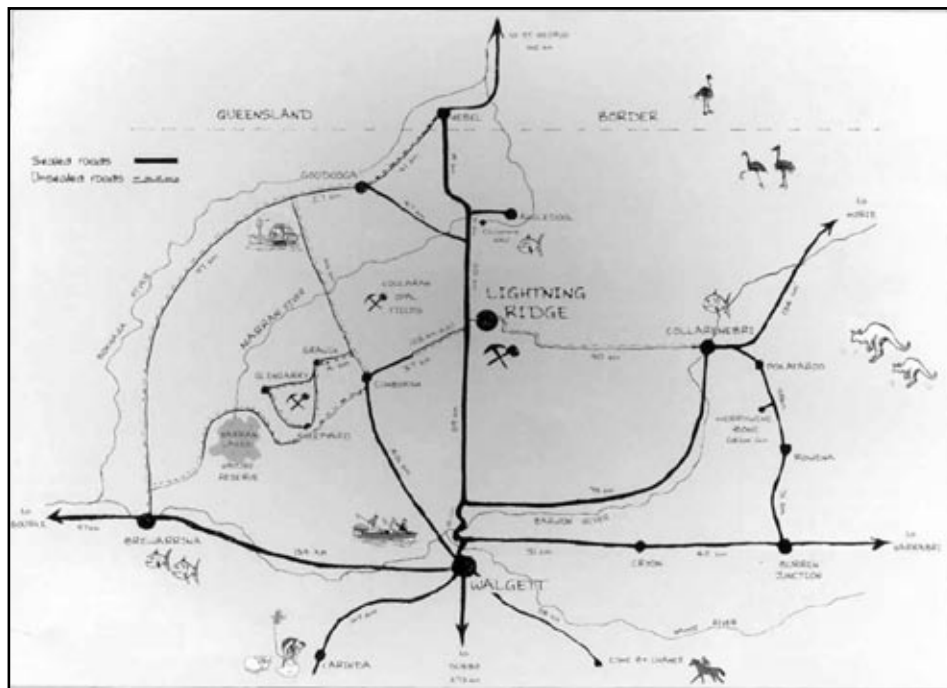
cases the knowledge of traditional stories, dreamtime events and meanings associated with placenames of Aboriginal origin has been lost. In other cases the meaning and origin of the name can be discovered through a combination of archival research and community-held knowledge.

As an example of the difficulties in attributing meanings to placenames of Aboriginal origin, consider the name of Walgett itself. It has been translated both as 'high hills' (Ridley 1875:26, RASA 2:13) and as 'cracks in ground' (RASA 1:66). The 'high hills' translation is unexpected, given the flatness of the country around Walgett. The meaning is now also often given as 'meeting of the waters', referring to the nearby junction of the Namoi and Barwon rivers, but this seems to be a recent interpretation. The original pronunciation of the word is also uncertain. Ridley transcribes it as *Wolger*, which seems to indicate a long final vowel. In current GY orthography it is rendered *Walgiirr*. On a recently transcribed Wayilwan tape the name is pronounced *Waalgiirr*, but no meaning is given.

Another example of uncertainty in meaning is a property near Walgett, Ulah. It was long assumed to represent Yuwaalaraay *wuulaa* 'bearded dragon' (the 'w' is generally not pronounced when at the beginning of a word and followed by 'u'). However, it has recently been discovered that the RASA manuscripts (1:373) give the meaning as 'ripple on the water', thus introducing uncertainty about its etymology.

Looking at the names of some of the other main towns in the region, Burren Junction possibly derives from GY *barran* 'boomerang'; Collarenebri is from GY *Galariinbaraay*, composed of *galariin* 'gum tree blossom' and the suffix *-baraay* 'with, having'. Brewarrina is from the Wayilwan language and is probably constructed from the name of a wattle tree (perhaps *biri*) and the verb *waranha* 'is standing'. Coonamble is another Wayilwan placename *Guna-m-bil*, 'faeces-covered with'. Warrambool is from the GY word *warrambul*, which describes the channels where the river overflows during floods. The name Namoi may come from *ngamaay* 'a variety of acacia tree', or perhaps from *ngamu* 'breast' because the river is curved like a woman's breast.

Gingie Mission near Walgett derives from the Yuwaalaraay and Wayilwan language. The original placename was *Giin.gii*, which means 'froth' and refers to the foam that appears on the river there during



floods. The name is currently pronounced *Ginggi* or *Ginggi* by some residents, keeping something of the original, but also clearly changed.

Near to Gingie is an important waterhole which is the start of a dreaming storyline that extends to the Cumborah spring, about 50 km northwest. The story is about the formation of an underground river that surfaces in a number of places. The name begins with Gamilaraay and Wayilwan *gali* 'water', but the second part was unclear – it was variously rendered *gurrana*, *gurinha*, *guruna*. It was not until someone who knew Wangaaaybuwan Ngiyambaa (closely related to Wayilwan) was consulted that the name for the waterhole was confirmed as *Gali Gurunha* 'the water is going in'.

Another site associated with a story is *Murrugu Walaay* ('She-oak camp') on the Castlereagh Highway a few kilometres north of Lightning Ridge. The she-oaks there mark the end point of a storyline that comes from the north, and the site where a group of people were transformed into she-oaks.

Along the road from Walgett towards Collarenebri, the first eight properties are Winooka, Euminbah, Kalamos, Bairnkine, Woora, Tara, Dundalla and Kyeema. Of these only Kalamos is definitely non-Aboriginal. Of the rest the only one whose meaning is fairly certain is Woora (pronounced *wura*), translated as 'battle'. Perhaps the others were just 'names' with no other meanings, or perhaps their elements have not been recorded in any of the existing language materials, or the current placename has altered so much that

it is unrecognisable, or the word of origin is from a distant language brought to the Walgett region by a property owner.

Much of the current information about GY names is summarised in the *Gamilaraay Yuwaalaraay Yuwaalayaay Dictionary*, which lists over 100 placenames. Most of the information is reliable but as the preceding discussion has illustrated often apparently credible information is called into question during the process of research. For example, *Gundhimayan* is the current orthographic rendering of what appears as 'Gundamaine' in Ridley's *Kamilaroi and other Australian Languages* (1875:26). He translates this placename as meaning 'house on the stream', and in preparing the dictionary it was assumed to refer to the Condamine River. However, it has since been pointed out by Ian Sim that the river was named by explorer Allan Cunningham after Thomas de la Condamine, aide de camp to Governor Darling. So now begins the search for the location of 'Gundamaine'.

*John Giacon, teacher-linguist  
Gamilaraay-Yuwaalaraay Language Program*

#### References:

- RASA, Royal Anthropological Society of Australasia manuscripts. 1890s-1910s. Records held by the Mitchell Library. Digitised by the Geographical Names Board of NSW, 2004.
- Ash, Anna, John Giacon and Amanda Lissarrague. 2003. *Gamilaraay Yuwaalaraay Yuwaalayaay Dictionary*. Alice Springs: IAD Press.
- Ridley, Rev. W. 1875. *Kamilaroi and other Australian Languages I*. Sydney: Government Printer.
- Sim, Ian (ed. John Giacon). 1999. *Yuwaalayaay, The Language of the Narran River*. Walgett: Walgett High School.
- Walgett Shire, 2000. Rural Property Map. Walgett: Walgett Shire.

that this name might have something to do with the island being raised above the sea. Vectis is mentioned in Ptolemy's Geography of the second century and in the Ravenna Cosmology of the seventh century.

Major Firebrace was subsequently honoured in the naming of Horsham's main street as Firebrace Street in the original town survey of 1849. In the 1860s Vectis was broken up into four runs, including one called Arapiles. The name Vectis is still preserved in places such as the localities of Vectis, Vectis East and Vectis South, the parish of Vectis and in the Vectis Station Road, which are all located in the general area between Horsham and Natimuk.

During the 1870s, the agricultural frontier (and along with it closer settlement) reached the Wimmera and wheat-fields began to encircle Mount Arapiles. As the mountain was not fit for

recreation, as long as the designation of the mountain as a timber reserve remained in place. At this time the locals had a plaque made, and installed it in an area called The Bluff, commemorating the 'discovery' of the mountain by Major Mitchell.

In 1936 a number of Victorian communities celebrated the centenary of Mitchell's journey of exploration through "Australia Felix". At Natimuk, persistent endeavours by the locals resulted in the Forest Commission granting formal approval for the creation of a recreation reserve of 18 acres at Mount Arapiles (to be controlled by a committee of management), in which ornamental trees could be planted and memorial gates erected. The memorial gates were formally opened on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1936, the actual centenary of the day Mitchell climbed to the highest point on Mount Arapiles. During this same year a number of pine trees were planted in the reserve, resulting

Park recognises the centenary of the arrival of the First Fleet at Sydney Cove.

Following the success in establishing Centenary Park (the word Arapiles was soon dropped from popular usage in talking about the reserve), the local community wrote in 1937 to the Minister for Lands and Forests, Albert Lind, requesting that a tourist road be built to the summit of the mountain.

The Minister visited the mountain on April 21<sup>st</sup> of that year, and described the view from the summit as "the most beautiful panorama of fertile land in the world". This perception of the mountain as an elevated point to survey the agricultural bounty of the surrounding wheatlands, can be contrasted with the subsequent perception of rockclimbers who look upwards at challenging rock-faces. Funding was promised, the road constructed, and Lind returned on October 30<sup>th</sup> to officiate at the formal opening. Lind was a long-serving member of the Victorian State Parliament for Gippsland East; a national park in that region honours his name.

During the 1950s there was renewed local agitation to change Mount Arapiles from a timber reserve into a national park. The Forests Commission responded in 1956, by designating 16 hectares in the south-east corner as the Mount Arapiles Wildflower Reserve. In 1962, another 2 hectares in the north of the reserve were designated as the Mount Arapiles Picnic Ground. All of this rather piecemeal action did not satisfy many of the locals who continued to push for land usage that would preserve the natural environment. But this change would have to wait until the 1970s/80s. As part of each change in land usage new names were created and some names abandoned.

As the mountain was increasingly opened up for recreational purposes, various features on and around the mountain were named. Apart from those features already mentioned, locally applied names include The Basin and Basin Creek (descriptive names), The Bluff (descriptive), Cathedral Rocks (descriptive), Flagstaff Hill (where Mitchell is supposed to have erected a flagpole - interestingly enough, this flagpole is not mentioned in Mitchell's

**... The most romantic of the aforementioned names is Melville Cave. It is said that Captain Melville used the mountain in the 1850s to spy for gold escorts to hold up; he would then withdraw to the cave to hide from the troopers. It is also said that a billy-can full of his golden loot is buried on the mountain waiting for some lucky person to dig up....**

agricultural purposes it was designated as a timber reserve (and subsequently a "rabbit reserve" when in the 1885 angry farmers petitioned for the mountain to be fenced off from the surrounding farms!). Many of the selectors were of German ancestry, coming from the Hamilton area in Western Victoria and South Australia. This German influence can be seen in some of the street names at Natimuk – Schmidt, Schurmann and Sudholz Streets

From the earliest days of closer settlement, Mount Arapiles became a popular picnic destination with the locals, and subsequently with people from further afield as rail and then motor transport facilitated access to Natimuk - getting to the mountain was another thing! In 1912 the Shire of Arapiles sought approval from the Conservator of Forests for 20 acres of the timber reserve to be designated as either a national park or a recreation reserve. The Conservator subsequently agreed in 1913 to an area being used for

in this particular area subsequently becoming known as "the Pines".

The public meeting called in 1936 to name the new reserve did not pass without a little controversy. Proposals were put forward to name the area Lockwood Park (after Alfred Lockwood, the owner and editor of the West Wimmera Mail, and a strong advocate for the reserve) and Sudholz Park (after Anton Sudholz, a member of a pioneering farming family). In order to resolve the matter, it was decided to adopt the name Arapiles Centenary Park. This story is outlined in the autobiography of Allan Lockwood (Alfred's son), which gives readers some insight into the "local politics" that can be associated with name selection; naming is rarely, if ever, a "neutral" process. The words *centenary*, *centennial* and *bicentennial* have been incorporated into a number of Australian placenames, although the actual anniversary being commemorated can vary. For example, Sydney's Centennial

book), the Goat Track (a rough foot track to the summit), The Gorge (descriptive), McClures Rocks (after a local family), Melville Cave (after the infamous bushranger), The Organ Pipes (descriptive) and Taylors Rock (after a local family). I have not been able to ascertain when these names were applied and by whom - senior members of the local community just say that they have long been in local usage - and to the locals Mount Arapiles has been affectionately known as "the Mount" for as long as anyone can remember. Similarly, Natimuk Creek is known to locals as "the Creek", and Lake Natimuk as "the Lake".

The most romantic of the aforementioned names is Melville Cave. It is said that Captain Melville used the mountain in the 1850s to spy for gold escorts to hold up; he would then withdraw to the cave to hide from the troopers. It is also said that a billy-can full of his golden loot is buried on the mountain waiting for some lucky person to dig up. Even though Melville is known to have been active in the area, these stories are probably a mixture of myth and fact. There is no reliable documentary evidence of Melville living on Mount Arapiles, or holding up the gold escort. However, in the memoirs of James Hamilton, *Pioneering Days in Western Victoria*, he recorded how Melville robbed a digger travelling from the goldfields of around 175 ozs of gold at Maryvale Station, south-west of Arapiles - no wonder people still snoop around "the Mount" for the fabled billy-can!

The various caves, lookouts and rocks in Australia named after bushrangers, demonstrate that it has been possible to name features after convicted criminals. The romance of the bushranging era has sweetened the reality of their anti-social behaviour (this will be the subject of a future article). Melville died in the Melbourne Gaol under mysterious circumstances (a red spotted scarf around his neck) after serving four of the 32-year sentence brought down by judge Redmond Barry (the same man who later sentenced Ned Kelly to hang).

Chris Richards

## On the WEB



**T**oponymic research is relevant to many different organisations, projects and fields of study and, as a result, interesting snippets on placenames can often be discovered on web sites devoted to other topics. Here are several such web pages featuring material on indigenous placenames from Canada, New Zealand and Australia.

<http://www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/ynlc/YNLInfo/PlaceNam.html>

This page briefly outlines the work the Yukon Native Language Centre is undertaking to research and document placenames in local aboriginal languages. The Centre staff works closely with Yukon elders to record placenames and their cultural and historical significance.

[http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/english/resources\\_e/placenames.shtml](http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/english/resources_e/placenames.shtml)

This page is part of some of the Māori resources which appear on the Māori Language Commission site. It features a lovely map of New Zealand with some of the more commonly used Māori placenames, and also includes a link to a list of more Māori placenames.

[http://brisbane-stories.powerup.com.au/maggil/02mag\\_pages/mag\\_ab-origines21.htm](http://brisbane-stories.powerup.com.au/maggil/02mag_pages/mag_ab-origines21.htm)

This page is part of site that publishes information on community projects initiated and funded by the Brisbane City Council. It was constructed as part of a project on the wildlife, history and people of Moggill Creek in the western suburbs of Brisbane. It briefly discusses important Aboriginal sites in the region and includes a map of some Aboriginal placenames in the land around Moggill Creek.

## American Name Society Annual Meeting

**T**he 2004 annual meeting of ANS will be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 27-30 December 2004. It will again be concurrent with the Modern Language Association annual conference. The annual meeting will include the society's business meeting and banquet, as well as numerous papers,

panels, presentations, and discussion groups on all onomastic topics and in all onomastic areas, (anthroponyms/personal names, toponyms/placenames, literary names, and commercial/corporate names).

For details see <http://www.wtsn.binghamton.edu/ANS/>

## I Quote

*To my mind, the immigrant who disgraces an Australian river, or mountain, or town-site, or locality of any kind, with the name of his own insanitary European birthplace is guilty of a presumption which amounts to unpardonable impudence. And there seems to be no limit to this effrontery.*

Joseph Furphy. *The Buln-buln and the Brolga*, first published 1948. Page 57 of the 2001 edition.

## Placenames Puzzle No. 11:

The following clues reveal placenames which are also those of occupations (disregard spelling). For example, (TAS) They dig and weed beneath the rounded window ...GARDENERS BAY

1. (NSW) Bearers of luggage at a hotel withdraw before the enemy
2. (NSW) Handel's were very harmonious
3. (NSW) Rod and line in hand, it is his Garden of Eden
4. (VIC) A private in the artillery
5. (VIC) They used to build canals in UK, now they are good at finding the way
6. (VIC) Vegetarians are unlikely to patronise these tradesmen on a long, narrow crest
7. (VIC) He was mad at the teaparty
8. (NT) The Sagittarian winner of the first two Melbourne Cups
9. (ACT) Ordered by the Good Monarch to stand at his side
10. (ACT/SA) Cries his wares in the streets
11. (ACT) Keats immortalised his translation of Homer
12. (SA) He has Sir Robert Peel to thank for his job at the sharp end
13. (SA) Once had a nightly job of patrolling the streets or guarding the sheep, but now remains in overnight at a cricket match
14. (SA) At this point is in charge of rigging, anchors and cables on a merchant vessel
15. (SA/QLD) Did the late boss of Sun-hill sell candles?
16. (SA) With the walrus in the historic area on Sydney Cove
17. (SA/ACT) One is sufficient. Too many ruin soup.
18. (WA) They need a lot of dough where Jack and Jill went
19. (TAS) If you pay up you may call the tune by their small stream
20. (TAS) An early banker, now a jeweller

- ANSWERS:
1. Porters Retreat 2. Blacksmiths
  3. Fishermans Paradise 4. Gunner
  5. Navigators 6. Butchers Ridge
  7. Hatrah 8. Archer 9. Page 10. Hawker
  11. Chapman 12. Policemans Point
  13. Watchman 14. Boatswains Point
  15. Chandler 16. Carpenter Rocks
  17. Cook 18. Bakers Hill
  19. Pipers Brook 20. Goldsmith

## Naming Fairmile Cove



You might not think that there were many parts of Sydney Harbour still unnamed. But last month the Minister for Lands, Tony Kelly (pictured), officially named Fairmile Cove, near Mortlake, at an on-site ceremony with the blue waters of Sydney's waterway as a backdrop. The cove was named in honour of the Fairmile class of navy vessels which were constructed there at a small shipyard during World War 2. Many veterans, members of the Fairmile Association, were present at the ceremony. The ANPS was represented by David Blair and by Bill Noble (an ex-Navy man as well as an onomastics buff).

## Mailing List and Volunteer Research

If you'd like to receive the ANPS newsletter and/or receive information about how to become a Research Friend of the ANPS, please complete the form below and send by post or fax; or email the details to:

Susan Poetsch  
 ANPS  
 Division of Humanities  
 Macquarie University  
 North Ryde, Sydney  
 NSW 2109  
 Fax: (02) 9850 8240  
 Email: [spoetsch@hmn.mq.edu.au](mailto:spoetsch@hmn.mq.edu.au)

Name and/or organisation:.....

.....  
 .....

Address:.....

.....

Phone: .....Fax:.....

Email: .....

- Please add me to the newsletter mailing list
- Please send me information about becoming a Research Friend
- Please remove me from the newsletter mailing list
- Please note my change of address (new address above).