

Placenames Australia

Newsletter of the Australian National Placenames Survey

an initiative of the Australian Academy of Humanities, supported by the Geographical Names Board of NSW



The low down on *Yo Yo Creek*

Yo Yo Creek flows for about 57km east-west just south of Augathella and north of Charleville (Qld), and runs into the Warrego River near the Mitchell Highway. Yo Yo Creek (South Branch) runs almost nor-nor-west, parallel to the Landsborough Highway and then runs into Yo Yo Creek. 'Yo Yo Park' station is situated on Yo Yo Creek (South Branch). The traditional owners of the region are the Gunggari/Kuungkari people, who speak the Bidjara/Gungabula language (a Pama-Nyungan, Maric language). I came across this interesting creek name whilst researching the place-naming practices of Australia's nineteenth century explorers.

During the 1860s a so-called 'Native Mounted Police' camp was established on the creek near Augathella and lasted for about 15 years. It consisted of two sub-inspectors, two constables and six indigenous troopers (Figure 1). Whitworth's *Bailliere's Queensland Gazetteer and Road Guide* (1876) contains the following entry for Yo-Yo Creek:

YO-YO CREEK (Warrego district) is an E. tributary of the Warrego river, rising in the Long downs and flowing W. into the main stream at Reynella. It waters the Dalgaddy block of runs in its course. Mesozoic shales, sandstones, and limestones.

An enquiry at 'Yo Yo Park' (Augathella) as to the possible meaning of the name resulted in an intriguing response. The owner, Mr W.R. Tomlinson, explained local folklore



Figure 1. *Native Mounted Police Camp on Yo Yo Creek (c. 1864)* [Source: FROM THE VAULT - 'Roughing it'. Queensland Police Media]

had it that the name was the result of the tendency of the water level in the creek to rapidly rise and fall again, in other words, the water level 'yo-yos' swiftly. Evidence for this is provided by W.R.O. Hill (an ex-Police Magistrate and Gold Warden) when he did a two-year stint (1866-68) as an Acting Sub-Inspector in the Native Mounted Police at the Yo Yo Creek Camp. He reported:

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From the Editor



A word of thanks, an invitation and an apology... Firstly, thank you to those of our supporters who have renewed their membership for the 2018-19 financial year. We value your expressed support and are encouraged by it. Secondly, if you are able, please do come to our AGM—see our notice below.

And third, an apology for an unfulfilled promise. Jan Tent's article in June about how cardinal compass points work within toponyms has generated some helpful responses (see *Notes and Queries* below). So much so, in fact, that Jan's promised subsequent article on the matter will have to wait until December—we didn't have room to do justice to the question this time!

David Blair
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Annual General Meeting Placenames Australia (Inc.)

1 November 2018 2pm

Room 558, Linguistics Dept, Macquarie University

with a presentation by David Blair and Jan Tent

'Methods of placenaming: a revised typology'

We are in the process of revising the current ANPS typology of placenaming methods to take account of recent developments:

'Motivations for naming'

www.anps.org.au/upload/ANPSTechPaper2.pdf

Everyone is welcome to attend and to participate in the discussion. It would be helpful to let the Secretary <secretary@anps.org.au> know if you intend to join us. Nominations for next year's Management Committee are also welcome!

Notes and queries

Placenames with compass points

Col Kohlagen has responded to Jan's request for reponses in our June issue. Col was principal at a public school at Wagga Wagga—and its original name was *Wagga Wagga South Public School*. After progressing through *South Wagga Wagga*, the name finally settled on *South Wagga*. We hope to give Col's full account of this, along with Jan's promised follow-up, in December. Jenny Griffiths has also responded with some information about Department of Education policy on compass-point naming of schools, so we'll be able to return to this in our December issue.

Geonames + Adjectivals:

David Nutting has asked about the adjectival forms for the names of, for instance, Australian States and Territories. Is it OK to talk about 'New South Welsh'? Can we use 'West Australian' as the adjective for

Western Australia? We asked Jan Tent if he'd like to give us some thoughts on this, and he's promised to do so for our December issue.

Tungamull

Jeffrey Hawke has helped us with a query from September 2016 about the origin of Tungamull (Qld). He's tracked down a reference in the Daily Northern Argus (11 January 1889) which reports that the railway station known as Cawarral 'should be known as Tungamul... a native name.'

Mt Evelyn

Karen Phillips has found an antedating for the County of Evelyn (her article in our previous issue, June '18, p.3): although the relevant Gazette was published on 10 January 1849, the Governor's proclamation was dated 29 December 1848. As Karen says, it might be only a fortnight but it puts the date back a year!

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...The low down on *Yo Yo Creek*

...from page 1

I remained in charge of Reedy Lake until it was sold, when I applied for and got an appointment as Acting Sub-Inspector in the Native Mounted Police, at this time under the Commissioner of Police, Mr. D.T. Seymour.

I was first ordered to the Yo Yo Creek barracks, forty miles from Charleville, a queer feature of the creek being that after a heavy fall of rain it came down in a solid high wall of water, and woe betide any unfortunate who happened to be camping too near its banks. (Hill, 1907: 36)

So, at first reckoning, this seems a perfectly logical and reasonable etymology of the toponym. However, it turns out to be a classic case of a *post hoc* folk etymology, because the use of *yo-yo* in its modern sense of a toy or something 'going up-and-down' could not have been known in the mid-nineteenth century when the creek was named.



Figure 2. Greek vase painting—Boy playing with a terracotta yo-yo, Attic kylix, c. 440BC [Source: Staatliche Museum Preussischer Kulturbesitz Antikemuseum, Berlin]

According to Oliver's 'History of the Yo-Yo', the yo-yo most likely originated in China. The first historical depiction of it was in Greece around the year 500 B.C. (Figure 2). In France, during the late eighteenth century it was known as a *l'emigrette* ('one who leaves the country'). Another name at this time was *de Coblenz*, which was a city to which many French fled during the French Revolution and Reign of Terror. The yo-yo arrived in Paris in 1791, and went by the name of *joujou* ('toy') *de Normandie*. Oliver claims some believe that this term may be the possible source for the modern American term *yo-yo*. The English had various names for it during the nineteenth century, including *bandalore*, *quiz*, *incroyable* (lit. 'incredible' but referring to 'a French dandy or macaroni'). The earliest citation for the noun *yo-yo* in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) is taken from the December 1915 issue of the *Philippine Craftsman* (pp. 363, 364); and the earliest OED citation of the term as an adjective with the sense of something 'going up-and-down' or 'to-and-fro' is 1958; as a verb the earliest citation is 1967. Oliver cites the 1916 *Scientific American Supplement* referring to the toy for the first time in an article entitled 'Filipino Toys', which showed it and named it a *yo-yo*.

It is generally agreed that the origin of the term is uncertain, although its first documented appearance early last century in Philippine contexts has led scholars to favour a source from that part of the world.

The name of the creek was bestowed much earlier than that—by Edmund Kennedy during his expedition in 1848 to ascertain the course of the Victoria River (see Figure 3,

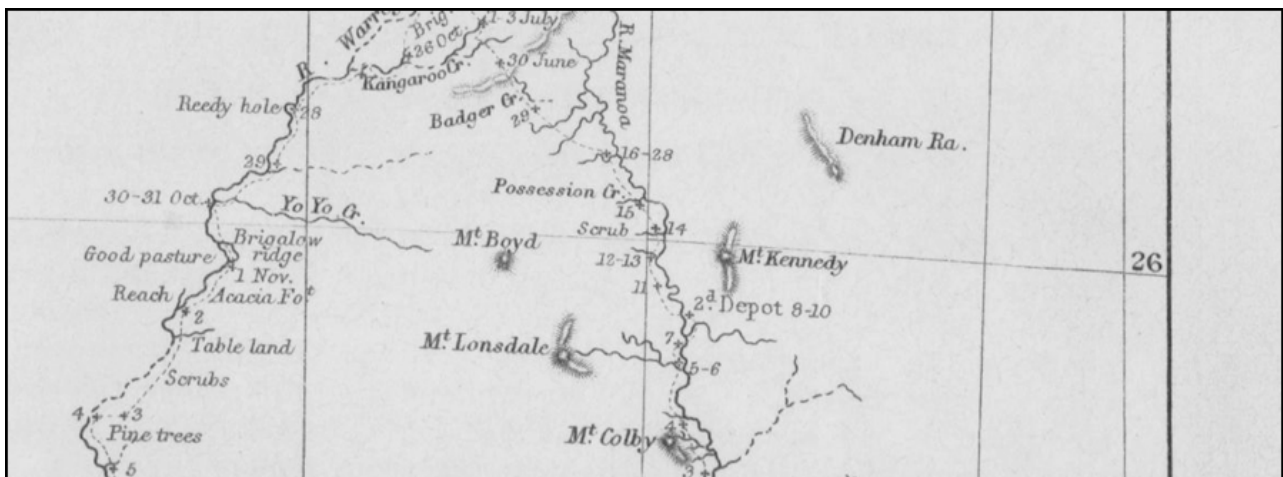


Figure 3. Section of Australia. Map to illustrate the Journal of a Route along the RIVERS VICTORIA & WARREGO by E.B. Kennedy Esqr. 1847. (Source: Kennedy, 1852)

continued next page

The low down on...

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above). His journal entries show a rather different motivation for the name:

30th [October] Travelled down the river on a general S.S.W. course. At about 8 miles crossed Yo-Yo Creek, and followed it down to its junction with the river under a brigalow ridge on its left bank. Encamped on the W. side of the river, at the junction, in lat. 25° 57' 55". Marked this camp K/XV. We disturbed a party of five natives in the Yo-Yo Creek, who ran away at first, but returned after the tents were pitched. Taking Harry with me, I went up to them, and found them to consist of an old man, his gin, and four sons; they were a most orderly set, but at first to everything we said to them they replied Yo-yo, by which perhaps they meant to signify their assent to all our interrogations. We exchanged presents and, although I was not able to obtain much information from them, I found that their language was the same as that of the natives of the desert. At sunset we parted company, we returning to our camp, and they to theirs on the opposite side of the river. Kennedy (1852: 258-259)

You will notice that Kennedy spells it with a hyphen, but the official toponym is without. His assumption that *yo-yo* meant 'assent' is not only logical, but correct. This is substantiated by the following.

Curr's *The Australian race* is a three-volume collection of notes and word lists of many Australian indigenous languages. Volume 1 contains a table of 'common and widespread Australian words'. Part of this table (from p.8) is reproduced below.

Table 1

Aboriginal word	Signification	Remarks
Ea, E-ee, Eeyo, Ni, Nea, Ye, Yi, Yu, Yo, Yoi, Ya, Nga, Ngoc, Ko, Kow	Yes	Words of this description, all probably derived from the same root, are found in not less than three-fourths of our languages.

As Curr states, these words are most likely cognates (i.e. words that have a common etymological origin).¹ Many of the languages in which these cognates are found are in Queensland and northern NSW. Four in particular are of interest because they occur in the region of Augathella, Charleville and Yo Yo Creek (Table 2).

The Peak Downs district and Logan Downs Station have *yaow* as well as the reduplicated *yo-yo* entered for 'yes'. In addition, we also find *yo* 'yes' in the Djapu language (a Yolngu dialect, north-east Arnhem Land) (Morphy,

1983: 183), and the reduplicated *yiyi* 'yes' in the Nyawaygi language of north-eastern Queensland, near Ingham (Dixon, 1983: 511).

Table 2

Region	Word(s) for 'yes'
Maranoa River	yo
Balonne, Nerran etc. Rivers	yo, geero, keer
Weir and Moonie Rivers	yo
Upper Warrego and Paroo Rivers	yoe
Upper Paroo River	yoko
Warrego and Paroo Rivers	yowie, ngowa

Reduplicated forms of the 'yes' and 'no' lexemes are common throughout indigenous languages (see Reclus, 1894; Clark, 1996; Wafer & Lissarrague, 2008: 33; Horgen, 2004; Ash, 2009). For instance, in the border region of the Lower Murray in Victoria there are various clan and language names that are derived from their respective words for 'no'. Wafer and Lissarrague (2008: 33) refer to them as the 'no-no' languages, many of which are listed by Clark (1996) and Horgen (2004), and include the following: Barababaraba, Bewadjali, Boon wurrung, Buibadjali, Dadidadi, Daung wurrung, Djadja wurrung, Jabulajabula, Jardwadjali, Jarijari, Jodajoda, Knen knen wurrung, Kwartkwart, Ladjiladji, Tharrthi-Tharrthi, Wadiwadi, Wathawurrung, Wembawemba, Wergaia, Woiwurrung, Yari-Yari, Yitha-Yitha, Yorta-Yorta and Yuyu.

Dixon (1980: 42) reports that 'the most frequent linguistic form to be used as the basis for a language name in Australia is that meaning "no"'. Wafer and Lissarrague (2008: 336) note that central NSW language names are generally formed from the word for 'no' plus a comitative suffix (e.g. *-juurray*; (*b*)*araay* 'with, having'). However, with the east Queensland and NSW border languages, the names of some appear to be formed with the word for 'yes' (e.g. Bigambal/Bigambul, *biga* 'yes' + *-bal* 'those who say...') (see also Reclus, 1894: 90). They also note (p. 34) that almost all the language names associated with Lower Murray region in Victoria that begin with *Ng* (i.e. [ŋ], for which Moorhouse (1846 [1962]) gives *ngaiyai* and *ngaiye* as words for 'yes'), such as Ngayawang, suggests they may be derived from the words for the affirmative.

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Of course, *Yes-Yes* is an unlikely candidate for a toponym, and it is quite clear Kennedy derived his placename from the local term for the affirmative and not from a clan or language name as highlighted above. However, Kennedy's journal entry of 31 October is intriguing in that his use of the term could almost be seen as a clan name:

31st [October] Obtained distances of moon and Mars, and sun and moon, also sights for time. Took Welch and Harry with me to the summit of a ridge bearing S. 70° W., distant from the tents 3½ miles. The view was not extended, but Mount Boyd bore E. 5° S., and a more distant range N. 80° E. In the evening our Yo-yo friends paid us another visit. I showed them the camp, and gave them some bread and tea, but they used both very sparingly. I have remarked that all the natives we have met are scrupulous in tasting anything we give them. [...] Kennedy (1852: 259)

My point in highlighting the 'no-no' and 'yes-yes' clan and language names is to illustrate the ubiquitousness of reduplicated forms for indigenous lexemes for affirmation and negation; as indeed they are in most, if not all, languages.² It is hardly surprising then that Kennedy came across a term such as *yo-yo* and used it creatively for a toponym.

JanTent

My sincere thanks to Jim Wafer (University of Newcastle) and David Nash (ANU) for providing me with valuable comments and references. Also thanks to Helen Slatyer (Macquarie University) and her student Stéphanie Muller for translating and interpreting relevant sections of Reclus (1894).

Endnotes

¹ Cognates do not need to have the same meaning, which may have changed as the languages developed separately; conversely, they also do not need to have a similar or the same form.

² Apart from a grammatical function, reduplication is also often used as a device for emphasis.

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Yo Yo Creek's connections

As Jan Tent noted, Yo Yo Creek is associated with several other local names:

Warrego River: Surveyor-General Thomas Mitchell noted this, on 11 September 1846, as 'an Aboriginal name'.

Augathella: originally the name of a pastoral run (reported to be a word meaning 'camp at a waterhole', language unknown). In 1883 the name of a nearby settlement, Ellangowan, was changed to Augathella.

Charleville: named in 1863-4 by Lands Commissioner W.T. Tully. Irishman Tully was born in Dublin, and Charleville is the name of a town in County Cork.

What's in a name?

Bilpin is a rural locality to the north-west of Sydney. Quiet during the week, it tends to be rather busier during weekends and holidays because it's situated on Bells Line of Road, one of the main routes to the Blue Mountains.

Most of those who pass through this small settlement would be surprised to know that it wasn't always called Bilpin—for a period of about twenty years it was known as **Norwood**.

In the mid-1890s Gillman Norwood acquired a 100-acre property opposite Mountain Lagoon Road where Bilpin Village now exists. This acreage, Bilpin 9,¹ had been given to Edward Grimes in 1830 as one of a number of grants to soldiers of the Veterans Company after two years of service. Grimes disposed of the property around 1850.² The origin of the name *Bilpin* is not known, although one well-known source reports it was an Indigenous word that was 'the name of a mountain'.³

When Gillman Norwood acquired the property in about 1894, it was an established orchard. He named it 'Norwood'. In October 1899 Norwood was appointed the Postmaster and the office was named Norwood Post Office. The area then became known by that name even though the name *Bilpin* had been used (despite misspellings such as *Belpin* and *Bilpen*) since the earliest survey.⁴



Norwood School of Arts, c. 1900—used as a public school and for church services. The portable organ is being wheeled away after church. (Photo: courtesy of Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society)

In 1909 the Norwood School of Arts was built with money partly raised by public subscription from the local residents. It was '¼ mile on the other side of Norwood Post Office' and was 'commodious' and with 'a fairly well

~ ~ Bilpin or Norwood?

stocked library and cosy reading room'.⁵ The building fronted the old Bells Line of Road, now called Bilpin School Lane, on the site which was to become Bilpin Public School.



Hanlon's Store & Post Office on Bells Line of Road (2017). Est. 1927 and still owned by the family. (Photo courtesy of K-C HS)

The School of Arts was also used for the original school. This was a subsidised school (not officially a government school, though a subsidy from the government was paid per pupil to support the teacher) and was known as Norwood School.

In 1914, to avoid confusion with Norwood in South Australia, the Post Office name was changed back to *Bilpin*. According to local recollection, Mr Norwood was rather miffed that his name was no longer used.⁶

Gillman Norwood sold 'Norwood' in late 1915 to George Richards of 'Belmore Lodge', Kurrajong Heights, and left the district. In 1917 Norwood Polling Station was officially renamed *Bilpin* and, by the time the school was upgraded to Bilpin Provisional School in 1927, the name *Norwood* had gone out of use.

Endnotes

¹ Bilpin Parish Map, 1889

² Hungerford, Meredyth. *Bilpin the apple country: including Mount Tomah, Mount Tootie and Mountain Lagoon: a local history*. Bilpin, NSW: Meredyth Hungerford with assistance from the Bilpin District Womens Association, 1995

³ McCarthy, F.D. *New South Wales Aboriginal place names and euphonious words, with their meanings*. Sydney: [The Australian Museum] V.C.N. Blight, Government Printer, 1963

⁴ Hungerford, p. 61

⁵ *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 30/6/1910

⁶ Hungerford, p. 141

Jenny Griffiths

Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society

To the heart of Fiji

We have already discussed the four largest of Fiji's islands: Vitilevu 'big island in the east', Vanualevu 'big land', Taveuni 'source of water' (originally referring to only a small part of the island), and Kadavu 'west wind, west'. For the next three—the only remaining islands with an area of over 100km²—we move to the Lomaiviti group, the archipelago of eastern Fiji lying between Vitilevu and Lau, variously translated as 'the heart of Fiji' or 'the centre of Fiji', where we find Gau, Ovalau and Koro, respectively the fifth, sixth and seventh largest islands in the archipelago.

So we turn to **Gau**, in southeast Lomaiviti (recall that in Fijian spelling 'g' represents the velar nasal 'ng' [ŋ], as in the English 'singer'). It was probably the first island in Fiji to be described in any detail by European observers; and since those observations are pertinent to what I believe to be the etymology of Gau, I will quote them at some length.

Captain William Bligh, set adrift after the famous Mutiny on the *Bounty* in Tonga in May 1789, passed through Fiji on his way to Timor in what is now Indonesia. He sailed fairly close to Gau, but could only note that it 'appeared very fertile'. On his return voyage to the Pacific in HMS *Providence* in 1792, however, he was able to take his time and write about the places he visited in some detail.

This time Bligh was able to approach much closer to the east coast, though without landing, and wrote that it 'has a very fruitful appearance... a fine cultivated land and numerous inhabitants... It was cultivated far up into the mountains, in a regular and pretty manner. Fine plantation walks and shades of coconut and other trees were rendered more picturesque by the dwellings that were among them.'

Fellow traveller and artist George Tobin was even more effusive: 'From the fertile and picturesque aspect of the island it acquired the name of Paradise [a name that has not survived, PG]... is diversified by hill and dale... the valley and sides of the hills being laid out in plantations, fenced in the most compact manner. Plantains were in great abundance and, if our glasses did not deceive us, a great proportion of yams and sweet potatoes.'

Although neither Bligh nor Tobin make specific mention of them, I have no doubt that the 'regular and pretty cultivations far up into the mountains' would have included not only yam and sweet potato gardens, but

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also irrigated taro terraces, which are truly 'pretty' to behold and to this day are still a feature of the landscape in some parts of the paradise island of Gau.

The relevant parts of these descriptions are 'cultivations far up into the mountains' (Bligh) and 'diversified by hill and dale... the sides of the hills being laid out in plantations' (Tobin), since they suggest that they perceived the slopes of Gau as relatively gentle, and therefore cultivated up to an unexpected height, compared to other high islands (such as Tahiti, in what is now French Polynesia) that they were familiar with. Indeed, while Gau is indeed relatively mountainous, rising to a height of 738m, it is geologically worn and has no prominent peaks, its profile and topography being well characterised as rounded and gently sloping.

So what do I propose as its etymology? I am not 100% confident, but I believe that, like most Fijian placenames, Gau was named after a permanent physical property—in this case, its shape.

The word *gau* is a common noun found throughout most of Fiji. It is difficult to give a single-word English translation, but perhaps 'trunk' comes the closest, since it commonly refers to the trunk of a tree or the main part of the human body. A stout person can be described as *gaulevu* 'big-trunked'. For long cylindrical things, such as snakes or lengths of rope or potting-clay ready to be coiled, *gau* means the body as opposed to the head or tail or end; with bamboo or a reed it means an internode; and in the case of a *meke* (traditional dance) it refers to the main part rather than the introduction or finale.

A very common use of the word in a compound is *gaunisala* (literally, 'trunk of path') which means a 'road', that is, a path (*sala*) of considerable size, so perhaps a 'bulky path' (though the temptation to translate it as 'trunk road' should be avoided). It is possible that this was a missionary coining of the early nineteenth century.

So my guess is that the earliest Fijians, some 3000 years ago, looked at the bulky rounded profile of this island to the east from the shores of Vitilevu, and decided that its shape reminded them of the **trunk of a tree** or a **body**. As for the other island in the east with a contrasting shape... you'll have to wait for the next exciting instalment!

Paul Geraghty
University of the South Pacific

Indigenous toponymy...

We recently completed our series Toponymy 101, but one extremely important topic that we didn't cover was that of indigenous placenames and place-naming. It is an important topic in any country or region that has undergone foreign occupation and settlement with the resulting imposition of new toponyms and replacement of the indigenous ones.

Territories colonised by Europeans generally had indigenous populations with long-established toponymic systems. The overall toponymic systems of former European colonies are thus best classified under two broad systems—the 'Indigenous' and the 'Introduced'—each of which may be further divided into names bestowed before and after European occupation (Tent and Blair 2009, 2011).

Even within our Introduced system of placenames, we use Indigenous-based toponyms on a daily basis but, in general, we are not aware of their meanings or origins. These names have, in one form or other, survived the onslaught of British colonisation and the annihilation of Indigenous languages and cultures that accompanied it. They are, in many cases, the sole survivors of the Indigenous languages, and are an essential ingredient of Aboriginal cultural heritage which represents the connection with the land and Country. They are constant reminders of the 50-60,000 year tenure Australia's original inhabitants had of the land.

In this first part of **Indigenous toponymy**, we look at the Aboriginal toponymic system. Before we begin however, it is important to note two points.

1. Hercus (2002: 63) aptly observes: 'There are few topics as challenging as the study of Australian [indigenous] placenames. Their formation varies from region to region, they may be analysable or not, they may refer to the actions of Ancestors, they may be descriptive, or "indirectly" descriptive: an Ancestor is said to have noticed some particular feature and named the place accordingly. [...] We can also never be sure we are right about a placename unless there is clear evidence stemming from people who have traditional information on the topic. In the absence of such evidence we have to admit we are only guessing.' Sadly, the latter is too often the case.
2. Aboriginal placenaming practices, like cultures, are *not* homogenous and so exhibit much variation,

subject to the particular language/clan or environment. It is therefore difficult to generalise about Aboriginal placenaming practices, and it is impossible to do justice to this topic in a series of short articles. However, I have drawn upon some general principles of placenaming gleaned from various sources in the hope that they may illustrate to some degree how different European and Aboriginal naming practices really are. And in doing so, I trust the reader will gain some insight into and appreciation of the complexity and beauty of indigenous place-naming. So the next time you see or hear an Aboriginal placename, I hope you will bear these dynamics in mind.

The Indigenous Australian toponymic system

There are numerous ways in which Aboriginal placenaming practices differ from European ones.¹

1. Indigenous placenames do not normally have topographic descriptors or generics (e.g. creek, river, hill etc.). So toponyms such as *Eucumbene River*, *Mount Jagungal* and *Yarrangobilly Caves* form part of the Introduced system, and should not be considered as unequivocally or true indigenous names.
2. Although all languages and cultures possess placenames, their structures and grammars differ from one language to another. (a) Some cultures derive placenames from a particular group of proper names in their languages in which each placename has only the function of designating a place. In other words, they are singular definite referring expressions, and only have a denotational function (i.e. a naming or identifying function). (b) Other cultures create placenames from the general stock of words and grammatical structures in their languages and customise the name specifically to the place designated. Such names may have a strong connotational function.² European languages tend more towards method (a)—e.g. *Adelaide*, *Perth*, *Bathurst*—whilst the indigenous cultures of Australia prefer constructing placenames through method (b).
3. Each Aboriginal clan has its own network of placenames and has diverse methods for constructing them. Further, these networks are often in close geographic proximity to those of neighbouring clans, so that a place or feature may have more than one name.

...Part 1

4. Unlike Introduced placenames, Indigenous placenames and networks are 'owned', in the sense that one family or clan may have sole rights to pass on information about specific places, including their names. Some placenames may carry special powers and may be sacred and secret, not for dissemination.³ The documentation of placenames from areas where indigenous placenaming is still exercised (e.g. Cape York, NT, WA and SA) is being conducted by anthropologists and linguists. In these areas, the transmission of placenames is unbroken because the owners of those placenames have been able to retain their language and their habitation on or near their lands. The names are, however, rarely published, for cultural, practical and legal reasons which include unresolved issues of indigenous intellectual property. The documented placenames are kept in offices of land councils as well as State and Territory government departments, and often have restricted access.

5. Indigenous placenames denote significant geographic features (waterholes, food sources, etc.) and feature in Songlines for the purpose of finding them again.

6. Aboriginal placenames rarely make reference to places of habitation because no, or few, such places really existed. Therefore, names of towns and cities that bear a so-called indigenous name (e.g. *Tallangatta*, *Woolloomooloo*, *Canberra*) form part of the Introduced placename system.

7. There is often no direct correspondence between the geographic features named by Europeans, and those named by Aboriginal peoples. For example, under Indigenous systems there may not be a single name that applies to a whole geographic feature such as a river, creek, hill or mountain: it may be that portions of such a feature which are considered significant are named. A typical example comes from the Kurna language (SA): *Nurlungga* 'Bend place' (on the Onkaparinga River) and *Ngangkiparingga* 'Woman river place' (on the Onkaparinga River, and whence the river's name derives).⁴ Thus, the two systems have substantial differences in what counts as a significant feature deserving to be named.

8. Aboriginal placenames are part of the Law assigned to specific places by Ancestor beings during

the Dreaming. As such, all placenames have a meaning which relates directly to the account of the totemic Ancestors that created the place and the actions they executed there. Consequently, ordinary people cannot transfer those names to other places. In other words, traditional placenames are not arbitrarily associated with the places they designate, as European placenames often are. Instead, the names belong to specific places in perpetuity, and people who interfere with this Law are seen to exhibit great arrogance.

9. European names often commemorate people, other entities (e.g. ships), and incidents (e.g. battles, dates, festivals). Apart from some Aboriginal placenames commemorating mythical events, Aboriginal placenames rarely do.

10. The Aboriginal placenames of Australia are in many different languages, whereas our Introduced system is part of the national language, English; names in this system are therefore words of Australian English, even though some are derived from other languages.⁵

11. Indigenous placenames reflect Aboriginal views on life and are an integral part of their storytelling. Placenames form systems of mnemonics (Songlines) for identifying places, and are fundamental to a clan's knowledge of its history, culture, rights and responsibilities for their land. Put in another way, placenames strongly represent people's relationships with the land.

12. Although all cultures' conceptualisations of place(names) involve some kind of relation among them, Aboriginal people comprehend places as entities in a network of meaning in a much stronger fashion than in European (and therefore in Australian English) semantic systems.

On this last point, Burenhult and Levinson (2008: 139) note that '[t]he intrinsic connection of places to other places, in a network forming a mental map, is precisely what is missing from traditional onomastics' and suggest that questions as to why 'some places get named, others not, why some cultures have dense systems of place names and others not, and whether the specific form of names reflects differing cognitive import' should be asked and investigated so that we may fully understand the diverse

placenames practices across different cultures. In other words, in order to appreciate what underpins Aboriginal placenames, we need to recognise the striking cultural difference between the way it views relations with and connections to the environment and the approach of the European tradition.

In our next instalment of this topic, we shall take a look at Indigenous names within the Introduced system. In the third part, we'll look at some of the issues involved in the reinstatement of Aboriginal placenames. In the meantime, if you would like to know more about Aboriginal placenames, I thoroughly recommend the following three volumes that form a series (and are *free to download*) from the ANU Press website:

- Hercus, Luise, Flavia Hodges & Jane Simpson (eds). 2002. *The land is a map: Placenames of Indigenous origin in Australia*. Canberra: ANU Press & Pandanus Books. <http://press.anu.edu.au/publications/land-map>
- Koch, Harold & Luise Hercus (eds). 2009. *Aboriginal placenames: Naming and re-naming the Australian landscape*. Canberra: ANU Press. <http://press.anu.edu.au/publications/aboriginal-history-monographs/aboriginal-placenames>
- Clark, Ian D., Luise Hercus & Laura Kostanski (eds). 2014. *Indigenous and minority placenames: Australian and international perspectives*. Canberra: ANU Press. <https://press.anu.edu.au/publications/indigenous-and-minority-placenames>

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Endnotes

- ¹ Many of these listed differences are gleaned from Hercus, Hodges and Simpson (2002: 1-23). My list does not claim to be comprehensive.
- ² Denotation refers to the literal meaning of a word, the 'dictionary definition'. Connotation refers to the associations that are connected to a certain word, or the emotional suggestions related to that word. The connotative meanings of a word are concurrent with the denotative meanings.
- ³ For a nice example, see: 'Aboriginal group disputes name change', ABC Radio, PM - Monday, 17 November, 2008, 18:46:00. <http://www.abc.net.au/pm/content/2008/s2422244.htm>
- ⁴ 'How one Indigenous man found identity through the almost-lost Kaurua language.' <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-06-19/rediscovering-the-kaurua-language-and-identity/8625612>
- ⁵ There are numerous publications (both in print and online) cataloguing indigenous words and placenames. These usually make no effort to distinguish between one Aboriginal language and another. Rather, they classify all words and placenames as 'Aboriginal', as if to say there is only one Aboriginal language. This is not only wrong, but disrespectful. It is akin to listing Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Philippine, Vietnamese, Cambodian etc. words and placenames in one catalogue and labelling them as belonging to the 'Asian language'.

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- Hercus, Luise. 2002. 'Is it really a placename?' In L. Hercus, F. Hodges & J. Simpson (eds). *The land is a map: Placenames of Indigenous origin in Australia*. Canberra: ANU Press & Pandanus Books. pp. 63-72.
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- Tent, Jan and David Blair. 2011. 'Motivations for naming: The development of a toponymic typology for Australian placenames.' *Names: A Journal of Onomastics* 59: 67-89.

A university course in toponymy

Have you been enjoying Jan Tent's series 'Toponymy 101' in *Placenames Australia*? Would you like to extend your knowledge? ANPS is planning to offer an online unit in toponymy next year, through **Open Universities Australia** and with the cooperation of **Macquarie University**.

Placenames in the Modern World

This short course will be the equivalent of an undergraduate unit and will not require any previous university study. It is designed to cater both for those who wish to increase their general knowledge of placenames and for those who need professional development in toponymy. There will be a practical component that will involve some data collection and the analysis of that data to help answer the five standard questions—the *what*, the *where*, the *who*, the *when* and the *why* of the placename.

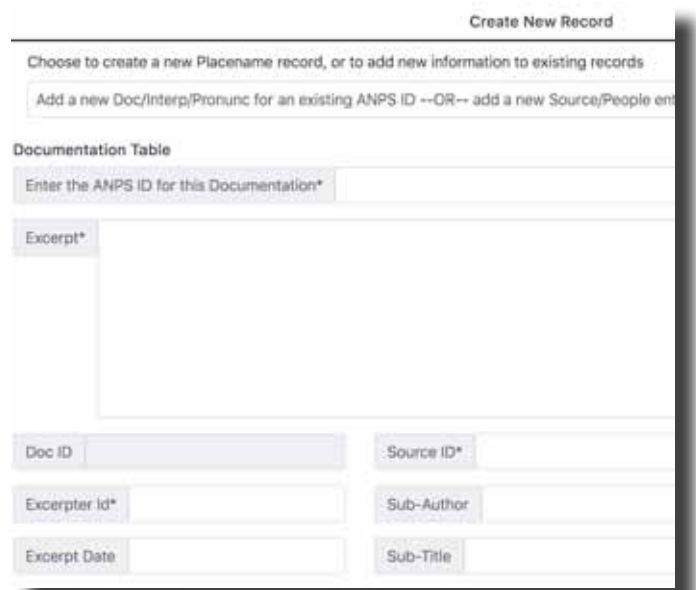
If you're interested in the possibility, we'd like to hear from you! Email Jan Tent <director@anps.org.au> or Helen Slatyer <secretary@anps.org.au>, and we'll keep you informed about our plans for the unit.

Do you have placename information for us?

The role of the Australian National Placenames Survey is to collect the required information to show the history and meaning of all Australia's placenames. Many of you, either as individual enthusiasts or as representatives of historical societies, have been assisting us for a long time.

It hasn't always been easy to submit the information—it's been a complicated process involving emails and spreadsheets. But NOW... our new website allows our informants and researchers to enter information easily, online.

Do you already have evidence that shows *when* a place got its name, or *who* named it, or *why* it got that name? Would you like to start collecting that information for your town or suburb? Let us know—we have easy-to-follow instructions that'll get you started.



Email [David Blair](mailto:research@anps.org.au) <research@anps.org.au>
and join the ANPS team of researchers and informants

From *Avalon* to *Xanadu*: Fictional places

Fictional places have been part of human culture ever since storytelling began. There's *Atlantis*, *Avalon*, *El Dorado*, *Shangri-La*, *Xanadu*, *Utopia*, *Brobdingnag*, *Lilliput*, *Middlemarch*, *Oz*, *Narnia*, *Rivendell*, *Mordor*, *Lake Wobegon*, and *Hogsmeade* to name but a few. Closer to home we have *Tanimbla* (Blue Hills radio serial), *Mount Thomas* (Blue Heelers), *Pearl Bay* (SeaChange), *Summer Bay* (Home and Away), *Erinsborough* (Neighbours), and the recent *Rosehaven* (Rosehaven). Sometimes such names are adopted and bestowed upon real places, like *Avalon* (Sydney suburb and beach), *El Dorado* (VIC), and perhaps *Tanimbla Street* (Kedron, Brisbane suburb)?



Most, if not all, such fictitious places and their accompanying names have a serious intent. But, here in Australia, and fitting our larrikin sense of humour, we find so-called places named *Bandywallop*, *Oodnagalahbi*, *Oodnawoopwoop* [a blend of *Oodna(galahbi)* + *Woop Woop*], *the Black Stump*, *Bullamakanka*, and *Kickastickalong*—all referring to imaginary remote, insignificant and backward townships. And we must not forget *the Speewah*, highlighted by David Nash in the March 2016 issue of *Placenames Australia*. Most such Australian names are attempts to mimic Aboriginal names or words. I am unsure if this reflects in any way our attitudes towards Aboriginal culture and languages.

If you have any interest in imaginary places and their names, I can thoroughly recommend *The Dictionary of Imaginary Places* by Alberto Manguel and Gianni Guadalupi. It is a catalogue of fantasy lands, islands, cities, and other places from world literature—a veritable Baedeker for mental travelling. Another interesting read is Edward Brooke-Hitching's *The Phantom Atlas: The Greatest Myths, Lies and Blunders on Maps* (Simon & Schuster, 2016).

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Placenames Puzzle Number 67

Toponym antonyms

In this puzzle we ask you to work out the toponym from its antonym (its opposite meaning) while ignoring the antonym's orthographic representation e.g. (NSW, Newcastle suburb) 'Floors beginning' > *Wallsend*.

1. (NSW) 'Occupied-womans' *Reach*
2. (QLD, south of Mackay) 'Leg-weak' *Beach*
3. (VIC) 'Hirsute Flats'
4. (NSW, Sydney beach and suburb) 'WB' (clue: numerically opposites in alphabet)
5. (NT, Darwin suburb) 'Spinster'
6. (NSW, Khancoban) 'Hot-ice' *Creek*
7. (NSW, famous for apples) 'Racket-high'
8. (QLD, north-east of Bundaberg) 'Few Troughs'
9. (QLD, just north of clue 8) 'Lot-less'
10. (NSW) 'Height-valleys'
11. (WA, Perth locality) 'Peace-river'
12. (WA, Perth locality, south of clue 11) 'Black-woman'
13. (WA, Perth locality, north of clue 11)
14. (NSW, east of Kempsey) 'Sock Foot'
15. (NSW, near Menai) 'Big Desert'
16. (NSW, east of Inverell) 'Queens Heights'
17. (NSW) 'Imprudent-womans' *Ferry*
18. (TAS) 'Uncomfortable/bleak'
19. (NSW, Sydney suburb) 'Winter Valley'
20. (NSW, west of Bulahdelah) 'Bumpy Bottoms'

[Compiled by: **Jan Tent**]

20. Flat Tops
19. Summer Hill
18. Snug
17. Wisemans Ferry
16. Kings Plains

15. Little Forest
14. Hat Head
13. Bullsbrook
12. Whiteman
11. Warbrook

10. Valley Heights
9. Littlemore
8. Many Peaks
7. Batlow
6. Coldwater Creek

5. Batchelor
4. Dee Why
3. Bald Hills
2. Armstrong Beach
1. Freemans Reach

Become a Supporting Member!

We realise that not everyone who wishes to support the Australian National Placenames Survey can do so by carrying out toponymic research and supplying information for our database. There *is* another way — become a supporting member of Placenames Australia! In doing so, you'll help the Survey and its volunteer researchers by providing infrastructure support. In return, you'll have the assurance that you'll be helping ensure the continued existence of this prestige national project, and we'll guarantee to keep you in touch with our progress.

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Articles for *Placenames Australia*

Material for publication in *Placenames Australia* is always welcome. Please send all contributions to the Editor, David Blair, by email: [<editor@anps.org.au>](mailto:editor@anps.org.au)

Supporting photographs or other illustrations are greatly appreciated.

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December Issue: 15 October