

Bega Valley Shire

Stage Three A Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study



Understanding Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

A place based collection of oral histories told by Koori people with traditional and historical connections to the Bega Valley Shire.

Prepared for

The Bega Valley Shire Aboriginal Heritage Steering Committee

Bega Valley Shire Council

Dept Of Environment Climate Change & Water

Merrimans Local Aboriginal Land Council

Bega Local Aboriginal Land Council

Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council

Elders Groups & Aboriginal Community Members

Prepared by

Susan Dale Donaldson
Environmental & Cultural Services

2010

© Bega Valley Shire Council/ NSW Department of Environment Climate Change & Water / Susan Dale Donaldson of Environmental & Cultural Services / Individual Indigenous Knowledge Holders.

Bega Valley Shire Council PO Box 492 Bega NSW 2550
Ph: (02) 6499 2222
Fax: (02) 6499 2200
Email: council@begavalley.nsw.gov.au

Department of Environment Climate Change & Water
NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services
PO Box 1967
Hurstville NSW 2220
Ph: 1300 361 967
Fax: 02 9585 6555
www.npws.nsw.gov.au

Susan Dale Donaldson
Environmental & Cultural Services
Moruya, NSW, 2537.
Ph/ Fax: 02 4474 5899
susandaledonaldson@bigpond.com

Individual Indigenous Knowledge Holders can be contacted through the three participating Local Aboriginal Land Councils:

Bega LALC: 02 64923950
Eden LALC: 02 64957177
Merrimans LALC: 02 44737288

The BVSC, DECCW and Susan Donaldson acknowledge the cultural and intellectual property rights of the Indigenous knowledge holders whose stories are featured in this report. Use and reference of this material is allowed for the purposes of strategic planning, research or study provided that full and proper attribution is given to the individual indigenous knowledge holder/s being referenced.

The Indigenous knowledge holders whose stories are contained in this report are: Pam Flanders, Mervyn Penrith, Harold Harrison, Ken Campbell, Deanna Campbell, Max Munroe, Loraine Naylor, Eric Naylor, Georgina Parsons, Mary Duroux, Margaret Dixon, Colleen Dixon, Gloria Pickalla, Cecil Hoskins, Jo Mundy, Jim Scott, Alma Carter, Faith Aldridge, John Dixon, Lionel Mongta, Valma Tungai, Jenny Andy, Marie Andy, John Mumbler, Tina Mongta, Olga, Beryl Cruse, Margaret Henry, Wilma Manton, Elaine Thomas, John Stewart, Deanna Davison, Ossie Cruse, Ben Cruse and Lisa Arvidson.

Warning: contains reference to people who have passed away.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	vii
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Study background	1
1.2 Study area	2
1.3 Study methodology, stage 3a	4
2. BACKGROUND RESEARCH	5
2.1 Review of previous stages	5
2.2 Review of other materials	7
3 ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH.....	10
3.1 WALLAGA LAKE CULTURAL AREA.....	11
3.1.1 Wallaga Lake Aboriginal Reserve / Koori Village	11
3.1.2 Wallaga Lake	20
3.1.3 Murunna Point 'Wintles'	27
3.1.4 Fringe camp – Beauty Point	29
3.1.5 Dignams Creek	30
3.1.6 Gulaga landscape	36
3.2 BERMAGUI CULTURAL AREA.....	38
3.2.1 Bermagui bushland	38
3.2.2 Bermagui River	39
3.2.3 Bermagui Beach.....	40
3.2.4 Bermagui Waterhole.....	40
3.2.5 Bermagui sawmill.....	41
3.2.6 Bermagui School	41
3.2.7 Bermagui Hall.....	42
3.3 THE MURRAH CULTURAL AREA	42
3.3.1 The Murrah.....	42
3.4 THE GOALEN BUNGA HEAD CULTURAL AREA.....	42
3.4.1 Bunga	43
3.5 THE ARAGUNNU CULTURAL AREA	43
3.5.1 Aragunnu.....	43
3.5.2 Middle Beach.....	45
3.6 THE COBARGO – QUAAMA CULTURAL AREA.....	46
3.6.1 COBARGO SAW MILL.....	46
3.6.1 Cobargo Saw mill.....	46
3.6.2 Cobargo Township.....	47
3.6.3 Quaama	48

3.7 THE BIAMANGA 'MUMBULLA' CULTURAL AREA	49
3.7.1 Mumbulla Mountain / Biamanga	49
3.7.2 Doctor George Mountain	51
3.7.3 Brogo Pass	52
3.7.4 Wappengo	52
3.8 THE BEGA VALLEY CULTURAL AREA	53
3.8.1 The Bega River	53
3.8.2 The Brogo River	56
3.8.3 North Bega River Bank - camp	57
3.8.4 Bega River – Tarraganda	61
3.8.5 Angledale Rd - Stoney Creek Camp	62
3.8.6 Murray's Flat	65
3.8.7 Jellat Jellat 'Jilla' / Penuka	68
3.8.8 Reedy Swamp	74
3.8.9 Bega Township	77
3.8.10 Black Range	88
3.9 THE WHITE ROCKS – BOULDER BAY CULTURAL AREA	89
3.9.1 White Rocks	89
3.10 THE KAMERUKA CULTURAL AREA	89
3.10.1 Kameruka estate	89
3.10.2 Brown Mountain	90
3.11 THE TATHRA - MOGOREEKA – KALARU CULTURAL AREA	90
3.11.1 Tathra	90
3.11.2 'Blackfellows Lagoon' – Cohen's Lake	91
3.11.3 Mogareeka	92
3.11.4 Moon Bay	93
3.12 THE MERRIMBULA CULTURAL AREA	93
3.12.1 Merimbula	93
3.13 THE PAMBULA CULTURAL AREA	94
3.13.1 Pambula River	94
3.13.2 Jigamy Farm	94
3.13.3 Haycock Point	96
3.13.4 Wolumla	98
3.13.5 Pambula	98
3.14 THE EDEN – TWOFOLD BAY CULTURAL AREA	99
3.14.1 Eden township	99
3.14.2 Twofold Bay	101
3.14.3 Davison Whaling Station	106
3.14.4 Curalo Lake	107
3.15 THE KIAH – TOWAMBA RIVER BAY CULTURAL AREA	107
3.15.1 Kiah River / Whale Beach	107
3.15.2 Kiah Housing Scheme	110
3.15.3 Kiah River Farms	112
3.15.4 Towamba River	114

3.15.5 Wallagarah.....	115
3.16 THE WONBOYN DISASTER BAY CULTURAL AREA.....	116
3.16.1 Wonboyn	116
3.16.2 Nullica.....	118
3.16.3 Green Cape.....	118
3.16.4 Nadgee.....	118
4. SUMMARY OF ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE ACROSS THE BEGA VALLEY SHIRE: COMBINING ORAL AND DOCUMENTED HISTORIES	120
4.1 Archaeological overview	120
4.2 Oral and documented history overview.....	121
4.3 Continuity of Aboriginal heritage values over time – combining all information.....	124
5. UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE PLACES AND LANDSCAPES	127
5.1 Understanding Aboriginal cultural heritage values.....	127
5.1.1 Aboriginal perspectives	130
5.2 Managing Aboriginal cultural heritage values	133
5.2.1 Aboriginal perspectives	133
5.2.2 Relevant legal framework	136
5.2.3 Ways to recognise Aboriginal Cultural Heritage	140
6 RECOMMENDATIONS	142
7 REFERENCES CITED	150
APPENDIX ONE: SUMMARY OF ABORIGINAL HERITAGE PLACES	154
APPENDIX TWO: BEGA HERITAGE TIME LINE	155
APPENDIX THREE: INFORMATION AGREEMENT BEGA VALLEY ABORIGINAL HERITAGE STUDY.....	156

MAPS, TABLES AND CHARTS

MAP ONE: Bega Valley Shire	2
TABLE ONE: Composition of land tenure within the Bega LGA	3
CHART ONE: Aboriginal Cultural Heritage places identified by primary cultural heritage theme [stages 2, 3 and 3a combined].	124

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Bega Valley Shire Council [BVSC] and the Department of Environment Climate Change and Water [DECCW] provided funding to support this project. The project has been successful because of the partnerships forged between the funding bodies and the local Aboriginal community, through elders groups and Bega, Merrimans and Eden Local Aboriginal Land Councils [LALC], and the dedicated efforts of the Bega Valley Aboriginal Heritage Steering Committee. These partnerships have kept the project on track.

This project does not intend to undermine or breach traditional Aboriginal Lore relating to the holding and passing on of information pertaining to places of Aboriginal cultural heritage. Aboriginal cultural heritage, including the physical, the intangible and the associated stories and mythologies belong to the Aboriginal community. These stories have been shared in the hope that the broader community gains a greater respect for places of heritage value to the Aboriginal community.

I wish to acknowledge and thank the Aboriginal people who participated in the oral history program and to their ancestors who had the opportunity to pass stories onto them; Pam Flanders, Mervyn Penrith, Harold Harrison, Ken Campbell, Deanna Campbell, Max Munroe, Loraine Naylor, Eric Naylor, Georgina Parsons, Mary Duroux, Margaret Dixon, Colleen Dixon, Gloria Pickalla, Cecil Hoskins, Jo Mundy, Jim Scott, Alma Carter, Faith Aldridge, John Dixon, Lionel Mongta, Valma Tungai, Jenny Andy, Marie Andy, John Mumbler, Tina Mongta, Olga, Beryl Cruse, Margaret Henry, Wilma Manton, Elaine Thomas, John Stewart, Deanna Davison, Ossie Cruse, Ben Cruse and Lisa Arvidson. Many more people also participated in the previous stages of the study with Chris Griffiths and Meg Goulding. Well done.

The oral history program would not have been possible without the support of the research assistants Warren Foster, Loraine Naylor, Kathy Jones, Carol Dixon, BJ Cruse, Liddy Stewart, Sue Norman and Shirley Aldridge. As a result of their work, as supported by Bega Valley Shire Council, the oral history program involved an extensive number of people, from a broad range of families. Merrimans LALC CEO Loraine Naylor, Bega LALC CEO Jan Dowling and Eden LALC CEO Penny Stewart also worked very hard to inform the community and keep the project moving forward. Thank you.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the three stages of the Bega Valley Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study, 296 places of cultural heritage values to the Aboriginal community within the Bega Valley Shire have been identified. In conjunction with the broader cultural landscape, all of the 296 places within the Bega Valley LGA are of cultural heritage value to Aboriginal people, It is recommended that some of these places require *management* in order to conserve the associated heritage values, whilst others require *acknowledgement*. All future cultural heritage management and recognition should be underpinned by Aboriginal people's direct input and ongoing participation.

The greatest number of places relate to the living / camping theme [64], followed by resource collection [58] and work places [42]. These three themes are interconnected and span the pre and post contact period. 22 spiritual / traditional places have been documented, although many more would exist. The theme 'spiritual / traditional' encompasses mythological places, traditional boundary places, cultural teaching places, ceremonial grounds and places associated with spiritual beings. 33 traditional Aboriginal place names and 15 traditional travelling routes have also been documented. These themes also relate to traditional practises. 16 meetings place have been documented across the study area, 8 places associated with death and burial, 8 educational places, 5 places relating to self-determination, 4 birthplaces and 6 contacts places. Of the 15 places identified as being associated with the theme 'conflict', 10 are associated with conflict between settler society and local Aboriginal people, whilst the other 5 conflict places are associated with intertribal battles, as documented by early settlers.

Generally, the places that require *management* relate to seasonal camping places where use has continued on and off since pre-contact times; resource collection places, places of conflict, travelling routes, Historical Aboriginal Reservations, burial places and spiritual places. Forms of management suggested include AHIMS registration, LEP listing, DCP considerations, Aboriginal Place nomination, or some other form of environmental zoning classification. It is recommended that management options and actions be underpinned by Aboriginal people's direct input and ongoing participation.

The places that should be afforded some form of *acknowledgment* primarily relate to living [camping] places, work places, places associated with early contact with European explorers, birthplaces and meeting places. As a way of acknowledging Aboriginal people's presence in local history throughout the Bega Valley Shire a timeline has been established. The timeline spans the period between the Dreamtime past and today, and showcases Aboriginal people's contribution to the cultural, social, and economic fabric of the Bega Valley region. It is anticipated that this time line can be used as an educational tool in public places. Other ways to acknowledge places of heritage value include production of an oral history booklet.

Thirty-six of the forty-six people who participated in the project's oral history program, have their stories featured in this report. Their cultural and historical links to places across the Bega LGA have been documented and have been arranged according to places of heritage value. The stories reveal the nurturing elements of Aboriginal custodianship, the enduring connection, care and concern maintained over time for the land and waterways and the array of precious natural resources that they sustain.

The expression of cultural values attributed to the landscape are multifaceted, complex and evolving and range from mythological Dreamtime and totemic associations to links forged in the process of earning a pound by picking peas in a paddock. The men and women who have participated in the oral history program have shared their memories about their working life, family life, their cultural and religious life, schooling experiences, fishing practices and the collection of natural resources. They recount the struggles and heartaches associated with racial segregation and the political obstacles they faced, contrasted by the grandeur of feasting on freshly caught seafoods and the marvelous times spent with extended families camped over summers in sheltered coves. Family get-togethers, no matter how big or small, continue to be a primary avenue for the transmission of cultural knowledge and the maintenance of connections to country.

As directed by the Aboriginal community, this report can be used for the planning and land management purposes and can be distributed to relevant organizations and agencies.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Study background

The Bega Valley Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study is a four-stage project involving a partnership between Aboriginal community members and government agencies with responsibilities for managing the Bega region. The project aims to develop a better understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage in the Bega Valley Shire and to develop better ways to manage this heritage and protect its values in the local planning processes.

The Bega Valley Shire Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study (BVAHS) commenced in 2003, oversighted by a Steering Committee with representatives from the Merrimans, Bega and Eden Local Aboriginal Land Councils. Stage one of the study could not be located and was thus not used for stage 3a research.

Stage two of the study comprised baseline consultations and fieldwork with local Aboriginal people within the LGA and was undertaken by NPWS Ranger Chris Griffiths in 2003. The aim of the consultation was to document cultural heritage information held orally and where possible, to connect it to places on the landscape. Three reports were produced from the oral history interviews, depending on the confidentiality of the information provided. The BVAHS currently has access to the 'public' report only, and the other reports containing confidential information are held by the relevant LALC and relevant individuals/families.

Stage three was undertaken by Megan Goulding and Chris Griffiths in 2004 who brought together information from historical and oral sources, identified themes and provided recommendations for further research and other actions. A total of 254 places were identified from oral and historical sources. The Steering Committee did not endorse the Stage 3 report, primarily due to a lack of an agreed approach regarding the distribution, ownership, use and storage of oral information.

This report details work undertaken for stage 3a of the study, involving further background research, oral history recording, the development of mechanisms for the recognition and protection of values and places and a review of existing consultation mechanisms between Council and Aboriginal community. This report has been arranged in accordance with these main research objectives. Stage 3a has identified a further 42 places of cultural heritage significance across the study area, thus a total of 296 places of cultural heritage significance have been identified during the course of the Bega Valley Shire Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study.

Upon completion of stage 3a, the fourth and final stage of the project will involve the development of mechanisms for the cultural data to be integrated into management and recognition processes, including scheduling places in the new comprehensive LEP and the publication of an oral history book.

1.2 Study area

The study area is the Bega Valley Local Government Area (LGA), which encompasses the coastal strip between Wallaga Lake and Cape Howe. Inland the Shire extends westwards to the top of the Brown Mountain [See Map One].



MAP ONE: Bega Valley Shire

The Bega Valley Shire covers 6280sq km. The Bega Valley Shire Council has jurisdiction over about 30% of the total area; whilst the other 70% is within conservation reserves, state forest or other Crown land. Less than one percent of land in the BVS is Aboriginal freehold granted under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act [see Table One].

<i>Tenure type</i>	<i>Squared km</i>	<i>% of total</i>
National Park	2507.62	39.9%
State Forest	1611.3	25.7%
Freehold land	1843.92	29.4%
Rivers and estuaries	73.15	1.2%
Crown Leases	10.16	0.2%
Roads and road reserves	103.69	1.7%
Crown land and reserves	95.35	1.5%
Aboriginal Land	35.5	0.6%
TOTAL	6280.69	100.0%

TABLE ONE: Composition of land tenure within the Bega LGA

Underlying the Bega Valley Shire an Aboriginal land tenure system has existed for many thousands of years, present at the time of European settlement of the area. Aboriginal people's links to the region, in the past as well as in the present can be described by different types of social groupings including tribal, sub-tribal, clan and linguistic.

Tribally, the area is affiliated with *Yuin* [*Murring*] people recorded by Howitt in 1904 as extending from the Shoalhaven River in the north, to Cape Howe in the south and west to the Great Dividing Range. More specifically, the Bega LGA lies within the southern *Yuin* region known as *Guyangal* occupied by the *Katungal* – coastal fishing people¹. Within the *Katungal* group smaller named groups have been identified, for instance, the *Brogo* people at Mumbulla and the *Worerker Brimmitter* people in the Bega area [Wesson 2000: 8]. Linguistically the Bega Valley LGA is associated with *Dhurga* [Thoorga / Durga], *Thaua* [Nullica] and *Djirringanj* [Jeringan] language speakers².

Under the *NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* there are three Local Aboriginal Land Councils [LALC] across the Bega Valley. Each one has participated in this project, offering field support and advice. From north to south the LALC are Merrimans [Wallaga Lake] LALC, Bega LALC and Eden LALC.

¹ S Wesson 2000: 131 – 147.

² Egloff, Peterson and Wesson [2005]: 17.

1.3 Study methodology, stage 3a

Under the direction of the Bega Valley Aboriginal Heritage Steering Committee [‘the steering committee’], this stage of the project involved a combination of office based and field research aimed at developing material from previous stages and investigating new areas. Office based research took place between May and June 2009, with the use of the mapped and tabulated data produced by Goulding as well as other historical and anthropological materials.

As outlined in appendix four, community-based consultations took place in order to ensure that Aboriginal community members were equal partners in the project. The prioritised list of recommendations concerning the management and recognition of cultural heritage was devised collaboratively and reflects the opinions of Aboriginal people with associations with the places discussed. In this way, the Aboriginal community has informed project outcomes. All phases of research were conducted in close consultation with the BVSC, DECC, the project steering committee, with key stakeholders and members of the Aboriginal community. Direct community consultations extended between June and December 2009; consultations were guided by Aboriginal research assistants and published and unpublished materials. Although additional archival materials were assessed, face-to-face community consults were prioritised over further comprehensive assessment of text-based materials.

A community participation workshop was undertaken using participatory planning methodologies to ensure participants are empowered through the ownership of the planning and development process and future uses of their knowledge. The identified heritage places were discussed systematically [according to themes, nodes or cultural tradition etc] to aid discussions, to focus participants and to assist in the compilation of the report and recommendations. Consultation biases were off set by ensuring that participants broadly represented as far as possible, all components of the local community, e.g. age, gender, residential variation, amount of time living in area, nature and extent of connection to the local area.

Advice was received from Local Aboriginal Land Councils and elders groups in regards to appropriate participants. The Gadu Elders, also offered advice regarding the identification and recognition of the local historical and cultural landscape and the development of a local heritage management model. Aboriginal research assistants were engaged to undertake and or support oral history recording. Discussions also took place with mapping professionals working locally for DECCW and BVSC and other relevant organisations.

2. BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Background research outcomes, such as the addition of previously unrecorded heritage places, or adding to the detail of previously recorded places, has been incorporated into the table in appendix x.

2.1 Review of previous stages

Gouldings work on the Bega Valley Aboriginal Heritage Study involved the compilation of text-based materials relating to the early contact period of the Bega region. A historical narrative was produced to assist in the interpretation of the Aboriginal heritage places identified. The places revealed a rich history of Aboriginal people's attachment to and occupation of the landscape over the past 200 years and hinted at their substantial contribution to the region's social and economic development. A concise annotated bibliography was also produced to assist in any future Aboriginal cultural research in the region. In addition, gaps were identified in the current knowledge pertaining to cultural heritage management in the region. These were presented as recommendations with suggested actions to address the issues raised. A summary of recommendations can be found in appendix four.

Based on an analysis technique utilised in other regional heritage studies, Goulding applied heritage themes to the places and associations identified in the Bega Valley LGA. These themes are traditional, contact, conflict, living, work, resources, travelling routes, burials, religion, government, education, health, life events, recreation, self determination and land. Places associated with early contact between the European occupiers and the local Aboriginal population include cooperative survival strategies, whilst ample evidence of ongoing cultural practises was documented.

Throughout Australia, the early contact period included numerous instances of conflict, often resulting in brutal attacks and murder of Aboriginal people. Goulding argues that although few documented attacks on Aboriginal people, in the Bega region, the European's willingness to use violence was evident and probable [86: 2005].

The living places documented in the written record reveal how people moved in relation to seasonal conditions, employment and kin networks. Government Reservations, holiday camps and more permanent houses on the fringes of towns were also documented. A large proportion of the camp sites recorded relate to employment and were situated in the vicinity of the relevant work place including saw mills, fishing grounds and farm lands.

Work places documented range from the late 1800s, in relation to land clearing and saw milling, to the late 1900s in relation to seasonal farm work and fishing. Goulding argues that 'the establishment and expansion of European settlement, on the south coast, as throughout Australia, has benefited enormously from the labour and knowledge of Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people's contribution has ranged through acting as guides to squatters, to participation in the full range of industries established in the

region. The labour of Aboriginal people on the south coast has been of importance in the development of the pastoral, agriculture, timber and fishing industries. Aboriginal women were employed as domestic labourers. Aboriginal people's involvement in the seasonal picking work, so central for many decades to the rural industries of the south coast, constitutes a major economic contribution to the region' [2004].

Records related to traditional Aboriginal spirituality, ceremonial and economic activities focus on the 1883 ceremony on Mumbulla Mountain facilitated by Howitt. In 1883 Aboriginal people from across the region attended a ceremony at Mumbulla Mountain, north of Bega. As noted by Goulding the types of places documented by the early occupiers and government officials do not comprehensively reflect the activities and attachments of the Aboriginal people at the time.

As a result of undertaking field work with Aboriginal Knowledge holders, Griffiths was able to locate heritage places documented by Goulding as well as places, known to the story tellers themselves. Griffiths was also able to formulate clusters of culturally significant areas, laying the foundations for the structure of the oral history program undertaken by during Stage 3a. The participatory fieldwork undertaken by Griffiths revealed a community that has held onto its culturally based practises while still participating in local economic developments in a non-Aboriginal world.

Living and camping places are usually geographically close to resource collection places as are teaching and work places. Where families camped, they made use of nearby natural resources. Where families worked, they make use of nearby natural resources; and where natural resources were being collected, elders passed on traditional ecological knowledge to the next generation, teaching them how to collect, prepare and cook / make, the food, medicine or item of material culture. Farms across the Bega LGA employed a great proportion of Aboriginal workers. Interestingly, Aboriginal people's participation in seasonal farm work provided a platform on which to continue customary practises, such as movement along the coastal region in relation to seasonal variation and the maintenance of regular reunions with kin.

A number of unnamed and unverified burial sites relating to the pre-contact and early contact period were documented. In some instances, burial sites also related to places where conflict took place. This theme covers town cemeteries, and traditional Aboriginal burial sites, both pre and post contact.

Pathways created in the dreamtime past [Dreaming Tracks] and regularly used walkways were discussed in a general manner. To many Aboriginal people, the entire landscape is imbued with a spirituality, which is intertwined with them as custodians of the land. No further routes were identified beyond those previously identified by Blay and Cruse.

Most of the experiences relating to education were positive and describe schools where everyone was 'mixed together'. Others spoke of segregation

and racism, where Aboriginal children were not permitted to enroll into the public school system. Government related places were documented more so in the written records than discussed in oral histories. This theme was not always linked to particular places, but more generally to periods of time such as the era of segregation and assimilation. The first Aboriginal school in the region was established at Wallaga Lake, immediately north of the study area.

In summary, the participatory fieldwork undertaken during Stage 2 of the study highlighted how colonial history had introduced new social, economic and political processes and alienated Aboriginal people from the landscape that had sustained them and their ancestors for thousands of years. Two centuries of non-Aboriginal appropriation of the landscape and its resources undermined, but did not destroy, Aboriginal people's traditional, custodial rights and responsibilities to the land and waterways.

2.2 Review of other materials

A number of documents were not assessed during previous stages of the study, including:

Aldridge, Stewart and Norman 2008 Contemporary Aboriginal Attitudes to the Pambula River: report to the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

- A number of actions in relation to Pambula River's cultural heritage management were recommended including interpretive signage at midden sites to promote understanding and respect; protect middens through embankment stabilisation and walkway construction; employ koori rangers to protect and promote the heritage values of the Pambula River; and raise the awareness of the effects of sea level rising on shoreline middens. These recommendations remain relevant and have been integrated into this report's recommendations.
- With permission, number of oral histories recorded for the Pambula project, have been integrated into this report [see Pambula River section referenced as Pambula River Project 2008].

McGregor, C 2002 While There's Leaves in the Forest. Ginninderra Press, ACT.

- A local publication dedicated to the memory of the McGregor family who were active in the early development of the Bega district.
- One story, as featured in chapter five of the publication, retells an account of settler and Aboriginal conflict in the Bega area, as handed down through oral history:

".....That Bega had it's very own Glen Coe there is no doubt in my mind. The story was told to me by my father in a hushed voice in the middle of an open paddock. He said that none of our folk were involved, as it happened before they came here. Who was involved

he would not tell me, except to say that some of the main perpetrators were members of old district families.i do not know when it happened , but father told me where. There is a small flat area of ground below the site of the old Angledale tip. Hills surround three side of it and what is known now as Stoney Creek runs through it. Thus is made a natural sheltered camping ground. A group of early settlers got charged up with rum one night and, after riding out from Bega, shot up the camp, killing many. In the sober light of day, fearing retribution from authority, the carnage was cleared up and concealed....." [McGregor 2008: 18].

".....Charlie witnessed a corroboree there and on one occasion a tribal fight. The two parties lined up facing each other chanting 'mim ya, min yun, min yar, min yun', for a time and then there would be a great outburst of yelling. This was combined with much waving of spears and boomerangs. The two parties edged together, encouraged by the shrieks and yells of the women behind them. A few heads were banged and some blood flowed here and there from spear thrusts.....to my mind, that place is a genuine sacred site. Grandfather Charlie had a great respect for the Aboriginal people and could converse with them in the local dialect to a limited extent....." [McGregor 2008: 19].

- Recommendations relating to the Stoney Creek are can be found in section 6.2.

D'Arcy, D Southern Star Open Column 1922 in Pioneer Families and Personalities.

- 'Bega' origin of name an Irish One of the 7th Century. Some fifty years back the king of the Bega tribe wore a brass breastplate with the following inscription" Tall Boy, King of Memanang". He had not heard of the name 'Bega'. Memanang is the name that covers the main or most commanding portion of the town [Bega].Bega was an Irish Princess who lived in the 7th Century.
- Details added to the cultural heritage place table in appendix one.

Dowling ACJ 11 August 1837 'R Vs Hall 1837 – verdict not guilty' in The Australian 15 August 1837. The case is also noted in the Proceedings of the Supreme Court Vol 141, State Records of NSW, 2/3326/Page 1.

- Description of a case in which prisoner James Hill discharged a pistol at an Aboriginal man named 'Bill Will' or 'Bell Well' at a place near Twofold Bay, on the 24th February 24th 1837, 'with intent to kill and murder him, or to do him some grievous bodily harm'.
- Bill Will, which is likely to be 'Bidwell' after the name of the Aboriginal tribal group occupying the area, 'had speared three head of cattle on that day.....he was brought into the prisoners hut with another old native black...Bill Will escaped out of the hut,

and the prisoner went after him.....the native turned to the prisoner with his tomahawk and the later then shot him in the belly..'. The jury believed the defendant was acting in self defence; verdict – not guilty.

- Given this would have been one of the first judicial hearings regarding the conflict between settlers and Aboriginal people, the case has been included in the description of Twofold Bay [appendix one] and entered onto the Aboriginal Heritage Time line [appendix two].

Bega LALC supplied numerous newspaper clippings. Where relevant, details of heritage places have been added to the table in appendix one or the time line in appendix two. Places include:

- Cobargo Police Station – 1899 conflict over Aboriginal typhoid patients entering police station.
- Death of Bill Haddigaddi [whaler and cricketer who toured England] - 1942.
- Foot race between Sam Haddidaddi, known as Black Sam, and Michael Power, Eden 1899.
- Gum leaf performance Quaama Hall – 1903.
- 'All Blacks' cricket team walking / boating from Wallaga Lake to Bega for a game against Bega – 24th April 1911.

Materials supplied by the Eden Killer Whale Museum, have been incorporated into the report, if not already done so by Goulding and Griffiths. Additional details include:

- Poem entitled 'Eden' by Eileen Morgan 29.12.1992
- Life of Genoa Jack as per Eden Magnet 1932

3 ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH

As guided by the Steering Committee, primary themes were agreed on for additional oral history research. In accordance with the brief more effective mapping of 'people to place' through targeted oral history recording, was requested. The steering committee also decided that people with traditional and historical connections to the Bega Valley Shire, be interviewed. These instructions were followed, however the team focused on people with traditional, more so than historical attachments.

In the recording and subsequent reviewing of stories with participants, it was confirmed that the information contained in this report is suitable for public viewing. As no confidential information was recorded during stage 3a of this study, an accompanying confidential report or separate LALC / Council / DECCW reports have not been produced. A copy of the participant information agreements can be found in appendix four. It is noted that storytellers retain copyright over their information; copyright is co jointly held between individual storytellers and the Bega Valley Shire Council.

The following people's story's have been recorded as part of this project and feature in this report: Pam Flanders, Mervyn Penrith, Harold Harrison, Ken Campbell, Deanna Campbell, Max Munroe, Loraine Naylor, Eric Naylor, Georgina Parsons, Mary Duroux, Margaret Dixon, Colleen Dixon, Gloria Pickalla, Cecil Hoskins, Jo Mundy, Jim Scott, Alma Carter, Faith Aldridge, John Dixon, Lionel Mongta, Valma Tungai, Jenny Andy, Marie Andy, John Mumbler, Tina Mongta, Olga, Beryl Cruse, Margaret Henry, Wilma Manton, Elaine Thomas, John Stewart, Ossie Cruse, Ben Cruse, Deanna Davison and Lisa Arvidson [36]³.

The oral histories have been arranged according to places, rather than people, as a way to reveal the variety and continuity of cultural connections to particular places, over time. A place-based arrangement of stories also assists in future management of each place, if cultural heritage values associated with a place need to be considered. The places are arranged according to the 'cultural areas' identified by Chris Griffith's [2003] during the fieldwork and preliminary oral history phased of this project. It is noted that the travelling routes, as identified by Blay and Cruse [2004], extend across the entire shire, linking many of these cultural areas together. Travelling routes are noted below as relevant to each cultural area.

³ A further ten local Aboriginal people were interviewed as part of the stage 3a oral history program, but due to personal reasons and time constraints, do not have their stories featured in this report.

3.1 WALLAGA LAKE CULTURAL AREA

The Wallaga Lake Cultural Area includes Wallaga Lake, the foreshore and headlands, Murruna Point 'Wintles', Dignams Creek and the closely associated Gulaga Mountain and Wallaga Lake historical Aboriginal Reserve, now known as the 'Wallaga Lake Koori Village'. The Wallaga Lake Koori Village is situated on the northern side of the lake, within Bega Shire Council.

3.1.1 Wallaga Lake Aboriginal Reserve / Koori Village

I was born at Wallaga Lake, on top of Mosquito Hill, on the 22 June 1939. I belong to the black duck tribe. That's the whole tribe of Wallaga, black duck. Yeah that's my totem My nation's Yuin, Yuin nation. Totem is the black duck. My Dad's name was Alfred John Lee Stewart, and Mum's was Thelma Isabel Walker. I was born in a house, and the house that I was born in was, poor old Mary and Ned Hoskins was was living in it, and that's when my mum went into labour under a big Yam tree. I was born there. So I really, really got roots there at Wallaga. Under the big Yam tree. You used to dig them up, little trees, and you used to the big, its like a sweet potato. Special food. They're beautiful, if you get the little tree that's big, eh, we used to dig them out with sticks and that. Then there's another little yam like an onion, eh, and its got a little sweet yam under it. No flowers on it. And you don't see any around now eh, there's none. I've never seen a yam tree for years. If you wouldn't eat that yam tree then, mate it was a monster. That's where I was born. The house isn't there any more. The Halls there and I don't know who's up the top, but that's where that yam tree and Mary Hoskins and we used to live there. One little house. And it was the only board house. The rest was little two room tin huts. I remember two room tin huts. Wasn't boards right, you know how they used to just saw the logs, like a log cabin; it was a board house. ELAINE THOMAS 5.11.09.

I was about 14 years old, 13, 14. When I finished my school, at Wallaga Lake. At school there was Harriot, Pam, Ernest, Cecily, Ivan, Audry Parsons, Margaret Harrison, there was a few kids there. But they were the good days. They're gone now. I finished school at Wallaga. There was no such thing as high schools then. And I remember my last teacher Mr Mosher, at Wallaga. And the manager was Hendrikson, last manager was Hendrikson at Wallaga. He was good. I liked school. After school, there's a funny story there - Mr Mosher got me correspondence - mum will tell you this - and I wanted to be a teacher, and I got into, what's the name of it, teacher's college up at Bennelong, Bennelong teacher's college. They brought me to Bega and done some shopping and that for me, suits, and you know, whatever. And in the morning I was to go and dad stopped me. You ask mum - and that was when me and my dad had a fall out, terrible big fallout. He wouldn't let me go. He was like that, he was strict. I said - where he pulled the plug I think was cos I said to him - if I make it - mum will tell you - I'm not coming back to Wallaga Lake, I'm going to go way out in among the Koories, you know. And I didn't get to do any of that. I held that against mum and dad, I held that against Pop. I would've done that too. Get

somewhere in life. Never turned out that way. But never mind. I wouldn't change anything now, anyways. Well, when I left school at Wallaga, I ended up at Central Tilba and worked on a dairy farm watching Ida and Jack Wiffen's, kids, you know, like domestic work [ELAINE THOMAS 5.11.09].

I remember them takin Lloyd Jock up to Kinchilla boys, up at Kempsey. And in that big flood, the river, Kempsey river, Kinchilla was on that side right, Jock floated down that river, you must have heard the story, down under the Kempsey bridge, it took that kid months but he made it back to Wallaga, yeah, he made it back to Wallaga, and he would've been about 12 or 13. The manager at the time was Alex Norton, the Indian. They took Jock, from there, but Jock made it back to Wallaga. [ELAINE THOMAS 5.11.09].

I was born in Bega in 1944. I was born in the old hospital. My mother was living at Wallaga Lake at the time. I was reared up here at Wallaga Lake. My mother was Joyce Carter and father Arthur Thomas. Dad was born in Braidwood. Joyce's parents were Charlie Carter and Margaret Haddigaddi. I met my grandfather before he died. Charlie was a little man. He was always wondering, up to Nowra, we walked some parts of the way. He got killed up there. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

Mum and Dad reared me up at Wallaga. Dad was on the roads all the time; he worked for the DMR. There were us three girls and mum's sisters kids too; they were reared as our brothers. There were five of them, our cousin brothers. That's how it was then, they also took in two Parson boys before they took the five others. Clemmy and Rawdon Parson's mum passed away, they were mum's brother's kids, so mum reared them too so. That was nine kids in total. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

I had me education, we had to go to school. I went to school here at Wallaga, the schoolhouse was where Budda's house is now. The next school use to be where the pepper tree, where they are building the resource centre. Valerie, my sister, use to take me to school. I found it easy to learn. They taught us white fella history, before we went into school; we knew that history and ours. It would be good to see some koori teachers, cause there are still prejudices in the schools around here. At school I was called a 'black gin', but I didn't let it sit, I'd fight back. I wasn't going to have people call me that. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

A few of us got confirmed at the Wallaga Hall, they had church there My poor old cousin Ernie Parsons, he was with us, he went home crying when the priest told us we were going to get confirmed. He told Uncle George and Aunty Jess 'arrrr, that priest is going to crucify me'. We laughed and laughed, he wouldn't come, we had to drag him up. That's Coopy's brother. The church didn't stop the kooris from doing anything. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

People made their money in all sorts of ways. It was hard to get work in Bermagui, mainly all the gubbs had them jobs. I use to work for the Hendricksons when I was about 15. I did housework and mind the little fellas;

take them for a walk. I was with them for a while, I even got dressed at their place for my wedding. We became good friends. When they moved to burnt bridge we visited them. The Hendricksons were a nice family. Me and Eddie Foster are still living at Wallaga with our grandsons. They go to the Wallaga Bridge for a swim like we did as kids. We will be buried here, down in that little resting place by the lake.

Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

After mum died in 1939 I moved to Wallaga Lake to live with Aunty Emma and Uncle Charley. I went to school at Wallaga Lake and then we followed seasonal picking work up north and I went to Jaspers Brush School and lived at Berry. We then moved to Terara were Uncle Charlie was killed stacking hay on a dray. Mary Duroux 22.4.2010

The old reserves mean a lot to us, particularly to people who grew up on them. At Wallaga Lake, my grandmother is named as one of the people who used to live there too, years ago. Her name was Dolly Walker; my father's mother. My other grandmother was Nellie Bundgel, she was from Bombala. She was a Monaro woman; that's on my dad's side. Even with the reserves, you can go back to all the reserves in the state and find that we have extended family in them. There's an affinity, to all of us, to Aboriginal people. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

I was born in Cummeragunja in 1943. My mother's name was Lena Harrison [nee Mc Gee] and my father Jack Little. My father and Jimmy Little's father were brothers; they met two McGee sisters. In the 1930's Uncle Jimmy and my father and other Wallaga Lake men in the Wallaga Lake gum leaf band visited Cummeragunja. That's when they met the McGee sisters. In those days people had to travel to find a wife, they did not want to marry in close. They brought their new wives to the coast, to Wallaga Lake and then up to Worragee at Nowra. They moved around a lot bean picking, they came down to Bega picking in the 1930s. Around the same time they opened the Harbour Bridge. Harold Harrison 15.9.2009

My father was born at Quaama, in Dry River there and was rounded up and taken to Wallaga Lake. They had no say; it wasn't their fault. If they played up, their rations'd be restricted. Dad is buried at Wallaga Lake, I am not sure exactly where, we are probably walking right over it. I would like to see the old graves marked, so we know where all the family plots are. Harold Harrison 15.9.2009

In the late 1940s the government took me away from my family. We were living at Worragee and they sent me to Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's home. My mother died that night. I was at Bomaderry for two years. I remember one Christmas they gave us all toys, then they took them off us to give to other kids the following Christmas. When I was 7 or 8 the Bomaderry home got full so they sent us to Kinchella. I knew Merv Penrith, Harry Penrith and Burnum Burnum there. We met up later at Wallaga and became friends, like family. We understand each other, cause we were all taken away. When I went back to where I was taken from, the first person I saw

was my brother. He was 19. I asked my Aunty 'where's dad', she said 'dad died broken hearted'. In the 1960s I moved to Wallaga Lake to stay with my Aunty Jane, my dad's sister. Forty years later I still live at Wallaga, everyone is family here. Harold Harrison 15.9.2009

I was born in Berry in 1941. I would have been born in Nowra, but my mother, being black, was not permitted into the hospital there. Dad was Hector Stewart and my Mum was Ruby Penrith, she was born on Mosquito Point, here at Wallaga Lake. I was named after my mother's two brothers, Mervyn and Charles Penrith. Bert Penrith, my grandfather was born not far from here on the banks of Dignams Creek. He use to work for farmers around Tilba Tilba and is buried in the Wallaga Lake Cemetery. Mervyn Penrith 17.11.2009.

During the 1950s Aboriginal kids were stolen from their mothers and made to learn 'white' ways. First I was made to go to Bomaderry Home in Nowra. All the kids there were Aboriginal. When I was about 11, I was hitching a ride from Nowra to Wallaga Lake, to get home. I wanted to come home. Welfare picked me up on the way and took me to Kinchella Boys Home in Kempsey. I had to live at Kinchella until I was 15. I was there for about 4 years. My first cousin, Burnum Burnum, was like a brother, he was at Kinchella too. We went to Kempsey High School and played football. I was the captain of the team. When I finished school I worked on a farm at a little place called Denman, out from Musselbrook. Then i made my way home. I was happy to come back home after they took me away. I gotta always come back. I was 15 or 16 when I came back. This is where everything is related to me, it all starts here. My family have always lived here, so it was good to get home. I've got everything here at Wallaga, why should I go anywhere? I've got the lake and plenty of fishin'. I got all me family here. Mervyn Penrith 17.11.2009.

I was Born in Batemans Bay, in 1939. Well it was, very important for all my family to get together for my 70th birthday recently. But I wasn't expecting the whole gang, from Sydney, right down, as far as Wallaga Lake, there was about over 200 people there. I'm the last of them. The last of the Parsons, there's more after me, but I'm the last of my Dad's family. My Dad was George 'Bimmy' Parsons. Dad was married twice - he was married to a Governor lady, Thelma, then he met my Mum, Jessie Chapman - and they were married. Mum was a Cootamundra girl, she was taken away when she was 8 years old. Dad and Thelma had Cyril, Hetti and Bobby. Mum and Dad had Dorothy, and then there was me, then the boys - Ernie, Barry, George, Dinny Dan, Stanley. Stanley's the baby. Dinny Dan was named after his two great grandfathers, Dinny and Dan. Dinny's was Uncle Charlie 'Crongy' Parson's father and Danny Parsons was George Parsons father. I met my Uncle Des Pickalla at Wallaga Lake, when I was down there, and he was Mum's brother. And I always said how come Mum, you're a Chapman, and he's a Pickalla, and she said because his right name is Des Chapman, so he's name was taken from him too, and given this Chapman name. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

Well we lived in two places at Wallaga Lake, we lived at Newtown, what they call Newtown, then you've got - the other point's Mosquito. Wallaga Lake - that's all my country, but cos of - the whole lot of it, the Koories on the coast, they've got their clans, their tribes, their groups and if they want to be called what they call themselves, fair enough. I've got no problem. But we've still got a connection with all these people cos we're all one mob. Well because their culture is connected cos of the travelin we did in between, and then stopin and the campin. The people there used to go work off Wallaga Lake, no matter where we lived and that, we'd always head back to the old Wallaga Lake, so, and a lot of the Koorie people, they'd go from Wallaga to Bega, maybe camp through there during pickin season, then go back to Wallaga Lake, that was the home base. . .
Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

I was born in 1948 at Walcha. My mother was Isabelle Ruth Naylor nee Collins from Tinga and my father was William Hugh Naylor from Kempsey. That makes me Dungutti – Kamilaroi. I was named after my father William and my grandfather Hugh. I moved to Wallaga Lake to be closer to mum when I was 12. I was happy to be at Wallaga. I stayed here until I was 18. I worked from when I was 12 years old. I use to go fishing and bean picking. Everyone use to share, that's just the way it was at Wallaga. Parents were stricter then too, kids had to be inside before dark. The white manager kept everyone in line. I still live at Wallaga with my wife Loraine; it's hard to leave.
Eric Naylor 15.9.2009

I was born in 1947 at Batemans Bay. My mother was Sylvia Chapman, she was from Batemans Bay and my father was Cyril Scott, from Victoria. Dad's Mum lived on Wallaga Lake, and Mum's mob lived in Wreck Bay. Once I remember Dad hiring a taxi from Narooma to Wreck Bay, that's up at Jervis Bay, we got to the hill at Wallaga, and he come up here, and Dad got out to ask the manager, and we only had from here, about a few hundred yards to walk down to see our grandparents, and he walked out and he said 'no'. He left us sitting there for about an hour or more, sitting in the taxi, hired it all the way from Narooma, sat in the taxi for an hour, hour and half or more, sittin there till he made his mind up, but his mind was made up. I'd be about 7 or 8 at the time. Cos I was in kindergarten, first class. My grandfather was a fisherman, with a boat and nets he used to get home, he used to do all right, so Mum's people, yeah, so we got to the mission and he left us sitting there for a long time, and then just walked down and said no, so the taxi had to turn around and fetch us all the way back to Narooma. Didn't have troubles visiting at the Wallaga Lake, well from what I can remember, it wasn't as bad as Wreck Bay, cos Wallaga Lake - we used to come down and see Dad's Mum used to live there, so we used to come down from Narooma, when we lived there, and have weekends with her, you could come in. Jim Scott 9.2.2010

When Rhonda was one week old we moved to Wallaga Lake, that was the first time I was at Wallaga Lake, and the first one there that I made friends with, and we've been friends ever since, was Thelma 'toots'. Aunty Thelma and Uncle Alfie Stewart use to travel each day from Wallaga to Dignams for work. Thelma was really nice. So, they were at Dignam's creek too for a

while working, she used to come out there. I also remember Uncle George Campbell, Uncle Isaac Cruse and Uncle Les Mongta being there. [Beryl Cruse 29.10.2009]

You couldn't go on a reserve. Wallaga lake, you'd have to get permission to go years ago. Couldn't stay there, even though my grandfather Thomas Campbell was born at Wallaga. I looked up in the blanket census, you know when they give the blankets out, they gave blanket's to his parents Margaret Nixon and James Campbell in 1883. They are my great grandparents. When my grandfather was young, he and his older brother Dick got a ride in a steamer heading north, they got off at Kempsey where they met their wives. Uncle Dick married a Mosley and stayed at Kempsey, whilst my grandfather met Ada Coombes from Walcha. Grandfather Thomas Campbell brought Ada back down the coast and they got married in Batemans Bay. Poppy was a fisherman, so they spent a lot of time travelling up and down the coast fishing, including at Moruya and Huskisson. They also spent a bit of time at Walcha, visiting granny's family [Beryl Cruse 29.10.2009]

We only went to Wallaga because me grandmother and her father Dick Piety was there. And when I got married, Mary and I went down there. Then when I worked with Norm McCarthy, there happened to be empty house at Mosquito, so I stayed there and done a bit of work. But more or less - I ploughed Wallaga, ploughed it all up and grew vegetables, but the manager come in and threw me off. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010

I was born in Armidale 31st July 1940. I am an inland fellow, I'm Kamilaroi. My mother was Norma Tighe and my father was Don Griffin. I never lived with my mother, I lived with my grandparents, we moved around. Welfare had transferred mum to Wallaga Lake cause Purfleet Mission was getting crowded. They kicked her out of the house at Purfleet Mission, that's near Taree. She had no family connections here at Wallaga, she didn't know a sole when she arrived. They lived in old wooden houses with no electricity. The houses got pulled down and they built fibro ones with asbestos, they pulled them down and got brick ones. In them days Wallaga was covered in trees. I remember the town was dimly lite by fat lights, in jam tins with dirt on the bottom. They put the fat into the tin then light it up. I also remember they had cows and we'd get milk fresh. Someone did the milking, the milk bails were at the bottom of the hill. Max Munro 8.9.2009

During the late 50s to early 60s when came into Wallaga to visit mum and my brothers and sisters I was only permitted onto the mission during the daytime. If I had of moved to Wallaga from Purfleet when they first came, I would have been let in, but because I was registered as living in Tamworth, so I was treated differently. It was hard for us, cause they didn't allow people to visit freely. At sun down I had to leave. I'd walk out past the manager, then cut through the bush and go back around the lake. I came up then, back up the hill to mum's house. She was down the bottom, 'downtown', they call it Newtown. When my grandmother died in the 70s, I left Tamworth for good and relocated to Wallaga. I have been here for

about 40 years. Once I moved here, I didn't need to sneak in. Max Munro
8.9.2009

In 1964 we got a house in the little street going down the hill called Mosquito Point. We was living there for probably about 12 months, cos I can remember my father would come back to Bega and work. And every so often, back then, they had the old cart and sulky runs where they'd drop fresh bread and stuff off, milk and the rations was tea and sugar and flour and all that, and I remember the rations when they was giving out old blankets and that back then and every so often we'd look up on the hill and we'd be watching for Dad to come on the weekends to see us cos he had to come and work on all the different farms and what not, and we'd see him coming down the hill with a big old bag hanging over his shoulder with stuff - goodies- and that for us, boiled lollies, and we'd all run up, and cuddle him, glad to see him, just to be there with us. And in a couple of days he'd be gone, he'd be coming back this way again, to keep on working. And every so often the manager would come down, they'd check the houses out, like the women used to get the wild eucalyptus trees out of the bush and put them into the fire place, the ashes they used to wipe over real clean, like a real nice clean white paint, but it was the ashes, and put an old milk tin in there with the eucalyptus and make it look pretty. So they'd come and do checks on the homes and that was going on up on Wallaga at the mission back then. I might have been up around the 14 mark, probably around 14. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010]

When we lived at Wallaga, I always used to help Mum, you know. I went to the old school on the mission. Cos in the one big class there was all different age groups. Back then everyone had a cow and they used to milk their own cows, and we used to go home and have damper and boiled milk for dinner and that. Mum would have the big billy of fresh milk on. But in the class the manager used to give us all these little vitamin tablets and big mugs of cocoa and sandwiches of Vegemite and peanut butter back then. I remember, till that school closed down, then we all went to Bermagui. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010]

I was born in 1946 at the Pines, at Central Tilba. My mother Marie Andy was born there too. When my worked, my grandmother Kathleen 'Kitty' Andy looked after us. I my grand aunt's name - Elizabeth 'Lizzy' Andy, my grandmother's sister. I lived at Tilba until I was school age. We moved to Wallaga Lake, and went to school there. We lived in a little house at Mosquito. [Jenny Andy 4.11.2009]

I was born on the 8th Dec 1945 at 'the Pines' - just outside Central Tilba. My great grandmother delivered me, her name was Mary Andy nee Piety. She delivered my mother too! My mother was Martha Andy, she was a Yuin woman born on the side of Gulaga Mountain. I was named after my mother's mother Kathleen Andy. My father Jeff Tungai was Ngarigo from Delegate but grew up at Wallaga Lake with the Carter family, Charlie Carter and Margaret. They closed the Delegate Reserve because the government wanted access to the water there. They relocated people from

Delegate to Wallaga and Orbost. My father ended up at Wallaga. Valmai Cooper nee Tungai 4.11.2009.

All of my childhood was spent at Wallaga Lake. My father built a hut at Muckens Point in the late 60s; that's just before you get into the mission itself. Down the hill and down the little track. Muckens Point they call it. All the other houses were taken up, and they needed somewhere to live. He built the frame out of timber, and had a bit of tin but not a lot of tin. So he got some potato bags and Hessian bags. He stitched them all together with a big needle that you stitch corn up with. After that they knocked the big ants nest down, crushed up the terminate mounds they were. Ground it all up and mixed it with water, and painted the house with that. They thought if a storm never knocked down a terminate mound then a storm wouldn't knock their hut down. It was a beautiful hut, with a beautiful little fireplace, it was split level and had a dirt floor, painted with clay, the floor was as hard as cement. They ended up building a tip where that house was. They should have built the tip somewhere else. Valmai Cooper nee Tungai 4.11.2009.

Living at Wallaga Lake Mission, if you were big enough, they'd send you milking - around the mission that is. The hard thing was you had to find the bloody cows, and there are a lot of gullies at Wallaga, up and down. If it weren't for the dogs, we'd never have found the cows. We worked hard. I remember being told 'go Martha, go get the morning sticks', she would call me my mother's name cause she couldn't remember mine but she knew who I belonged to. She would camp any where at Wallaga, wherever she was, as soon as it was dark she'd sleep. We would make her a fire in the morning with sticks we'd collected the night before. Valmai Cooper nee Tungai 4.11.2009.

I was born in Nowra in 1941 and lived there until I was about eight year old . We moved around a lot, we went to Wreck Bay, Cowra, to Sydney then come back down the coast here, and well we was out at Nerigundah. We used to come down for the picking, yeah, pick the peas and beans. The people did travel when the seasonal work was on, they'd come down from all over. Come down here to Bodalla to do the bean picking and pea picking. Just lived for a little while at Nerigundah then I went back to Sydney and cos that's when I got married and, I'd had Iris and and two of the boys, we moved to, we come down to Wallaga Lake cos me dad, Reggie Walker had moved from Nerigundah to Wallaga Lake so we moved down to Wallaga Lake to see him and we stayed there for about seven years. We left there in 1970, so when Iris was two-year-old, three, then I had Colin and Derek so that must have been in 62 we moved down to Wallaga. Brother Alex lived there too. DEANNA DAVISON 21.4.2010

Well dad was born on Wallaga Lake. His name was Reg Walker. My mother was a Ngarigo woman. My grandfather on dad's side was Edward Walker and my grandmother was Mary Jane, she was a Johnston from Broulee. They were married at Turlinjah and then moved down, or were moved to Wallaga Lake and lived on the mission there cos dad was born there on the

mission at Wallaga Lake. Well dad passed away in 1970 or 69, just before we left. My youngest daughter Lucille she was born in 1970 and that's when we moved. We moved from Wallaga Lake back to Nowra. I have nine kids; five boys and four girls. DEANNA DAVISON 21.4.2010

I don't visit Wallaga Lake much now. I sometimes visit the cemetery to clean the grave up and that. Well my my brothers are buried there at Wallaga Lake, and my son that passed away up in Canberra he's buried at Wallaga Lake too. We brought him home to bury him. If we come down the coast we go in there to visit the graves and that. The cemetery was closed when dad passed away so dad and a couple of the others, cousins of theirs are buried in Bega. That's a bit sad, I would have liked him to be buried at Wallaga too. DEANNA DAVISON 21.4.2010

My birth certificate says I was born at Tilba Tilba, but I was born at Wallaga Lake in 1954. The registry office was in Tilba, so they just put that down. My mother was Audrey Harrison and father Rawdan Parsons. He was from the Wallaga Lake area. Me mum passed away when I was only little, I can remember when I was 7 or 8, I was mainly with my grandmother, Agnes Harrison, that's mum's mum. She was from over Victoria. [Deanna Campbell 8.9.09].

I went to Wallaga Lake school too. When that was a school. When the work was finished down this way, or that, we moved up to Wallaga Lake for six years I think we did, this was when I got a bit older, and lived with our aunts and uncles, then we got our own place, when my grandfather got sick and he gave the house to my father and mother and we lived there for six years and my father made a big vege gardens and give all the Koorie people on Wallaga Lake veges and he'd go out spearing in his boat and give all the people fish. Done a lot for the mission. Yeah that was grandfather Les Mongta's house. Dad used to go and spear the fish at lunch time. He done it for a lot of people. Share, we still share. We all still share if we've got it. That's our Koorie culture way, sharing, caring. When we all become teenagers, just before we become teenagers, Uncle Ossie Cruz and all his clan and all of us and all the mission kids on Wallaga, we used to have a youth group going, and with our youth group those days, in the early 70s I think it was, something like that, we used to just all go on adventure, climbing. We climbed up mount Gulaga, we climbed it, all of us youth group kids. We put a flag on that little mountain - BJ, Carol, I, May and Button, you name us all, we all put a big flag up there. I forgot what sort of flag. It musta been the Koorie flag. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

Back in the 60s I went to see my Uncle Bill at Wallaga, and they told me I want allowed in to the mission. I went up the road and late in the afternoon I went around the lake, walked in to visit my uncle, then stayed a few years, we all had to hid from the manager. If he seen stranger, he'd make you get off. I could always go down to the lake and fish, no one could see you down there until they cut the trees down, so the manager could see what was going on. They always locked the gate that was near where the land council office is today. The land council office was the manager's residence. He knew what was going on. There were lots of different

managers. There are older people around, older than me, they know lots more than me. Ken Campbell 8.9.2009

I was born in Bega on the 25th October 1952. I came from Bega hospital to Wallaga Lake. I grew up here on Wallaga Lake and have lived here most of my life. I lived here with my mum. I've got one brother and two sisters here at Wallaga Lake, one brother at Cobargo, and one at Tanja. My mother was Cynthia Carter. Pam Flanders, Harriett Walker and I are related. I remember there use to be goats and cows here at Wallaga Lake. We use to lead the cows up to the bails every evening; they got milked every morning. Boy Andy use to milk the cows. The Managers had control over everyone – everyone had to keep a clean house, the houses would be inspected. We use to get rations, sugar flour, treacle, dripping, tobacco every week or so. I can't quite remember I was only young. I met Eric here, we've been away and done our own thing and now we've been here 30 years. Everyone comes and goes, if you've got family here, you'll always return. Loraine Naylor 15.9.2009

In 1967 we were living at Mystery Bay and going to meetings in Bega, about the referendum. We stayed at Mystery Bay until the mission manager left Wallaga. When all his powers were stripped we moved to Wallaga Lake. That was a first for the Cruse family, to go to a mission. When you look through the records, you will not find blanket issues for the Cruse family. See my great great grandfather was an America Indian, he refused to live on a mission, he refused to take hand outs and he refused to be told what to do. We are not sure of the full story of how he came to Australia, dad done a bit of research. He was in South American when Mexico was separate. He got on a seal boat and thought he was sailing to another part of America but finished up in Tasmania. He got on another sealing boat in Tasmania and between Tasmania and Batemans he stabbed two crewmembers, he was only 17 or something, so they rowed him into Batemans Bay. He got in with a Walker lady at Batemans Bay. They thought he was another black fella. Grandfather said it took my great great grandfather forty minutes to arm himself; handguns, rifles, knives, he was full on. The cops did not go near him, and if they did 12 would come. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

3.1.2 Wallaga Lake

I was born at Central Tilba, at the Pines, in 1930. The 27th of April it was. A lot of our family were born there, that was the old school at Central Tilba. The Andy family lived in the old school house. Kathleen 'Kitty' Andy was my mother; she was the daughter of Bob Andy and Mary Ellen Piety 'Granny Andy'. I got my name from my grandmother, Granny Andy was a midwife; she helped out a lot of people. I lived at Tilba for a long time. I remember riding my bike to school at Wallaga. We caught a lot of black fish in Wallaga Lake, oysters, bimbullas, leather jackets, muscles. The fan oysters were lovely too. Beautiful, Lovely. Marie Ellen Andy 4.11.2009

During the 50's and 60's we use to walk through the lake to get oysters, muscles, bimbullas. I remember 'line fishing' there too. Wallaga Lake, the lake was really good to get fish out of. Not any more. Merrimans once lived there

in that lake. They had a tribal fight there between the Wallaga Lake and the Lake Tyres mobs, Merriman was put on the island for safety. The island has his name because he lived there. Some people from Lake Tyres now live at Wallaga Lake. Mervyn Penrith 17.11.2009.

Merriman's totem was the black duck, Umbarra. Umbara – that's our totem too, the black duck totem. The Black duck is our bird. We see him around here, I seen one here today. The black duck goes wherever he wants; he lives here all right, he is part of the lake too you know. It is very hard to see these birds' nests. They nest in funny little places, lay their eggs in the weeds. They have nests everywhere, not just here. When we see a black duck, we knew he is one of us; we are not allowed to touch him. There might be a nest around here, if we found a nest we gotta leave him in peace, leave the bird and leave the eggs. If someone was visiting, they could have a feed of duck if we let em. If they hurt a black duck by accident, that would be ok, we'd forgive them. If someone hurt a duck because they tried to, then we'd have to punish them. These rules are thousands of years old, it is very important to abide by what we are telling them. The rules are old, really old rules, like Dreamtime old. The elders are connected to the Dreamtime so they can let people know what the rules are. The rules automatically come and they go through the elders. That's the rules of the Wallaga Lake people here. Without the black duck we've got nothing. Mervyn Penrith 17.11.2009.

There are middens by the lake. Along time ago people were throwing their shells out there, like we are today. They would have been camped somewhere nearby. We they first get to a place, they'd sort out a good place to camp. They needed a windbreak and it all needs to be cleared. All middens are important to us. They tell a story about our people; they use to live there, they use to eat there. Anyone that belongs to the land, mainly elders can tell the stories about the middens. Young people can tell that story if they know it and their telling the truth. Warren can tell the story. Koori people from somewhere else, they could tell that story if we let em. Today, we are making a shell midden over the hill behind my place, that's were we put our scraps today. Mervyn Penrith 17.11.2009.

We get bush tucker from time to time. Wandamas, snot golyons and cherrys, and yams. Old Uncle Charley, we used to call him, Shepherd, Charley Shepherd. When we was kids on Wallaga, he used to get porcupines and the goannas, and make a big fire and dig a big hole and cook 'em in, put them down in the hot ash in paper, he used to cook them, as kids, yeah Porcupines and all that. That was at Wallaga Lake. But old Uncle Charley, he was a full blood, and his hair was as white as this. But we used to have a ball. I've had a go at goannas and . . . its meat is snow white. Well we were kids and we'd try anything. Wrap them in paper and put them down in the hot hole, and then cover them with the hot soil. Dry paper and put leaves around and then put the porcupine in. That was good. It's like pork, and they're fatty hey, lot of fat. But beautiful. But see you can't go and get any of that now. You get fined. You can't do that now. Get two abs, and who would that feed? not worth going and gettin 'em. Used to get abs before there was a limit put on 'em. When we used to come here and go around and you could bring home what you wanted.

You could get them and freeze them, you know. You wanted a feed of abs, pull them out of your freezer. But you can't do that now, which is wrong I reckon. It's wrong. All that's taken away from us. [ELAINE THOMAS 5.11.09].

As kids we were always down at the Lake. We would always catch a feed, we'd dive down and get bimbullas, mussels, oysters, junga, cook em on the hot coals by the lake. We had our own swimming hole, it was nice and clean, you can't swim there now because it doesn't get washed out. There use to be big floods that washed the lake clean, and with the tide coming in and out, it use to be lovely. We use to dive off the bridge and get mussels off the 'black piles'. We would cook them on the shore, every child was well fed. We never starved. We always had a mixture of shop food and bush food. They were good days. Valmai Cooper nee Tungai 4.11.2009.

We were born to swim. We lived in the lake. We got a feed good of oysters and bimbulla. We'd go swimming and all. Even if it was raining we'd still be in the lake. We played around there on the beach. We done everything, we woke up in the morning and we were off. We were taught what to do. Me and Monica Morgan, we had a good time. We had a little tomahawk and billy can and we'd go up to get witchetty grubs from the wattle from around the edge of the lake. We'd make a fire and get the hot coals ready, then we grilled them, they were the best witchetty grubs to eat. We got gum too, from the same tree. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

We lived off the land most of the time. I enjoyed those times it was good. Years ago the kids had to make their own fun. We made rollers from the old milk tins, put wire in through them – put lots together and make a semi trailer, we'd drag it along and make tracks through the bush. We had pegs and made dolls out of the pegs. We use to have weekends on the beach and get mum lots of shells, for her shell work. She needed certain tiny little flat shells, you can't see them there now. My uncle did the harbour bridge out of shells. That's Roy Thomas. He sold it. They also made little shoes, tourists would come into Wallaga and she'd sell her little shell things – they'd take them all in one go. Dad use to have a boat and take us across the lake; we'd have a day fishing. We'd dive and get mussels and bumbullas. Mum use to make a big damper to take. She cooked the damper at home, or if we were at the beach shed cook it in the sand; straight in the hot sand. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

All the Koories around they know about Reggies Point. That place is named after my father, Reggie Walker. He camped there. He was born at Wallaga Lake, down Mosquito Bay in 1908. Everyone just knows that its Reggie's Point, across the south side of Wallaga Lake. I always stop and have a look across there. When you're up at the Wallaga Hall and you're looking straight across the lake, there's a little point there where there's oak trees, its directly straight across the lake. There are no houses there, its all scrub. There might be bits and pieces of his camp there. I tell you what, no matter where he lived or camped, there was always a clean camp and no rubbish left around. He used to row across in the boat. Everyone knew what he used to do; he'd row across there and have his camp over there. He had his boat tied up down at Newtown they call it, at the bottom part of the mission, by

the lake's edge. He'd go all the way over in a row boat, it never had a motor on it. Look, I wish I'd had the time to sit down and listen to him, listen to more of what the old people had to say. DEANNA DAVISON 21.4.2010

Dad set up a fire over there, and he had a mattress. Well it was clear on that little point where he was. You could see his fire from Wallaga when he had his fire going. He put up bushes and a bit of bark or something up against a tree that's a lean too. He probably had something to cover it over; you know to keep him dry if it was raining. He paddled it all over in his boat. Once he even took a lounge over in his boat! And we thought 'oh my god that boat's going to sink'. And Cheryl was sitting on the lounge in the boat, she'll tell you about that too see. You ask her about the lounge in the boat, ha, ha, ha! She was 4 or 5 then. She was one of his pets, and Iris too. Dad used to love fishing and just laying there in the quiet with his line set. He used to catch the eels and the fish, and he used to salt them, dry them and salt them, smoke them. When he want a feed he used to steam a bit of fish, or steam a bit of eel, and have a little pot of rice. I always say I wish I'd watched him to learn how he did, I know he used to do it with the salt and brown sugar too. Smoking, yeah. He did it over there at 'Reggies Point'. He catch the fish there, and the eels, cut them up, make a feed out of anything. DEANNA DAVISON 21.4.2010

We used to go across in the boat with him sometimes. We used to go over there and sit with him, but we never camped over there with him. He used to say 'if these kids want me, they'll have to swim for me'. Cos all the kids used to be mad on him, you know, he loved his grandkids. Yoy hear different ones talk about how he could spin a good yarn. He was pretty healthy and strong too, but he always worked hard. After he had that accident when he was a young man he was left crippled in one leg and well his knee, he couldn't straighten his leg, he used to walk with a limp, but it was never a handicap. He kept on going. He had a really good physique; he was a good strong person. You know after me brother turned around and sold the boat, well it was Alex's boat, dad just kept on going down the hill, cos it was important to him to physically do something you know, and be able to get around, he had a lot of knowledge, dad did. DEANNA DAVISON 21.4.2010

I would like to see Reggie's Point recognised. It should be put to the council, or the Gulaga Board of Management. It might be in Gulaga National Park now. I'd like to see it named in honour of my father, and be recognised as a place where he camped and I'm sure that lots of people from Wallaga, that's left there now, would be able to fill you in on the story. So it would be a real honour, you now, not only for me, but for, his grand kids and great-grand kids. A sign at Reggies Point would be good, an information sign saying who he was and that he's a traditional owner, and that this was a camping place for him. DEANNA DAVISON 21.4.2010

We swam off the bridge; everyone use to jump off the bridge. I can remember collecting Black mussels from around it too. We'd cook the mussels on the shore or bring them home. We usually went after Blackfish or Bream. We used dough for bait. Wallaga Lake use to be clean, it use to get

flushed every day with the in and out tide. Now you can't swim there, it is too polluted. We use to walk from Wallaga Lake to Bermagui, past Camel Rock. The kids have been pulled out in the under toe, but they know not to worry, they don't struggle, they just go out with it and come back in further down the beach. It is important for the kids to be by the sea. They go down to camel rock and hear the sea, go fishing, collect some periwinkles, pipis, conks, cook em on the rocks out of the wind. Harold Harrison 15.9.2009

When I first went to Wallaga Lake I was 13. I left when I was goin on 17. Camping on snake island, we'd have to be with our parents, my oath. everything, old Wallaga Lake was a very scary place in them days, you'd see ghosts, you'd see black ghosts, you'd see all these sorts of things, you know, and after dark we'd either get in, have to be in before dark. . . snake island was safe, all you'd do is fish and camp, right in the middle of it. We'd eat bimbulas, whatever fish we got. When the tide was low you might walk across, but as time when on it got a bit deeper around the edges, you know, so we used to swim sometimes, just go over, wouldn't stay the night, we'd just go over walk around. Oh we'd camp there, but sometimes just went for the day there and stayed there and got oysters and cooked them up over there on the island, oh it was a good life. I remember when one of the Thomas boys, Vincent Thomas, well all the boys used to get together, and the girls and we'd all go spearin. Well the funniest thing happened, you see my - one of my brothers - stuck the spear in his own foot, then Vincent Thomas he stuck the spear down the calf of his leg, and they're yellin out for me 'Coopy, Coopy, look at him his bleedin', 'help him' so I went over to him and I just pulled it straight out like that. The spear head, that was, remember the old, the old um, tubs, the old iron tubs, the top of them, they used to get the spears out of that, if they had holes in them and that, you know, Dad used to get the, used the round part of it, and it was sharp, used to sharpen it up themselves, with a file then, anyway put it in the back of his leg and I pulled it out, and there was these two old white people comin down, walkin down the beach, and he was bleeding, so we grabbed some weed and we started to wrap his leg up with that, but it wasn't stoppin it, and 'sit down' we was sayin to him, and the two old white people come over and they had a look at his leg and they pulled their handkerchiefs out and they tied their handkerchiefs together and they bound it up for him. He was one of the Thomas boys from Wallaga Lake, yeah. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

Well snake island, and you've got snake island and you've got goat island, it used to be then. I've never known them to be what they call it now - Merrimans island - but they may have looked back, went into research and got that. Yes, there were goats on that island. No, we used to camp on snake island, its the one over the other side of the bridge. And whatever they do with that, that's their boundary, that's the Yuin people, what they call themselves, the Yuin people. I have camped on snake island, we used to go across there and stay the night there and sneak around get the bimbulas and fish of a night time. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

The boys used to dive for mutton fish, that's abalone today, that's changed we used to call it mutton fish, and periwinkles and bimbulas, not bimbulas we'd get the bimbulas in the lake, Wallaga Lake, but around we'd go fishin,

the boys dived for lobsters and we'd get our feed of conks and periwinkles and all that sort of sea food. . . we'd be camped on the edge of the headland, around the edge of it sometimes, me and my family used to camp round the edge, Dad and Mum and them. But there was a time when my brother come down with his wife Norma, brother Barry, he married Norma Tighe, and she went in not knowing though, and she went and dived into the sea and she dove right into where the current is and she was gettin dragged out and she had clothes on, it was hot day, and she wanted to get her clothes wet to keep her cool, when she hit the current it started draggin her out, she was screaming and so me brother run, and he dived in, and they had a swim with the current till they swam out of the current, on the side till they come in to where the rough water was then they was right then, they swam in. A lot of people think just because they see calm water and no waves, they think I'll put the kids in and let them swim and that's the most dangerous place. Dad would be screamin get out of that part, you go there where them waves are breakin. Brought up on the sea, had to know all those sorts of things. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

Bimbulas, did all that, on the old lake, fishin. Myself and some of the girls, we'd borrow Uncle Bob's boat, Uncle Bob Parson's boat and we all went back towards Dignams Creek, up the river there, we used to go right up the end of Dignams Creek rowin, comin back cos the two sisters got into a fight and of course we lost a paddle - these were my age - about my age, now - and they lost the paddle, and so what were we supposed to tell Uncle Bob, we didn't know how to bring this about, so we went for oysters and we got this big bag of oysters, so of course the girls said we'll give him the oysters, eh, and I said that's a good idea, we'll give him the oysters and he won't worry about his paddle. So this is what we did, we gave - I said yes, we'd give him the oysters, they agreed with it - so when we pulled in we tied the boat up and we carried the paddle up, one paddle, and we said Uncle Bob, something happened to the paddle, it just fell out. 'Don't worry about it, he said, you're standin there tellin me lies, I've got a few spares under the house, about 5 or 6 spares under the house, and the girls looked at me and they said give him the oysters eh, and he took the oysters anyway. He coulda took half but he took the lot. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

I was born in Orbost district hospital 27th October 1936. My mother was Zeta Andy. She was born in Potato Point, near Bodalla. My father was Les Mongta, he was born in Gippsland. Nurse Smith she reared me till I was about two. Nurse Smith got in touch with Aunt 'Lizzy' Elizabeth Davis, my mother's sister and said 'if you don't want Lionel to go back home, I'd like to adopt him'. And they got back to her and said 'no, you won't adopt him, we'll take him'. Lizzy and Uncle Gundy they had no children. Then they got a ride to Orbost with the Snowy Phantom on his fish truck. See Uncle Gundy was a fisherman, he worked for Paul McKenna commercial fishing out of Wallaga Lake, Snowy would meet them at Wallaga Lake Bridge to collect their fish. So anyways, they picked me up in the fish truck, I was still a baby; Snowy brought me back to what we call the Pines in Central Tilba. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010

As a kid I remember fishing in Wallaga Lake. All the time. Always had a spear in our hand. Every kid had a spear. But every kid's got a bottle of beer these days, no spear. Its a thing of the past. . . if you don't go fishing, I'm going to spear you! hit him in the head with a nulla nulla or something. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010

One time I was sitting down there by the Lake, getting oysters and mussels off the bridge with Percy Thomas. He died a while ago now. I went down there with him to get the mussels I was standing on one of the pillions of the bridge, he was diving down to get them and the biggest junga grabbed him and pulled him down under the water, as soon as I seen that I chucked the mussels and took off, I am not stopping on the bridge, wasn't standing on the bridge or he'd get me too. I didn't hang around. Percy pulled it off his leg, maybe he caught it, I can't remember. I didn't stay around I hate them Jungas; they are everywhere and they sneak up on you and change colour. Max Munroe 8.9.2009.

Years ago when I was young in the late 50s, I remember the old people from here went over to the closed lake entrance with picks and shovels to open it up, they let the fish out. The opening wasn't closed too badly, they could see it was going to close up and so before the high tide they helped open it up. Now when they need to get the tractor down to open it up, they drive over our midden grounds at Murunna. The tractors should make their way from the north side. Max Munroe 8.9.2009.

Years ago, you could always get out onto the lake in a boat, cause who ever owned a boat on Wallaga would share it, or we'd go fishing with them. They all use to share. Uncle Roy Thomas taught me how to make spears, he'd take me up Dignams Creek. The young people listened to the elders in the old days; there was respect both ways. We'd cut the wood off with a little tomahawk and sharpen the end off. We'd find glass for the blade. We'd get the mingo stick, make the spear, go spearing, catch some fish and return home. We'd have to look out for the goonge. All around the lake we'd fish. I never went to school, I just learnt from the bush. Eric Naylor 15.9.2009

We went to Wintles fishing and off the Wallaga Lake bridge. We collected periwinkles and shells for shell work, to cover the little cardboard shoes. Eric Naylor 15.9.2009

I remember morning time at Wallaga, we'd go out of a mornin and not go home till evenin but without takin any water or anything, you know, cos it was there, it was just there. We knew where the food and water was. Dad showed us what not to eat. I know that Dad showed us a lot. I know about the soap and sugar poultice, but that's about it. Lisa Arvidson 6.11.09

I remember there being thousands of octopus in Wallaga Lake, real big ones, everywhere you walked you had to be careful. [Deanna Campbell 8.9.09]

I remember the old people catching eels down at Newtown and smoking em cause they had no fridge. They ate pretty well when the lake was opened up to the sea, they should open it up again. We have told our kids about the Bunyip who lives in the swamp on the other side of Wallaga; that area is connected to the lake. The Bunyip man is like a spirit. Loraine Naylor 15.9.2009

3.1.3 Murunna Point 'Wintles'

Wintles – they call it Murruna, we call it Wintles, I've called it that from when I was a kid. Dad taught me and my baby brother Carl how to grab lobsters, he use to take us to Wintles Point and get into the water with us, he'd find a nest of em out from the rocks. Mum'd sit on the rocks with a bag and we would just come and put em in. He'd get about two corn bags full and keep one bag raw and one cooked. He sold em at the central pub. We'd have some too, we'd put our aside before we took em up there. Dad put a big pot on outside, we brought em home and cooked them in the yard. He was the best fisherman I've ever seen, even with a spear, he'd get them big bream no matter what. He'd always come home each evening, go again the next day. We'd go with him to catch lobster too. Usually around Wintles Point. That was our cultural food. We never took more than what we needed, for us and the immediate family. The seas were plentiful, now, I haven't tasted lobster for years. Your paying through your ribs to get one in the fish shop. It made us feel proud that we didn't have a dad that sat on his bottom, he went out and done things. Dad shared the fish and everything with Uncle Roy that was his older brother. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

A farmer buggered the bora grounds up there. There use to be two bora grounds there, one little one and one big one. You could see them plain as day from Wallaga Lake community here. They were always there, until he sowed it all up, he ploughed them and ploughed them until they were gone. They got no respect for anything. It would be good to see that place protected, protected from people who don't consider our things, our culture Where there were peas and beans around there, people had to go pick. It was hard work, but they had to go and pick at Wintles, they were always scraping the bottom of the barrel for everything, it was pretty hard like the depression. They put me out picking before I was knee high to a grasshopper. I would have been five or so. Dad gave us little plastic buckets, we'd have to pick into those. Babies would have beds made up along the rows, and get taken along. They'd put the baby down in a little bag or cardigan or whatever, for the baby to sleep on. Our family never camped at Wintles when we were picking for them; we usually used that place for day trips, and returned back to Wallaga before it got dark. Even if we were just going to camel rock, we didn't camp there, we went there lots in the daytime. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

Later on we use to drive over to Wintles to pick, we had our own vehicle, the whole family would go. I was a pretty good picker. Some people camped in amongst the trees at Wintles, where the caravan park is today. In the tea trees there in the Montreal area. There were Wallaga Lake people

and visitors camped there too. It was good to catch up with your mates who you did not see for a while.

All the old folks call the point on the south side of Wallaga 'Wintles', after the old farmhouse. The Wintle family owned that farm. When it rained, we use to go and shelter under Wintle's farmhouse. It was where that big house is now, where the pine trees are. If it rained for two weeks at a time we'd go there, cause our camp at Beauty Point would be flooded. [Deanna Campbell 8.9.09].

Wintles point, you know where the big point is goin out there, we'd go and camp on the side back near the, Camels Rock, in the bush there, camp there. Lot of the Koories used to camp around in there. I'd say I was around about 14, 13 or 14, Mum and Dad and brothers. We had a little camp back from Wintles, between Wintles and Camel Rock. We used to travel sometimes from Dignams Creek, where Dad worked in the mill and go in there sometimes, and sometimes we'd go on to Wallaga Lake, and sometimes we'd go on to these other places and camp. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

Camel's Rock area, was all corn then, I just remember Camel Rock as a good playground, when we was growing up. We used to walk all the way out to Camel Rock, not cross the bridge, we used to cross the mouth, swim across the mouth. There was heaps of people fishing in the lake then, there was a lot of food in that lake, there was a lot of good food. I don't know now, I don't even know if there's any bimbulas left in Wallaga Lake. . . .that's where the Murrays used to live there, too. Paul Murray and them, I remember walking from - we used to live there too, when we was kids. That's at Camel's Rock. There's a big home there now. . . there wasn't a farm house at Wintels. It was all bush. There was a little house - Uncle Tom's Cabins owned them, they would have been just there, or was he there years before. I've forgotten his name. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

I remember in 1953 a group of kooris were staying at Wintles point, they come up and they camp at Reeces. They went down and asked the Wallaga manager, 'can we camp at Wallaga'. He said they weren't allowed on the reserve. So Auntie Aggie went and got in touch with the paper, the Daily Tellie and the Sun. And the paper come down and wanted to know why the Aboriginal people was dispossessed of an Aboriginal Reserve. And they said 'if they don't, if the manager didn't give them a house, then there'd be hell to pay'. So him and the school teacher at the time, we were taught by broken down army officers, got me and Kevin an early mark for doing our work quick, so we could go for a ride with the manager, in his F100 ford. Well we were all mad on driving trucks. But he only wanted us to come along to help, gather the camp into the truck like cattle, to take them down to Wallaga, and they went into a house on the reserve, that was 1953. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010.

I was always driving machinery, either tractors or rotary hoes, whatever, you know. I worked ploughing at Wintles. Ploughing, disking, harrowing,

preparing the soil for the beans. We ploughed a big patch at Wintles. Beans everywhere. After we plowed it up though. The paddocks is still there but so is, what I'm saying is, they replotting, and enterprises come in and cut them into house blocks. Where we used to camp is house blocks, at Wintles. Always camped in a shack, you can still see it today. Ernest Andy and Winifred, Beryl Brierley's mother and father, they lived there. If I needed to stay over night at Wintles, I'd stay with them. That's where we done most of our fishing. Cos we'd fish in the night, we'd fish for shark, gummy shark in the night. Off the headland. Either the north end of Wintle's point, or the south end Wintles point, the Bermagui side, alongside of Wintles itself. We always fished in the night. The bunan rings at Camel Rock, they are very dear to me. That place is special. If that place was Aboriginal managed it would mean a lot. They need to listen to someone who knows whats there. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010.

I picked at Wintles, the Wintle family owned the property. We walked there every morning, around the lake, across the bridge and onto the paddock. We'd go when they needed us. They'd let us know if they needed workers. We'd wonder over with a mob of people. When you're picking, we didn't have a break, we didn't get paid to have a break. We'd take our own lunch. I think we got paid 5 bob, 50 cents a bag, That was my only income. Aboriginal couldn't get welfare payments at the time and I never got any rations. At Wintles people went fishing and with some peas and bean, we had soup for dinner. With a hot damper, it was good. We'd have meal in the paddock, on the end of a row, someone'd make a fire, someone'd catch some fish, we'd sharing everything. People who needed a break from picking would go fishing. Max Munroe 8.9.2009.

I remember the Picallas were camping at Wintles in a tent. They come from here. The Campbells were living in the bush near Wintles, old George Campbell and Bill Campbell, all the old people. That was a permeant campsite set up in the bush. It was a really good place for them to live, out of the wind, near the seafood. Others lived at Wallaga Lake and the Cricketing ground, to be close to the fishing. Max Munroe 8.9.2009.

I got family that still live at Beauty Point, they walk over to Camel Rock to catch fish and then walk back again. Camel Rock, that's Murruna Point, most Koori people call it 'Wintles'. Ken Campbell 8.9.2009

3.1.4 Fringe camp – Beauty Point

From camels rock we moved up where the water tank is, there's a big water tank there, comin up - if your'e goin off the road, the highway to Bermagui, its not far from the turnoff, we were goin up to Uncle Tom's cabins, used to be Uncle Tom's cabins, and the big water tank, we used to live in there. Just down from Uncle Tom's cabins, on the corner, near there - where you go across the bridge, and instead of turning off to go up the hill near Uncle Tom's cabins, and them houses and that, you go straight into the bush, no wait a minute, yeah you do go to Bermagui, where the turn off is I meant to say goin down to Camel's Rock, there was another old track going straight

off, into the bush where the water tank is now, and that's where we used to live there too. As I said, we'd get grey blankets around and make our own shelters and that, in the bush in Bermagui. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

I remember in the late 50s to early 60s there was a koori camp at Beauty Point, on the south side of Wallaga Lake, across the road from Wintles. We was all living there all through the bush before that road to Bermi was tared. The camp was down from where the water tank is today. I would have been under ten at the time. I camped there with my Nan Agnes Harrison and my sister, but there were lost of other families there too. It was sort of like a work camp, but there wasn't much work there at Wintles, but at the same time, some people weren't allowed to go into the Mission at Wallaga. [Deanna Campbell 8.9.09]

I was born in Bega, on 19 February in 1960. My Mum's name is Natalie Logan, and my father's Walter Mongta. I have lived from Wallaga to Bairnsdale, mainly up and down chasing the picking and mill work. I was about 4 when I started school at Club Terrace. We came from there, to Wallaga. Grandfather and Aunty Em were livin in the house at Mosquito but there wasn't any room there so we lived over just past the proach, we were camped in a bus over there for about 4 weeks then grandfather got work down here in Eden, so he gave us the house and so we moved in the house. Lisa Arvidson 6.11.09

3.1.5 Dignams Creek

I married Clem Parsons and had two children Trevor and Janice 'Jenny'. We lost Trevour 15 years ago. Clem was a sawmiller, so were all his brother's and his father. They travelled all the way to Victoria for millwork. The whole family followed them, kids and all. Most saw mills had good huts for the worker's families to stay. I remember at Dignams Creek I had to have morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea ready for Clem and the others when they needed a break. Then I had to get dinner ready for when they finished. We all worked hard back then. Marie Ellen Andy 4.11.2009

When Dad was on the road, he'd come home on his week off. During his break he'd leave here at 4am in the morning, go up Dignams Creek with his spear and come home with the biggest load of blue nose bream, they were big, about 60cm. They went like hot cakes; he'd sell them at Central Tilba pub. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

When we used to live in Wallaga Lake, lot of the Wallaga Lake people at that time used to travel from Wallaga Lake down to Dignams Creek to pick. They also started a mill at Dignams Creek there was the Andy family, old Ernie Andy and his family, and there was us, I think that was 'bout - there was other Koories that used to come there to work in the mill, and there was Costy me cousin he used to stop with us. That was Uncle Crongie, Charlie Parsons' son, and now - the things that used to happen out there was the funniest things though, like when Costy would come back he'd go to Wallaga Lake, down to the mob at Wallaga, and then one evening he was coming home and Dad used to say to him 'get back for work mate', and

he'd say 'yes Uncle George, I'll be back', but he got back very late this night, and when he was comin down through the gates, headin down to towards the sawmill at Dignams Creek, there was this big white figure standing alongside the tree and Cossy started to run, and when he'd come to the door and bang on the door and Dad opened the door, he said 'Uncle something's chasing me', and Dad looked at him and said 'bloody good job, that'll learn you to get home a bit early to rest to go to work'. Georgina Parsons 25.11.2009.

My father George, he taught a lot of the young men how to work in the mills, like me elder brothers Cyril and Bobby, even meself, I used to stack timber - not in Dignams Creek, but in Dignams Creek mill I used to sit and watch them how they used to work. I stacked the timbers at a spot mill near Hartley when we had a little spot mill, me and my old man, I even got behind the bench and started - but it started tailin out. Always used to be a family thing, see, well me brothers were all brought up in the mill and they knew what they were doin and brothers'd be breakin down the logs and the big saw, it was very interesting, and all the lads would never talk to one another, their hands were all the language, did all the body work, sign language with the body, that's the way they used to speak to one another. Georgina Parsons 25.11.2009.

That's right, I remember - see when the sawdust comes down the pipe and makes the big sawdust piles, or when the timber that wasn't any good, they used to throw it into big piles too, and cracker night, one cracker night at Dignams Creek, they had, like they lit all the waste up, and we're all standin around it now lettin off crackers, and my brother next to me, Ernie, I don't know where the billy-o, he got this can from anyway he walked over and no one was lookin and he threw it right in the middle of the big fire, and it went off like a bang and everybody jumped back and they said 'what was that', someone else said 'gee that was a big cracker', makin a big joke out of it, and my brother, Dad knew who it was, he just looked around and he said where's Ernie, you know, and when he looked at the other people around the fire, they were all just about white cos they had ash all over them from the big fire, you see it threw the ash and went all over them. Dad forgot about Ernie just sat killin himself laughin, but they never forgot though, and the next day Ernie copped it. Georgina Parsons 25.11.2009.

At Dignams Creek the Newmans owned the mill. When Mr Newman said we could build a house, they helped build a house for us. There was Andys and then us. Cos, not thinkin, we knew we get big floods in Dignams Creek, but then we just built alongside the creek, cos I think the house must have been up for about 3 or 4 months when we got the big flood, and it just took our houses, most of them, we had snakes and lizards and god knows what in the house. What we had to clean up after. Lot of it got washed away, some of the boards and that, but we still lived in it after. But my brothers they had a big 44 gallon drum cut in half, lyin around in the hut and they had the hide to get in it and float down in the flood, they were tryin to save the fowls that was goin down the river, so they got in this big half a gallon drum and they was chasin the chooks. The river was running too fast, and Mum was screamin, she singing out 'George, George, come and get the boys, they'll

end up in Wallaga Lake'. They went a fair way before they was caught, near the bridge, before they got em in, they rowed themselves in, but by gee, Dad flogged 'em. . . I reckon I'd have been about 14 then, I think. Georgina Parsons 25.11.2009.

They were all taught, 14, 15 when they were in the mills. . . there was a little old house that used to be out there and the Rosie used to live in it, Rosie Payne I think her name was, and we used to go across there and get our homemade butter. Dad use to say 'go on, you and your sister go and get the butter'. I think that old place is still standing, you can see it when you cross the bridge at Dignams. We went to get the butter and this geese was like a dog, used to come at us, used to be a lot of other geese, but this was the main one and he'd come and he'd chase you like beak open. I thought to myself, I've been over that many times, you'd think he'd know me, and I got wild at him and I picked up a stone, round pebble, and he come at me with his mouth open, and I chucked it like that - I didn't think it'd go down his throat, but it did. And it choked the poor thing, and Barry took off, 'run', he's sayin to me, 'run', well Rose come out and said what happened to him, what happened to me geese, 'we don't know, we don't know, must ta eat something'. She knew, so she called out to Dad, and another flogging for us. Georgina Parsons 25.11.2009.

That was on this side of Dignams creek. You know where the turn off when you're comin around the bridge, and you turn off for Dignams creek road, down that side, yeah, and the saw mill, that's where the saw mill, that's where we camped. We went fishin in the creek for eels, used to spear them. I used to tag along, be with all me brothers. We were all taught how to make the spears, and Dad's favourite stick was the Goorarah tree. Yes, we got them from further up, we used to come up the road a bit but you'd get them all down in the gullys there, there was a lot of them. . . from where you're comin through from Dignams Creek, that brings you right out, right out near a place what they call the Commanders place, on the Nerigundah rd. Georgina Parsons 25.11.2009.

The mountain always had meaning to us, the old mountain. In them days it was called Dulugal mountain. Cos the Dulugal used to live up there. Dulugal didn't come down to Dignams Creek. But we had an encounter with him, but it wasn't at Dignams Creek. Georgina Parsons 25.11.2009.

I never went to Dignam's creek. Old Bert Penrith, was my grandfather, well my step-grandfather, but we never use that term 'step', and he was the only grandfather I knew. He was a lovely old man, cos I knew him from our days in Nowra too before they came down to Wallaga Lake. And he was still alive when we'd moved from Sydney down to Wallaga Lake. So it was good, you know, and the kids got to know him. He was born at Dignams Creek, I know that. DEANNA DAVISON 21.4.2010

I got a lot of experience in the bush, truck driving, I've got a truck licence and I can drive a bulldozer. We got a job in the sawmill at Dignams Creek. Dignams Creek sawmill was owned by an old fella by the name of Stan Newman. And he loved Aboriginal people. He had an all Aboriginal crew.

The boil man was Cliffy Carter, old Cliff 'grub' Carter, he used to look after the boiler. Royden Parsons was a friction driver, and Dad and Uncle Isaac were the benchmen. Clemmy Parsons was a tailer out, there was a team of us there. Uncle Les used to work the yard with someone else. Newton Carriage used to work there, Hoskins, Ernie Hoskins used to work there too. Lot of black fellas used to work there. And I came there, Dad taught me how to sharpen saws, so I become the saw doctor. I was looking after saws. We were treated too well. The timber came from down around back of Cobargo up in the mountains there. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

We made our own huts, made out of weatherboard and I learned then, at that time how to do a lot of things on that saw mill. We lived on there for a fair while, at Dignams, in the huts we built. See when they slice a piece of timber, they take the off cut on the outside, that was thrown away, we used a lot of that to make the huts. No electricity. We lived on Dignams Creek. You carried the water, you did the washing down the creek, had a drum to boil the clothes in. The huts were on the south side of the creek. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

I remember when the old fella got into debt, he was too good hearted, he'd put anyone on, do anything, the owner, so he got into debt, and I put it to him, I said look I'll do two jobs for you, and that will save you one man. So I did the truck driving and the bulldozer driving, I used to snig the logs up, load them on the truck and bring them in. It was long days, you'd go out in the dark and come home in the dark. I'd even help out in the log yard. But doing that, and the men, really good workers, we got him out of debt, pulled him out of debt. Actually the old bulldozer at Cox's, that's the one he carts around displaying at the whale festival. The first one to come to the south coast. He rang me up one day, he said 'Crusey, get over here, I got something to show you, soon as I saw it I knew that was the old dozer I used to drive. D4 dozer. He bought it somewhere, must have been, and they traced back who were the drivers, see, there were a couple of drivers before me. Anyhow, that was the sawmill we were all working in. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

Beryl and I were married by the time we were living at Dignams. We got married in 1952; we had our first two children then. We were living at the sawmill when BJ was born. That was a harrowing time that was, you know, in the middle of the night, Beryl wakes up and says its time to go, up and running around, we were. I had a car, but it was old. It was an old '27 Buick, it had a flat tyre, don't know what happened that night. The boss had the best car. Stan Newman drove us into the hospital, but he'd be better off in a horse and sulky than a car, he couldn't change gears, he'd lean forward to try and make the car go up the hill, and the car would be jumping, and we're going up the hill and I'm sitting in the back with Beryl, and he was up the front and I was saying 'can't you go any faster' all the way from Dignams to Bega, on that dirt road too. We made it anyhow, we got there in time, and BJ was born at Bega. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

I remember a story, a coupla times I could have been killed there. I was driving the dozer, cos it had no blade on it, a big steep hole, I remember zigzagging to get up it was so steep, when I got to the top something happened and it kicked out of gear and I couldn't hold it, it just went down the mountain backwards, it should have done cartwills, down through the mountain it went flat strap. The other time was when Boats, Brian Mongta was with me. He came out to help me with this really big log. One log made two truckloads, and it was so big. We were coming down the mountain, go down to the sawmill, where the bridge is, the sawmill was just up there and you had to turn off the road just to get across the bridge, and half way down the brakes blew, the trailer's air brakes blew out and we were riding that truck and Boats is looking at this big log behind us, couldn't jam on the truck brakes, just down around the bends there across the bridge before he could pull up. But that's another time we could have ended it very easily. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

We got contract work there at the mill, we got paid what they used to call super feet. The log was super feet around and lineal feet as it come out of the saw. One of those times when men really, they just loved working. Those fellas would even work after the whistle blew just to finish the order. Like today, before the whistle blows, they knock off. But in those days, you went out, you had your skids greased, you had your trolley greased, the fireman had the steam up before the whistle blew. Everybody would do those things before the whistle blew. Then after the whistle blew you'd do those things too, clean up the bench, even stack timber. There was pride, people loved working. Better than sitting around doing nothing. But that was the way men were those days, they'd work after hours and before hours to get the timer orders out. They were all Aboriginal workers. The only non-Aboriginal was the boss. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

Ossie was working at Dignams Creek when Rhonda was born, him and his father. There was nearly all Koories in the sawmill. Because Stan Newman, he lived across the road from us at the time, Ossie went and worked for him, he returned each weekend to Bomaderry. Later we moved to Dignams Creek, and Ossie kept on working on the sawmill there. That's where BJ was born. When I had BJ, I don't know whether Ozzie had a flat tyre - when I was ready for me to go into hospital they had a flat tyre - him and his father they had the little van - tyre kept going out or something, and the old fella got cranky and kicked it down the bush - and I said what'd you do that for? How are we going to get to hospital now? But he was like that wasn't he, he just kicked it. Short tempered. They finally fixed the tyre. I got there in plenty of time. They treated us terribly at Bega hospital, in the earlier days, they did, but the old matron used to be, they were the worst ones, the matrons. They were real bossy. And they sort of talked down to you too, if you was Koorie. At Bega. [Beryl Cruse 29.10.2009].

We lived there at Dignams Creek for a while; there is only 12 months between Rhonda and BJ and 18 between Rhonda and Dennis, so it was a busy time for me. I coped alright, you had to. Mum had 10 children and she

worked. But we helped her. We all had work to do. We were there for about 12 months or so, then we went back to Sydney, and lived out at La Pa'[Beryl Cruse 29.10.2009]

I remember once we walked nearly all day looking for Dennis boy and we couldn't find him anywhere and he curled up in the sawdust and went to sleep at the mill. And there was a little river there, but it wasn't deep. I don't think we used to be getting much money there at the time. Pay a wage. Used to get the taxi into town, into Cobargo, do my shopping and that same lady Rona Sutherland she had the taxi her and her mother, and they used to run the wine to the mission and that. Yeah, she did a good business. The road was all dirt road, yeah it was and you had to wait for ages to get across the punt at holiday times at Batemans Bay. You'd be sitting there in the car or sitting outside waiting for your turn to go across the punt. [Beryl Cruse 29.10.2009]

I remember camping up Dignams Creek, when dad worked at the sawmill. We use to go to the farm, the one not far from the mill, to collect eggs. We had a little hut, a little shelter, and there was a little bit of a creek. I would have been about 12 years old. [Jenny Andy 4.11.2009]

When I was 20 I finally settled in at Wallaga, and we got right into collecting bimbullas and oysters, we loved it. Fishing is in our blood. They make middens, by putting the shells in one place so they don't make a mess. The farmer use to come into Wallaga and tell us picking was on, like at Dignams Creek. When we were pullin corn I remember hearing 'corn coming', they'd chuck it into one place, you'd have to watch your back or you'd get hit in the head. Back in them days mum and dad were getting one dollar a bag. We had to sit in the paddock until they got their quota up; they collect 100 bags per week, so that's one hundred dollars each week. Pickers now, although there aren't many of them, they get \$13 per bag, so if you got 100 bags you'd be smiling. We took our kids picking not long ago, they say 'we had to slave for our money', that's back it he 80s. Ken Campbell 8.9.2009

Dad got work cutting sleepers. Ted Mundy use to sneak him sleepers out of Dignams Creek, with the horses. Ted had a draught horse and could drag the logs out. A lot of fellas worked there at Dignams Creek. Dad use to drive there from Muckens in his old Ford. Ossie Cruse and Beryl lived there too. Valmai Cooper nee Tungai 4.11.2009.

My grandparents moved around a lot. We moved around a bit too; pea picking, bean picking and corn pullin. Corn pullin was the hardest of the lot. We picked in Bega, Nerrigundah, Bodalla and Cobargo. We picked peas and corn about 2 miles up Dignams Creek Rd, on the south side of the creek. We swam in Dignams Creek, by the bridge, it was really deep there then. We'd jump off the bridge, the one by the highway. Usually we went there for some fun and to cool down during a lunch break. We got about \$3 for one bag. That was in the mid 60s. Everyone at Wallaga use to jump into the back of a white cattle truck and be driven to the farm. The farmer made us lunch in the big tin shed; we had sweet drinks and tin meat. Loraine Naylor 15.9.2009

3.1.6 Gulaga landscape

I was drawn back to Wallaga Lake; the mountains drew me back. You can't leave the place for too long, you get home sick. Gulaga and Mumbulla. Harold Harrison 15.9.2009

Merrimans name was Umbarra, after the black duck totem. He turned into Merrimans Island, in Wallaga Lake. From Gulaga Mountain you can look down at Wallaga Lake and Merrimans Island looks like a duck taking off – flying away. I worked at the Umbarra Cultural Centre, I worked there for 10 years, I did training. There were 19 of us and we learnt all about Aboriginal history, it was really interesting how they called us half-caste, quarter caste. It didn't matter how good you were, if you were black you were black, they hated us all. I couldn't understand why, but it made me angry.... Harold Harrison 15.9.2009

You can see Gulaga from Camel Rock. Cos the mountain's very sacred to us. Important. They all feel happy when they under the shade of it. You've only got to see the mountain. You don't have to be on it. Not for us. Only got to look at it, its a piece of heaven. Other people want to be on the mountain, and wondering and thinking why the blackfellas go off about this mountain, but they don't understand. I'm on the board of management, but everyone's got different views. The main thing is that Traditional Owners manage culture and heritage, that's the law. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010.

I am happy to be the first Chairperson of the Gulaga National Park Board of Management. A lot of us over the years worked hard to have Gulaga Mountain returned, that and Mumbulla. Our elders fought hard for many years for them mountains because they are sacred to us – they didn't go for any mountain, they went for the important ones. Those two mountains are connected. I remember when Uncle Percy, Uncle Ted, Uncle Frank, Uncle Jacko Campbell and Paster Frank Roberts came to visit us in Kempsey. They told us about the Aboriginal Land rights Movement. Because we believed in what they were fighting for, we joined in from where we were. That was in the early 80s. Mary Duroux 22.4.2010.

The hand back of Gulaga and Biamanga was lovely, we worked hard to sort out that lease agreement. I was on the negotiation team. We worked for two years on that agreement, the day the Minster handed over the title to Gulaga and Biamanga was wonderful, something lifted off me shoulders. I can sit at my window and think – you are ours, I say good morning to Gulaga each day, that makes me happy. When I was in Coffs I always pictured it. You can't see Mumbulla from Wallaga, but you can see it from Bermagui. Me and Eddie had to pull out from the board of management, we were crook, it would have been too much. The others are doing a good job. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

The mountains are important; the mountains tell me a story, plenty of stories, there are different stories coming through that place. You got to believe in what you see around you. The mountains speak to me. I can tell the story of

what the mountain is saying. You can see a man and a woman in that mountain, Gulaga. The woman is lying across the south side of the mountain, and the man is lying along the north side. They meet at the top. You can see all that from Wallaga Lake. It's all connected. We connect everything together. It wouldn't be a story; we wouldn't talk about it if it weren't connected. Mervyn Penrith 17.11.2009.

It is very important to tell the kids a bit about the places. Wallaga and Gulaga, they're old Aboriginal names. Gulaga and Mumbulla, they are the only two mountains I recognise, they are important to me. I took Warren up Gulaga. Other places might be important to other people. It is good that we own them mountains now. I have been involved in a lot of things for Wallaga. We went to Canberra, Sydney. We made them listen. They weren't gonna listen, but we made them take notice of us. We protested against that Japanese company logging on Mumbulla. The company was blowing up sacred rocks and knocking down sacred trees. We took a petition to the Japanese Embassy in Canberra. They finally listened and the logging stopped. We got both them mountains handed back after that. We own them two mountains now, Mumbulla and Gulaga and that's a good thing. Mervyn Penrith 17.11.2009.

We have to look after these places, cause they tell a story, it tells us about the country. It would be better if they left the trees there as far as I'm concerned - it is part of where we are coming from. It is not really ok that the trees are gone, but I can still tell the story. So long as the mountain is still there, but really everything is important for that story to be told, they've clear enough now. You can tell the story from anywhere. All the mountains are important if they have got a story. If some areas got stories behind them, you got to tell the story for them places. I do any way. Mervyn Penrith 17.11.2009.

The mountain is important, Gulaga is very important to us. Sometimes you just can't explain your feeling, what you've got for that place, it's like a big monument, our monument, you know, and it's a special place. And kids used to walk up the mountain, I never, well I went up there once or twice, went up in the car when you could drive up. Its important that young kids learn about it, they should go and visit it, and be told about their heritage I'm on Gulaga board of management. Well I really wanted to get onto the board and now I'm Deputy Chairperson. And cos I was sought of left out of a lot of things, me husband used to be on all of these different organisations and committees and things, and I thought well now all my kids are grown up and gone, I might start getting involved too. You know, its still my traditional country and I'm interested in what goes on there and I haven't missed any meetings I like to go along and see what's happening, but I want to see jobs for our young people to come out of there, you know. They can identify with it, and a lot of the kids if they got jobs they know all about Gulaga, walked all over it, know about it, learn about it, and be responsible for it, you know. That's important. It's a community, really its up to us traditional owners, to get in there and do what's got to be done. The maintainance of the mountain, you know. DEANNA DAVISON 21.4.2010

3.2 BERMAGUI CULTURAL AREA

3.2.1 Bermagui bushland

I was about 13, 14 then. I remember making a midden on the old track heading to Cobargo. That's when the divers, up on top and goin out towards Cobargo, there's a bush in there where they used to go off and eat their mutton fish and that and make the midden grounds all on the top of the hill there. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

We used to see two or three koalas down in there. The people haven't seen any for years, but this was way back in them days, when there were a lot of spotties around. Dad wouldn't eat koala, they were sacred to us, the koala bear. Just something that the Koories had, it was like the whale, they used to eat the whale at Eden, but as I said they'll kill the whales and that, but that was a livin for them, it was a livin for them, you know. Koalas, no they wouldn't touch the koalas for some reason, wouldn't eat them. This picture here what I'm painting here, that's the story about that koala bear, and Dad loved his possums, he used to eat these possums and we used to feel sorry for the possums, and we said Dad can't you go and get something else to eat besides killin them poor things. So one day, one of the young boys was swingin this boomerang around and it was late in the evening, just gettin on dusk it was, and he swung the boomerang like that, not knowing there was a bear in the tree, koala bear, and hit the poor little bear in the head, and the bear's nose started bleeding, and cos when the possums seen it, the possums looked like they were cryin, you know, makin a noise like as if they were crying, and when the young fella come back to where we was camped he had his hand behind his back, and when he pulled it out like that and he showed Dad and the rest of the elders, they knew then that's he's punished himself for what he'd done to that bear. He'd picked a sharp rock up and cut his hands, and that's what that painting's about, in that bush at Bermagui. In that painting, what's happened in real life. That's what I said, its a Dreamtime story, but its happened in real life. Will I tell you, or won't I tell you, oh alright. It was my brother Barry Parsons, threw the boomerang. It was him that did it. He didn't kill it, but he punished himself for doing it. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

There was a place we used to travel to to go to the Bega show, and that was out around Bermagui, down back of Bermagui, we used to camp on a big point there. The boys used to go down diving there, that was in Bermagui. We used to travel out that way. I don't know all these names, we just travelled, but there was one, when we had the old T Model Ford one time there went around, there was myself, me Uncle Arthur Chapman, Dad, Mum, me and two - three of the brothers, and poor old Aunty Aggie Harrison, and we used to travel round that way, and she come for a burn with us, and the old car broke down not far from this big farm, and there was bulls and cows and that there, so we got out, and didn't know what to do, oh my goodness, what are we going to do, Dad said, 'we got to get down to Bega show', so him and Uncle got out and they lit up a fire near the car, and we're all us sittin inside, the three kids, going to sleep the

women, next thing we hear 'moooo' coming down the road, and Dad shook Uncle Arthur, cos they were layin around the fire, he said wake up, listen to that, 'mooooo' getting closer, and Uncle Arthur, he spun around that quick he put his hand straight in the hot coals, the fire. Talk about laughed, yeah you can laugh, you bastard, he said to Dad, but I'm the one burning, and big bull come up, they squeezed themselves back in the poor little T Model Ford and we was all jammed up there and here comes this monstrous big bull comin up the road and when he got to the car he tried to over turn the car, and the owner spotted him cos they heard him yellin too comin up the road, and he chased him and he come down on the tractor, chased him, he said are yous alright, are yous alright. We got to the show, the bloke who owned the bull, he ended up fixing the car up, and we kept going down then to Bega. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

We use to walk everywhere. There use to be a walking track to Bermi, around the lake across the bridge, through the bush. We'd walk over to Wintles to collect Abalone. Mervyn Penrith 17.11.2009.

No one had cars everyone would walk everywhere. We'd walk to Central Tilba to get a feed and to Bermagui. We would walk to Bermagui, around the lake, across the bridge and down the Bermi Rd, they'd be a big mob of us, during weekends, we'd take the bundis and a heap of dogs. We use to see Koalas all the time when we walked to Bermi to the pictures, through the state forest there, that was in the 1960s. Before the short cut rd went into Cobargo, there were lots of koala's in that area. Eric Naylor 15.9.2009

I never went to Bega picking, I didn't need to go out working when my husband Jim had a good job. Jimmy got a job with the forestry commission; he was working with the forestry commission at Bermagui. Him and Alex Walker, me brother, and there was a coupla others too, there was about four of them, all got permanent jobs with the forestry commission at Bermagui, Bobby Andy was another one. DEANNA DAVISON 21.4.2010

3.2.2 Bermagui River

We have lived here in Bermi, in this house for 10 years, we fish just here in front of the house, into the Bermagui river. We can get oysters off the rocks, but there aren't many bimbula here in the Bermi River. Before this house was here we'd come and fish here in the Bermi River. The Bermi waterhole, is now protected. Uncle Bill and Jo Brown use to live on top. It is land council land. There is a midden ground up here over the hill. That is where our people lived and camped. Our young ones today get their oysters and they have started a midden at the back of our house. In the little yard here. Lots of people do that in their backyard. They start their own little midden. That comes to us naturally. Wherever they catch their feed they, cook it on the coals. [Deanna Campbell 8.9.09]

My brother Barry was the one who built the bridge at Bermagui, going across the Bermagui river, with workers they couldn't get a crane driver, and he used to work in the steel works, this was years after that, you know, and

when he moved onto Wallaga Lake with his missus, Norma June, and he used to work on the bridge cos he was the only one who could drive the crane. None of the history of what the Aboriginal people have done on the south coast, is never ever been recorded. They just about made farmers working for them picking beans, and peas and that. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

I get Oysters from Bermi, I always get oysters from Bermi or a bucket full from Narooma. I love oysters, I love fish, I got not patients for fishing. The young people can go fishing for me now. Bermi is another good place for fishing; it is not far, just up the road. I go up and back in a day from Bega so I don't need to camp there. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

3.2.3 Bermagui Beach

Me and Mum were very close. She taught me how to do shell work, we'd walk for miles along the beaches – Wallaga, Bermagui, Mystery Bay, Batemans Bay. If we were camped at the beach her and I would go lookin for shells and makin little art boxes and and that cut out of cardboard. People would buy them. Shell work was all done in lots of ways, you know, like necklaces, bracelets. We were stickin it onto boxes, cut out boxes, but we used to get the boxes. Mum would sit down and sew the boxes together and what we used to use then for, was just mixed up old plain flour and stick em on. We made our sticky tape out of flour and water. And if we didn't have no flour she used to get the gum out of the tree and that was real yucky gooey sticky stuff too. It still worked. She'd sell them anywhere, like the cuttlefish, we used to walk along the beaches with the boys and that pickin up all the big cuttlefish, there was heaps of them along the beach, and people would buy it all off us, cuttlefish from the sea, Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

I was born in Berry in 1952. I followed my parents to this area; they did seasonal work around here. My father was Richard 'George' Campbell; he was born at Huskinson and worked up and down the coast saw milling. My mother was Sadie Josephine Quinlan; she was from Bellbrook, west of Kempsey. Dad's father was Thomas 'Ninam' Campbell. Thomas's father was William James Campbell. William was born in Tilba Tilba in 1846 and I was given him name 'James'. Ken Campbell 8.9.2009

William James Campbell, my great grandfather used to travel up and down the coast. When he was at Bermagui he use to live in a bark hut on the hill behind the old wharf. He used to retreat to this cave in times of trouble. He worked on Montague Island and helped to build the lighthouse. He collected mutton-birds and their eggs. They picked him up from Bermi each morning; they went out there to build the light house. They brought him back each night. Years later Dad and Uncle Bill used to spot fish around the Bermagui area for Gordan Simpson and Ken Stevens. Ken Campbell 8.9.2009

3.2.4 Bermagui Waterhole

Bermagui waterhole, you can't drink the water there. There is rubbish and houses, weeds, fences. At least it is protected now, but it needs a good clean up. There is a midden ground near the waterhole – I think it is land council land. Ken Campbell 8.9.2009

3.2.5 Bermagui sawmill

By the time I was 18 I worked at the Bermagui saw mill. I cut palings and fire wood. I was paid \$70 per week. I was docking and cutting. There were a lot of Koori people working at the Bermi mill. All the Parsons were there. They were cutting timber from the local area. Ken Campbell 8.9.2009

3.2.6 Bermagui School

When we lived at Wallaga, I was in year 7, that was 1964. We caught the bus to the Bermagui school, but before Bermagui school, we went to the old school on the mission. I remember, till that school closed down, then we all went to Bermagui. Went to Bermagui primary and high school. But I was in year 7, but I only went to year 7 and that was it. I was pulled out of school to help mum with all the kids, all my brother's and sisters [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010].

I went to primary school and high school at Bermagui. They have moved the high school to Narooma now. We went to school every day. If we didn't go to school the welfare man use to come from Bega and pick us up and take us to school. I went to second year in those days, that's equivalent to year 8 today. Loraine Naylor 15.9.2009

I went to high school there too. Not at Wallaga Lake, at Bermagui, it started off there and we got shifted from there to Narooma High. The school's still there at Bermagui, but the High School kids got moved. I stayed in Narooma till year 7, 14 and a half, come back to Eden. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

3.2.7 Bermagui Hall

We use to have a lot of fun. I use to be a 'Wallaga Lake Hoola girl'! There were about six of us and we had a show at the Bermagui Hall, to raise money for the cost of the Ambulance. You see it cost a lot of money for Wallaga people to get from Wallaga to Bega in an ambulance, so we held a big concert to raise funds to cover it. We had to sing and dance. We did the 'hoola', mum sewed the dresses. We had grass streamers, all different colours. We wore tights, bright grass bras and a lathe. There was me, Veronica Andy, Ellen, Barbara Stewart, Evon Stewart and Katie Stewart. I was the youngest, I was 13. Eddies two brothers Steven and Ian Hoskins were the guitarists in the band, one played the squeezebox. Uncle Ned their father played the banjo. My Uncle Cecil was there too and my sister Valerie and Iris Hoskins, they sang. I can remember hoolaing to the Pocaricariana. We had supper after the dance, they call it a 'supper dance', we'd have a cuppa tea and some cake, peopled pay six pence to get in and the managers wife would make a big cake for after the dance. So, all the funds went to pay for the ambulance trips, it was a one off show. Hendrickson, the manager at Wallaga put us through that; he said 'we ought to do a concert'. There was no standing up room; they came from all around, farmers and all. They were the good old days. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

Sometimes were would walk from Wallaga to Bermagui to see a picture. We always knew our place at the Bermagui Picture Theatre; we had to sit up the front with all the other Koori people. We didn't question it. We loved to see a good picture. Valmai Cooper nee Tungai 4.11.2009.

When we were picking we got paid by the weight of the bag. I use to go after clothes with my money, as I got older, if I liked a blouse or skirt, I bought it. They were good bosses, they'd give us the day off on Friday and we'd go to the movies. When the theatre was down at Bermi, a bus would come and pick us up. They'd bring us home after the picture. It was good. The Jones's who ran the Bermi theatre, they done a lot for us, they were very nice people. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

3.3 THE MURRAH CULTURAL AREA

3.3.1 The Murrah

We picked peas and beans all over this area. At Bega, Nerrigundah, Wintles and Bermagui – on the Murrah River at Alf and John Gowings farms. I can remember the first crop of beans at the Murrah were 30 cm long. We use to go there on day trips from Wallaga, I can't recall anyone camping there. Eric Naylor 15.9.2009

Over the years we have camped at The Murrah, Aragunnu and Bunga. We have taken our families to these places too. Loraine Naylor 15.9.2009

3.4 THE GOALEN BUNGA HEAD CULTURAL AREA

3.4.1 Bunga

I worked at Bunga too. I done about, well 18 months there. I was ploughing a rotary hoe. For a property owner out there. He bought a farm out there and he wanted Norm McCarthy to work. Norm gave me and Eddie Cole a tractor and we set to work. I remember Eddie kept breaking the shackles on the tractor, he lifted the disc up before he turned it, and he turned it with the disc in the ground and he kept breaking shackles and I'd end up with no shackles cos I had spares – I'd lend them to him. I had a rotary hoe. He'd do a disk and I'd come along behind with the rotary hoe. I was living at Wallaga at the time, on the Aboriginal reserve. Every morning I went to work I drove out to Bunga then drive back home. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010.

There was some land down there, south of Bermi that King Merriman was granted, that was a land grant to him. Well it didn't come to anything because he, it was granted to him, but he came back to Wallaga. Its south of Bermagui somewhere there. Just other side of Bunga. On the south side of Bunga. Wappengo maybe. This side of Wappengo, somewhere there. It means a lot, but its been sold out to enterprise, to the developers. The developers main one that come in and bugged up everything. Its already happened. Where you get your water from - nothing! I would like to see that place given to Merriman protected. We got to protect our culture and heritage. Then we done a lot of fishing too south of Bermagui, down this side of Bunga. We fished there too - we still go. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010.

We use to go to Bunga Head, that's a good place. Picking was on there too at one stage. Our camp was out of the wind, and in the bush and the beach was out in front of us. We went there in holiday time, some of them go diving with their parents, and the little ones'd be learnt, with masks so they can see around. I went there with my mum and dad in the 60s, they went there fishing. I have taken my kids there too. We have called it Bunga for ages. We can't get to where we use to camp, a bloke put a house there. There is a lock and key on the gate. We can camp on the topside of Bunga now, but it is not as good as our traditional spot, out of the wind. We can drive into another place, but it is not the same. Bunga that is a very important place for us. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

We also use to go to Bunga. The farmers use to take the families out on the weekends, usually to Bunga and I remember the farmers use to put us up out there in an old milking bail. They grew beans and peas at Bunga and so we picked there too. Once the farmer needed his paddock cleaned up so the fellas built a rock wall. That rock wall is at Bunga, you can still see it today. [Deanna Campbell 8.9.09]

3.5 THE ARAGUNNU CULTURAL AREA

3.5.1 Aragunnu

We used to get out of Bega on the weekends to go fishing. I remember the Aldridges used to like Middle Beach, down in there, see, it was a beautiful

spot there. And we'd go anywhere, we'd go all over the place, we'd go to Arraganu, we'd go further. We'd have the weekend off. See depends on the market, and depends on the beans, sometimes you had to start Sunday morning to get the beans for the market, there were days you had to work - if the beans were going off he'd ask you to work through the weekend to try and get the crop off. But if the beans were a bit sparse, you'd have the weekend off. But you'd always make up for it. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

I remember going to Arragunnu, out there old Uncle used to know where the lobster nests were, we'd go out there. See the lobsters, they're a peculiar fish, they come in in the winter and they go out in the summer, but there's some that they call homers, they stay in, and we used to go looking for these homers. And the way we used to dive in those days was different to what they do today. We were taught the Koorie way of doing it, you'd feel with your feet. You'd go into the weeds, if the crevices were there, you'd put your foot in and you'd keep your foot on the top of the crevice, cos there could be a wobegong shark in there, and you put your foot in there, like you're putting it in his mouth, so you'd put your foot along the top. And when you felt the horns you'd be there. Lobsters they always face with their horns out and you'd feel with your toes their horns. And when you felt their horns you'd look around you'd see another hole, put your foot in there, yeah, they're in there, then you'd close these other holes up, put a rock over them, trap them in there, then you'd work out of the one hole. The fella that found them, he'd be freezing, so there'd be a big fire going he'd go out and sit at the fire and the other bloke would come in then, and the other fella that found them, he'd hold the bag. Find them, set it up, then come out into the warm, then two of you would work the nest. One fella would hold the bag. He never put his head under the water, feel it all with his feet, and he close all the holes up, and when you finish, it was law you pull all those rocks out, clean the nest out, you don't leave any horns that broke off the lobster or anything in there, and you left lobsters in there to breed on. We'd bring back and share, mutton fish. But most times you eat it out there, cos we never had any fridges, we'd eat them while we could. From memory it was a real sharing trip, cos it was really good to give someone a whole lobster or a few mutton fish. It would make you feel good to do that. That was our culture. We'd bring a bag full back for the people who ate them. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

We did a lot of camping with the kids, usually at Aragunnu. Between me and Ken, we've got thirteen kids; Kerry, Wesley, Angela, Berni, Brett and Stephanie Parsons, Sadie, Ken Junior 'Dick', Teresa, she's passed away now, and Desmond Campbell. We also reared my sisters three Tania, Michael and Ashley Parsons. So out thirteen would come and then there'd be more - if the nieces and nephews knew we was going to Aragunnu, they'd come too! They loved the young the possums and goannas visiting the camp. Away from the TV and the games, get back into the bush. It is really healthy. The kids get to run wild. Its good for them. They run around everyday, they fish and eat well. When the tide goes out the girls go and get periwinkles and when they come in they trade the boys some periwinkles for some fish. If the boys catch too much fish, they'll give the girls some. We tell stories

about when we were kids, like when Nan use to break branches to make a shelter and leaves for our beds. [Deanna Campbell 8.9.09]

We have got our favourite place to camp at Aragunnu. Near where the boardwalk is, that's where we camp. Other people go there and camp too. But sometimes, they pack up in the morning, the good ones, the tolerant ones stay and share with us. We want our own spot somewhere there. If we could look after our own place, that would be good. We don't destroy the trees and they stick to one track, they know how to respect the place. There is a midden ground there too, not far from the boardwalk. We use to camp in one place close to a fresh water hole, near where the BBQ area is now. It was lovely cold fresh water, there's a toilet above it now and with the treated pine fence logs, we don't let the kids drink from it now. The water is still there. [Deanna Campbell 8.9.09]

We are still going to Aragunnu. We take our kids, our 56 grandkids and great grandchild. I think there are more coming! [Deanna Campbell 8.9.09]

We also go to Aragunnu for lobster and muttonfish; the fish are plentiful there in the deep water. I use to go there with my mum and dad. Kenny and them go there every year. Mob from Wollongong right through to Victoria. Before you go over the hill to the island, we use to camp on the headland part. Campbell's be in one spot and the Wollongong mob, and I'd be with my family this side. There was plenty of room there, you could put up a few tents. We'd camp any where am amongst the trees. You'll find a few young people can fish and dive now, they are more interested in other things. We need to get them out there. The trouble is we are meant to fit into tiny little spots. We need more space than that. There's not much room for us now. I've seen some big changes in my time. I'd like to see the little sites at Aragunnu increased in size. It is so crowded now. We use to have a big fire where the boys'd sleep around it, now the fires are in little boxes. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

Aragunnu – the kids love it there, it is a safe place for the kids. Over the years we have taken all our kids there, all thirteen of them. Now we take our grandkids and our one great grandchild. We get muttonfish, and everything. It is good to get away from here, away from town and the house. It is good to be in the bush, camping and fishing and laughing at the kids when they make silly mistakes. They get up to mischief and we laugh at them. Aragunnu would be a good place for a culture camp, there's plenty of food there and we have always been going there. We don't want it just for my family, it would be for anyone who wanted to camp. Ken Campbell 8.9.2009

3.5.2 Middle Beach

The family connections are important to us, all along the coast. Even when we lived in Sydney, every year we would travel down to Middle Beach, near Tanja. That place we will keep on going for us. Our family goes to Middle Beach, different families go to different places. The Aldridge's are from north western NSW. They travelled everywhere for seasonal work, not just

picking. The coast was part of their circuit. We camp at the public campsite in the National Park. Sometimes people are camped right on the track to the dam. People complain that we are there walking through their camp when they are on the old track! It would be good to have some privacy, so we can do our own thing. We were offered a chance to find another spot because we get crowded in when it gets really busy with all the gubbas. But that particular place is important to us and we know it well. It is close to the dam, so that we can clean off the salt water after diving. We go out there to be free, and let it all hang out, run around everywhere, be ourselves. Faith Aldridge 21.10.2009

Dad and them, our grandfathers and uncles were all fishermen and whalers. We are saltwater people we will never leave the sea. The sea means everything to us. It is hard for us, cause we need some many muttonfish to feed our family, but now we can't get many. We see poachers coming in from the sea, taking all our cultural food. The poacher's behaviour is ruining our ways. We send our boys out to get us a feed, and there is none left. Sometimes we camp there with three or four families with all of their kids. I had 7 kids and took in 9 of our relative's kids, there always a lot of us, and others. We fostered families' kids, if their parent couldn't look after them. Koori people look after each other. We've always had heaps of kids around us. We take them to Middle Beach, teach them how to swim and fish and rest in the tents. We have lived this way all our lives, and now we are showing our kids. Faith Aldridge 21.10.2009

3.6 THE COBARGO – QUAAMA CULTURAL AREA

3.6.1 Cobargo Saw mill

I worked at the sawmill at Cobargo, I was tailoring out, behind the big saw, the benchmen pushed the timber through two people pull it through, My brother in law Barry Parsons showed me how to do it, there was 8 parsons and me. All the parson brothers, they all worked in the sawmills. My sister married one of them, Barry Parsons. Georgina is the only one in the family left, their sister. I was 19 or 20 when I worked in the Cobargo saw mill. The mill hand, the taylor out the whole lot of them they were all parsons. They helped me out. Ernie was a taylor out and he showed me how to do it, I was scared when I first saw that blade. Lots of people have their fingers cut off. Max Munroe 8.9.2009

They all lived in an Aboriginal house in Cobargo, there were down there. They were trying to assimilate us, try to make us like white people. My sister was in one house, Norman Parsons and the Morgans were in the other house. Barry Kelly bought the two houses. He got his fingers cut off in the saw mill. So when I was working in the Cobargo sawmill, I lived with Norma and Barry. I worked there for a couple of years, when I got sick of it I went back to Tamworth. Someone else got the logs and I did the tayloring out. In them days they didn't have chains saws, they used cross cut saws, it was a mixture of people. Not all Aboriginal. The boss was always white. The spot mill that was based at Wallaga Lake was managed by Merv Penrith. The main fella was the benchmen, he was the most qualify, that was Barry

Parson, George, Ernie Parsons, they were all benchmen. They all got good wages, we got paid the same as everyone else. Max Munroe 8.9.2009

3.6.2 Cobargo Township

Jimmy Little is a good friend. We all grew up together, he got interested in singing before I did, he was always invited to concerts. Every year, even now, I'm going up to the concert at Cobargo. I will play Elvis, or Baby Blue by Jimmy Little. I am 'Jo and the Country Cowboys'. The first time I was worried getting up, but now, it's all good. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

My grandmother she always worked for Doctor John Mckee and we had another doctor, which was a woman doctor at Narooma called Doctor Fox. If anyone got sick or pregnant, that's where gran, Mary Ellen Piety came in. She delivered a lot of white people around Cobargo and Narooma area. She didn't only work at Bega hospital, she freelanced. She worked, she got a her training with the nurse Corkhill, an English nurse, out at Tilba Tilba. Gran, wherever the Aboriginal people from Wallaga were, she went, and if they were pregnant she had to be there to do delivery, that's when she'd go to Bega too. Well John Mckee was happy that she was there, cos he said 'while ever Mary with you, you don't need me'. So he knew that patients were safe. White and black it didn't matter. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010

I think the boiler from Dignam Creek sawmill is in the Cobargo Pub there. Not long before I left the mill I got in and did all the tubes in that boiler, so if that's the boiler it'd be a really good boiler, you could fire it up now. So that was our timberwork at Dignams, we were working in a lot of other mills too. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

I remember going up seeing Uncle Lorrie Parsons and Aunty Florie, they lived at Cobargo. Uncle Lorrie was working for a Cocky out there, him and Aunty Florie were there, with their little family. They lived in the little drovers shack, the little hut is still there today on the east side of the highway, north of town. See Aunty Florie she was Aunty Isadore's daughter, so she was mum's first cousin. That little shack wouldn't have even been 2m by 2m. Cos when I went out there with Mum and Dad, we camped out there and we had to sleep on the dirt floor. And it was like sardines in there, cos there was only one little area and inside was a little Bega stove. It's probably still sitting in there today, and that's where Aunty Florie was doing all her cooking on that little wood stove. It's got an oven and a cook top. And you feed them with firewood and you can cook on the top and cook on the top with your hot plates and it's heating up the oven at the same time. The old girl had a couple of big dampers in the oven and she had a nice big pot of stew cooking on the top. And we were all in this tiny little place, but that didn't matter, it was all family. And I can remember having a big feed there, and Uncle Lorrie and Aunty Florie and Mum and Dad telling us stories by the candle light. They got off Wallaga Lake cos things were bad on the mission then. That was probably mid sixties. Cos I was only very young, I wasn't even going to school, but I can remember that. John Dixon 4.11.2009

I have had a good life, I remember sports carnivals at Cobargo, the manager would take us there from Wallaga, we had running races and high jump. Loraine Naylor 15.9.2009

It was all corn around Cobargo way. I remember going out with Dad on an old truck, like Jim McMahon used to have and pick up all the pickers, on the big red truck. Well there was one at Wallaga Lake, that used to pick them up to do the corn. That was at Cobargo. Way out. Mainly Koorie pickers, all the people from the mission. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

3.6.3 Quaama

My father was born at Quaama, in Dry River there. His mother and father were tribal. They use to live along the side of the river, there was an old traditional camp there before missions and reserves were set up. They were rounded up at Dry River and taken to Wallaga Lake. They had no say; it wasn't their fault. If they played up, their rations'd be restricted. Dad is buried at Wallaga Lake, I am not sure exactly where, we are probably walking right over it. I would like to see the old graves marked, so we know where all the family plots are. Harold Harrison 15.9.2009

My grandmother was Mariah Picalla, born in 1874 at Bega. Mariah's father was Harry Picalla and her mother was Sarah Haddigaddi. Sarah Haddigaddi, my great grandmother was born at Dry River, Quaama in 1859 and died in Batemans Bay in 1931. Sarah's father was Paddy Haddigaddi, my great great grandfather. He was born at Wandella and was killed in 1875 by two strangers with a tomahawk while he slept at the Cobargo Showground. Sarah's mother, my great great grandmother was Lucy Goldie Turner born in 1828 at Dry River. She died in 1908 at Wallaga Lake. Mary Duroux 22.4.2010

They first encountered Koma at Dry River. She identified her boundaries to the first settlers, when they first came down to Cobargo. She had two daughters that we know of, Lucy and Eliza. Lucy married Paddy Haddigaddi and we come from them. Through Koma that's all our land here. John Dixon 4.11.2009

You see Quaama that name means Turtle. That's an old Aboriginal name. Mervyn Penrith 17.11.2009.

There is a 'cob tree', that's a Banksia I think, just past Quaama, near the straight, you can see it from the highway, look over to the west side, a big cob tree, a Banksia, all sitting by its self. That road follows a traditional route, past Quaama to the north of the toilets; the track went to Bega southwest. The cob tree is a marker of the route; they planted that tree to mark the route. Mum's brother Dick Henry told me about that tree and I think Jack Campbell told him. They said old women use to carry around kurrajongs seeds too, they held that knowledge about where to plant and grow them trees. When you see an old Kurrajong, you can see another one along the line, marking the boundary. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

3.7 THE BIAMANGA 'MUMBULLA' CULTURAL AREA

The Biamanga 'Mumbulla' Cultural Area includes.

3.7.1 Mumbulla Mountain / Biamanga

Gulaga and Mumbulla, they are the only two mountains I recognise, they are important to me. It is good that we own them mountains now. I have been involved in a lot of things for Wallaga. We went to Canberra, Sydney. We made them listen. They weren't gonna listen, but we made them take notice of us. We protested against that Japanese company logging on Mumbulla. The company was blowing up sacred rocks and knocking down sacred trees. We took a petition to the Japanese Embassy in Canberra. They finally listened and the logging stopped. We got both them mountains handed back after that. We own them two mountains now, Mumbulla and Gulaga and that's a good thing. Mervyn Penrith 17.11.2009.

We have to look after these places, cause they tell a story, it tells us about the country. It is very important to tell the kids a bit about the places. Mumbulla, that's an old Aboriginal name. It would be better if they left the trees there as far as I'm concerned - it is part of where we are coming from. It is not really ok that the trees are gone, but I can still tell the story. So long as the mountain is still there, but really everything is important for that story to be told, they've cleared enough now. You can tell the story from anywhere. All the mountains are important if they have got a story. If some areas got stories behind them, you got to tell the story for them places. I do any way. Mervyn Penrith 17.11.2009.

I've got that connection out there with Mumbulla, but Bega's my big connection. Bega's my big connection. I was taken up Mumbulla as a kid by old folk to get the gurrara sticks to make spears. We still do go up Mumbla when we get the chance. I take these fellas here, when they were little, they can take their own kids now, you know. Its just, its there and you know, once you're told something, you never forget it, but I'm forgetting a lot of things lately, but that's probably where his spirit is, I don't know. That was a special place. I'd take the kids. And if I don't go, the boys could take their own kids up to Mumbla now, James has taken his little gang up to Mumbla. But she said to me 'we'd move over here and you can sit and look at the mountain all day'. I'm an owner of that, see, registered owner . . its important to see that place, cos what is there, and the feeling I get from it, when I just sit there and look from it. I get the feeling from just looking out my window. . . why did God send me here, why did we move here, you know, there was a reason, and the reason was the children and I didn't know we were going to come here and I can just look out the window here and there's my mountain just there. Its a spiritual side of it, I feel like I was drawn here, where I can see that mountain. . . yeah I won't leave here, I'll die here. [Jim Scott 9.2.2010]

I've taken all my kids all around, I've got my sons, I've got to give it to them. James, he's the shortest fella he's got 4 boys and one girl, and they love their fishin. . . if we lose it they got nothing. See I took James and them when they

were that high, and if she allowed me to take them, I'd take them out to where you can fish, to learn them how to fish and that, get mutton fish. . . taught them how to make spears and spear fish. . . there was one time when we were out there spearing, and James put the spear in his foot, and I had to put my foot on his to pull it out, and I nearly fainted. . . down along Jilla flats and that there, from Tathra, right out around there. The spear material comes from the mountain. I showed them how to make spears, how they're made, how to cut the, how to flatten them out and sharpen them, take the bark and that off them. [Jim Scott 9.2.2010]

I was born in Singleton near Newcastle. I spent the first 5 years at Bulga where dad worked as a black tracker. My father was Eric 'Nugget' Mumbler and my mother was Helen 'Nelly' Donovan. Nelly's father was Christopher 'Hackett' Stewart of Wallaga Lake. Nugget's father was Harry Mumbler and his mother Jane Drew. Harry's brothers were Percy, Frank and Christopher and his sister was Kate. Harry Mumbler's father was John Mumbler, also known as 'Biamanga'. I was given his name. John Mumbler 22.4.2010.

I was taught my culture by the old uncles, my dad and my grandfather. I was told to go home to Wallaga Lake and to talk to the elders; Uncle Percy Mumbler, Geoff Tungai, Jack Campbell and Ted Thomas. I also met up with Aunty Ruth Walker and Cecelia Bond. I ended up being the first chairperson of the Biamanga National Park Board of Management, after we worked for years negotiating the lease agreement with the government. It is great that the first chair of Biamanga is a Mumbler, that's how I see it anyway. Its great to see Aboriginal people looking after their own country after such a long wait to get some of our land back. We hope to get more too. My kids now have kids and I teach them about Aboriginal law and culture too. John Mumbler 22.4.2010.

We have a spiritual connection to Gulaga and Mumbulla Mountains. As kids we didn't really go up Mumbulla, but now, we go up and we know it's ok. If we felt it was bad, if it felt bad, we'd leave. But it's ok for us to be there; women don't usually swim there. We take notice of what the birds tell us, like if they are jumping around going mad, we watch and take notice, a bird a little bird with an orange chest once told me not to go up Gulaga. I wasn't meant to go up on that particular occasion. I've been up there since. The Willy Wag tail tells us there is a death in the family. The 'post bird', the one that sounds awful, that one tells us bad news is coming. Different birds tell us different messages. Faith Aldridge 21.10.2009

I am comforted by the fact that Mumbulla Mountain is there. I remembered it all the time I was away, when I was taken away. I always thought about Mumbulla, Gulagal and Browns Mountain, Bega and the bean paddocks. [Cecil 'Junga' Hoskins 10.2.2010]

I was drawn back to Wallaga Lake; the mountains drew me back. You can't leave the place for too long, you get home sick. Gulaga and Mumbulla. When Biamanga sat there on the rocks, on Mumbulla, that's Biamanga really; he would watch the clans coming in from Mallacoota in Victoria, Mt Coolangatta at the Shoalhaven River there, Braidwood,

Queanbeyan, Mt Keira. ...from all around, including Mt Kosciusko. Harold Harrison 15.9.2009

The Greendale track - there's access to Mumbulla Mountain from Greendale. There is also access from Murray's Flats up through Doctor George Mountain. So there's two ways they could get up that mountain; straight up where the road is today, and further in from Murray's Flats, which went directly up to the mountain. The old fellas used to go up the mountain in the picking years. No women. Well that mountain was theirs, so it was important to be close, especially people who had traditional ties to it, ownership rights. You know the people who had traditional ownership and ties to the area they knew they had it, cos there were old people who would've told them, lived by their cultural ways. But they would have also told the other fellas that come in, cos in those days there was no land rights act and all the people were together. John Dixon 4.11.2009

Black Range, Mumbulla Mountain, the showground in Bega, where the Bega golf links is now and the headland at Mogareeka they were big meeting places Mumbulla, Biamanga is a men's law mountain - that's where they young men went and learnt laws on how to live their lives, how to live by them laws. We're still living by them laws and customs today. John Dixon 4.11.2009

I always pay respects to Merv Penrith, Jacko Campbell, Ted Thomas and Percy Mumbler for their efforts in fighting for our mountains and our culture and heritage. It feels good to have the title to Gulaga and Mumbulla Mountains, we feel proud, when we come past Wollongong, we feel like we are heading home and when we see these mountains, we know we are home. I respect my mother's area and I respect my father's area. So I am happy in both places. We are proud to have our mountains handed back to us; we can look after them for generations to come. We go to Mumbler falls. Ken Campbell 8.9.2009

3.7.2 Doctor George Mountain

Mumbulla and Doctor George Mountain - they are all one; they are the same place. You can't get to one without going to the other. It's all connected. If your koori, its gotta be connected. We connect everything together. It wouldn't be a story; we wouldn't talk about it if it weren't connected. Mervyn Penrith 17.11.2009.

I went up Doctor George Mountain with Forestry. We were also working on Mumbulla. I was about 17. I gave up the job after I saw too many death adders. When I saw them death adders, I was gone. One would have been ok, but I kept seeing them, one bite from them and you'd be dead. I made a quick decision. I worked with forestry for about 18 months, checking things in the forests, cutting timber, they was hard jobs. I used a cross saw, and now they use chain saws, the modern ones. We had one on each end, usually white blokes on the other end, when they push, you gotta pull. If you got a good saw it didn't take long to cut down a tree if you got a good sharp one. Someone'd sharpen the saw, not everyone could sharpen them.

We'd be cutting down spotted gum and iron bark and that sort of stuff. Split em up and use them for firewood. It'd dry out or take it to the old mill near Tathra, on the corner. We'd split the timber on the mountain, we'd use wedges for that, that'd split the wood, some was used for building and some was used for firewood. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

Biamanga is a separate mountain but its connected to Dr George Mountain. Its culturally connected cos our people were up there too, they were using that Dr George Mountain to get up to Biamanga and to get across to the coast. Cos it would have been easier to go that way, all through Goats Knob and up through Reedy Swamp. Its all connected. And there were ridges, our people walked the ridges. There's a big ridge running from Dr George Mountain into Mumbulla mountain, which is the way you go to get to that special waterfall up there. And that's the way our people would have walked. And there's ridges running down from Wappengo Lake, from Dr George Mountain. There's ridges running from Goats out to Mogareeka, and back into the Bega Valley. Its all connected. Its all significant. And the bullock wagons which first went through, they only widened the Aboriginal traffic lanes that were already there. John Dixon 4.11.2009

Dr George Mountain has always been known as that since the white man called it that. But its all connected to Biamanga. You know our people had names for places. The Dr George Mountain area was actually called Talleganda, the name has been corrupted to be known today as Tarraganda. John Dixon 4.11.2009

There are a lot of good places where some say 'that's a good place to camp, but there's no one there'. Our people would not camp if the Duligal is around. Dr George Mt was a place they avoided at night, and Wandandian, they were careful of them places too. Even today, I avoid going through these places and if I do I don't feel right cause of what the old people told me. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

3.7.3 Brogo Pass

There are a lot of good places where some say 'that's a good place to camp, but there's no one there'. Our people would not camp if the Duligal is around. Uncle Jeffo told me not long before he died, that people would not walk through Brogo or camp there at night. And even dad, when they were driving between Sydney and Orbost, they'd always program the trip so that they would go through Brogo before dark, and if they were late, they'd camp on either side of it. The highway, runs through that place, south of Quaama, Brogo, they didn't like that section, the Duligal or Goonge was known to be in that area. Even today, I avoid going through Brogo at night, and if I do I don't feel right cause of what the old people told me. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

3.7.4 Wappengo

At Wappengo we get heaps of oysters. We still go there and put the oysters in a jar. Sometimes we used to eat them out there, sometimes we'd bring some home. I think I went to Wappengo with my parents, we didn't pick on a Thursday – it was pay day. We had Fridays and the weekend off, sometimes we'd work on the weekends. On Thursday we'd go shoppin, we used to catch an old bus running from out at Callandars. Ice cream used to be only 5 cents. a dollar or something to get into the pictures. We saw some good ones, some show come out in 3D with the glasses . . . John Wayne . . . they used to put all the Koories down stairs, down the front. You could sit where you wanted to sit, but it had to be up the front. We had to be up the front. . . everyone else was upstairs. Later on we sat upstairs. [Alma Carter 20.10.09].

I got oysters at Wappengo, but I don't camp there. You got the lake there and ocean, you pick em up at the lake. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

We'd go and camp out at Wappengo. We'd just go anytime really, especially if Uncle Joe came down from Wollongong, when he was on holiday, cos he used to work on the water board up there. John Dixon 4.11.2009

And Wappengo's very good. At Wappengo there was only one little dirt road in there, and that's where, I can't remember, a little dirt road, haven't been back there since, that was over night fishing trips. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

3.8 THE BEGA VALLEY CULTURAL AREA

3.8.1 The Bega River

I picked a lot of beans. It was good – but we needed to watch for snakes. At lunchtime we swam in the Bega River, back in them days it was better, there is no river now. To catch eels, we'd put a grub or something on the hook and they'd bit the grub. Even witchetty grubs from the wattle trees. The witchetty grubs are mainly situated in wattle trees and the eel bites it cause that's the food they like. You skin the eel, take the skin off and the flesh is really white and clean. Then you Cook em, depend on how you cook em, maybe in the damper, cover up with hot coals on things, it is beautiful when the damper is cooked it the ashes. I use to take damper to school; mum cooked it in the morning before school. We mainly just ate fish from the river, mullet, perch, eels. The Bega River runs into the mouth near Tathra, the water at Bega was fresh. The salt came not far, just to Jellat Jellet, not far down the road. Jilla was brackish, then further up real beautiful and blue. We cooked on a camp fire no oven, we cooked fish on the coal, fish is more beautiful on the coal, we'd take the scales off and put the fish on the coals, use a stick like a skewer. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

There was always plenty of good water, not now, the river has been destroyed by white man's pumps; the pumps have destroyed the river. I feel like the river should still be there if they looked after the lands. We loved that water, for swimming, fishing. We always caught lots of eels, now the lots

gone cause of what they have done to it – it was beautiful, now its gone. The pumps are all along the river, right up. If they cleaned out the Willow Trees it might be good. The Willow trees and choking the water and the trucks are taking away the sand. The willow trees and the water pumps, they are both taking the water. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

The best thing about my childhood - well it wasn't pickin, anyways, it was hangin around all the young ones, that's what I loved best. They had a rope, jumpin off that and goin swimmin with all the young ones in the Bega River. We've had a coupla floods. It was a willow tree we used to swing off. That would be the best part of me life, goin swimmin after pickin. Me dad was very strict. Mum was a softy. . . oh there was heaps of us. [Alma Carter 20.10.09].

Mum and Dad were good pickers. When it used to get too hot, people have got to knock off, we went down the river and had a swim. When it gets too hot they knock em off. When they knocked off everyone went fishing. They got them little, mullets, in the river. Dad used to make spears. Spear em, in the Bega River. He'd spear em too. After pickin, cos when its hot and you're pickin see, sometimes they'd go for a swim down the river and that, take his spear and that. Yeah, yabbies too. No fridge, no electricity on out at that place, had candles, no electricity at Callandars. Had to eat 'em straight away. We'd make soup out of them, fry them up and that. Potato and pumpkin and veges in with the soup[Alma Carter 20.10.09].

I nearly cried, I went down to Bega the other day and I looked at the river and not a drop of water in it, makes me very sad. Yeah, we camped on the side of the river, north end of the bridge, not the other end of the bridge going around into town, but on this along the riverbank there, and we used to catch eels out of, where the back road used to come into Bega and there was a little bridge and we used to go up there and catch eels. We use to fish there, we had no hooks, so we used to use baby's nappy pins and turn them into hooks and catch eels on them. On a line, back them days it was this real strong green line. I don't know the name of that creek, another way to come into Bega around in towards, before you go across the bridge, anyway, but the other bridge you was takin about is over the other side. We was pickin for Ottens, and, what was the other names of the other pickers, but we was pickin for about two or three pickin people around there like when we finished with these people, they'd send us on to the next people, like sharing all the Koories around. Most of them were all Aboriginal, and the Asian kids they used to take the bags of peas and beans away. And they, where they took them spose to Sydney and everywhere to the markets. Trucks, big trucks from down there. And Friday, every Friday we used to get ready to go to the pictures, that was our main day Friday, cos that's when we'd be paid then, Friday we had off that was our day off. We worked Saturday and Sunday, all the week we'd be back in the paddock, all the week till Friday. And when we'd get all hot and sweaty and that we'd dive straight in the Bega river, couldn't do that now. My Dad

learnt me to swim, he used to have me divin for mutton fish and lobsters with my cousin she was Nunagin Vivienne Chapman, and he used to say come on you girls, you've got to learn too, that's how we learnt to swim. He'd just say fall in, then we'd dive under until we learnt how hold our breath and that. He taught us the hard way. I taught my kids the opposite way, I used to get them and throw them in, you gotta watch them so they don't drown. That was the technique you either get in and use your arms and legs, or that's it, dragged out by the hair of the head. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

We usually camped on the Bega River. It was a flowing river then. Oh lovely, it was beautiful. When they all started looking for bores, they went down into the mother's vein and then all the water that was feeding the Bega River suddenly disappeared, goes on their crops. And it evaporates until it gets back in the mainstream, all gone, so what happens, the land dries up, the big wind comes and it all blows away, make another island somewhere else. Ridiculous. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010

Water's one of the most sacred things in our lives, it still is today, water. Specially with nature, close to nature, it's important. You know, it's always stuck in the back of me mind with Bega river, that picture looks like when the willows was hanging over this beautiful crystal clear water, the river was big, it wasn't choking back then, it was absolutely beautiful and kids used to swing out on the willow trees. As I was saying, that was our bath tub. Lovely, healthy. Drinking the water, it was everything to us. It was life. Crystal clear. . . The other day you could see it flowing after the rain, but the next day, next month or so it will be dried up again, just goes through and it dries clean up cos years ago it never used to dry up. After I had kids of my own, when we were living out at Murray's flats in the 1980s, they used to go to the junction or they'd swim in the river there only certain times when they could go down swimming there otherwise they got that green algae in the river. That was about 20 years ago. Michael's 20 now and Robben's 26. Big changes. The kids usually go down the beach now and the little ones, like me little nieces, they go to the pool. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010]

I think about the days when we walked around up and down the river banks with the older fellas and the other older men. They taught us how to make spears and where to get them from, the gurrarah. That was in the mid 1960s to early 1970s. As a young person and even now, I get traditional food. Some of the old people who taught me was Uncle Desmond Picalla. He was a real tribal man, he was from here, this was his traditional country. I was taught all that from the old people, how to get the fish with a spear, come home with a big bag of fish and eels and go into the swamps and get the eggs. We use to hunt the Bega river by following the river path down, looking for fish and in the deep holes for eels. We had spears and then got a bit more innovative later on, we used to break the fibro to make a boomerang, if we broke it it would make a nice sharp piece and we'd throw it directly into the water and if it hit the fish the fish'd be dead. The fibro would end up floating, that way we got it back see. But we did not realise in the '60s we were mucking around with things that were lethal - asbestos. John Dixon 4.11.2009

We went right up the Bega river, right up past Bega, and go right up to Brogo. Go right up past where the bridge is on the highway now. Just walking. Then we'd go right down, as far as we could go, down to a place called Chinnock on the other side of the river from Tathra, getting right down near Blackfellas Lake. It was pretty deep, but we used to cross the river, to go to different flat areas to walk. Follow the shallow waters, cos that's where the fish are, that's where you had a chance of getting the fish, in the shallows. We used the natural sand bank traps in the river, sometimes these would form. We would have a wall of people blocking the exit point. It would create a situation where you could get fish into that trap. We cornered a big heap of big bream in there one day. We had a few blokes standing across hitting the water with spears and a few more up in there spearing them. John Dixon 4.11.2009

We'd carry the fish in a bag or get a stick like a branch with a piece on the end where they can stick it through the gills. Put them all along like a kebab. We carried them that way, but as time went on we'd have a bag or wrap them up in a jumper. We'd light a fire if we were hungry and eat the fish right there, no salt, but didn't matter still get a feed out of it. Mainly it was the older men who were in the river teaching us things and the women were, they'd be back cooking dampers and that up, so we could have a feed when we went back. Waiting for the fish to come back. I can remember back in those days when I was only a young person, just walking down the rivers and in the fields and that just basically thinking about nothing just in touch with nature right there. I had no other worries, we had everything right there. I was roaming free on my land. John Dixon 4.11.2009

When we were living in Bega on the riverbank the kids'd walk into town to go to the pictures. We'd walk all the way home to Tarraganda or to north Bega where ever we was camped. During our lunch break or after work, we'd go for a swim in the Bega River, wash our clothes. We'd swim in our clothes, so they'd get a good wash too. Loraine Naylor 15.9.2009

3.8.2 The Brogo River

We used to go right up to Brogo, which is opposite where the old Bega tip was out at Angledale, and we'd walk over to the tip, there'd be about 8 or 9 of us, ten of us, cousins, brothers, friends, just all boys. We'd cut the roof off an old car and put it in the river, and we'd have to carry it about two kms across land and there was a little creek, Stoney Creek, and we'd put it in there and a couple of blokes would row it as far as they could along there, then we'd get it out and we'd carry it across land, probably about 2kms to get it to the Brogo River. Then we'd sail it, come right down to Jilla Jilla and we used to have it there, sitting there, moored there on the river and when we'd all go down swimming we'd have this car roof there as a boat. Just play with it there. What we'd do is - if a flood come and washed one away, we'd have to go and get another one. And we'd spear fish all the way up, and hunt animals all the way back. When we got back we'd want to have a big issue of fish and eggs. Back then the old cars had more curved roofs to the windscreens. And the way we used to get them off the old cars, we'd find an old hacksaw blade in the tip and we'd use an old hacksaw blade to

cut the roof off. It would take us a day to cut the roof off. Then we'd take it across, it'd take us a good few hours to get it across to the river. Probably four kids could fit on it. We were all skinny lads back then. And all the rest would run along the riverbank. I reckon I was about 6. John Dixon 4.11.2009

When we were at Bega picking, I remember swimming at the Junction, where the Brogo comes into the Bega River. Ken Campbell 8.9.2009

3.8.3 North Bega River Bank - camp

We moved to the riverbank down the road from the cheese factory in the mid 50s, when Glenda was a baby. The four of us slept in a tent by the river, not far from here are the drains where they worked, digging out the sour milk. They emptied the sour milk and the cream into the long trenches with big boots on. You could smell the trench at night, that's how close we were. We had a tent with a double bed. My father was there too. The floods came and we had to move. Terrible big flood, there were logs coming down the river. Margaret Dixon 13.11.2009

I was born in Nowra in 1934. My mother was Ellen Hoskins and my father was Joe Mundy. I went to school at Terara, for a while. That's near Nowra. One day Dad said 'arh, I think we'll go home now, let's go home to Bega'. So we all go out to the cross road of the main highway and met up with Snowy Phantom, he said to dad 'come on Joe, put your kids in the truck, I'll take you'. We was sitting on the fish, in the truck all the way to Bega. I was young, but I remember it, it must have been in the early 40s, I must have been 5 or 6. We settled in a camp on the Bega River. Margaret Dixon 13.11.2009

We dun a lot of bean picking, a lot of seasonal work around Nowra, like pullin corn, when I was younger. Me and Jimmy Little worked at the cordial factory in Nowra, we were only young boys then. After the cordial factory I did seasonal work in the Bega area I was about 16 or 17 I think. I came with me mum and dad, we all ended up living here. We first stopped on the Bega River. We had a lot of black fellas from different towns. Victoria and Nowra, they all came for the picking season. That was the early 50s. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

Later we moved to another place on the Bega River, to Kirby's on North Bega. We moved around a lot chancing the bean picking. It was not hard to move the tent, the kids helped. Dad had a Chev; we'd put the tent in the car and move to the next place. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

I was happy to come back home after they took me away. Everyone was picking in them days, in the mid 50s. So I went picking at Nerrigundah and then Bega. We camped at Bega on the riverbank. We found a good clear site, somewhere we could spread out. There was a mob of us. You got to be careful what you said there, cause there were different tribes all there together. That was our country, so we always felt safe. No one said anything to me; they knew where I was coming from. Mervyn Penrith 17.11.2009.

We lived at Wreck Bay a couple of years before we come down here to Bega. I was ten, nine or ten. Must have been in the mid 50s. We came down here pickin, for work. When we first went down to Bega we camped on the river bank. A lot of Koories lived on the north Bega riverbank, we were livin in tents. Just one of them old khaki tents, canvas ones. We only had one. Had a fire outside, for cookin. My brothers and sisters, they were there too, sure they were. I think some of them was there, can't remember, I was only young. Sister Leila, she was there, sister Dot, she was there and sister Vera, and meself. I think the boys were in Nowra. They were up in Nowra, they lived in Nowra all their lives. Oh, brother Colin he was down here cos he was the only one who stayed with us, I think, cos he used to be paddock boss. When we first come down to Bega I remember Uncle Joe, Aunty Cecilia and Aunty Margaret Dickson. Old Aunty Cecilia Bond, we weren't related, I just call them Aunty out of respect [Alma Carter 20.10.09].

We would've been pickin for Doug Otten, could've been Doug Otten – and Paul and Kevin Darcy too. They were the ones all the Koories were pickin for way back then, the Darcys. That's who we was pickin for, cos he had a property across the road, where we was livin in tents, going towards Jilla Flats, we were livin in tents, down there pikcing for the Darcey bothers, on a weekend I'd pick. Done me share of pickin. We stayed on the riverbank, till the flood washed us off there, had to get out. After the flood no one was living on Bega river. We were livin on a little island, but then we had to get out of there, the water never touched that island, only right around it, we had to move, otherwise we'd a been gone down the Bega river too! had no choice. The old bridge was built then, not this bridge over here, the old one. That old bridge was there, but when that got washed away they built another one. I think they kept that one there until they built the other one. Everything was lost in the flood, just had to take our clothes. We had to get out cos it rained and the water was all buildin up from the mountains. After the flood we moved to Jilla Flats, got a place at Jilla Flats. Been so long, I was only a kid then. [Alma Carter 20.10.09].

Brother Colin used to be a paddock boss. He wasn't bossy, hey, just made sure all the bags were weighed properly. They were goin by the weights of the bags in them days. . . you gotta pick a bit more, put a bit more in. . . once they were all right, he'd stitch them up then. . . I think he worked for Jim. There were four Otten brothers, Ronnie was sort of the youngest fella, Jim and Doug were the main ones, then there was Tom. I think Ronnie was too, the youngest brother. . . Colin was a big man [Alma Carter 20.10.09].

I feel a connection to Bega, where my grandparents lived there for a while. I remember living on the river bank at Bega going out across the bridge. We picked for Doug and Tom Otton, we lived in a house too at Bega, that was in John Street, north Bega. Tom owned a house across from where we used to live. We had Rhonda and Dennis when we first came to Bega picking. [Beryl Cruse 29.10.2009]

Beryl and I worked about 15 years in the seasonal work. We used to pick for several growers there at Bega. Some of the men were key men like Doug Otten, Tom Otten and Jim Otten. I might have done a little bit of work for

Darcy. Mainly Ottens and Callendar, Billy Callendar. They were the people we used to work for. They were really good times, cos you could get in and earn a good day's wages. I used to set myself on five bags, picking, by the time the kids were going to school I'd have five bags picked, and by the time it was lunch I'd have ten, and by the time they'd come home I'd have fifteen and by the time I'd knock off I'd have 22 bags. I used to pick 22 bags a day. They were good days. A lot of picking was done. There used to be a few non-Aboriginals there, but mainly Koories. There were better pickers than me. You got paid by weight. We all got paid by weight. The farmers were good men, they used to look after us really well. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

All the family picked at Ottens; Rhonda, Dennis, BJ, picked till it got hot. Then we'd be swimming. That was the culture with us, all the families would get in there and earn a good days wage for the family. It was good cos people were friendly with each other. I can't remember any blues around the place, only when people got drunk and done silly things. But I can remember the way we used to help each other out. If you seen someone with a big line of bags there, you'd all come in and help carry their bags out, or if someone was struggling to get their row finished, you knew they all had to be finished up before anybody'd get paid, or weighed up. Course you'd get on the end of the row and help pick it out, and pick into their drum too and help fill their bags up. Well that was mostly the character of the people that were out there.... Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

Some of us had tents, others would gather a bit of iron, make a little roof, canvas around. We made our little shelters comfortable. Some people had permanent ones, old Foster used to have a little hut there on the land. Some of them were more permanent than others, they'd stay there and do farm work as well. Every year you'd come back, you'd find a nice spot, didn't necessarily be the same place. But it was close to the water, cos you had to carry water, and where you could get enough wood to make a fire, so fairly close to the paddock and get up early and be first in the paddock and get the best rows. We mainly lived on the farmers' property. A couple of people used to live on the Bega river, near under the bridge there, some people living. But mainly on the people's property. I can remember us being in Bairnsdale and ringing Doug Otton up 'Doug we're here, we need some money to get home', he'd put money in Albie's account and we'd come home and just pick. They were good people like that, they'd help you out. See you can go to a place and you can pick and the crops are not so good and at the end of the season you've made all your living, but you didn't have enough to get on to the next place, that's where growers would chip in and help you get over there. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

We come back to Bega when I was probably about 8, that's 1959, with me second oldest brother Bruce and Carol, there was three of us. At that time people started coming from all over Victoria and all along the south east region. All the tents started going up along the river. When we first came to Bega with Mum and Dad we owned an old chev. Mum and Dad decided to camp the night down there on the river under the old oak tree. We made a big fire, just down from the old cheese factory. I think we slept

around the camp fire that night. That was our first night in Bega, from what I can remember back then. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010]

We lived on the Bega River, at North Bega. It was near the old cheese factory. We lived in an old army tent. I don't know what happened to that big army tent, I think it got washed with the flood. Cos I don't know how long we were staying on the river, cos one year the river started flooding and it was pouring down rain and I went to put me foot out on the floor and it was in water so the river was coming then, we was all in the flood and Dad had to rush up and get Henry Davis and them and come and get the tractor then we had to go up and get out as soon as we can and then they moved the tent up closer to the fence, up the hill, and the next morning when we looked down that river was just all flooded where we was camped. So if we'd have woked up the early hours of the morning, we'd have been out in the ocean! [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010]

We had to go through an old gate to get down on the river back then the people up where the old cheese factory is was called the Davis's and they were growers with beans and peas and I remember Dad being offered a job in the old cheese factory. He used to go down the river and dig all the old drains out and he'd have these big gumboots on, and it was putrid all that stale milk. I can remember then the pickin season started and Dad went and asked Henry Davis and Margaret Davis and they come up with a big army tent for him, and Dad pitched the tent down there on the river. The river then was beautiful back then, and I always say to people I can remember the river use to be big and lovely and it never use to dry out during the drought season. And that was our bath tub, and Mum and all the women, they used to get there and wash, do a big day of washing on the river, clothes hung on the fence or on the willow trees. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010]

We lived along the north Bega Riverbank, mum and dad earned a living by picking peas and beans all year round. They picked up and down the coast – they call it seasonal work. I've seen the floods coming and going in Bega. The river came up to the clock there one year, but I can't remember what year, in the seventies. I don't know 1973, coulda been. We also lived out on the old tip road with Mum and Dad and the family, including Margaret's mother and father and all the kids. We also lived at Murrays Flat, along Tarraganda Rd, as well as Reeve's farm and Reedy Swamp on Tarraganda Rd. We lived all around this area, depending on where the work was. Rodger and I lived on the riverbank with Mum and Dad. The Tighes and Naylor's were there too. As I was growing up I moved in with Margaret Dixon, I moved in with them, cos I wanted to be with the kids, cos I was the same age. I remember living with Eric and Margaret Dixon at Jellat Jellat flats, on the Tarraganda Rd to Tathra. We lived their will all the kids and we went to school I Bega. [Gloria Pickalla 9.2.2010]

We were made to pick. If we didn't pick we couldn't go to the show. They wasn't lazy days, those days, you know, we were told if we wanted to go to the show, we had to work for our own money. Today the kids get away with anything. Weekends we picked, not in the holidays. We probably swam in

the river, or in the pool over here. I was the teachers pet in some classes, must have been alright. I was good at spelling and that. All me old mates are not around here now. They used to come and pick me up, over at Howard Ave and take me to their house for parties. Stay overnight with them. . . couldn't get a boyfriend! No, Colleen was terrible strict. She had this long dress on, following us, and we were all dressed up in tight jeans, blouses showing our thin bodies off. Couldn't put make up on or she'd go and dob us in. Chaperone. I'd get love letters from school and have to hide them from Colleen. Like a mother! And she'd be singing out to us, 'wait for me', 'oh what'd you come for' we'd say! We'd get in trouble. [Gloria Pickalla 9.2.2010].

In the picking season come down and pick in Bega down here and live on the river banks down there, I remember that as a kid, down the river bank and going pickin. We used to pick for Henry Davis was the lad that, like the farmer that had all the beans in those days, that was before Ottens got too big, then they became the biggest. The Victorians would all come up to Ottens. Up the top would sort of come down to Davises, was like that. But most the Victorians was down Ottens way. Jim Scott 9.2.2010

3.8.4 Bega River – Tarraganda

I was born in Berry, Joseph William Mundy 20th Sept 1936. It has been a while. I didn't grow up in Berry I was just born there. My mother was Ellen nee Hoskins and my father Jo Mundy. Mum's father was a Chapman and her mother was a Hoskins, then when she married my father she became a Mundy. Mum's mum was Elsie Hoskins. Elsie Hoskin's parents were Jack Hoskins and Mariah Haddigaddi. My great grandmother use to live at Tarraganda, at Corrigeria. The Hoskins use to live there. Jimmy Queero lived there too. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

Mum's mother was Mariah Picalla born in 1874 at Bega. She died in 1937 and had been living at Tarraganda. Mary Duroux 22.4.2010

One of my earliest memories of mum was when she was working at Tarraganda House in Bega. She worked there for Mr Wren as a domestic. Mr Wren's father built Tarraganda House, and I was told he also built the Kameruka Homestead. I remember helping mum clean up the ashes in the old fireplace at Tarraganda House. I would have been four at the time. Mum died in Bega five days before my fifth birthday on the 4th August 1939. A while later I remember Mr Wren picking me up on the Tarraganda bridge as I was walking to school- he said 'what are you going to do when you grow up? You can work for me'. I never ended up working for him, he died and I moved away. Mary Duroux 22.4.2010

The Dr George Mountain area was actually called Talleganda, the name has been corrupted to be known today as Tarraganda. Apparently Talleganda meant the place of the bush turkey. Apparently it was pretty thick with bush turkey, but they nearly wiped them out, along with the Koala. Talleganda was the place where the big spear fights used to take place. The old people told us about that. My Mum and my Dad told me

about that, and my Granddad told me about that, my Mum's father, Uncle Joe, Mum's brother, Uncle Claudy, Mum's brother, Aunty Celia and Uncle Joe Bond told us about that. The spear fight was were the golflinks is today, on the flat area there, that's where they used to hold spear fights. If they had a score to settle, they'd settle it there. But there was a big spear fight in Bega itself, where the town is today. See maybe that was a more hostile tribe that come it. If they had something to sort out the different tribes would go out to the flat area to have it out, near the golflinks is. That's where they'd have a big fight out there. John Dixon 4.11.2009

I remember going up there to Bega and pickin all the time, Kiah or from Palestine to Bega. And then we'd camp up there for a long time too. And the floods used to be really bad then too. I remember camping under the Bega bridge and Dad had to put us way up under the Bega bridge cos the floods were getting bad and we couldn't cross the river. We was at the bridge there but it wasn't, at the time it wasn't seen to be safe to go across the bridge cos the floods were heavy. There used to be floods all the time. A big one in 1971. . . it was a big flood. The Aboriginal camps along the river, they knew when to move, they weren't silly, no one got drowned. We went higher, to higher ground. Go and pack up camp real quick and move quick. Koories were too cluey. They knew when to move. The old bridge. Bega bridge. When at Tarraganda, we wouldn't have been able to cross then, the little bridge. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

We picked on all Ottens, mainly, all Ottens farms. Jim, Doug and Tom. We camped on their property, of course. Plenty of fruit trees, that's why. They were good, they shared. Sometimes, when it wasn't flooded they'd pick, hey, if it was raining. Lot of the older women they had to, used picking drums to wash in, and put on the fire to boil the clothes. . . there'd be no work if the paddocks flooded, no work, move on and do something else. If disaster happened we'd move. Or if the fish was running out we'd move. Dad used to get his own water, he used to know where it was and dig it up, and put an old sheet across there and drain it and do it all that way, and get us fresh water out. Boil it up and let it go cold. Yeah, they cluey. Yes, I loved picking. And I'm still looking to go and do a little bit more before I retire properly. I've nearly getting a half century so I better get out there in the field TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

3.8.5 Angledale Rd - Stoney Creek Camp

We moved around a lot when I was young. At one stage I was living at Stony Creek with my Nan Elsie Hoskins. That's near Bega. I remember walking along the road with Nan she had a long plait running down her back. A few of them use to stay there. She was camping there, and then people cum and moved her into a house. They built her a little house at Stony Creek, a long time ago when I was little. My mother and father use to work all the time, so I stayed with my Nan. That was an old camping area. Sometimes if you look around in the earth, you can see things you know, artefacts and that. That was a long time ago, around 1945. Margaret Dixon 13.11.2009

In the 1960s we lived at Stoney Creek again, this time we lived on top of the hill in the Angledale area. We lived in a tin shed. There were always lots of fruit trees around. There was an apple tree here always, near a track. My brother Jo lived in an old green car, that was his house, he use to sleep in that car, just near the bridge. Then further up the hill, my mother lived. There was a few camps around that area, the Mundys and Harrisons, the Knights and on the other side a few more, the Solomons and the Johnsons. The kids would go swimming in Stoney Creek, jumping off that rock into the water. Margaret Dixon 13.11.2009

The kids went to Angledale school, the teacher use to pick the four kids up on the way. My husband Rodger Dixon [Eric Bruce 'Goodger'] was working for Henry Davis who had a little house by the side of the road. After that he worked at the Cheese Factory; he walked there from our camp. It was hard for him to get into town from Angledale when the road was always flooded. He wasn't working in the cheese factory; he worked *next* to the cheese factory digging the stinking milk flowing into the river from the factory. That was a really smelly job. He did other jobs as well to survive. We lived on an empty block of land, all trees, the farmer next door had a garden full of cabbages. There is a house there now, we could see across all the way to the tip. Margaret Dixon 13.11.2009

No one lived at the tip, they lived 'at the back of the tip', up past Stoney Creek. The kids'd collect things from the tip, like coper and nickel, and sell em. We'd always go rummaging through the tip, pick up furniture and take it home. People were living in that area, they had nowhere else to live. People'd walk into town. The kid's weren't allowed on the school bus cause they was black. You can see it from the tip Mumbulla Mountain. The other big mountain is Gulaga, she has a white cloak on her, like she's lying down. Old people would go up Mumbulla Mountain. Margaret Dixon 13.11.2009

We'd go up the hill from the creek to our tin shed, half way up was the blackberry bushes. There was blackberry's all across the hill. One night my brother Jo came home to hear the sound of groaning, he followed the sound, it was mum in the blackberry bushes, a goat had barged and barged her...she died. I can't forget this place, we moved after that. Margaret Dixon 13.11.2009

We was also living the other side of the tip, there was big tip up Angledale, our camp was on the other side of the Stoney Creek bridge. Mum use to go to the tip everyday, pick up stuff, she had beautiful dogs, she'd take the dogs to the tip. She loved her dogs. The thing that broke my heart, there was complaints about the dogs and the police shot the dogs in front of her. They did not even care. She sat down and cried. We were not able to take action. Dogs are good if you get a good one. That was near the tip, out at Angledale. I use to sleep in my old green Chev by the bridge, I could drive it, it had rego. It was not hard to get rego in them days, I walked into the cop shop for me licence, the bloke in charge said give your money and heres your licence. I paid the money and he gave it to me. I lived in that car for a while, until we had a bad accident. Mum had an accident. Mum had something happened to her out there, she either got killed by a pet goat or

someone murdered her. I walked up the track from my car to her place, in the night, I carried her up the track and she was light as a feather. There was a goat out there; they blamed the goat. They shot him they shot the goat. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

When we lived at Angledale, we got lots of stuff , plates, crockery, my mother got stuff every day. When I came home from school , she'd have more things. Someone complained that her dogs were noisy. They weren't noisy. When they got shot, she didn't get another, she loved the ones she had. They broke her heart. The police were ignorant, but they did it anyway. She had about 4 dogs, they were like kids to her, to see them got shot in from of her, they was bad. There were lots of blackfellas campaign the cause. There was nowhere else to go. Stoney Creek at Angledale, that's where mum go murdered. I picker her up and she was light as a feather. It never got followed up. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

We also used to live at Stoney Creek, along Angledale Rd there, that's just down from the tip. THat's when Aunty Marg and them was livin out there too, and Uncle Roger, Aunty Ellen. She was there too. Aunty Marg and them was livin there. And, there was some other families there too, but I forget who they are. Solomons they were livin there. We used to live on top of the hill, Aunty Marg and them used to live on this side of the road, down the side there, and there was someone livin just down a bit on the other side. I think so, I think they were livin there. We used to catch the bus from there into school, from Angledale, no, not the bus, the yellow taxi, didn't have a bus runnin then, the yellow taxi. Pick you up and take you back home, take you back out that way. Don't know who paid for that, I think it must've been run by, I don't know who, government or something. Yellow station wagon. It was a taxi, but it was a yellow station wagon, you know what I mean, they use to pick us up, take us to high school and fetch us back home. At Angledale, we used to live in tin huts, old tin huts then. I don't know if they're still there, haven't been out since, haven't been out for years. That's when we used to pick corn for Ronny Apps. I get mixed up, long time ago. I think we lived out there first, then moved to Callanders. We moved around so many times, see [Alma Carter 20.10.09].

I can remember moving out past the tip on Angledale Rd. Up on top of the hill, and Uncle Cecil carter, Alma's father and all them lived just across from us. And down the bottom of the hill near the road was Uncle Joe, Uncle Claudy, there was a mob, and me grandmother, Mum's mother and Aunty Aggie from Wallaga, they had a big tent down near the bridge there, and so there was tents all around there and little tin shacks. We used to go to school at Angledale then. The teacher used to pick us up and take us out. We was all in the one class, there was different age groups, but then down the track we started coming into Bega primary, but that was a long walk. We used to get up early and walk all the way to school, across the little footbridge up to the Bega primary, then by the time we got home it was dark, so it was a long walk. Me brothers and sisters were all walking. I was the eldest. That was tough. Just us going to school. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010]

Angledale school closed down back then. I can remember that. I was 10 or something when Angledale school closed down. We used to roam all over the paddocks looking for mushrooms, witchitigrubs, go and make a little fire and chuck all our witchitigrubs on the coals, have a billy can, little tomahawk, look for more witchitigrubs, but you know, children going on adventures. Back then it was no problem, but today its really dangerous to let children roam around. We got the witchitigrubs out of the old gum trees; we used to take the gum off, the liquid stuff that was on the tree we used to get it off and eat it. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010]

We used to get down the creek, I think it was Stoney Creek. We slid down the rocks into this big waterhole, or we'd go looking for wild ducks, just adventure down the creek. Then all the women, they'd have a big washing day down the creek, Mum'd be there with all the clothes and all us kids there, swimming. They had one big washing day. Probably a Saturday, down there for the whole day, sometimes they'd cook down there, and eat. That was where you can catch fish too. Kids used to go down and catch these ugly looking fishes but I wouldn't eat them . . . funny fish they call them bull heads back then. I don't think any of us ate them. We would have eateb the fish we knew like freshwater bream and eels, and stuff like that, but these were real weird fish. That creek was running all the time. It's probably changed now and dried up after time, choked up with willows, like the old Bega river now its dried up, when it dries up it just dries and there's nothing in the river. Back then it just flowed constantly. Because of all the farmers pumping the water out and with the cows, cattle and that, and willow trees. . . I think they got to get rid of all the cattle and stuff going along there or get rid of those pest willows. They started cleaning some of the stuff up, and helping it to breathe, fix it all up. . . just they messed around with the environment, mother nature, you know. Make's me feel sad in a way, cos when you can remember it back then and to see it now, it's sad. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010]

We was up there at the tip, waiting for the cars to come in everyday, or in the afternoon, especially on weekends you know, we had another old lady sit up there Mrs Solomon used to be there with her big cap on and big stick going through all the stuff, there used to be a lot of nice stuff thrown out, it would be put on the side. That was like, oh the kids all get up there it was exciting. We lived in old tin shacks. Old tin and old iron and something old bags, old fishing bags used to be hanging up, cos Mum used to get the old tea tree as a broom and sweep out the floor, all sort of dirt floor, but everything used to be nice and clean, up off the ground, beds and that. Mum kept it really clean. Sometimes we'd go to school with dampers and the kids used to always swap us, we'd get the sandwiches and they'd want the damper. There was a lot of that goin on. Back then it was. . .we were, Dad you know, he got out and he struggled really hard for the family, and another person in the family, Mum used to do a lot for us by keeping all our things clean and keeping us all together, if it wasn't for Mum, DOCs back then, welfare days, and kept us all together, we would have been all separated. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010]

3.8.6 Murray's Flat

We moved out to the bails at Murray's flat. The bail was an old milking shed, the 'bail' the cow bail, on Otton's farm. There was four brothers; Doug, Jim, Tom and Ronney. We use to pick peas and beans for them. 'Come on get along those rows' Doug Otton'd say. Doug Otton and the other brother's lived in town, but they gave us the bails to live in. The old bails have been replaced. The shed has also been changed. We lived there for a year or two. We had the river, we had fruit, we had work, we had family around, there were tents set up around the bails. We would have a swim for a break picking, then we would hear a whistle, warning us to get back to work. There was apples and pears, Doug Otton'd say 'help your self'. One hot day I lost my twin girls in the bails. June and Jill, they didn't survive. I nearly died that day too. That's when we moved to Wallaga. Margaret Dixon 13.11.2009.

On the corner at Murray Flats, Aboriginal people lived in houses. Aunty Cecilia lived in the middle one; the house was knocked down when she moved. She lived there with all her dogs. Down in the gully, across from the corner, anyone will tell you if they have lived here, at night about 2am or 3am, you can hear the sound of clap sticks coming out from the gully. It is like two rocks being clapped together. It might be the old people doing their corroboree. They use to find spearheads out this way too. People who use to live here, it is their spirits. There might have been an old campsite around here, at night you can hear them, it is a really spiritual place. There is nothing to see, but you can hear it, you can feel it. Margaret Dixon 13.11.2009.

I know we lived at Callanders cos I remember we used to live up the back there. Callenders is out at Murrays Flat, Bill Callender, we used to pick for him then. All the others was workin for Ottens. We didn't camp at Ottens Farm, just at Callanders. We camped at Callanders farm. When we was living out at Murrays Flat we went to school by bus. I would have been pretty young when we moved to Murrays Flat. 'bout 9 or 10 I think. Then I went to high school, and I only done one and a half years there, cos books and things were dear, and dad had to buy books and uniforms and everything. Then the Abstudy money come through and that, bought our homebooks and that. We used to live off the pickin. It was pretty hard them days. You'd get a drum and to fill up with peas and beans it takes hours, they'd take that long. We only got 5 or 10 dollars for a bag and there'd be three drums to fill up a bag. . . I used to eat the peas all the time. I use to pick after school too; I'd go out the paddock. If it wasn't rainin or anything. Mother and father were both pickin all the time. [Alma Carter 20.10.09].

Bill Callander built himself a new house when we were livin in tents. We moved into his old house. That was a big old house at Murrays Flat, I think its still standin, up the back there. Silvia's still alive, but I don't know if she's stayin out there. I think her daughter's got the place on the top of the hill. That was the first house we lived in. It was only a one-bedroom house, but big enough, it had a big fireplace, but we had it like blocked off. Mum and dad were on that side, me and me sister on this side. It had big windows. Just our family lived there, oh, Aunty Emma with that little dog 'Coconut'. Bill

Johnson - they had the other place, but further up. Aunty Emma was a Bond. After we finish pickin, probably Mum and sister Dot, be cookin, she was stayin with us. Eat beans and peas, I used to eat more of them than I'd pick! Bill Callander used to give us fish, cos my brother Colin used to go fishin with him, with a boat. Bill done it commercially, he used to sell fish, but Colin used to get a heap of fish for us [Alma Carter 20.10.09].

Later Mum and Dad got a house at Murrays Flat. They were the houses that were brought down from the snowy mountains. It used to be an old camp, Aboriginal land out therebrought em down on big trucks, three old houses and put them on the Koorie land out at Murrays Flat. They went a while ago and there's only two houses there now, newer brick houses, land council owns them now. Murrays Flat was alright. Used to play around then, lived there for a while, brother Lorry and Vera lived in the top one with her family, and Uncle Joe and Aunty Cecilia lived in the middle one, and mother and father lived in the bottom one. [Alma Carter 20.10.09].

When I was working in Sydney, I'd only get four weeks off, get three weeks down here, wherever the majority of the beans were, that's where the picking was. Well we lived off the land, rather than live out of me bank account. We lived off the land, it paid for itself. Ottens, mainly Ottens, but we had others there too. So it didn't matter if it was Ottens, or Davis or whatever, you know. We usually camped on the Bega River. It was a flowing river then. Oh lovely, it was beautiful. You feel like a bird now - having a sand bath. Ridiculous. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010

After Angledale, we moved to the Otten brother's property. We lived in the old dairy bails. We used to get on the bus out there, the old yellow buses with the big round roofs, we used to come in to go to Bega primary. That's where Mum was in labour and they had to rush her to Bega hospital, both the twins died, they had to send for someone, she had a big blood transfusion, we nearly lost Mum too. At the time Rose and John were babies. The twins were 8 pound something each, big babies. That was 1964. Even though the twins didn't survive, Dad named them Jill and June. I'm the eldest, then Bruce, then Carol, then Glenda, then Michael, Kevin, John, Rose, then the twins, then Kathy, William, Pamela and David. Eight girls and six boys. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010]

That same year, that's 1964, the welfare was doing the rounds. There was diarrhea and everything at the time going through the community, so they was a warning out that if the Aboriginal people didn't go onto a reserve they would come and take the children. So when we was living out there at the Otten brothers in the old dairy bales, like a lot of them lived in the big tin sheds and that there, cos what happened, they were dodging the welfare back then and there was this big semi trailer came in, big cattle truck, and picked us all up, we were all in the back of this cattle truck going to Wallaga. Mum and Dad was on the truck, yeah, we were all on that truck. We took our belongings, Mum and them got the stuff on, all our clothes and things. It was terrible sad though, cos how they shipped us all out of there on that big cattle truck, back then, all sitting on the back of the big truck. Thinking gee, we're not cattle. I have a clear memory of that. It was very

upsetting, to have to do that to protect the children. I was 13. I was angry cos Dad had to leave the family at Wallaga to work in Bega. Every weekend we'd get to see him. We had rations delivered like they used to bring fresh fruit in and bread and all that for us. And we had tea and sugar and flour and all that. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010].

One day, Dad came up to Wallaga and we packed up in the night time, he picked us all up and we sneaked off the place. Me auntie and Uncle Mum's brother and his missus and their family, they followed us, that's Uncle Claudy Mundy and Auntie Wilma and we ended up coming from Wallaga and we moved out to Reedy Swamp road in those old shacks that was still left out there. They didn't know where we went [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010].

At Murray's Flat, first we lived in tents, if they could build a little humpy, they'd go out the dump and carry it home and build little sheds, little places. Picking beans. Then we'd pack up and go back up the coast, end up back at Narooma or just pack up one day and go straight through to Victoria and ended up over there. [Jim Scott 9.2.2010]

As a child i went around with my father and mother following seasonal work. When we were picking at Billy Calander's, we use to catch the bus to Bega Primary. The bus picked us up every day from the Murray flat turn off, so we had to walk from Calanders to there to get on the bus. This would have been early 50s. We picked beans there. We all lived in one big tin shed. There were two big sheds, partitioned off on the inside for all the families. There use to be a lot of fruit trees around, all sorts, all over the place. We would know when to pick them. They were wild, just growing from scraps. [Jenny Andy 4.11.2009]

I can remember staying at Billy Calander's farm and Deanna was just up the road. My father knew Deanna's mother. We were on the Murray Flat Rd, up the road from the corner, we picked all around there, living in sheds, bagging walls to keep us warm. We used to put the big bags together to keep us warm. It was a fun time. If we didn't pick it wasn't fun cause we'd get a belting. There were more Kooris in Bega than anywhere, we were the workforce. We had to pick until dinnertime, and if it was too hot, they'd let us go. If we stopped, a clod would land beside you, and you'd move on. Our parents would chuck it beside us, to make us react. Ken Campbell 8.9.2009

3.8.7 Jellat Jellat 'Jilla' / Penuka Swamp

In the 1940s we went to different schools, close to wherever the picking was on. I remember going to Jilla School; Mum and dad were working near there. In the 50s, we moved onto Jilla from Stoney Creek, and the kids went to Jilla School, the same school as I went to once when I was a kid. Rodger was working for Mr Parberry, he gave us a three bedroom house to live in. He was working for farmers around the place. Across the river Bill Koellner 'Calender' had farms. We camped there too and picked for him. We stayed there for a year or two and lived in a tin shack. I had three kids then Colleen, Bruce, and Carol. We were there for a year or two, along with all

the other campers. There was nowhere else to live; that place was good - there was fresh water there. The Kirby's and the Thomas's lived in old tin shacks on 'Calanders'. They use to pick peas and beans, the workers lived there. A few families came in from Victoria to make a few bob for themselves. I picked here, all me kids helped out. That is close to the Bega River. The big ones taught the little kids how to swim. We'd chuck em in, they'd soon learn. When they finished picking, they went for a swim. I did my washing at home; some people washed their clothes by the river. Margaret Dixon 13.11.2009

We also lived along the Tathra Rd, near the old sawmill. A bloke named Paul Darcy owned the place, we use to live in trams, we had no other house, we lived there when we did seasonal work. They built tents and all there for the pickers there, there might have been two trams and some big sheds with showers and laundry. We lived in the tram with other people, I was about 20 then. The trams were brought there on trucks, they weren't running on lines, they were especially for koori accommodation. They are gone now, I don't know what they don with them. They were green and yellow, like the ones they use to have at La Pa. We lived in tents then, we were living in one, it was a big tent. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

When I was a young girl I was in a bean paddock in Bega picking and my appendix burst, the grower, Billy Calander, took me to hospital. We were living there. I was only young. That would have been one of my earliest memories of Bega. That would have been 1945. Marie Ellen Andy 4.11.2009

When they worked for Ottens they were livin out at Jilla. When we were living out at Jilla flats, I started kindergarten, we used to walk to school. It was hard them days. [Alma Carter 20.10.09].

A lot of us used to go fishing in the evenings, and I remember down a bit further, when Doug used to grow beans down at Jilla Flats, we used to fish in the river there and we'd catch the bass, just as the sun was going down. You'd catch these beautiful bass. You could keep them overnight, but you don't waste food. And most times it was best to cook them fresh. Scales and all, you don't scale them. Put them in the coals. Healthy alright. A lot of growers used to grow corn, and we used to borrow some of that sometimes. Pumpkins and things, we'd borrow them. They knew we were eating them hey! You know, that was an industry in itself. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

What happened was that in 1968, or 67 somebody had the ingenuity, ans invented a bean picker, and that bean picker little by little took over the paddocks. See the bean picker couldn't turn around; you had to pick the ends in the rows, other wise they'd smash all the ends up. So we got the end ones and the bean picker would take the rest. It was a big cumbersome machine, and for the grower he'd want to get every bit he could, so he'd take the rows right up to the fence, almost. So you'd pick the ends and the machine would run over those and it'd come down the next row. The machine straddled them, it went over the top, it had these things that would just do that. But it couldn't do the ends. That really reduced our potential. It was introduced all over the seasonal work. They were getting

grape pickers at the same time, cos some of them used to go grape picking too. The machines could mass pick where forty pickers work was done by one machine. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

Well the company that owned the machines got the franchise on paddocks too. They offered the lot at a cheaper rate, cheaper rate for the bosses. I think it hurt a lot of the guys, like the Otten family, they were caught between economy and loyalty, I guess. But slowly the need for economy was taken over. A lot of things happened at the same time, right across the country. Edgells were gaining an edge by canning a lot of stuff and what you bought in those days, like off the shelves, kept these businesses alive, and a lot of the people preferred the canned beans and peas, or frozen. So a lot of those things were sort of damaging the fresh local economy. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

I remember we used to go picking out there at the flats and you'd look out the side there and you'd see these bora rings eh, and when the land rights come in, the farmers must of plowed them in. This was at Bega. They're plowed in. Two there was two there. Yeah they was as clear as anything. They were on the side of the hill as you go down, they were down lower, not far from the sawmill there, wasn't it, on the side. You'd look over the side and you'd see them there. They were at Jellat Jellat, towards Tathra, near the flats, not far fro the sawmill. And they were there for years. There were bora rings all over Bega. We used to go up out back of Tathra, sometimes, used to go through this big paddock, Nelson's, Middle Beach, Cowdroys, we'll you'd go through the back road, and turn in there, near where that post office used to be there. We spent time there. [Beryl Cruse 29.10.2009]

In the 1960s and 70s we worked in Bega picking beans for Otton, Doug Otton. We lived next to the paddocks in tin shacks and tents. Otton had his house further away; you could see it from where we lived. I was the paddock boss. In the early hours of the morning I had to get all the drums and bags ready for the pickers to fill them up. Once they filled them up, I had to weight them; they had to be 52 pounds. If they weren't heavy enough, I'd get them to fill them up a bit more. About 300 bags were collected each day that I had to sew and load onto the truck. The bags were taken to Sydney each Friday to sell at the markets. We worked six days a week. I hated picking, it was harder then weighting the bags, I was paid per hour, not per bag. I think I earned \$300 per week. Most of the pickers came from Wallaga Lake, or around Bega. Men, women, children, the biggest family mob were there on the paddocks. Not everyone enjoyed it – it was hard work being on ya knees all day. We didn't work in the rain, it was too muddy. Harold Harrison 15.9.2009

In the mid 50s I remember picking at Ottos in Bega. People were camped along the Bega River, all along. We camped down there, Dad use to sow for Billy Callender, further down the river. Dad'd sow the seeds then later when we were picking he'd sew up the bags. I was there with him. We could go swimming at lunchtime; have a dip after dinner then back into the paddock. We'd have another swim at the end of the day. It was lovely then, we use to swing out on the willow trees. I think back to those days, it

was really good, we weren't home at Wallaga all the time, we'd have a bit of freedom, walking from the farms to the picture theatre. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

We picked for old Doug Otton in Bega. He'd come to Wallaga in a big semi trailer to pick us all up, we'd grab our swag and camping gear, tents and that, we'd stay there for the season about 3 or 4 months, then he'd give us a ride home. We'd go through the first crop, then go and collect for the 'seconds', all before Christmas. They'd fill the first paddock up with beans, then once they were done, they next lot of beans would be growing, so they'd be for the second pick. We'd leave the smaller beans for the second pick. Some people'd hide clods or clay in the middle of the bag, to make the bag heavier, the bag would be weight in and no one knew, until a bag fell over and the clod fell out! If we had a break from picking at Bega, we'd come back to Wallaga for a good clean. Eric Naylor 15.9.2009

In the mid 50s I went to school at Wreck Bay. The family then moved to Tomerong, then Wooragee. When we were living at Wooragee we would come down the coast picking, to Bega, Bodalla. The farmer would send a cattle truck to Wooragee to collect the pickers. We were pretty young. I loved it, the wind in our hair, all the family squashed into the back of the truck. That's the work what the kooris mainly done – seasonal work, if we didn't pick peas and beans we'd starve. Arnold's store in Bega made good money from the pickers, cause we use to have to 'book up' our meals each week, and it was dear food. They took the money out of our wages before we got it. We had to work extra hard to get enough money for a car, it was not easy to save for a car, booking up throughout the week, we'd only have enough left over to go to the movies. Sometimes we took our only lunch, but working that hard we didn't mind a cool drink and a hot pie. Each day we tried to meet our tally, the beans weren't always plenty, so we'd pick a row, go to another one, then come back again later. We all put in for a car and then that's how everyone got around. We all stuck together. They never drove us back to Nowra in the cattle trucks, we all brought cars, and drove our selves home. Faith Aldridge 21.10.2009

Eventually in the mid 60s I met my husband Gary Aldridge, he was from northwestern NSW. Everyone came over from Victoria and all around, to pick in Bega. So we married and stayed here, in Bega. There were three main places to work; Jim Otton's, Tom Otton's and Doug Otton's. Doug was at Penuka, Jim was at Murray Flat and Tom was out north Bega way. It was hard work, you'd have to get up real early in the morning when the bushes were still damp and that, carting big buckets along the rows, the sun is beating down on you, the heavy clods under your feet. You can't stand up all the time, you got to get down on your knees. If we had another choice, we would have took it – but that was the only job available for koori people. Koori people didn't get jobs in shops in them days. We were glad to get out of there. Faith Aldridge 21.10.2009

I remember being on the Tathra bridge 20 minutes before it collapsed. The river, the Bega River was flooded, and a wall of water came down and all the trees in the floodwaters knocked the bridge down. When I was there, 20

minuted before the bridge went, the water was pouring down. Another time when the flood waters were above the willows at Jilla, Mum and Dad were at Gowing place at Jilla, the police boat brought them across to the other side of the river where I picked them up. They had no bread and milk, they were stranded. In their bag was a fox terrier and 4 little puppies, they saved the dogs, never mind about their clothes. Dogs are as important as kids to Koori people. That's the koori in us, kooris always love dogs. When a dog's owner dies, they move to another relatives house. They are like relatives. Koori people have always had dingos. Valmai Cooper nee Tungai 4.11.2009.

I think we might have went to Bega, cos we lived around Bega too see, down the river. What's that big place out Bega there - Ottens is it, where they all camped there - I remember camping there - we'd be bean pickin. I remember that. Fishin - we'd only go out for the day, you know, go all round the rocks here, and out the rivers, but we'd come back in that arvo, it was just a day thing. John Stewart 5.11.2009

I was born in Walcha, in 1939. My parents are Elizabeth Henry and Bert Henry. I was married when we came down the coast, we got married in La Perouse, and we moved down the coast, oh, I was 18 when I got married. We all go together picking, you know. And now you don't get it no more, eh. I don't think I could pick any peas or beans now. No, I used to love doin it then. Being together and just gettin in the paddock and just pickin, which I couldn't pick but I could help and do things. And meetin everybody, you know, cos it was good when you'd go out, you'd be on the back of a truck or something, all goin to a paddock to pick, yeah. Bega, we all picked in Bega. All had a go at that pickin in Bega. We was there for a long while, with the Ottens. Lived on the river banks, in the tents. Victorians used to come over. They'd be spread out. When we first started off we used to be all in the back of a truck, hey, big truck. Like me brother, he bought his own car. Margaret Henry 2.11.2009

Mainly every pay day we'd go in to Bega. Yeah, do our shoppin and that and then back. Couldn't fish there in the river, could we but we could swim. We did our washing in the river then hung it out to dry on the bushes if we didn't have a line. Or on the fence. I think I only had Kym and Brenda, then Brian I had, Linda's the third eldest girl. I have 11 children. Lost two. I had the three girls and I had, who else did I have, Brian, yeah, Wayne and David, cos I remember David stuck his finger in one of thoes things at Ottens there, a mincer - and he got all the top of his finger minced off. Margaret Henry 2.11.2009

At Jilla we lived in the old house that the Darcy family let Mum and Dad have. That's when we was picking corn and that. Dad was working down there. Old Barry Grimes worked for Welfare. He had a limpy leg, but he threw his leg aside and jumped in the car as quick as he can to get away from Mum. Mum was trying to protect us from what was happening, even when the stolen generation cos Mum and Uncle Claudy and them were all taken when they were little. They were all stolen generation back then; it

was still in the 80s still happening. And its still happening today too. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010].

When we lived at Jellat Jellat flats, Dad would be out working and we'd see the Welfare car coming in and we'd all run down the willows and get up the willow tree and hide. When we see that car, I would have been, 14, 15 something like that, in the 60s. Because when Dad was working Mum was home and we seen this car coming so we all went for the river and when we come back, Mum was telling us she run at the welfare man with a big axe, if you don't get out of here now I'm going to split you from head to toe. That was old Barry Grimes back then. It was one big journey after another. So we just lived all over this area around Bega, like fringe dwellers. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010].

In about 1965 we were living on a property which was owned by Gowings, which I believe is still owned by Gowings today. It's just before the big straight, its just opposite the wetlands. Opposite where the old school was at Jilla. The older fellas went to that school at Jilla, I can remember in our family, Bruce and Carol and Coleen going to that little school over there. John Dixon 4.11.2009

We used to walk all over the place hunting for land animals. Not just rabbits, we'd go kangarooing and that too. You know, we'd look for where the birds were nesting and that. And we had, the dogs we had were pretty faithful. Always looked after our dogs and they'd protect us. One day we were out there at Jilla round a big swamp, we were trying to flush rabbits out of the blackberry bushes, and there was a big snake in one of them, and our dog called 'Rover' dog just went stiff, and stood there, and he was growling, going off his head, we knew something was wrong and then we took another step and the dog flew into the bushes and grabbed the snake by the back of the head, and he shook the snake and took half the back of his head out. They used to keep the dogs around the camps and that. He was a mongrel, but because, you know, you look after a dog and he'll look after you. We knew how to train dogs how to hunt; it was simple. Put the smell of the animal on its nose and that dog would find that food. John Dixon 4.11.2009

I can remember a time when we were down at Warragaburra. That's where the old trams where located, our people use to live in them trams. Mum and dad lived in them at one stage, when Glenda was a baby. I can remember I was only a little fella, must have been only about 3 or 4 and all the people there picking beans and all the kids were over in the river swimming and I was over there too. And a little water hole there, they were all jumping in and out of it. And I can remember going in cos it was hot, and I couldn't swim, and me head went under, and I was trying with the tiptoes of me feet trying to keep me head above water and back out. The bigger fellas after that taught me how to swim. The bigger kids, like my brother Michael taught me how to swim. They told me 'this is what you got to do'. Froggy, that was Freddie Harrison from Victoria, he's connected to the other side of the family, he showed u how to dog paddle. And he'd bring a dog and put him in the water and you could see what the dog was doing. And he'd say if

you get in the water that's what you've got to do, and that's called dog paddling. Then we'd get in and he'd say 'go on now', and we'd dog paddle. And he'd say 'swim, kick your legs', and that's how I learnt to swim. That was at Jilla flats, the Bega River. Back then the river was deep and we always, we basically lived on the river. John Dixon 4.11.2009

We weren't at Wallaga long because, it wouldn't have even been 6-8 months, cos I can remember we come straight back to Jilla flats. Somehow he found that little place down at Jilla with Russels. And he brought the family back. It was like a little, early settlers shack, or a property shack. It only had one little room and an area where you come in, and another room, and another little bit out the back. And somehow we all fitted in there, cos you had too. We had that many people camped at Jilla, that's why the churches got together and bought a block of land over at Howard Avenue, in the Glebe, in Bega here, and we moved in there from Jilla flats. John Dixon 4.11.2009

Later we were still camping on the Bega River; getting fish and we'd go and camp for a few nights. Just walking down the river at Jilla Flats, down the big bend, camp there. Just set it up. Sometimes we'd just grab a heap of wood and make like a wind break shelter and just have a nice big fire and go to sleep in the sand. We'd have eels hanging off the trees, and we'd roast them when we liked. John Dixon 4.11.2009

3.8.8 Reedy Swamp

In the 1940s we lived with Aunty Cecilia and Uncle Jo Bond at Reedy Swamp. Aunty Cecilia was my father's cousin, even though he called her 'sis'. They use to look after me, Mary Hookwin [Duroux] and my brother Jo. Mum was out working, she worked as a domestic and dad worked for farmers around Bega. They weren't far away, just around Bega. Us kids needed to be close to school. We lived in a place, in a tin shed, no it was a little house, with Aunty Cecilia and Jo, up there on the Darcy's place. The Darcy's had their house on top of the hill. Aunty Cecelia did the cooking and cleaning for the Darcy's and Uncle Jo did the fencing. We was going to school then; school in Bega, Bega Primary School. Aunty Cecilia and Uncle Jo made sure we got to school. Uncle Jo's brother use to visit, he was in the army. He marched us to school from Reedy Swamp, all the way over the Tarraganda Bridge then onto school. We'd go along the river, through the picket fence, across the paddock, around the racecourse. We were happy, we laughed about it and we laugh about it now. He'd march us to school, the old lad marched us all the way, like he was still in the army. He'd say 'Go on get going.....keep on marching'. It was like we was in the army! Margaret Dixon 13.11.2009.

After living in Wallaga Lake and Berry I remember being sent back to Bega to live with Aunty Cecilia and Uncle Joe Bond at Daisy Bank on Reedy Swamp Rd. There were a lot of families picking in Bega area during the mid 40s. Uncle Jo worked for the Darcy's fencing and other farm work, that's how we came to live on their property. Aunty Cecilia was working for Mrs Darcy doing domestics. I remember Uncle Joe's brother Jimmy visiting. He

was an army guard who worked at the Cowra Prisoner of War Camp. He use to be all dressed up in his army uniform; they had to wear it all the time. Mary Duroux 22.4.2010

I walked to school every day and if Aunty Cecilia was picking when I got home, I'd help her out. We picked on weekends too. I remember being at primary school in Bega when peace was declared for WW2. So that would have been 1945 – I would have been 11 at the time. I went to school in Bega until I was 13, that's when I moved to Bomaderry to live with Aunty Emma. Mary Duroux 22.4.2010

I remember our camp was north side of the bridge, to the east in the Reedy Swamp area. To get into town we walked across the Tarraganda Bridge, along the highway. It was a long walk but time meant nothing, it didn't matter how long it took. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

In the summer when the picking was on we would camp at Bega, work, then return to Wallaga before winter. We'd be finished picking about April. We did it like that every year, everyone did. The older kids had to work, and the younger ones went to school. I was in the middle, so I had to work. It was hard work picking, we worked from dawn to dusk and camped on the banks of the Bega River. We camped in the same spot for many years. We washed in the river and the farmer's cattle truck would come to collect us in the morning. There were lots of kooris there at the time, my mother and father and brothers. We took a packed lunch with some meat and bread, that did us for the day, plus the occasional bean! Sometimes the farmer would come and take our lunch order, go into town to purchase the meal and deliver it to us in the paddock. Our wages would be docked for what every meal we ordered. I think the farmer owned the hamburger shop! Sometimes he'd be late to deliver lunch, we were told to keep picking, do a few more rows, have a few beans, but there were only so many beans we could eat. Valmai Cooper nee Tungai 4.11.2009.

My name is Cecil Hoskins, but i am known as 'Junga', the koori name for octopus. Uncle Cecil Thomas 'Truthful' gave me that name when I was little, because my eyes were bigger than my head, like a junga. Then later I was netting for prawns and a junga got hold of me. I am not known as Cecil, I am not use to Cecil, only white people call me Cecil, my name is Junga and I am from the Djiringanj tribe. I was born here at Bega. I am not sure about me parents, because I was taken away when I was very young. See I don't know nothing about the history or nothing, I did not know my mother, I only knew my aunties and uncles. That is the only regret I got, from not knowing my parents. I knew my aunties and uncles on both my mother and father's side. Mainly me aunties, we lived out at Reedy Swamp out of Bega here, in the old barn, one of the farmers lent us his barn shed. There was about a good family in there; 6, 8 kids and about 7, 8 adults, aunties and uncles. Mum was never on the scene she was always gone. I never really knew her, but I knew my aunty, my mother's sister, 'Arbu'. That was Iris Hoskins, she just about reared me up. See, my dad was a Parsons, his sister is Aunty Coopy, Georgina Parsons in Moruya. [Cecil 'Junga' Hoskins 10.2.2010]

I was 5 when I was taken away from Reedy Swamp, but I still remember from the age of three, when I was three years old. I was born down in the bean paddock, in Bega. This is the roomer I heard any ways you know. She had problems with her appendix, but it was not her appendix at all, it was a big black appendix here, me, I popped out in the middle of the rows and they rushed us to hospital. You may as well call me cabbage patch kid. She did not know she was pregnant, she thought it was her appendix. She kept on working that day with her mum, Nan Mary. She was only 13 when she was carrying me and 14 when she had me. [Cecil 'Junga' Hoskins 10.2.2010]

The farm was straight down here by the Bega River, where we use to camp during picking season. Down town here near 'the junction' there are big paddocks, along Milk Factory Rd. That is where she had me, on Otton's farm I think. We use to live off the land, finding eels and swans. Nan, that's Mary Hoskins, in them days taught us how to catch witchetty grubs and goanna. I remember the whole lot of it, we'd go up the other side of the mountain. Eels we'd live off Eels from the river. They class spears as a weapon now, we used them all the time for hunting. You know when they had river floods, it would dump seeds along the river bank, all the vegetable's would grow along the river banks, that is what we lived off. We could collect pumpkins and corn. Beans in the paddock, we wasn't starving or nothin. White fellas say they have a big turkey for their Christmas dinner, we had swans from the dams. We were brought up on fresh stuff. [Cecil 'Junga' Hoskins 10.2.2010]

Up until 5 I lived with the old people, hunting and picking. Mum never came on the scene she was the youngest in her family, her eldest sister reared me up until they came in and took us away. Nan had the camp on top of d' hill next to the gate near the road and we had the barn down the bottom. I remember the day welfare came in; coppers, welfare, ambulance, fire engine, they all come in all together and grabbed us, the whole seven of us. I was hiding under the bed, under Nan's bed, one of the coppers went there and dragged me out by the foot. Nan tried to kick the day lights out of him. I still remember the day. They chucked us all on the bus the same day they took us. Nan threw herself in front of the bus to stop it from going see, we were all out the window of the bus trying to get out and all the people in the bus saying let em out. We tried to get out to Nan cause she was laying in front of the bus so it would not take off. As soon as they grabbed and dragged her, we went ballistic, all the kids on the bus 'saying let em out let em out'. They would not open the door. It was an old pioneer bus, the old round ones, where you pull the doors with a latch - we could not get out. We were the only mob on the bus. We played up real bad all the way to Sydney; they took away my chance to grow up with my mum. I very rarely remember mum. I try to picture her from when I was three years old. She passed away when I was in the homes. [Cecil 'Junga' Hoskins 10.2.2010].

We hardly went to school. We use to walk from Reedy Swamp to School, but we'd walk up the river. Somehow we'd forget the time, by the time we got there it was lunchtime. We'd do it deliberately to miss school. We never use to make it - well we got there every now and again. They would hand

out the flavoured milk in glass bottles. We'd line up for them then take off back to the river. We were catching eels, swimming, catching lizards, birds. Nan cooked up the swans we caught on the Reedy Swamp dam. We would sneak up and grab them from under the water, they never saw us. We could slip into the water, duck under, as we got closer, grabbed them and down them straight away. This was how we survived. I have been back to Reedy Swamp to have a look around. It all looks different. I can remember exactly where our camp was, but there are roads everywhere. I remember one dirt road and one house. Now about 9 house and lots of turn off roads. [Cecil 'Junga' Hoskins 10.2.2010].

One day, Dad came up to Wallaga and we packed up in the night time, he picked us all up and we sneaked off the place. Me auntie and Uncle Mum's brother and his missus and their family, they followed us, that's Uncle Claudy Mundy and Aunty Wilma and we ended up coming from Wallaga and we moved out to Reedy Swamp road in those old shacks that was still left out there. They didn't know where we went. The shacks at Reedy Swamp just up from the little creek part, and then over across there where all the shacks and that, before they became empty there was tents and that there too. And that's where my Aunty got burnt alive in the tent out there. We moved out there and then we moved from there down to Jilla. It's all coming clear now. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010].

We moved around a bit, Bega I lived in Bega for a number of years, Bombala, Lake Tyres, Nowra, Eden, Potato Point, Dalmeny and Dignams Creek. Dad was a mill hand, so we followed the millwork. They also did seasonal picking. When we were in Bega for seasonal picking work, we stayed at Murray's Flat and Reedy Swamp. Mum was actually born at Reedy Swamp. She later died at Reedy Swamp too. We was living in an old barn with bagged ceilings and bagged walls, we did it all up to make it homely. It was Nan and Dad and Shirl, one big family. You can still see the barn, on the back road to Bega across Dr George Mountain. I grew up in that area, so it is important to us. [Deanna Campbell 8.9.09]

3.8.9 Bega Township

We went to Bega Primary School, that's when the Flood and Hayes boys went to school too. That would have been during the 1940s. Mr Flood owned the taxis. There were lots of koori kids there then, and now today, all the little ones still go there. I had 12 kids go through that school too, and all the grandchildren too, they are going there now and the great grandchildren. Margaret Dixon 13.11.2009

I was told a story by Aunty Cecilia Bond. There was a spear fight where the pub at the corner near the lights are today. The Grand Hotel, at the end of the main street down there. All these blokes came here from up north somewhere and they grabbed all the local koori girls to take them back with them, just here. They all had spears. They recon under that building all the spearheads are still under there today. That's the Grand Hotel. The big blokes came to take all the young girls. A fight started. They had a spear fight. Aunty Cecilia Bond, she told me that story, she would have been 99

now, she knew everything. Real dark kooris they were that came for them girls, they were real dark. Margaret Dixon 13.11.2009

In 1968 we got a house in town, in Howard Avenue Bega. The church got us a stable home. Reverend Woodwell got people from all around Australia to build us a house in three weeks; it was good to have a house. Reverend Woodwell got some funding to build the house, 16 young people worked on that house over three weeks. I had 10 kids then, Pam and David weren't born at that stage. We lived in that house for at least 5 years. It burnt down a few years ago, well after we had moved out. The land is vacant there now. Margaret Dixon 13.11.2009

I got married in 1970. It was a double wedding, Wilma Harrison married Claudie, my brother and I married 'Rodger' Dixon. Mr Woodwell, Reverend Woodwell married us in the Church at Bega, at the Church of England. He would do anything for us. The kids all changed then from Mundy's to Dixon's. Since then I have lost three of my children. I still live in Bega surrounded by my nine children and my many grandchildren and great grandchildren. I'll never leave Bega. Margaret Dixon 13.11.2009

I once did a show with the marching girls at the school of arts hall in Bega, in town here. That would have been in the 1950s or 60s. Uncle Bing, old Percy Mumbler, dressed up with a spear and put a koori thing on. He was putting charcoal on to make him self black. He was already so black, there was no need to do that. I use to play guitar with Franky Mumbler. He ended up in Nowra with Shingles. He had them pretty bad. I won a trophy in the Buddy Williams show; I played one of Nat King Cole songs. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

Mum is buried up here at Bega cemetery. I visit the place. My niece is there too. A lot of our people are there. A lot of black fellas are there. That place means a lot to us. They lost the records for where our people are buried; the council has not been doing there job. My brother, he is buried here too, but we don't know where he is, we might be driving over him. That is bad. There is Sarah Tungai, Bill Mundy, they died in the 1930s and their death certificates said 'Bega Cemetery'. A few of the Hoskins family, it is hard to find them. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

When I was about 45 I started working at Telecom, in Ulladulla. All the boys were good to me in Ulladulla. We got on well with one another. I worked there for 14 years. After I finished with Telstra, I came back home to Bega. I got no kids, but lots of friends, lots of nieces and nephews, I like being near my family. I don't feel like being anywhere else. If I go away I always come back. It is nice country, here, Bega. I always feel for Bega. I had trouble with racism, it is hard to rent houses, there is so much discrimination. We don't need to be pushed around. Bega is my county. This land is our land; they got to face it. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

I play my guitar in the park at Bega, near where the fountain is. They all sit there, all the koori mob. They all cheer for me. I play where the seats are; I busk with other young fellas. They all hang out there at 'the step', and then move onto the willow tree. It has been burnt down now, but it is still growing.

They use sit under the tree. It's got good shade; at some stage they said it was unsafe, not stable enough. It is always nice and cool. I won a trophy in the Buddy Williams Show in Bega, in a hall next to the bank, where the butcher shop is now- I got a standing ovation.. I also won a talent quest 'search for the stars' at the Grand Hotel Bega', 4th June 1990, I won first prize for singing 'green green grass of home' a Tom Jones song. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

Bega was a town that had mixed people, there were good people there and there was - one, two shops in particular, they were a little bit funny, I remember Terry Brown struck it once, he was picking with us there, and he went in to get something and the person wouldn't serve him, and he just hit the roof, cos she was serving the people in front of him, cos he was a blackfella. Another one was Mary went in to look at the clothes, and the woman implied she had dirty hands and said 'don't touch the clothes'. You'd avoid those shops. But you can't avoid, if there's a nice dress in there and the woman'd want to buy it, you'd still go in. I think Aboriginal people are more tolerant than white people gave them credit for in those days, cos I always said, had I not become a Christian and all these other fellas with me, there would have been blood shed, cos we would have taken a radical stance, in a serious way. The way things were going. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009.

In about 1968 when the seasonal picking industry was winding back we formed the Bega Valley Aboriginal Advancement Association, it was a motivation largely from Rector Woodwell and his Anglican Church at Bega, and they saw the plight - well we didn't see it as a plight, we used to love living out in the humpies, but these whitefellas said 'oh look at them living in them shanties'. But one serious thing that happened that kid that got that gastro-enteritis. Caused a lot of concern, what happened was that this sickness got a lot of public scrutiny, it was through the water in the river, and so then they focused on the way we were living there, and so with the Rector Woodwell and several of us got together in the community, I think Ron Clarke was involved too. He was mayor at that time. They decided that we was to start to move towards trying to get the Aboriginal people in houses in the towns. Prior to that there was nobody living in the special house for Aboriginal people. I was on the committee, there were a lot of us, I can't remember everybody. Anyhow, when this was formed, I remember the Anglican church owned all that land over there where they call Newtown, in Bega, they owned all that, and they made a bargain with the department of housing that they would sign the land over, they would sell it to them with the proviso they would build one house for the Aboriginals. They brought down a group from Sydney, they had builders, they came and built the house, but when the family was to go in there, the hullabaloo, major ruckus about this Aboriginal family coming into town, it was incredible. Anyhow, they, you know, we took all of that on the chin, and still the first family to go in was Margaret and Rodger Dixon, the Dixon family, they went in. And little by little people saw that they just lived like any other family. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

I was born Mary Kathleen Hookwin at Bega hospital in 1934. My mother's traditional name was 'cathule' but she went under the name of Cath Hookwin. She was Waddi Waddi from Shellharbour, they use to camp at Minnamurra. Mum's father was William Hookwin, he was a Bunjalung man from Grafton. Mum's mother was Mariah Picalla born in 1874 at Bega. She died in 1937 and had been living at Tarraganda. Mariah's father was Harry Picalla and her mother was Sarah Haddigaddi. Harry was born in 1852 at Kameruka and died in 1911 at the Bega River. Harry's father was 'Tommy the stockman', also know as 'Doolin' or 'Marimbine'. Tommy was born in 1822 in the Bega Bemboka area and is said to have been killed whilst boxing a kangaroo at the Kameruka cattle yards in 1875. Sarah Haddigaddi was born at Dry River, Quaama in 1859 and died in Batemans Bay in 1931. Sarah's father was Paddy Haddigaddi. He was born at Wandella and was killed in 1875 by two strangers with a tomahawk while he slept at the Cobargo Showground. Sarah's mother was Lucy Goldie Turner born in 1828 at Dry River. She died in 1908 at Wallaga Lake. Mary Duroux 22.4.2010

Grandmother Mariah Picalla and Grandfather William Hookwin had three girls, Bessie Hookwin, Cath Hookwin, my mother and another one. Mariah then married Joe Bond in 1902 had had five more children Nellie, Jim, Emma, Joe Junior and Alice Bond. Joe Bond Senior was robbed and murdered in Bega. Joe Bond Junior, my Uncle Jo, married Cecilia McLeod from Delegate. They married in 1931 at the St John's Church in Bega. Mary Duroux 22.4.2010

After my grandfather died, my mother moved to Bega with her mother. Mum was a deaf mute. She grew up in Bega until the age of 12 - she was taken away. The government took her to Cootamundra Children's Home and then onto North Rocks, a home for the deaf and blind where she learn how to speak with her hands. She was put into service at Parramatta as a domestic servant and when she turned 18 she returned to her family in Bega where she worked as a 'domestic' for the Crowe family. She walked every day from Reedy Swamp into Town. That's a fair way you know. Mum died in Bega five days before my fifth birthday on the 4th August 1939. Mary Duroux 22.4.2010

I remember walking from Reedy Swamp into town across the Tarraganda Bridge, along the highway, just to go to the pictures. It was a long walk but time meant nothing, it didn't matter how long it took. We saw a few westerns. Bega was full of racism, like in all the little towns here. In that picture theatre they sat them all down the front, all the kooris, the gubbs were in the best seats, we all paid the same money to get it. We didn't think much of the gubs. Later we could sit anywhere, and I'd find the best seat, I'd choose whatever seat I wanted. It felt good. Pam Flanders 8.9.2009

When I went to school in Bega, no I don't think I had family there then. Vera, she was goin to school, but she's older than me. I started from kindergarten, see. Kindergarten, you know, they put you in the line, this was when - all the other ones started too eh, I was there with em. And I used to like this one teacher - Miss Eagular - and when it was, like, you'd go out for - not lunch - play lunch, she'd have biscuits for me and things for me, don't know if she's

still alive. Miss Eagular. In kindergarten, it was really good. I used to love goin to kindergarten. In high school, sometimes there were a lot of good people there, but I only went there for one and a half years. Lot of people they come up today and say how you goin Alma, went to school with them and that, know their face and tryin to think who it is, come up and still say hello to me and that. [Alma Carter 20.10.09].

We lived there for a while at Murray Flats then we a place over at Howard Avenue, in town. Later I got the house next door to Mum and Dad at Howard Avenue. I didn't get married, I had Narelle, Graham and Melissa already, then got on with Bob, Kylie's father. Yeah, Kylie's dad was staying at Murrays Flat when we met up. We lived together for 21, 22 years. He's passed away, only this year too, eh. [Alma Carter 20.10.09].

It is important, this place, cos I've had all me kids here in Bega, they were all born here. . . all my family are buried in the Bega cemetery. If I live here, I'll die here. If I move away, I want to be brought back, brought back and get buried in Bega, to be with my family. My little daughter's there too. . . They're all up there. [Alma Carter 20.10.09].

We've got a connection with all these people cos we're all one mob, because their culture is connected cos of the travelin we did in between, and then stopin and the campin. And there was one old man who used to do a lot of that, and his name was old Munz Hammond, Jimmy Hammond, he used to do a lot of travelin from Wallaga Lake to Bega and he'd stop here for the night and he'd stop there for the night and when he used to camp he'd have these dogs, I think about three or four dogs he had, and when he'd make his camp up and stop there, he's dogs'd circle him, make sure he was looked after. And no one would ever go near him, cos the dogs used to growl and open their teeth and their eyes was red, so he was a bit of a clever man this old fella. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

All my family originally from out Bonang, the tablelands. James 'Munz' Hammond, he's related to me through me father, my father's mother. He was my Grandmother's Uncle. . . about 4 generations. Jimmy Hammond 'Munz' - he used to walk, with the dogs. He'd come to town, he used to go to town and he'd come and stay at our place. I was living out at Murray's Flat with him, I remember as a kid out there. He'd come to Bega and stay around here for a while. Harrison was all his mob, so they lived there, Aunty Aggie Harrison, she's related to me, she's me Aunty, that's my father's first cousin, so her mother, Aunty Aggie was my grand-auntie, that was my Grandmother's sister. So I used to spend a lot of time with them too, when I was a kid at Bega and Wallaga. Munz, well he liked me and I liked him. He was a good old man as far as I was concerned, he'd never sleep inside the house, always slept outside the house. And his dogs would be there with him. If he went to sleep there at night, no one would go near him . . . he was from Lake Tyres. But this is more or less his home was here at Bega, although he came from Victoria, this was his home here in Bega. He had family and that out there. [Jim Scott 9.2.2010]

Muntz Hammond, Jimmie Hammond, yeah James, Jimmy. He was a smart old man, he was a bright old man. You couldn't pull the wool over his eyes, he was very smart. He used to tell me stories but, as I gotten older I've lost that sort of thing, through me memory. He was a traditional man, because I seen, he showed me the marks on his chest, where they cut the chest, and he had the marks there, so he was the real, and he'd stare at - from the initiation, he had the marks. He really had those marks on him, cos I remember that as a kid, seeing them, he used to ride a white horse up the main street of Bega and he'd be leading the parade, the Bega show, every year. I s'pose he was a special person, to Bega here. I don't know why, I don't know why I ended up here. My family don't live down this way. But I came back down here with me own family. I think that was the reason I came back here was cos I had that connection with him as a child, and as I got older, I still thought, thinking about him, and I thought I'd go back. [Jim Scott 9.2.2010]

The Bega show was very important to the Wallaga Lake Koories, for all the Koories matter of fact on the coast, they used to travel down there to the Bega show. The Nowra one was the next one, time to go to Bega it'd be time to go to Nowra, so goin backwards, forwards to the shows. Pickin, saved our money up to go to the show. Still with me Mum and Dad, then there used to be a boxing tent then, and he used to come down to the Bega show, and that's when the Koories used to get up there and put their hands up to have a fight. There was Cliffy Carter he was a good fighter that bloke, and he used to get up in there, and Dad had a go, and one of me brothers had a go. Sharman's tent, Jimmy Sharman, that was his name. And they used to get up there and have fights, but Cliffy used to never lose a fight. Dad was a fighter, oh yeah, well me and Mum'd do our own thing, let the men do their own thing, you know. Well the Sharman always had their fighters, you know, but if you could've beat the fighters, you'd have won some money, pounds and pences then. Dad won now and again, but Cliff, he won every time. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

I came to Bega and I went to school in Bega. Kindergarten years, when I come to Bega. Round about 6, round the 50s. Wreck Bay you had your own, cos it was on the mission. When I started school in Bega there's a few fights, you know. It was hard when you first start, cos you got into fights cos they'd call you black and that'd be it, you'd be into it. At the time we were there on our own, there's me brother Lennie, he's the eldest fellow, then there's George, then me, I'm the third eldest, then me sister Carol, when I was in first class, second class she was in kindergarten. Jim Scott 9.2.2010

My name is Gloria Jean Pickalla. I was born in Bega, in 1956. My mother was Isadore Mundy, she married my father Desmond Pickalla at Wreck Bay, in the ACT, on the 17 September 1938. Mum was from Delegate. I think me Dad's from the Nowra area. Dad's sposed to have an estate down at Kameruka; someone had a map with Dad's name on it, 'Desmond Pickalla'. Mum was Margaret Dixon's Aunty, her father was mum's brother. I was the youngest of eight. My brothers and sisters are Lindsay, Heather, Charley, Harry, Florrie and there was another Gloria before me, she died at birth I think. And then Mum had me and named me after her. I think they were all

born in Bega. I think one sister was born at Wallaga Lake. Keith I don't know, Kathryn I don't know where they were born. [Gloria Pickalla 9.2.2010]

Years ago there was a photo taken out the front of the old Bega courthouse, of Mum and Dad. The photo was given to me, but I was going to Armidale, and I had it, I was pretty young. I left me job in Canberra and I was travelling with a friend we pulled up at Coomaditchie and what do you call it New Dawn, it was in there. It was when the old Bega courthouse was still going. This old lady took it and she passed away and I've asked all her family and they said they haven't got it. [Gloria Pickalla 9.2.2010]

I remember the Dixon family getting the first house, for Aboriginal people, in Bega. I moved in too – it was good because it was close to school and the shops. I was about 8. It was good for us to have a house, we were closer to school, we used to walk to school. That was the days we used to have to polish the floor, instead of mopping. I think we were all made to do things, because there was a lot of us. We all chucked in, doing the same things. They sort of saved me from going to the homes. [Gloria Pickalla 9.2.2010]

I am a Ngarigo person, with ties to Yuin country and people, I guess you'd say I'm Ngarigo – Yuin. As soon as a Koori feels sick they make sure they go home, so they can die at home, they want to be buried with family. As soon as they feel sick, they get on the Bega bus or pay someone to take them home. Valmai Cooper nee Tungai 4.11.2009.

I went to Bega school. I went to the second year of high school. They were good days, wish we had those days again. Didn't treat us differently. In my teenage years I used to travel around. I worked as a cleaner at Mt Kosciusko and Cooma. Then I worked as a telephonist in Canberra. If I didn't go to school, I had to go to work, so that's why I went. I got a job. There used to be the pickin, we were never without money. And we used to walk across the river with our clean clothes and go to the show or the pictures.[Gloria Pickalla 9.2.2010]

I now live in Bega with my partner Cecil Hoskins. We are happy here; it's a peaceful place. The dogs make us get out and exercise. Companionship. They are our good friends. We tried river fishing, but Cecil kept missing the eels. Dad and them use to fish and catch eels years ago, they'd set a line at night. I think I'll stay here now in Bega and when the time comes I wanna be buried here too, with the rest of my family. [Gloria Pickalla 9.2.2010]

I married Collin Oswald Little, Jimmy Little's brother. We didn't have any kids. Collin worked in sawmills and on the farms. He worked at Braidwood, Nowa Nowa, Monga, all over. I enjoyed travelling around, I didn't have much choice. Collin died over a year ago and is buried in the Cemetery here at Bega. Collin's father Jimmy Little is there too. So is my brother Trevor and my father Clem Parsons. I am still living in Bega and have had a fun filled life. [Jenny Andy 4.11.2009]

I don't think anyone lived in Bega. I don't know of any Koories that lived in the actual town; Bega was really racist. That and Kempsey was another

bad place, even here in Eden. But it's not as bad as it was. [Beryl Cruse 29.10.2009]

They held dances at Wallaga Lake. There was nothing much at Bega. You couldn't even go in some of the shops there at Bega. My sister, two sisters went in there once and Jim Otton's wife, she owned the shop, and she said, oh there's nothing here that'd fit you. But Mary was real fair. Well they had all the Koories picking for them. Picked for old Sarah and Bill Callander. Mary never got a dress. She didn't worry about it. Jim was a good person. [Beryl Cruse 29.10.2009].

I was born at Bega in 1954. For the first 11 years of my life we more or less lived in tents on the riverbanks, or by the ocean and beaches, cause dad was a seasonal worker. We camped in tents in places along the coast, from Bodalla to Bairnsdale that was the main stretch we camped. Seasonal work went from picking vegetables, some fruit, but mainly peas and beans. We also done a lot of diving; we went back and forth between diving, picking and hauling, saw milling and logging, depending on the season and the availability of work. Picking each year was the normal life style. It fitted with the lifestyle of dad, seasonal work ranged from picking in certain seasons, beach fishing in other seasonal and abalone diving in the winter months when there are calmer waters. In the rain and the wind, you'd be better off diving than picking. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

Dad always went to Otton's farm in Bega. I went with dad many times, every year for at least 11 years in my memory. My grandfather was a friend with one of the Otton brothers. Grandfather was too old for the second world war and too young for the first one. Otton ask grandfather what he should do with his war pension. He bought a bean paddock on grandfather's advice. During the war no one was left to do the demeneal tasks, our people didn't mind picking cause they liked being on the land. That lasted until the 70 s when Edgell's mechanised the industry and then the fringe camps were bull dozed. Forced resettlement happened in Bega, Bega had 600 blackfellas living there when the picking was on. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

We camped both sides of the riverbank, on the river heading to Brogo. There are three river systems coming into Bega, the junction where to two rivers form one and it runs out of Bega in a single one. On each one of these rivers, there was a cow cocky. Families more or less stayed together. Six or seven carloads would travel around, and everything we owned went into the car boot, or on the roof racks or on a trailer. From a kids point of view it was a good adventurous lifestyle, walking through the paddocks, shootin rabbits, fishing diving and swimming. There was a strong sense of kinship, family and community. That was before land rights and native title that sort of divided our people. Government would fund some groups and not

others, causing factions and frictions. Before land rights, we was all equal on the bean paddocks. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

We lived in Bega and had all our kids here. Then we moved to Sydney for 15 years and come back to Bega in the late 90s. All my kids have been born here. Bega is where all my family will be buried. We have made our life in Bega and will never leave. We couldn't wait to get back to Bega, you just come back to the peace and quite. When we were younger we loved the Bega and Nowra Shows, everyone got together. Then the statewide koori knock Rugby League started. Who ever won it, got it at their town the following year. That is how we got around and met up with family today. Faith Aldridge 21.10.2009

Coming back to Bega has brought back good and bad memories. From the age of three, when we use to come into town from Reedy Swamp, everything from what I remember from the age of three, are exactly the same now. It helped me remember back then, running around the back of little ally ways. I have got relatives here that I went to school with. I grew up with these people, for a short time. It is mainly all family here, it is good to know who my family is. It is like coming home. Bega was calling me or the mountain was calling me or something. Every time a black fella leaves their little clan, something calls them back, that is an Aboriginal thing. It is a spiritual thing. A spiritual belief, something to do with our life. There is something there you can't explain. It is a thing that an Aboriginal person is born with; no matter where they are it always calls them back, they know what I am talking about. It can happen to you to we are all human. We are the same, the only difference is the pigment in our skin, we still bleed, talk the same. This is home, Bega is home this is where I'll die. [Cecil 'Junga' Hoskins 10.2.2010].

Our first real house ever was at Howard Avenue, Bega. Revered Woodwell was here at the time at the Church of England. He found out about the family and how we was living and he musta been talking to that christian group cos they were the ones that got the funds and built that big home over there, we were the first ones that they built a house for. One house for one family. And that was built within a week. After we moved to Howard Ave William, Pam and David were born. Back then, I had to get pulled out of school to help with all the siblings, like a second mother. I went through such a lot at a young age. Then we got this lovely big home and Rev Woodwell came in and kids all started settling into school and that, and then as I was coming up, I was about 17 or 18. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010].

I got my nursing job at the Bega hospital, I was a nurse back then, and then I'd come home and I'd be teaching my sisters how to make beds. 'Now this is how you tuck the end of the bed in, fold the sheet'. And Rose and them still remember, and they still did it. It was really really good, that job, cos I thought I'd be able to help Mum and Dad, the eldest in the family, I used to do night shift and all, walk in the dark, coming home from the Bega hospital late at night, this 18 year old walking along that street. And then I got put into geriatrics there, I did night duty. I did all the training in there. Between geriatrics and then in the hospital I went into the operating theatre where I

sterilised all the instruments and worked with the babies. I was trained back then, before I got arthritis. The old starch uniforms were, with white collars you had to pin down onto you, they had grey and white stripe red cardigans, and the white caps. . . it was just something that I felt I had to do and help Mum and Dad. But then I went to Sydney then and worked up in the factories up there, me and Carol me sister went up and got a job at a lifesaver factory, up there packing lollies in the boxes, and Christmas time we'd come home with big boxes of all these lollies, chewing gums, all types of lollies. That was at north Ryde there. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010].

We have a strong history in this area. I found out that Mum also went to Bega Primary school, and me grandmother. So its got a lot of history with our family. That's why our family here in Bega are well known, we've lived here all our lives in Bega, and all our children's gone through and got educated. Cos what I can remember when I was in school, we had to sit up the back, not allowed down the front of the class, Bega primary, and then that happened in the picture theatre too, we weren't allowed up stairs, we had to be downstairs. But slowly things changed. We have had a lot to do with the schools now. We worked with the teachers to help the Aboriginal kids. We also organise NAIDOC day, putting on the spear throwing, everything to share with the children. I think it was like an education thing, we were educating the non-Aboriginal person, what it was and what we had to share. They wasn't aware of what it was or didn't have a proper understanding cos the parents wasn't teaching them anything. It was easy to go in the classroom and get in there and teach non-Aboriginal children, cos I used to teach Bega primary and Bega high school with Aboriginal culture and history. I used to get up there and teach with all the paintings and everything. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010].

I use the paintings to tell a story, and also to get them to understand, know where we're coming from and who we are and why we're so important, why we're connected to the country, cos its very valuable important things, even for our children that they know where they come from and who they are. Painting my history is the most important thing, when you've got a connection to your county, and you see within your country the landscapes or what's in there, like our totem, we're always doing things like our bogon moth from the snowy mountains, or the turtles, you've got all the different wildlife, and we connect to the sea and all the different surroundings, its important, that's what I love about it. You can express it in paintings. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010].

When the show came to Bega, we'd pick half a day for our money for the show. Nan use to pack lunch for us, she'd buy new clothes for us to wear to the show. She was a real 'lady'. She got dresses up too. It was 40 cents for a ride, so cause we took our lunch, we used our money for the rides. Bega wasn't a racist town, when I was growing up. Kids at school would call me by my name, I never got called any names. Today, the kids are getting treated down. I was happy when the floods came, cause we wouldn't have to go to school. But then, old Mr Calander would row us to school if the river was up. He had a little boat and came rowing down cause the bus couldn't get to us. He'd drop us off and we'd walk the rest of the way. We

had to go to school every day. If we didn't go to school welfare'd take us. Weekend and holidays, we'd have to pick. Welfare was always on our back. Nan wouldn't let him take us, he was coming out to take us away after mum passes away, but Nan was there with a big stick, she didn't want to break her family up. We all stayed together. She took us to Lake Tyres, she had me and my three sisters and Aunt Shirl took my brother. We were luck really. Every Easter and Christmas we'd have a family gathering, so we could all meet up, at Bega, Lake Tyres, where ever we all were. [Deanna Campbell 8.9.09]

I was born in Bega, in 1961 to Eric Bruce Dixon and Margaret Rose Dixon. I was born in the current Bega Hospital. I am one of 14 children. Mum had 8 girls and 6 boys. She lost twin girls, so there was 6 girls and 6 boys, I am in the middle. Family is important to me, it means a lot to me. Mum was a Mundy. She grew up around Nowra and my Dad grew up around La Perouse and Nowra. They came this way to find a better place to stay for their family; at that time they only had a small number of family members in our family. They were young when they came here and she said she was 'coming home' so she had obviously been here before. Bega is the area where the Djirringanj language speaking people come from. I believe this area is Yuin and Ngarigo, Ngarigo comes here through history and kinship. The tribal group for this area is the Thawa. John Dixon 4.11.2009

When I first started school, we was living at that place called Jellat Jellat or Jilla Flats, about half way between Bega and Tathra on the Tathra road. The first day of school at Bega Primary, I remember Mum and Dad took me in; I had no shoes and the kids were all teasing me, I was pretty wild cos we used to walk around, all around, all over the land there at Jilla and all up and down the river systems and I was a pretty wild kid, cos we used to hunt with the dogs and stuff like that, traditional way, and I can remember telling the kids 'just don't go teasing me'. The next day Mum, she brought me a pair of plastic sandals to wear to school but they were in then, when everyone was wearing those plastic sandals. That was the first pair of shoes I had. I had other brothers and sisters there at the school, older ones. John Dixon 4.11.2009

The churches got together and bought a block of land over at Howard Avenue, in the Glebe, in Bega here. It was the first house in Bega for an Aboriginal family. When we moved in there was a sign put up the top of the hill that said 'Coon Avenue'. We moved in there in the mid to late sixties. Basically every chance we had we were going back to the river. We'd walk down through Campbell's farm up the top, to the river, cos that was a lane way running through. Somehow we knew the access points, and we'd do the swamps on the way through. Go down, right down the river, back down to where we were living, further down to do fishing and spearing and walk right back through and do it again on the way back. It's still public access today down there to the river, its a public lane. some of the older fellas like my brother Michael they used to say don't walk across the farmers paddocks here, cos he'll come out with a gun. But we could walk on the public access and they couldn't touch us. It might be called Taronga Lane or something, Taronga Crescent. It is a paper road right down to the river.

We know that now. And that's the way we used to go to get access, and we knew we could walk down the river banks freely and in the river and no-one could touch us; that's how we continued to get our cultural foods. John Dixon 4.11.2009

At the cheese factory Dad used to dig pits in the river, so they could drain all the whey off into the river. So what they'd do is they'd put it into the whey pits that Dad was digging, and cos of the sand it used to filter through. But it used to overflow. Cos I remember going down to see Dad when he was down there working, he was the only one there, and gee he was a hard worker, he used to dig pits they'd be a good 3 to 4 foot wide, and he'd dig them pits by himself so they could drain the whey into them. And I remember when they used to have a lot of whey and put it in and it'd get into the river and you'd see it all white on top of the river, like a big oil spill in the river. I can remember that. Dad never got paid very well for that work. What he did with the money was support the family, look after the family. It was only enough really for rent and food. John Dixon 4.11.2009

At the council Dad was basically a labourer, but he'd do things like, be involved in the road works, foot paths, and he was doing some gardening as he got a bit older and he set up hazard lights and that at work sites, alongside the roads and that. He was there for years. There's actually a picture of him in one of the early papers about the late to early seventies with Dad working on the shire, setting up the hazard lights on the road. It's in the local newspaper archives. You'll see him, back then, the old man he was a big man, really tall and stocky. John Dixon 4.11.2009

I went to year 8, at Bega High, then I finished up until year 10 at Cleveland St Boys High School. I come back to Bega, I must have been about 16 I think. And I remember going down town and I ran into a lot of old friends that I used to hang around with. I remember saying to them 'is there any work around', and they said 'no just go and get on the dole like us, its really good'. Then this Aboriginal fella come along, he's an elder now Lorry Solomon, he seen me standing there and he said 'John are you looking for a job'. I was only back in Bega this first day. I said 'yeah, where's all the work Uncle Lorry.' He said 'I just came back from the bridge across there, over from Billy Williams..there're looking for a young fella over there, not an old fella like me.....walk straight over that bridge there go to Bill Williams Fabricators over there and ask for the old fella Bill and tell him you're interested in that job'. And when he walked off I walked straight across the bridge, and walked into the office there. I started an apprenticeship that day, that's when I did my trade, I started in about 1976, and I got my certificate in 1980. I am a fully qualify boilermaker and structural steel engineer. I went on to work as a boilermaker in Bega, Canberra and Sydney areas. I did that for about 25 years. I also lived and worked in Queanbeyan and Wollongong at one stage too. I returned to the Bega Valley in the mid 80s and have been here ever since. John Dixon 4.11.2009

3.8.10 Black Range

As far as I know the Black Range is in the Djirringanj language group area. Its significant because of that big trading area up there. The tribes used to trade up there right up on the top of the Bald Hill, and there's a lot of bora rings up there. And they were doing the corroborrees up there. A lot of tribes come in, it was the main meeting place, trading, the initiations, it was like an annual festival and to arrange marriages. John Dixon 4.11.2009

From where we were living down at Jilla Jilla we could see the Black Range. Its all changed now, like there's more growth on the Big Bald Hill. We used to call it the 'Bald Hill' back then, but there was a cluster of trees up there and it looked like an old car from back down at Jilla, we used to look up and see this cluster of trees that looked like a great big car. We went up there this time with the older blokes and we weren't allowed to go on the top of the hill, Bald Hill, because of the bora rings. They were keeping us away, us younger blokes cos they knew if we got inside those special corroborree rings up there we could get sick. You could get caught, and that means you get sick and die. The old people could have left something magic in there or something. All Aboriginal people know you're not to go inside those rings. John Dixon 4.11.2009

Back in them days in the sixties there was no vegetation, only that clump of trees. But now its got vegetation all over it. We went up there with National Parks and we fenced off an area where they thought the rings were so no-one can go inside them anymore, and there was small trees coming through, but it was still fairly clear. What they did is they must have recorded it as a significant site; the farmer had to agree to fencing it off and he did. But Telstra went through and destroyed one of the bigger rings in the late 1980s. That didn't make me feel too good at all. No consultation took place with traditional owners. They spoke with a non-traditional owner who was working at the land council under a white administrator. This is the trouble with lands councils not identifying the right people within their membership to do the cultural heritage work. John Dixon 4.11.2009

3.9 THE WHITE ROCKS – BOULDER BAY CULTURAL AREA

3.9.1 White Rocks

I also like fishing White Rocks, down the bridge at Tathra. Not the new bridge, the old bridge. [Jenny Andy 4.11.2009]

We'd go and camp out at White Rocks. We'd just go anytime really. John Dixon 4.11.2009

3.10 THE KAMERUKA CULTURAL AREA

3.10.1 Kameruka estate

Harry Picalla, my great grandfather was born in 1852 at Kameruka and died in 1911 at the Bega River. Harry's father was 'Tommy the stockman', also know as 'Doolin' or 'Marimbine'. Tommy was born in 1822 in the Bega

Bemboka area and is said to have been killed whilst boxing a kangaroo at the Kameruka cattle yards in 1875. Mary Duroux 22.4.2010

3.10.2 Brown Mountain

Up on the Brown Mountain, Pipers lookout, Piper wasn't the first fella up there, our people were. That's where our people used to go up there to the Monaro, they used to stop there. John Dixon 4.11.2009

3.11 THE TATHRA - MOGOREEKA - KALARU CULTURAL AREA

3.11.1 Tathra

We still like to go down the rocks, near Tathra. I got taken there by my parents when I was little. We go fishing sometimes. Last time, we just went for the day. Well you can camp out there, I only just went down fishin, and throw a line in and have lunch and that and come home in the afternoons. We took our lunch there. Sometimes make sandwiches and take them, and drinks. . . Fish for tea, lovely. And oysters. [Alma Carter 20.10.09].

Tathra is a beautiful place, I go there to go into the talent quest. I am still singing. I'll do it until the day I am not around. A lot of people love me voice, they say I have a versatile voice. I go in the country shows. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

A lot of our ancestors back then used to live on the land, camp on the river before white people were here, our ancestors, they had to be near the water, or near a billabong, you know, camped around a billabong, and down here near that lake there where that billabong is there and that's fresh water and you've got the saltwater there -down near Mogarreeka. Tathra River Estate. You've got the big billabong there where they all camped back then, and you've got the lake just there, just next to it and you've got the saltwater and freshwater together. Big tribe lived there, hundred of them lived there. In the bush all the different resources and the food in there. You can identify all the foods in the bush too. All the bush berries and native stuff. People still go there, swimming, fishing, camping - no I don't think you can camp now. Mum and Dad used to take us to Tathra down there, we'd go down to Tathra to the beach that's when they used to pitch the tents, now you can't put tents up now. Its all BBQ area now. [Colleen Dixon 9.2.2010].

we come to the Lorry Leggs Sawmill, and then the Lorry Legs mill got burnt down, so we've been here ever since, about 35 years, I think, something like that. Lorry Legs mill, at Bega, going down Tathra road, that one. Lived in the mill house on the road, with Elle and Billy Davis, they were there. Then when we come here I got into the cannery and never got into the mill. Roots are here too. Nev was working up the top one first then over, the new one over here. [ELAINE THOMAS 5.11.09].

I married Barry Cooper in 1968. In the early 70s we moved to Tathra and the kids, Barry and Donna went to Tathra Primary School and later Bega High.

When we lived at Tathra Mum and Dad lived at Jilla, on Gowings property. I started working at the Bega Hospital with Colleen Dixon. We were nurses aids – the first nurses aids to work in the Bega Hospital. A lot of koori people came along after us, but we were the first. I liked that work. They trained us on the job. I worked there for about 9 months, but was unable to finish the traineeship because mum got sick and she had been looking after my kids. I went back a few times, but one thing or another got in the way. Valmai Cooper nee Tungai 4.11.2009.

There weren't many other Koori people in Tathra at that time, I was accepted into the community because I played sport. I did a lot of sport. I had a lot of energy and I was good at it, so that kept me going. I played hockey, tennis, softball, squash and indoor bowls. I was in my 20s. I was bitten by a funnel web spider too. The doctors didn't know if I was going to survive. I ended up being ok. Barry worked at the Tathra sawmill and then at the Kalaru brick factory. Before we had a car he'd hitch hike to work, he'd always get a lift cause he was well known. We were young with two little kids. Margaret Dixon is family to me, so when we arrived, Margaret's husband, Kathy's father Gooja, took him in as family also. Gooja taught him how to drive, he got him onto his feet, he helped him even though he had a lot of kids of his own, he stuck with him, driving up and down up and down the road until he got him to drive properly. When he got to the police station, Barry had no shoes. Gooja had a real big foot and lent his very own shoes to Barry so he could pass his test. He said 'son, you are not giving up here, we have come this far, we will keep on going...'. So he wore these huge shoes and got his licence. Valmai Cooper nee Tungai 4.11.2009.

Cos we had a car and Mum's brother Uncle Joe had a car, we could go and get feeds of oysters and mutton fish, we'd go fishing off the rocks and that. That was all stuff that was contributing to our diet, which was culturally appropriate. We'd also get things like a bag of periwinkles, you know, the conks. They taught us how to get pippis. We'd go to Tathra beach. All along, down at the bridge. And we'd go and get all our cultural food. John Dixon 4.11.2009

3.11.2 'Blackfellows Lagoon' – Cohen's Lake.

Cohen's Lake's significant because of the fact that its named after an Aboriginal man called George Cohen. George was living out there in the 1800s and he was making a living out there with his family and he was doing exceptionally well and looking after his family, growing crops, taking care of that particular piece of land that he was on. An area was a gazetted Aboriginal Reserve and he was supporting a lot of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. He was also doing stuff like writing letters to the government and local council asking them to release land to the Aboriginal people so we could have a better future. That's very significant that George Cohen was there and he had the lake named after him. Today they call it 'Blackfellas Lake' or 'Blackfellas Lagoon', but as far as I know Blackfellas Lake never officially had a name change from Cohens Lake, cos all the old people, they only knew that lake as Cohen's Lake, and it only become Blackfellas lake when people started saying that's where the blackfellas are

camped out there. I'd like to see it once again called Cohen's Lake out of respect to George Cohen. And I'd like it acknowledged by everyone in the community that George Cohen was an Aboriginal man and he was doing great things out there for his people. He was even renting out a shed on the property to a white man who was a fisherman. John Dixon 4.11.2009

There's a cemetery out there on the old reserve, and there is reference to it. That's how we know its there. The old people told us its out there and we actually found reference to it in an early district newspaper, and it actually says that when George Cohen died he was buried in the old cemetery out there with his old comrades Jimmy Queero and Tallboy. They were traditional men from there. There's a rock out there called Jimmy Queero's rock too, and we'd like to find that cos that's pretty significant. We've got a picture of him there. The rock would still be there, its a big rock. I only have the greatest admiration and respect for George Cohen, Tallboy and Jimmy Queero and any of the other people that were there. Because they were living in a time when sinister people were out there doing everything they could to steal the land and resources and doing everything they could to call it their own. The government Acts were actually cancelling our people out. John Dixon 4.11.2009

We don't know the exact location of that cemetery now. It makes me feel powerless and its ripping my heart out of me to think that someone might have already discovered that or knows where it is, and they've built over the top of it or just ploughed them back into the ground and told no-one. And I've asked around some old fellas in the area there and they claim they don't know where it is, and they've asked other pioneering families in the area, and they say they don't know where it is, but I'm pretty sure someone knows where it is, its definitely there. The information has come in two forms - oral history from our old people and referenced through district newspaper. We want this place protected. I'd also like to see something put there in memory of this great person, this great Aboriginal man, just like a cairn, or memorial. There is room to do that because there is a public access down to the lake there and I believe that this great man and the things that he did have got to be acknowledged, and something should be put there. John Dixon 4.11.2009

3.11.3 Mogareeka

As a kid, I remember climbing around the cliffs at Mogareeka, where the Bega River comes out, to get the seagull's eggs. I forgot all about that, its in me mind. From the entrance there, the seagulls used to come and lay their eggs there, at the mouth of the Bega River. I can remember camping on the straight, with the whole family, the extended family. [Jim Scott 9.2.2010]

Mogareeka was King Nelba's land; Mogareeka was recorded by early settlers as a big meeting place. The old people told us all the black fellas used to come there and have a meeting about things. And the white fellas recorded that black fellas would come from 400, 500 miles around. It was another place to meet to send young people to be initiated. On the headland - National Parks have got it in their possession now. They used to

have great feasts there, and the headland's just covered in shells from the ocean and the river there, oysters, mutton fish, periwinkles, all sorts of shells. It was actually recorded that there are mountains of midden shells out there. Those midden shells are significant because our people left them. Three thousand years ago white man was not thought of in this country, only blackfellas. John Dixon 4.11.2009

There's a little cave down in front of it, and we found a tree down in there, a log put down in there, and we didn't want to go down in there. We started thinking straight away this could be where the little Hairy lads live, the Dulagals could be there. You don't go annoying them. The old people used to leave fish out for them. We still do it. We never stop our laws and our customs. John Dixon 4.11.2009

3.11.4 Moon Bay

Moonbay shell middens. They're special cos that's another site we know of where our people were having the feasts. Our people created them thousands of years before the white man ever come here. Moonbay is south of that first headland from the Tathra River. That's where the birthing place is. Moonbay, and Nelson Bay area, the corner of Moonbay and that's a real spiritual, sacred place. And you get over into Moonbay. Its very, very significant. We camped there on the beach. We camped there, right on the sand. And that night the dingo came and attacked us. And we were in the tent and the dingo was trying to get in, he'd run around one side and jump on us and try and bite us. It was a dingo, now I think about it he might have been doing something trying to keep us away from that birthing place. I was about 17,18 at the time. . John Dixon 4.11.2009

3.12 THE MERRIMBULA CULTURAL AREA

3.12.1 Merimbula

Merimbula, i get oysters there. Merimbula Hall, I have played there too. There are a lot of while people there; you don't see many blacks coming to the show. I know a couple of koori songs. [Joe Mundy 2.12.2009]

And other places along the coast, like when you go from here, you go up to another spot near Merimbula, on the other side of Merimbula, that's all National Parks now. National Parks only became National Parks since we come down here. You can go into those spots and you could camp there. You could go all up to the little beach this side of White Rock. Kyaninny - that used to be another favourite spot. And then up to Cadroy, mouth of the Bega river, all over there, there's camping spots all along there. So there's a whole host of them all the way up, but its because you don't have any, what they call, long association, with those places, they're - as far as they're concerned you don't have any relationship with them. We can reminisce about the time we used to go there, family and friends,

but the legal ramifications is you didn't go back there no more, why didn't you go back there no more, cos the law didn't allow you to go back there no more. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

What happened in history, we found out to our amazement, was that the treatment plant in Pambula River, they had seepage ponds there, they dug up our burial ground there, and a lot of the sand that they dug up actually had the bones of our forefathers in it. Then they used that sand for footpaths around Merimbula and Pambula and I can take you there and you can see the bones that are on top of the ground broken up. The thing is that lots of the people have known about these things are not in a position to control. The older people knew there were burial grounds,but when you're talking to the younger generations that come into it they don't know anything about it. So when they talked about the only clear place they could make these seepage ponds, and we're looking at that now, is there on that - like from the treatment out towards the beach. And if you see where that treatment plant is there now, and you look straight east, that's where the burial ground is. And if you go in there you'll see these two big areas they dug for ponds. Well the sand they used out of them they used for footpaths. By the time we found out about it, with our surveys, the bones were still on top of the ground. We covered them over with some turf. So they're still there resting on top of the ground. So when we do a proper underground survey, and we're working on this with government, to make sure there's no more bones. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

3.13 THE PAMBULA CULTURAL AREA

3.13.1 Pambula River

When we were children we use to camp out there and my dad used to spear fish and mussels and oysters was on the go then and we have spent a lot of time out there and when I was growing up we still spent time out there. Just at Haycock and at Severs itself, around that little area. We swam, camped, barbeques and when I had children we done the same....and we took our kids out and done the same what dad taught us when we were young and fished, ate oysters, mussels, and found a few bimbullas there too. I remember at Haycock, mum and dad camped there, we've got a camp there now,there is a midden down there too just off the banks there, we use to camp there, I think I was about three or four then, not even quite sure what age I was but that was the good old days and mum and dad and the rest of them lived off the sea. Dad use to always spear fish around at Severs there and on the beach side there and on the lake. He would'nt let us starve. Thoes old bottles, I'm still digging them up, one day I might find an old doll that belongs to me [Tina Mongta Pambula River Project 7:2008].

3.13.2 Jigamy Farm

I think the biggest example we've got as Koorie community, is Jigamy farm. And Jigamy farm's been there since 1977, or 76, might have been earlier.

But its been there since there, and we have developed our programs from there, like our home-care, we used to run a child minding program there. We have camps out there, youth camps, we have our cultural centre there, we have our lands council there, we have a house there. We run these programs through our other organisation, Twofold Aboriginal Corporation, and the land council. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

We saw the RTA doing the road up, coming from Bega, we watched them doing it up all the way through, up to Gregs flat, all these beautiful turn offs for all these people. And they're coming over, and I say, righto we're next on the line. Well they jumped over us and did the road up going up the hill there. They did the site surveys there for them to look after the road. They jumped over us, did that road up there, up to the new settlement where people buying blocks around there. So there's a racist element still alive and well in government agencies. It only takes one person, one bureaucrat, that has the decision making, not to do our road up. As a result we can't open our building, we can't take buses in there. When we were experimenting with those overseas passenger ships. We took them in there, showed them a good time. Showed them what we could do if we had this road fixed up. Michele Robinson did the survey on the preferred stop over for the tourism on the ocean. Jigamy farm was rated 85% preferred stop over. I went up and read up on the laws of black-spots, you know, and I found then that it says that an area like this should be attended to - not in those words - but that it should be attended to even if its a potential black-spot. Potential place where someone could die. And I put that up in a submission. But now they've changed it that it has to be a black-spot, that someone has to get killed there. Then they'll fix the road. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

I would like to see this youth camp finished. For our young people to be able to use, that's on the eastern boundary of Jigamy. They've been wrestling with that for 25 years now. Its owned by Twofold Aboriginal Corporation. But its us, we're the owners, we're Twofold, and we're the lands council. So they're things we're working on. I know I wouldn't be here today if I hadn't become a Christian. I'd have drunk myself to death. And all these young fellas we're burying now, I can put it down to the two terrible things, drugs and alcohol. That's why the youth camp has to be built. We've got to show our kids quality of life. They can live a good life, enjoy the ocean frontage, even when the law stands up against them, they can still enjoy it. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

Dad set a youth group up at Wallaga Lake in the late 60s. We got taught jujitsu, I never forgot them skills. It was a pretty political group really. Dad asked us what we wanted to do and we said, 'we wanted a farm', and years later we got Jigamy. Before we got Jigamy, it may have been a farm, then it scrubbed over, we got money through a government organization. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009.

This is a lot a part of my heritage that I remember growing up, from the borderline right up to Bodalla actually. I made a lot of baskets through TAFE, and we've got a film of Dad somewhere, but I think we've lost it. Jigamy. Wally and Patsy, remember we got the grass and stuff and they dried it out

and spread it and weave it. People still make baskets. I'll show you one of the baskets, what my Dad made. And they's got one up in the archives too. He didn't get to finish it properly, there was something he didn't like about it and he was whinging. But he got sick and had to stop making them. He got the reeds from Jigamy. Jigamy farm is a farm of the basket grass. 'Jigamy' means basket grass. There's other places too, but, there is a lot out there.
TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

Cherries, geebung and all the Wondarmas there's a lot, figs, there's a lot of wild cabbage out there we used to eat all the time. You just boil it up in water and eat it with a bit of salt and pepper, same as the cabbage. Like spinach they grow more like spinach there's plenty out there and they're still out there too. Very healthy especially with the bush fruit, that's very good for you and the olf gum. Dad use to force us to eat them [Geebung], 'good tucker' he'd say. I didn't really like them but we ate them, we had no choice. Cherries are good, plenty of cherries still around and plenty of gum, wattle gum and lots of yams [Tina Mongta Pambula River Project 2008].

3.13.3 Haycock Point

We used to go out there to Haycocks too. We go out a lot even today. We can still pass on Knowledge to the young ones. Tell them what's this and what's that around the place. Only if they ask me if we're walking around. Usually when we're walkin around I'm saying you remember when we used to do this, and do that, that time around the cliff, and that. and the young ones they pick it up when they're walkin along with you, they pick it all up. Yes, so its pretty alright. But then they go and try 'n do the same thing, so you don't show them too much. John Stewart 5.11.2009

We're cut off from that activity, collection muttonfish, just sitting home, in a house, we like our gardens, we like our houses, but we also like to get together. And even though we probably are fortunate here in Eden, more than most places, cos of the efforts of a few. We've got what you call a culture camp. We can go out there as a family, open the gate and go in there, camp there, and the kids go out fishing and playing. Now that's one area we can retain it. But I'm thinking of places along this coast where all these other camps were, they can't do, cos its gone into someone else's land tenure. So they're things that we can do, and what we're really doing now, is one of the advanced things in this country, we're working with the local government through an memorandum of understanding, that's the Bega valley shire, and in that area we're looking at the cultural retention of cultural areas. And this is why we're doing this, but I'd say most of the areas that we'd like to inherit and work at is gone from us, and that's covered by law. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

I remember the campground out at Haycock, but not the way it is. I remembered it being on a hill. I drew it once, from memory, I thought now, this is where we used to go camping, but when I went out there to the camp I went this is nothing like where we used to go. It just felt like it was more on a hill. I thought it was round a bit further. Lisa Arvidson 6.11.2009

We went on a few fishing trips. But we used to drive out to, turn off out here at, that turn off where we'd go to the beach, out past the dump - Haycock. We used to drive out to Haycock and walk down through the bush there and come down to the mouth of Pambula river, it was a beautiful walk, so we used to take all the kids out there for picnics and let them swim. We didn't camp there we only went on day trips. Then later on when we got a boat, we used to take them all down by boat, put the boat in up at Pambula, where the launching thing is there. It was a big oyster punt, big flat one. All the kids would be in there, they'd all go fishing and that down there. OLGA Manton 28.10.2009

From Kiah we moved to Wonboyn, then moved into town and onto Haycock, out there - lived out there, where our culture camp is now. Lived there for a long time. This is when I was really little, this was all happening. We were based at Haycock for food, diving. Just to feed the family there. When we camped at Haycock this was round about the same age, cos we never stayed too long in one place. All this was round about 5 years old you know, round about, up at Haycock. I go out to Haycock all the time, through the winter and all. I love me camp. Well Robert and I still dig up my father's and Stewarts' father's old bottles of wine, flaggon bottles, beer bottles, I had a heap of them I brought home, but there's still more out there. I know where they are. I dig them up and bring them home. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

I'm trying to keep my kids going with the culture, but they won't even come on a camp with me now. Now I'm going out there taking other girls out, they're looking to come with me now, but they won't come with me when I want to take them personally on me own. When they were younger they used to all come, but they're getting older now. I still go camping heaps. Not just the one spot. Everywhere. My favourite spot has to be Haycock, Wonboyn and Haycock. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

Cultural camping comes close to seasonal working days, cause it brings people together, from the very old to the young. When the old and young get together, they talk and it stimulates their memory. Say if a young fella catches a fish it stimulates the old persons memory 'oh that is a wargo or muckenty'. Culture camps help to maintain the culture in an unscheduled, unstructured way. Even though quota regulation denies us of a ceremonial harvest, we are still able to get enough of any species, to maintain that practise, catching, preparing and eating practises. Don't take the abalone too far from the ocean cause they will fret and toughen up. These laws are still passed on through everyday activities without a planned study or program. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

Haycock has a good for a variety of rockfish, abalone and lobster. Some of the people there, Tina Mongta for example, her father lived at Haycock, for us going to them places where the old people were, it helps us remember them, those places were special to these people, we can recall events and remember them people. It keeps us connected to them, their lives are in that place, so it is not just the food or sustenance side of it. We go to lots of

places and now the kids even go out them selves, my grandson is only 11 and he goes out and shares his abs with his grandmother. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

3.13.4 Wolumla

I was born in Orbost Victoria, 1933. Dad was Benjamin Cruse and Mum was Sarah Lillian Pepper. Sarah Lillian or Lillian Sarah, she got Sarah any way. Mum's family were from Gippsland. They got a history that goes right back in the mid western Victorian area. Then they ended up coming over there to Gippsland and Snowy River area, they ended up living in Orbost. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

Dad decided he was going to bring his young family north. By this time my sister was born and I was only a baby in shawl. That's when they decided they could either walk or get a horse and cart. They decided to get a horse and buggy, and they bought one of those draft horses - Dad and Jimmy Bond never knew anything about horses, at that time, they just bought a big bag of chaff and kept feeding it, making it strong, keep it going, they thought it was like putting petrol in a car. Anyhow, they got this horse on the road, it was a dirt road in those days and not many people on the road. There was only about two or three vehicles ever travelled over that way in those days. One was a fish truck, and another service car, but not much else. So they're coming and they got all the way across here to Wollumla and they overfed the horse, and the horse dropped dead, there at Wolumla. So Mum and Dad camped there and sent Uncle Jimmy into town, into Bega, to get some help. Uncle Jimmy went in with a little bit of money to get some food. And he came back drunk, no food or anything. Him and Dad, well they were good mates and Dad didn't rough him up or anything. They decided, oh well lets do something about it, and so they put themselves in the horse's harness and pulled Mum and the gear all the way to Bega. Must have been a sight! That's a long way from Wolumla to Bega. They were walking, they would have trotted along, they would have done that in a day. They were strong men. I was in the shawl. I am going on what they told me. And no doubt they would have beefed it up a little bit. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

3.13.5 Pambula

What happened in history, we found out to our amazement, was that the treatment plant in Pambula River, they had seepage ponds there, they dug up our burial ground there, and a lot of the sand that they dug up actually had the bones of our forefathers in it. Then they used that sand for footpaths around Merimbula and Pambula and I can take you there and you can see the bones that are on top of the ground broken up. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

There is a straight section of Pambula River. There use to be a billabong that was deep and fresh. I was told by an old white fella that the white fellas poisoned the billabong to kill the kooris, but then when the cows started drinking the water in the drought, they started dieing, the cow cockies pushed the billabong out and made the river straight. They made up a story that the tribal people were stealing the milk, so they poisoned the milk. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

3.14 THE EDEN – TWOFOLD BAY CULTURAL AREA

3.14.1 Eden township

We have lived in the Eden area since 69, well Ossie come down late '69. We lived in the green house in Eden, for about 20 odd years, and we moved out to Kiah, must have been only there for about 4 years or something. Then we moved back in here then, and we've been here for about 10 years. Doesn't seem that long though does it. [Beryl Cruse 29.10.2009]

I was in the cannery for about 12, 13 years. I was, no, I got sick, and had a kidney removed and all that was no good, I didn't want to leave but the doctor sent the cannery a certificate. So that's how come I got out of there. Otherwise I would've been there till it closed. Now we've got nothing in the town. [ELAINE THOMAS 5.11.09].

I was born in Bega, 1964. My mum's name's was Rose Stewart, she was Rose Mumbla. Dad was Ossie Stewart. I grew up down here in the Eden area, I first went to school here, I think it was in '60 something, don't remember which year. We came in town we lived out at Palestine, and we lived around Happy Valley. Our house got burned down in Palestine, when we was at the footy. And so we moved around to Happy Valley. We stayed with Uncle Les for a while, and Aunty Emily, and then we ended up getting a house up in the corner, around Happy Valley there's a little road there across. There was a big house up in there so we lived there. John Stewart 5.11.2009

My first job was probably being a farm hand. Yeah and I grew up with it. That's how I come to be an operator cos I learned to drive tractors, then I went to bigger machinery then. When I got to down into Eden, when Mary and I got married, that's when I took on heavy machinery. So I was soiling crops and all that kind of stuff. Electrical machinery. Scrapers, tracters. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010

Those burial areas need to be identified, like at Eden cemetery. We're looking at this one down here, we know that there was two Aboriginals at least, there might have been more that weren't allowed to be buried amongst the early settlers, they could be around the outskirts. Dicko knows more about it than anyone, cos he used to look after the cemetery. Jack Dickson. He would know where they are, he's at the whale museum now. They're the main two graves that we know about. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

Eden, that place is important because we've got a son buried down here. Wayne's down here. And that's what me brother used to always say, well, you'd be better off down there, cos your son's down there, and if you want to go, you know, down there, I reckon all my kids, any of them, they'd be down here. I'm happy here with Eden, I've always been happy with Eden, you know. Now and again when I get sick of it, I'll go back that way. But there's nothin like Eden. She'll draw you back like a magnet, come back here. The kids went to school in Eden, they liked Eden. They still like Eden, well I've got two boys here and one girl, they won't leave Eden. Yeah, I like Eden. Margaret Henry 2.11.2009.

After they built the house within the township of Bega, the first one for Aboriginal people, The Bega Aboriginal Advancement League looked around, we decided that, by this time the Baptist minister got involved, Tory Galoshen, he was the treasurer, and we looked around and we said why don't we try a relocation program, resettlement, take them from the humpy into a caravan into a house. And we decided Eden was the place we were going to do it. And so, several of us came down, I remember they sent me down to supervise the place to put it on, like the caravan site, when we applied for caravans from the federal government, I remember old Billy Wentworth, he was the guy, and was there a Major involved? He was a member of parliament, state parliament was one of the Majors, they were both involved in getting these caravans. So we spoke to Imlay shire, about putting a caravan, these caravans on this caravan site at the beach. We called it transitional housing, for itinerant workers, and we chose Eden as the spot and we approached the Eden, Imlay shire and the hullabaloo over that! Bringing blacks into town, in Eden, they'd never sell another spot. They'd never sell another camp site if blacks put their caravans - they were brand new caravans, wasn't the caravans it was the people in them. So we were undaunted then, I looked around the area and I found this site, south of here, the old school site, at Kiah. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

Then we got a house in Rodd St. We got 6 Rodd St. Then from there, Dad died and we ended up moving to Victoria. There 'bout 5 or 6 years, could be longer, but we came back cos I went to high school here. We moved around everywhere. Had to go where the work was. John Stewart 5.11.2009

I packed tomatoes, helped do some bananas, packed bananas. I never used to go pickin beans or things, that was Uncle Leonard's job. Then the only other job I had was down here at the cannery. I worked at the Eden Cannery, on Cattle Bay Rd, when kids were at school and that, used to go to school during the day. I worked when the kids were at school. Sometimes I used to ask to work on a Saturday, but they were usually alright with their father, so I'd go down and work. That was really good, I enjoyed myself down there at the cannery. Went down there, got a job down there, stuck it out for a while, till I got hurt, then I left. There 'bout 10, 15 years. I enjoyed my time down there at the Eden Cannery. Met a lot of friends down there. And you sort of knew everyone in the town then. We were with them all. Carpal tunnel, and had an operation of it. Cos we used to do the salmon and the tuna, and the salmon was real cold, we used to get up there with warm

water and put our hands in it. It was hard, and I used to stand down on the end to do the cans. You packed the salmon in a trough thing like that, and you've got to push them along like that, and they've got to be packed into a can, be pushed into a can real tight. And it was real icy. And with the other, the tuna, we used to put them in the cans and you just used to have to wipe the cans as they come along and push them through. WILMA MANTON 2.11.09

I used to travel in from Boydtown to work at the cannery. We had a car. Terry worked there for a while, and then he got a job on the oysters. At the cannery there was a lot of girls working there, and women, and it was really good, because they used to have three shifts and one was the 7:30 start and the other was a 9:00 when the kids went to school, the women used to come to work, then in the afternoon, when the girls used to finish school they'd come down to work. But there was a lot of Aboriginal girls and women working down there at the time. So that was really good employment and the fellas, fellas used to work there too. You could walk straight in off the street and get a job. None of this resumes and appointments and referees all that they got now. But the work was there, you went in and the poor lady just signed you up and give you the uniform and tell you to start work. I was there for 12 years, at the fish cannery, then I left there and started with the health then, Aboriginal health and I was there for 12 years. My kids went to school in Eden, and the high school. They got on all right at school, but they didn't stay at school, don't think any of them done their HSC here. They went to school. Most of them play football, rugby league, for the Eden team. OLGA Manton 28.10.2009.

I am still living in Eden with my family, my wife, kids and grandkids. I was the chairperson of Eden LALC for 25 years. I resigned last year and dad is chairperson now. I am still fighting for the rights of Aboriginal people and even though government systems are not always helpful, I still have a kinship respect for people, black, white and brindle. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

3.14.2 Twofold Bay

The early contact period in the south east coast region was marked by the 1770 passing of Lieutenant James Cook aboard the *Endeavour*, although Yuin people may have seen Portuguese ships passing in the sixteen century [McKenna 2002: 26]. As Cook sailed northwards on the 21st April 1770 he noted, "At 6 o Clock we were abreast of a pretty high mountain laying near the shore which on account of its figure I named Mt Dromedary". Preceding Point Hicks in northern Victoria, Gulaga became the second landmark in Australia to be given a European name.

Twenty-seven years later, the survivors of the wrecked Sydney Cove walked for two months along the east coast from Ninety Mile Beach in Victoria to Sydney, NSW. The travel journals belonging to Clark, one

of the survivors, describe traditional practises of coastal people who occupied this region. On the 18th March 1797 Clark describes Koori people's first face-to-face encounter with a foreign civilisation, estimated by McKenna as being in the Twofold Bay area;

'.....We this day fell in with a party of Natives, about fourteen, all of them entirely naked. They were struck with astonishment at our appearance, and were very anxious to examine every part of our clothes and body, in which we readily indulged them. They viewed us most inventively. They opened our clothes, examined our feet, hands, nails, frequently expressing their surprise by laughing and shouting. The natives on this part of the coast appear strong and muscular. Their hair long and straight, they are daubed in blubber or shark oil, which is their principle article of food ...their ornaments consist chiefly of fish bones or kangaroo teeth fastened with gum or glue. A piece of reed or bone is worn through the septum, or cartilage of the nose..... Saw a few of the natives, who, at first sight, advanced, but on a nearer approach they fled and concealed themselves in the woods. Among the different groups of natives it is remarkable we have not yet seen a woman...On crossing a narrow but deep river one of the natives threatened to dispute our landing, but approaching with a determined appearance no actual resistance was attempted, and a reconciliation was effected by the distribution of a few stripes of cloth. A good understanding being thus established, the men called to their wives and children, who were concealed behind the rocks, and who now ventured to show themselves. These were the first women we had seen; from their cries laughing it is evident they were greatly astonished at our appearance...'. ' William Clark March 1797

I was born at Wreck Bay, Nowra, in 1950. My parents were Jessie Timbery and Ted Thomas; they lived at Wreck Bay. Ted's father was William Thomas and his mother was Mary or 'Lynno'. William's family were from Eden, my great grandfather Peter Thomas was born on the shores of Twofold Bay, Eden in 1830. Peter married Anne McGrath; they called her 'granny Nadia', her Tribal name was Nadia. She was born at Delegate, from the mission area. Eden is important to us because that's where the Thomas family come from. Faith Aldridge 21.10.2009

Dad was born in Eden, over behind the chip mill. When Dan - that's his father - was a whaler down there. Yeah, so that's where he was born. Grandfather Dan's from Wallaga Lake. And Uncle Bob was born at Wallaga. Grandfather Dan passed stories down to my Dad, and Dad passed them down to me, and he's told me where he was born. But I also had another old man tell me where Dad was born. Behind the chip mill, where it is now, in the bush behind there. That's where the tribe come from, that's where they all lived, there. There was a lot of Koorie families around, you know, in Eden, but whether they was in Dad's mob over that side, I really don't know. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

The Eden chip mill - that area's very important to me, the old Eden, cos even myself and my family, we've travelled down there and stayed in the - places over the other side, near the beach - sit there and daydream about where Dad was lookin out to sea, and thinkin about how the whaling, old tom the whale used to come in, sing out to all the whalers to get their boats, there's whales in the bay. Dad'd sit down and he used to tell us all these sorts of things. It was a hard time, because they didn't want - the Koorie people didn't like killin things like that. But for a living, you know it was hard to make a living, and being sea people, they went to sea, you know, and killed the whales. Most of the time Dan was at Eden, in the township of Eden. A lot of the Koories there used to go out and cut sleepers and that sort of a thing too, so he could have done that sort of work too. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

Well I used to go pulping at Eden, out at the chip mill, I used to go out there on me own, way out in the bush, and I could hear the dingoes. . . caravans down there, that's the only place we could get a place . . . what year was that? back in the 60s, we was staying in Kiah at the caravan park at Kiah. Kiah was good, cos we only had Maria then, didn't we, the eldest daughter. Moved down there and I got a job in the chip mill, no, I went falling pulp first, then I went in to the chip mill, cos I was down with Uncle Ossie Cruse and them. Jim Scott 9.2.2010

I was 14 when I walked out of school. Didn't work straight away, about a year I stayed in the country, in the Eden area. Then in the 80s I worked down there, unloading the tuna boats in Twofold Bay. Couple of months on and off. I also got a job in Bairnsdale, I done a contract job over there for the cement works. The only reason I got that was because my skin was fairer than the other two boys. So I took the job anyway - I needed it. And they didn't mind either, the boys, they were older than me, eh because of the prejudice see, they had to give one of us the job, so they took the fairest one. We still get that around in the workplace today. Still get it today when you see it. Discrimination - that didn't worry me much. I've always found that. You get 'em, no matter how fair you are, but it does make me angry sometimes. John Stewart 5.11.2009

I've been campin out there where the wharf is, at Fisheries Beach, everyone goes there too, that's another spot. People come over here, the Farnhams and that all go there. And its right down on the water there, on the sand, they got their own little spots where they camp every year too. John Stewart 5.11.2009

Then I stayed up with Lindsay at Twofold Bay, next to Davison's; Old Les Davison himself. Les was the boss, Les Davidson. He's the founder. And Ben Boyd. We become friends of the Davidsons because of the whaling, and we ended up old friend's with Mary, Les's daughter and her husband too. And when we going through to Orbost, we always pull in to Mary's place. She died not that long ago. I went down looking for her, I took Ernie and Alan Brierley to show them all the papers and Photos fro the Whaling days. We had a BBQ and everything. There was a photo of Bert Penrith carting water for the Davisons, Les was Burt's boss. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010

I never had anything to do with the whaling, just fishing with the Brierleys. We done it from Eden, right along, yeah cos the boats went to Eden and back, you was in trawlers. When the tuna'd come on, then you'd go tunaing. Ernie Briley had his own boat. I was crew for Ernie. I worked with Roy once and Ernie, wherever they was I was welcome to go. Mostly salmon. Well my brother Lyle he was top man. You'd have to be strong to do that job. They'd do all the lifting with the poling, and now and again I'd have a go at it, but its heavy. I was 17, 18 I suppose. Strong enough to lift fish anyhow. You would, you'd go, even went up to Ulladulla. You had Ulladulla, you had Batemans Bay, you had Moruya, you had Narooma, then you had Bermagui, then you go down to Tathra, on to Eden. When you got your quota. They all worked on quotas from the cannery, that was in Narooma at the time. They later built one on Eden. The cannery gave you a quota. Each boat all depend on the size, they might say 8 tonne, 10 tonne whatever. It was hauling, we were chasing salmon with Ernie, that's when I'd play the part with the rest of them was when we'd be hauling on the beaches. Seven, or eight hundred, or three, thousand boxes of fish, one hit. Take two or three days or nights to move them. I still fish. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010

I started diving in Twofold Bay. We were living at Club Terrace, VIC and it came over the wireless that they were looking for divers for abalone. And being blackfellas that's all we'd ever done was dived for mutton fish. So we packed up and I come home to Eden and went down to the canneries, that's where they were doing it. He said yes, well he gave me his diving gear, free of charge, gave me me diving gear, me wetsuit, me belts, I had everything that went with it and we were on our way. The only thing is he gave us the diving gear we had to supply him with the goods, which we did. The licence was part of it, but I never regained it. We were diving for about five or six years. We weren't living anywhere, we were just camping alongside the beach or wherever we were dived. Mary lived in the camp, whenever we go to the foreshore we put the tent up. Might be at Mystery, Wallaga, Wintles, Bermagui, Tathra, Pambula, Nadgee near Cape Howe. From the Victorian boarder right through to Sydney. Wherever I could get in the water. The cannery was at Eden, Twofold Bay. We done a process what you call salting. So every time we'd go abalone diving, what I caught today day, or what I caught for seven days, I'd brine, what you called brining, so you had big plastic drums, you fill them up with abalone, and every time you put abalone you put a lot of salt on top, and put more salt on top, and that's brining, and put the lid on. So at the end of the week, or when we got enough, you take down about two or three thousand dollars worth of abalone to the cannery. Till we fill it up, then take them straight to the cannery. That was back in early sixties. . . that cannery its closed now. We were across the board with fifty, fifty black and white. Lot of the white fellas here are divers and we all stuck together. We all help one another. It was matemanship. Black and white doesn't matter. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010

I think Brian was, they were doin abalone then, out past the chip mill. Selling abalone in Eden for Allens, when they used to be down here. I think everybody was for themselves, weren't they. And then he got a job in the sawmill. And then out on the forestry, was it forestry, way out in the bush

they used to cut timber for Coxy. Yeah, eh, out there. Yeah, I think so, out there for a while. Margaret Henry 2.11.2009

I enjoy fishin if I get a fish. No, I used to go with Brian and them and they'd go get abalone or lobsters, I'd go with them. I used to help em clean 'em, you know, just scrape them on the rocks, let them cut 'em out of the shells. We'd go to that place out there near fisheries or somewhere Boydtown, yeah all those towns. I remember once we had a big sea and we went out to Boyd Town and there was abalones everywhere on the beach, but Brian just walked past he said they're no good, you can't touch them, cos of the high sea, we'd leave them all on the beach. Margaret Henry 2.11.2009

When I came back to Eden, I worked at Bayview motel first, and from then on the cannery. The good old cannery. Must have been about 15 and a half then. It was a bit here and a bit there, you know, feeling my way around as a young teenager. Dad said 'if you don't go to school you get out and work'. So we had to do it. Heaps was working at the cannery, all of Eden, white and black. Tuna, salmon, pet food, anything, I think it was, to do with fish. My job was in the loft mainly, I was good at pushing the tins out really fast, while everyone else was packing, cleaning and packing, I had to have the tins going all the time. So I was put up in the loft. Then I was doing the skinning, tuna skinning, cleaning. I liked it all, I liked doing anything. Well I went away, here we go again, got with somebody, went away, come back, went back down there, went away again, come back and went back again, about three or four times I've been back and forwards to that place. I got a job back all the time. I was told we were all good workers. All the Koorie people were good workers. It was equal wages. Big time wages were \$27 a week that was a lot of money though, in those days. That was plenty of money. We thought anyway, money was money. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

My parents were from Gloucester. That's where my family comes from. My mother was Olive Cook. And my father was Len Smith. I went to school at Burnt Bridge. In them days you weren't allowed into the white schools. When we first came down here, the mother in law came down, and me sister in law, we travelled together down here. They lived out there too at Boydtown. We rented a private caravan, a big caravan, but there was other caravans there, but they didn't have any for rent there. The caravans that was there, people owned them and bought them themselves. The one on the highway, where the building is now, where that restaurant and that is, there used to be a caravan park over from that. We lived in the caravan for 12 months before we got a home in Eden in 1978. OLGA Manton 28.10.2009

Shadracks, Quarantine, we just camped, just over night, Dad would fish overnight, and we'd camp and pack up and go somewhere else and do the same again. Dad would - if it was a warm night, he wouldn't put tents up, we'd just sleep under the stars. He'd just put shelta right around us, big tarp in the middle, throw the bean bags, what he sewed up, the big corn bags, I mean, spread them on the ground, we never had sheets in those

days, soft blankets, put those down on the ground, over the old bags, he used to wash them of course, in the running water so everything'd be out of them. Cleaned them up, and make our beds up. There was five of us, two sisters and me two brothers, and myself. He made the wind break out of tarps, he had old tarps, if he didn't have that he'd just cut all the tea trees and leaves and all that, and make shelters that way. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

3.14.3 Davison Whaling Station

*"Our beautiful homeland down by the sea
With its rugged cliff tops and tall trees
And out goldem beaches to see the waves wash upon our shore
Twofold Bay, oh, what a beautiful sight
Hunchback whales, killer whales, dolphins and our famous
Old Tom who once leaped and splashed in the sea below
Are now legends of our past of so long ago
Our brave fishermen and Aborigine men
Who worked side by side as they towed in Old Tom
Memories of our whaling days will remain with us forever;
Eden, our home, down by the sea..."*

"This is a poem by one of the daughters of the two Aborigine men [Albert Senior and Albert Junior] told to her by her father about when they were whaling down at Eden" [Eileen Morgan 29.12.1992].

My favourite spot is Mrs Boyd's at the Whaling Station, yeah I love it out there. And then when Nan and Pop died, old Nan Lorna was the one that taught me how to cook sand dampers, and every Sunday here after that we used to go to Mrs Boyd's and I'd always cook that big sand damper. And we took Marion Grant one day, and you know Marion said 'i'm not going to eat that Lanny its going to be full of sand'. Nan was the one, I hadn't fished since Nev passed away. I can't rock fish now anyways, I'm too old. But we used to go fishin a lot. Mrs Boyd's up at Davidson. Sometimes I still go over there, take the kids, Emmie loves being over there. Its good for kids there in the little bay park cos its not deep, you know. Caught flat head, and bream, all that. And there was heaps and heaps of mussels there then, but they're gone now. A few tiny little ones like your thumb nail. But no, the tourists cleaned them out. Cos I used to get buckets and bring them home and pickle them. Pickle them up. Oh they were big. Used to go over and knock a bucket of oysters off the lease. [ELAINE THOMAS 5.11.09].

I think they made - I know at the amber grease, when the whale used to be sick - we used to go and get that too, Dad used to say look for the birds, I heard the whale been sick last night, look for a heap of birds, well when we find the birds that's when we find the amber grease. That - they made scent out of that - and we used to use it for, the boys used to use it for lighting fires, or they used it to put under their skate things, they'd ride down the green

hills on, make them go faster. Made scent, like perfume, must have added other flavours to it, cos to me it was terrible smell. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

Oh yes, well we used to use it for lighting fires, and Dad would use it for sores sometimes and other stuff he would mix with it. And in them days you would be able to scrape the salt off the rocks, you know, and when we'd go campin we never had any salt, we used to use that, or Dad would say, how many times have I tried to tell yous you've got salt water there, you'd just go down and get a can full of salt water and bring it up, pour it into the vegetables, the beans and the peas and the corn we had cookin, boillin, then he'd go and get the fresh water and pour that in til he got the right taste for the vegetables. He'd mix the salt water with the fresh water, and that was our salt. He was the best damper cooker out, specially sand damper, he was deadly. He used to make a big fire and make a sand damper, make a big fire and when the sand used to get hot, he used to part the sand and put his big damper in it, and cover it over with the hot sand, bit like the oven, and keep the coals on it. Bakin powder, in to the fresh flour, it was beautiful. We never used wattle seeds, but we were shown, told how to use it. Flour was out then, so we used that. Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

Everyone knows the history of the Whaling industry, and the friendships with the ship owners and Aboriginal people. Whaling crews in other areas were not so friendly. So this area is important because of the good relationship between black and white, descendants of both of these groups are in the area today. We want to maintain their links. The things that impacts on Aboriginal lifestyle, are not all about economics and cultural things, but also race relations and kinship relations are very important. Strong kinship links between races should be preserved and recognised. That recognition can't happen elsewhere. People got on there at Davison Whaling Station. It is equally important that the public know the good and bad. We can't keep dragging people over the coals for things their ancestors done. But it is healthy for everyone to know what went on so we can move on. Most the encounters that our people had with Europeans, our people where saving them... Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

3.14.4 Curalo Lake

All the main camping areas would have been down around Curalo Lake here and places where there was fresh water seepage. And in those places we have burials that need to be identified. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

3.15 THE KIAH – TOWAMBA RIVER BAY CULTURAL AREA

3.15.1 Kiah River / Whale Beach

'..the later part of Jack's life were spent between Eden and Genoa, at which places he would stay alternately, about six weeks at a time. When in Eden he camped close to the late Mr Solomons; at Kiah River he camped near Paddy Whelan's and Tommy Stevens's;He occupied his time by

supplying fish, honey and pipeclay to the housewives. Age came upon him and in 1874 he contracted a severe cold, and after about a weeks illness, he died at a spot about half a mile from Merrimingo Homestead. Jack was buried after the backs fashion. A sheet of bark was stripped and tightly rolled around him, and the whole bound with ropes of stringy bark... He was buried 'between Merrimingo and Genoa, within half a chain of the Prince's Highway'. 'Genoa Jack' Eden Magnet 13th February 1932

We are survivors, and there are places, like Mewtreys, one of our favourite fishing spots, camping spots, we can't get into now. A white man bought the land next to it and put a fence up, even though there's a public road going in there. And today the local government won't do anything about it. I was there last week, but I had to go and ask for the key from the white man. And I remember going to the gate once to get in there, he gave me a key once before, and he changed the lock. I had all my family there, and he changed the lock. That was embarrassing, I had to go back to the man and plead for the key. But this is one spot we really demand be opened up. He's a nice guy, seems to be. But he's talking about overall development and then putting a road in there. But its a public road, always has been. We'll open it up one way or another. But that's one spot that must be given to Aboriginal people, access to the mouth of Kiah River. That's where you got two waters, you got the calm water of the Kiah River where the kids can play, swim, you can fish. Then you got the ocean over this side, waves and rips and everything, dangerous waters, where you surf or fish in the ocean. They call it Whale Beach. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

We camped out at Whale Beach, this was when we were trying to earn money. That's crown land but its on its way to National Parks. National Parks owns a lot of land there, but they don't own that. Council manages it. Its the beach, its only sand. You're not allowed to camp there. Before, we used to camp there. Beryl and I used to go out there when our kids were little. We'd go out there and camp there, make a fire and stay the night, you're not supposed to, you do it illegally. So that would have been in the seventies. When we used to dive for mutton fish. Its important to us because its culture. Its culturally appropriate for us as a family to get out, get away from these houses, get away from all the stresses of the so called civilisation and get out there, not in un-civilisation, but get out there into a place where kids play and enjoy themselves, people sit around and yarn up and generally get relaxed you know, have a good feed together. The boys would dive for mussels, and we'd get the mutton fish there, and we'd get the fish out of the river and cook them on the coals. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

Went to school out at Kiah, that was my first school. God bless it. There was only about 10 or 15, not even that I don't think. Then we moved from that school, went out to Palestine out here, and went to that school. Palestine - that's just a little spot out the road here, where the old school used to be. Part of Eden. Dad and Uncle Ossie Stewart, they were still fishing, fishing then again, just fishing around the rocks and doing their stuff and we'd go down there and sort of help them out and they'd teach us how to get our own

foods, and fish, and how to fish, and Dad used to take us out the Kiah River, or when we was out there, he used to show us how to spear, and all the girls used to spear then. I was a very good spearer, I still am actually, but me eyes not. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

There is a place on the Kiah River reserved for public recreation; we call that area the 'whale spit' or Mewtreys. We use to go there fishing and to collect oysters. I would have been 6 or 7, cause Lisa was a baby and I am 6 years older than her. Uncle Wally Mongta was mad on spearing and he'd go there to spear fish. The access has been closed, even though there is a public reserve there. We took it for granted cause we though we would always be able to go there, now our future at that place is being threatened. In the years gone past, because Cow Cockies needed Aboriginal people to pick in town, Aboriginal people were the best pickers by far, we were welcomed to camp in the farm areas, camp outside the town boundaries, in places like this, on the north side of Kiah. Some cow cockies allowed us on the farms. Town was a different story then, due to racism, it was hard, so the cow cockies would shop for us, cause we weren't allowed into the shops. So they needed us on the one hand, but did not want us on the other. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

We camped here at Kiah Inlet in a caravan for a few months. With Carol me wife, I camped here cause Uncle Jeffo called me, tribal way, he was tormenting me to visit. I did and when I saw him he said 'don't let them take that Kiah River area you go there and don't let them take that place'. Not long after that old Jeff Tungia, passed away. Old Jeff Tungia had a stutter, he took a long time to tell a story, he'd get frustrated. He said 'you're the only person who will take the time to listen and you can understand me'. He was talking about the east bank, the south side of Kiah Inlet, he said it is all 'hairddigeddi' country, sound like 'air' you breath, he was referring to the people who own this place. According to Jeffo this is the north east boundary of haddigaddi country, that is why this place was important. When old people tell you to do something, if you asked 'why' they'd take it as an insult. They expect you to listen and not ask questions. I listened and have attempted to have the place preserved. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

Another elder told me that an American battleship pulled up here at Kiah Inlet during the First World War and 1,500 GI soldiers raped and murdered our people then left. I believe this is a sorry business place and a place for people to come and enjoy this area, to bringing healing to this land. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

The heritage values here are intangible and relate to life style and history of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people living and working together. Mum and dad used to fish on the rocks here at Kiah. It is hard for disabled and sick people to access Haycock, but access to Kiah is easy for people how can't get to the other places. The fishing here is good right at the mouth entrance, the fish come down from up stream, like bass, then rock fish coming in from the sea, mussel beds and oysters are easy to get. I prefer to get my seafood from the ocean. It is not just getting food to eat. It is also

about going out with your kids and grandkids and enjoying the day, making an activity of it. If you go to the shop, all you get is stress. We look at the weather; we got these places depending on the nor-easter. Depending on wind, and shelter, if it is too rough we go into the lake systems. Around Eden, Kiah River is special cause the tidal waters go up to the bridge there and it is a good place to spear mullet, because they got in their in large numbers cause they go from one deep holes into the next deep hole, they are easy to find. I have speared fish there before, with Collin Walker. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

3.15.2 Kiah Housing Scheme

The Bega Aboriginal Advancement League looked around for a place for Aboriginal families to live; they would not have us within the township of Eden and they got one house built in Bega. I looked around the area and I found this site, south of here, the old school site, at Kiah, and we put that up to the government to transfer it to the Aboriginal Protection Board, see the lands councils wasn't in then, so they did, they gave us that bit of land, put it under the Aboriginal Protection Board, gazetted it as a reserve, and we started work on it. Before the caravans came – Jirra was one fella come out there with me, I think several young fellas come out there. We dug the trenches and set up the washing shed and toilets and everything. We had the health inspector, he come and worked with us and showed us how we could make everything healthy, so we put in seepage pits, run off, water and silage and that. And it passed his inspection. We made nice little gardens there, and the women used to, some of the women from the Anglican church, Catholic church used to get together and come out and sit with the women, have special programs for them, while the men were working in the bush, cutting pulp wood, we had contracts with men like Vin Heffernan and Lloyd Cox, for the chip mill. And the idea was that we'd work, we'd live in a caravan and then we'd go into a house, as the houses were built. We had a deal with the department of housing that they'd build houses both in Bega and Eden. And they'd designate those houses, what they call 'Houses for Aborigines' or HFA houses. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

I think it might have been Basil Andy that moved into the first house. Up on the side of the hill there. I'm not sure how it was. All I know we were systematically moving in. The HFA were building houses right along the coast I think, in other towns, but we chose Eden as our resettlement. And we came down here, and one by one we got a house and moved into town. I didn't really want to come into the house. When we were living in the second house, I got sick. Had an operation, hernia operation from lifting these big chainsaws around. And I went in to Bega hospital, and this bloke beside me he said 'where you from mate', and I said 'I'm from Eden'. He got up real interested, he said 'my brother lives down at Eden. He was telling me about all these blacks moving into Eden, he said they were going to come in, messing, drunks everywhere, but lo and behold', he said, 'the family that moved in along side of my brother, he said he just lived like everybody else. Started making gardens, just lived like anybody else'. I said 'what address was that mate', and he give me my address! Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

Ossie came down this way late '69. They were working on setting up the caravan park at Kiah. Then when Dennis [Dennis' son, Dennis] was born, we were down out there living when Dennis was born, and he was born in Feb 1970. [Beryl Cruse 29.10.2009]

Then when the DMR work come on constructing the highway from Eden to the border, it was better work, hard work it was too. I had to, operating the Berrima driver. I was a berrima driver. That's all working hard, you got to walk and hold a Berrima and push it down and pull the dirt and rocks out of the river so we could put it on the highway. I was doing about three loads, four loads of that a day. Well spreading was nothing. Truck would spread. We were living at Kiah at the time. No, we was living at Shadracks Creek with Mrs Furda. I was still at Shadracks, cos we used to go out in the morning. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010

We had to travel round and round to find work. I also use to work with Ossie Cruse cutting logs for the Eden chip mill. That was in the late 60 early 70s. We were based at Kiah in a caravan. I was ringbarking and taking the bark off the logs. I got paid per log. Ossie is my cousin, he was the leader of the gang. At Kiah, we lived in the Caravan Park, we lived there for about two years or a year. They had a lot of koori people working there. Ken Campbell 8.9.2009

I was born at Kempsey, in 1948. We lived called Double Bridge, and had to walk into Burnt Bridge, to get the rations. Burnt Bridge was the mission, and Double Bridge was out, a little place out of town where we all lived. My maiden name is Davis. My mother's name was Olive Davis. She was a Cook, Olive Cook. She was from Kempsey, and most of the Cooks were related to the Moorins from Armidale, and around up that way, so they're all from around that area. Lena and Ronnie came down first, I don't know who they came down with. But we came down, I stayed with them for a while, down there at Curalo St, and then we moved out to Kiah to one of the vans for a little while, out there, till we got a housing commission house. Then we moved up to Rod St, I used to walk from up there down to work. Kiah was nice and quiet, lovely out there. Peaceful. WILMA MANTON 2.11.09

I was born in Bairnsdale, Victoria, but I was raised up in NSW, on the south coast. My father was born in Central Tilba, on the highway there, underneath an old pine tree, and my mother was born in Lake Tyres mission. Her name is Natalie Logan, and my Dad's name was Wally Mongta. I was born in 1955. I'm 54 this year. Kiah River was the first place we came to when we came up to NSW. Kiah River was the main place I remember. Then from there Wonboyn, then moved into town and onto Haycock, out there - lived out there, where our culture camp is now. Lived there for a long time. This is when I was really little, this was all happening. We were based at Haycock for food, diving. Just to feed the family there. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

Dad and his father were sawmill doctors. They sharpened saws and that. When I came along, they were out of saw milling into logging. So we was living at Kiah at the caravan, collecting timbers for the chip mill. I remember Dad and them done the big contract on the Burragerang Valley, that's where I learnt how to cut, stack and burn green timber, in the winter. I was only young. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

The Kiah Reserve is the same as the Kiah Scheme. Woodwell, Reverend Vine, and Joan Whetton, they helped Aboriginal people. They were the main non-Aboriginal people to help us in 1967. It was just outside the town boundary, dad helped negotiate to get that land. People call it a caravan park, but it wasn't a caravan park really, it was some caravans for Aboriginal people on the edge of town. It was a voluntary resettlement, dad decided that he had enough of the picking and wanted to get us into more stable permanent work, the kids needed jobs too. Picking was going out of its period of existence due to mechanisation. He saw that need and got the vans set up at Kiah. We moved off the riverbanks at Bega; babies were dieing from the chemicals in the river, dad wanted to get out. There are houses there now. The land council owns the houses now; they got them through the Housing and Infrastructure for the Homeless [HIH] program. It was international year for homelessness. The houses are still rented out to Aboriginal people. There's good bush there, a lot of people like it Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

3.15.3 Kiah River Farms

In the 1970s we picked out of Kiah, down at MacMahon's farm. They grew beans and peas. Ossie was on the abalone then. I used to help clean them on the rocks. Not clean them, used to have to take them out of the shell. Vincent Thomas was with us at the time, he was diving, oh he used to make me so nervous, he wasn't a bit frightened, he'd go anywhere, Vincent. And Dennis was working with his father. And BJ. The kids missed a lot of school. where we stopped for any length of time they went to school. But even through that Dennis and - Rhonda, she just taught herself, her and BJ. Dennis wasn't, he didn't like school. I never, ever worked when I was down at Kiah, other than picking beans, because we used to come back to Bega picking, from Kiah. Because the picking was still there when we moved down here. [Beryl Cruse 29.10.2009]

Yeah, done a lot of pickin and that, pickin out Kiah, all around Eden. We moved to Kiah and lived up on McMahanons farm, up the snake track. And then, from there I can't remember much from that, they're the early days. At Kiah, we lived up the snake track first, with a big verandah. We worked on the farm. We stopped, it was the work really. Had to go where the work was. Picking and sawmills. I've never ever had a go at the mills. The only thing I did at the mills was when they finished we had the job of sweeping all the

floors, cleaning up, and we got pocket money for that. But I've never, ever worked in the mills. As kids we usually had seafood that was about it I spose. We always had beans and peas, and meat. Yeah, we had our fish, and rabbits. I like the pig trotters, used to get the pig trotters - boil them. John Stewart 5.11.2009

We went down to Twofold Bay for a while, about 11 years. Actually we was on our Christmas holidays, down at Bega, picking some beans, we get down to Bega pickin beans and Kiah was a hop step and a jump from Orbost. So we got down to kiah, we thought this is close to Orbost. So we were picking beans at Kiah at the Mc Mahons. There was Peggy, that's old Jimmy Little's wife. They lived right up the top, up the snake track. Snake track is going up to Kiah, back towards Bombala. Its a short cut. An old bush track. But only worked on the farms. But we used to go back there to the short cut to Bombala. We'd go up there to chop fire wood or sight seein or fishin. We'd be taking the rods on the weekends and trout fishing in the Kiah River. Have a look at the country. There used to be lots of Koorie families there, they were seasonal pickers and moved back to Bega or to wherever they were from when the picking season ended. Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010

When we came back here to Kiah, lots of memories on Kiah River. Yeah, we worked at MacMahons - both brothers, I remember we were livin in the house just on the snake track, just as you go on the snake track there was a house on the right, up on that little bluff thing - um, - there's a big new home there now - yeah we lived in that for a while, with Aunty Mary and Uncle Lionel. In the mornings we'd just walk down the hill to the paddocks right on the river there. Dad used to sing out 'I'm going to get some dinner now' and he'd go down and back in like ten minutes with some big mullet, always. There is a big pool just below the house - that's where the highway used to cross, there was a bridge, on the old highway. Just barely remember the bridge, I was quite small then. Lisa Arvidson 6.11.2009

We picked out at Kiah for the MacMahons and the other ones - the Gropler's. That was a long while ago. It's been a few years now. But I used to enjoy that, and you used to go out, was that the same, oh no, Youngs too had them - Marilyn - they had beans, peas too. Kiah, the property was called 'Narra' yeah out that way had a property. But if I could do it all again, I'd do it all again. When we started off it wasn't much money, was it, and then a few years back then it started to be alright. Seventies, seventies or eighties. Somethin like that. The, kids would be at school - I wouldn't have them in the paddock with me, unless it was on the weekends. Margaret Henry 2.11.2009

At Kiah we were - you know when you're going down Hills road, across the road, right down that way. We used to go across in the track up to McMahons that was their property too, it was old, what's his name, Brian's place then. Brian McMahan, and Jim was on the other side. There was a few brothers. Yeah, that was up the snake track. I remember the old snake

track too. That's where Dad used to go and get his spears from, to make spears, go out to Bellbird Hill, used to go out that way. You can still get spears from those two places. I've got one growing out the front, I took - its only a little one like that, but its growing back. They're the Gorarah trees.
TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

Him and Mum would fish overnight. They were just fishing to feed us. All our family was with us. They'd all go out fishing. No, I think it comes from his Mum's side, where the fishing comes into it. The Andy side of things, they were all fisherman. They were all fisherman. And the Mongta's side is chip mill, the wood mill and chop, they used to chop wood and sell it and skinning bark and Dad done a lot of that too round Kiah hills. Well, Jim McMahon's is where I first remember, and we were staying out there and we used to go up and milk the cows, learn how to milk the cows, which I'm going back out there with my same friend that taught us when we were little. Well I sort of grew up with Claire, Jeff and Barbara, out at Kiah, they used to teach us how to milk cows, me and Zeta. We camped at the old gate, we used to camp there. There was an old gate there, and that's where Dad was first barking wattle, and he was just taking it all off and loading it all there. We went up and milked cows, chased rabbits for tea and do the rest of everything like all children do. Fresh milk every day. Fresh eggs, everything, fresh vegetables. I rang her up the other day, I found her, and she said 'oh Tina come out, I haven't seen yer for years' - Claire McMahon. I'm going out to see her probably, might be this weekend, I'm hoping, just to have a follow up on our old days. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

Picked all along Kiah, McMahons, all the McMahons. Brian, what's his name, old Austie McMahon. Used to walk across the river from Jim's, across to Austie's. Only went further up river when - can't remember if Mitchells grew beans. Never went out that far, no. only, what's his name that lives out there now, only when he started coming into town, growing beans. Mick Gropler, Don't know if he's still doing it. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

We also picked up around the Kiah River for the Hurlston's and the McMahon's. They were along the Kiah River, along both sides I think, but mainly the north side. I did not like that area; there were a lot of snakes. If you talk to people from Sydney to Melbourne, especially older people, they will know the McMahon's. I went there with Uncle Collin Walker; we lived and worked on the McMahon's farm. I was about 11 and we stayed in a house. Some of the families lived in tents, but Uncle Collin Walker had been going there for years. Some of the families had cow cockies they went back to year after year, they built up a friendship. Uncle Collin would of gone to McMahon's often, whereas dad always went to the Otton's in Bega. The snake track is the road up the Kiah River to McMahons and Hurlstons.
Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

3.15.4 Towamba River

April 1797 the survivors of the Sydney Cove Shipwreck passed through Twofold Bay on their way to Sydney. Local Aboriginal people assisted them

in crossing the waters of the Towamba River as recorded by Clarke, one of the survivors:

".....we came to a pretty large river, which, being too deep to ford, we began to prepare a raft, which we could not have completed till next day had not three of the native friends, from whom we had parted yesterday, rejoined us and assisted us over. We were much pleased with their attention, for the act was really kind, as they knew we had this river to cross, and appear to have followed us purposely to lend their assistance....." (Clarke 1797)

'..Jack, the original tribesman who came to be familiarly known in local history as Genoa Jack, was an outstanding personality. Jack was the greatest Waddyman known. That is to say, he was generally considered to be the cleverest and most capable waddyman of his time. By waddyman is meant climber, spearman, boomerang thrower, clubman and general hunter. Jack's life was not a bed of roses, for his life on several occasions sought by natives who liked him less alive than dead. On one occasion, whilst employed on the Cut Hill, near lower Towamba, working for Ben Boyd, he nearly lost the number of his mess, for John Gow, another blackfellow, sneaked on Jack while he was asleep and stuck a tomahawk in his skull. Jack got away with it, and ran nine miles to Boydtown, where it taxed the strength of two men to pull the tomahawk from the position in which it was wedged in the bone.'Genoa Jack' Eden Magnet 13th February 1932

We worked right up the Towamba River, but that was years later, for the Groplers, Mick and Dianne. We went up to Towamba pickin at their place. Go out in the mornin, back in the arvo, back to Eden. John Stewart 5.11.2009

Jingera Rock – that's were they recon they took our people and forced them over the edge. It saved them on poison and bullets. Nan Henry, mum's mum told me that when they massacred people, they put the dead bodies on log dumps, then burn the logs and bodies, so that the bones would also be burnt. This place, is a sorry business place, that is what our people cal them. When we bury our people, who died of natural cause, it becomes a special place that you might go back to. But a sorry business place becomes a bad place; you don't go back there and pay respects to people. Jerra Moore would know about this place. He lives here in Eden. He is the Chairman of Twofold Aboriginal Corporation. Jerra means native flower, there are a few Jera Moores around, they all got the same name. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

3.15.5 Wallagarah

The 1971 flood - I would have been 11. I remember the start of it, we were going to camp the night at Wallagarah, cos the bridge was flooded there, yeah and they wouldn't let any traffic through so we had to camp back up

the road a bit and wait for the water to go down. Tina and Zita were there when the new bridge was opened. They walked across, when the bloke cut the ribbon. Barbara Stewart was the first one to walk across. That's recorded. Lisa Arvidson 6.11.2009

3.16 THE WONBOYN DISASTER BAY CULTURAL AREA

3.16.1 Wonboyn

We were out at Wonboyn, we stayed there too for about 6 months, at Greenglades, and fished down there. [Beryl Cruse 29.10.2009]

We used to go camp there, out at Wonboyn, right out past the long beach, past the shops and that. We used to love goin down there campin, that was good. Always used to catch a bream there. Nullica that was a quick feed of oysters and good goin down, playing around in the river. Lisa Arvidson 6.11.2009

We got our own business out at Wonboyn, an oyster business. But when I first come down here I left the oysters on a Friday, up in Port Stephens, came down here on a Saturday, we moved down into a caravan at Boydtown. I'm worried about Womboyn cos we had problems out there with the lake getting blocked off. With the oysters, they had to get, there's a big meetings about opening the Womboyn lake, cos the sand used to fill it up. When we first went out there it never used to happen like that. I don't know about now. But in the early days it was a lovely big water way, go straight out, tide coming in, big rise and fall of the tides. The brother in law got his own oyster business. He opens oysters out there at Jigamy. And me other brother in law, they got leases out at Womboyn. We didn't camp at Wonboyn. That's another place we used to go, take the kids out there just for the day, sometimes we'd go prawning in the nighttime, but we'd never camp. OLGA Manton 28.10.2009

My first memories are of Wonboyn, it was all over this area cos I remember Dad was a gypsy, and my Mum and Dad used to roam up and down with the fishing and the bean picking and pea picking and camping was our biggest, biggest thing, you know. My Dad used to spear fish and give it to the locals in Eden for bread and milk. I must have been only 4 years old or something, when we lived at Wonboyn. I remember, with the Squires. Uncle Ossie Cruz come down from La Perouse, I remember that and we all camped out there together, all the parents. I remember there was some old paintings in the rocks, but I forgotten where that is. Every time I go out there I got a feeling I know, but I can't pin point it. I know they were Koorie paintings, cos we all used to play underneath that rock, out at Wonboyn, way up in a little place called Green Glades, that's where the camp was, and that's where they were all, the Squires, and my Dad and Uncle Basil Andy, Uncle Ossie, they all was netting mullet and all sorts of fish there, and cuttlefish collecting that and selling to the markets in Sydney. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

It was a camp for the Koorie fisherman. They'd take the fish to Sydney, as far as I remember. Took it all the way to Sydney on the little trucks they had, and they'd sell them and they'd fetch the money back and they'd share it around. We were living in tents - the old canvas style tents, the old bean pickin tents. Cooking by the fire, cooking damper. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

My husband worked over at Wheelers there for a while, then they went into business then, buy that oyster business out at Wonboyn, he was workin hard out there. The Mantons all do that, the whole lot of them, they're all into oysters. Used to start when they was young too. That's probably why they got all crook backs. WILMA MANTON 2.11.09

In 1963 we were living in tents at Wonboyn. There was Uncle Billy Holmes, Aunty Cath Holmes and their son's Peter Holmes, Goo and Jimmy. There could have been other families too; I was only 8 or 9. Uncle Basil and Aunty Barbara Andy were also there. Billy Holmes and that were beach haulers, mainly for mullet and beach salmon. I call him uncle. Dad's mum and mum's mum knew them all. When uncle Billy moved from Barlings Beach, to Bengello to Wonboyn we followed him. At that time the Campbells moved to Bermagui and the other families stayed at Barlings before moving to Mogo and Moruya. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

We liked it at Barlings and at Wonboyn; it was a good lifestyle. The kids and all would haul in the fish, so they were good places to camp. I remember at Wonboyn, we got that many fish, the older fellas dug a hole in the beach sand, and buried the fish in the wet sand to keep them fresh. Goo, Jimmy and Peter cut their teeth driving trucks there at Wonboyn. At that time we were camped on crown land, near Green Glades. I went back there a few years ago. I noticed there were no sand dunes, I specifically remember sand dunes there cause me and the Larritt and Holmes boys dug a fortress in the dunes. They're not there now. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

At Greenglades I remember exploring with the other kids. Peter Holmes is 5 years older than us, he built a sled and we'd slid on it down into the creek. It was a wood sled with a metal base. It was common to see a pronged spear for spear fishing and we always ate abalone, lobsters and bimbullas. Other than that we lived in tents, a bit of language was spoken and did the work what everyone else done. When the salmon season finished at Wonboyn, we'd go to Mystery for Abalone. In summer when the nor-eastern winds were up and the seas were too rough, we'd go pick. So we still lived by the seasons. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

We're great fishermen, especially my husband. And we go fishing a lot, we go out to Saltwater and in the early days, and used to camp out there, all the kids and with the Cruses and can't remember all the other mob, at Saltwater creek before it was a national park. Lovely spot. OLGA Manton 28.10.2009

3.16.2 Nullica

As I was growing up Dad had a lot of friends around there, when he was growing up, so he knew a lot of fellas, Michael out here, he knew his people and they all got together out at, back of Nullica there, we all used to meet on a Sunday out there. The Bobbins, my father and grandfather and, they'd have a big picnic session on the Sunday. Cups of tea and you know, cookies. That wasn't a property, that was the main road. It was the princes highway then. We'd meet there cos it was a good place for meeting. The Bobbins. Well his father owned property all out that way, and there's still a lot of Bobbins own their own property out there. Dad knew how to connect. He had connections everywhere. He'd sell worms, if he couldn't sell worms, he'd sell cuttlefish. Or he'd sell his fish, that's a way of getting petrol, flour, milk, sugar, tea and the rest of it. We never starved, never. We ate a lot of rabbits! TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

Before the highway went on the other side. The highway now tracks along the coast, between Eden and Boyd town, but in the 60 it went around the back of Nullica. It was over the other side where we use to camp, on the journey back and forth to the boarder, in them days the roads took us hours and hours and hours, the roads were windy and steep and with old cars. Now it takes a day, but then it use to take a few. Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

3.16.3 Green Cape

Green Cape, well it was only fishing. It was all about fishing all the time. That was - if we couldn't catch a decent fish there we'd move to another spot and make another camp and do the same over. We had a car with an old dickybird, you know the dickybird seat in the back, me and Zeta used to sit in the back and squeeze Lisa down in the middle. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

I still do a lot of fishing today. Don't do much spearing cos I'm getting too old now. In my younger days, yeah. My kids are pretty good, my three boys can spear. And my granddaughter can spear too. The last time we went out to Mewtries was when Dad was alive actually, he got access for us to go out fishing for the day. Old Bill when he was living in there. He come out, you're right you can come down and I'll give yous the little canoes he had. So we all mucked around with the canoes, and Robert's boy and my boy young Rip, they went right around the lake in it fishing and stuff you know. Wish they didn't lock it up. That is my biggest worry. In a way they're good, parks and wildlife, they do a lot for all of us. But I can't understand why are they putting all this poison stuff out there, or anywhere, and they say don't take your dog out there, not our little dog or anyone else's little pet. I wouldn't take them out there cos they'd get poisoned. TINA MONGTA HARRISON 28.10.2009

3.16.4 Nadgee

I remember once in the early 70s when I was out the bush, I lifted this big chainsaw up on my shoulder, and as I swung around I kept going and fell down on the ground, I thought what happened there, I've done this a thousand times, laying there and I suddenly felt I couldn't feel my legs, so I couldn't do anything, so I just grab hold of the bush and pull myself through the bush. I was cutting timber out in the bush, out towards, the big forest out there, out towards Nadgee, on the edge of Nadgee, out further than East Boyd, it was pretty flat cos I could pull myself along to the old jeep and blew the horn. They took me into the doctor, x-rayed me, found that I almost squeezed off the nerve system, what had happened, from cutting the sleepers so young, my vertebrae got wedges shaped into it and the nerve was growing into it, into the wedge system, and when I swung around like that I almost pinched the nerves off. And the doctor was giving me all the explanation of what had happened, and within two years I'd be paraplegic. But praise be to God, that didn't happen and I'm still walking upright. But that took a while to heal, and I just took on light duties, like getting contracts and that, and Loyd Cox was one of the big contractors, and he was giving us all the rubbish bush all the time, and I went up and I got stuck into him one day, I said what's this mate, I'm a bushman, I know what you're doing, you're giving us, you're giving us all the rubbish. And this bloke over here, you're giving him all the good bush. And Cox said, 'but you're getting your wages paid', 'no', I said, 'what's coming off the end of the saw, that's what we're getting paid. Either you give us some good bush or we're out of here' anyway, he give us some good bush then. Anyhow we become good mates. He just thought we were supported by government for wages. Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

4. SUMMARY OF ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE ACROSS THE BEGA VALLEY SHIRE: COMBINING ORAL AND DOCUMENTED HISTORIES

4.1 Archaeological overview⁴

For about the last two million years the world has been subjected to cycles of climatic change, including cold periods called 'ice ages'. When the world is colder the polar icecaps absorb more of the oceans water lowering sea levels. During the last 50,000 years which is a conservative estimate for human presence in Australia, the shape and extent of the Australian continent has varied greatly. During the period 25,000 to 12,000 ago the continent was very dry and temperature ranges were extreme. This climatic regime peaked 21,000 – 15,000 years ago during a period called the Last Glacial Maximum or LGM (Mulvaney and Kamminga 1999: 114).

The Snowy Mountains during this period was glaciated. There were dust storms in southeastern Australia that were presumably unpleasant for human inhabitants that continued unabated for 9000 years (Mulvaney and Kamminga 1999: 114). During the LGM sea level stood 130 metres below the present level, much of the continental shelf that is now ocean floor comprised low lying plains. Some would have been dunefields but others included resource rich coastal lakes and lagoons and rugged hills, plateaus, canyons and river valleys. While the eastern seaboard remained well watered much of the southeastern interior experienced cold, arid conditions (Mulvaney and Kamminga 1999: 114).

After the LGM world temperatures increased, icecaps began to shrink and as a response the level of the sea rose. The present coastline began to form about 6000 years ago (Mulvaney: 120). In most situations the inundation of land was barely perceptible within a human lifespan, and individuals were not displaced from their territory. But where coastal terrain was flat, marine transgression during periods of rapid rise would have been noticeable, and even a cause for concern for coastal inhabitants. In parts of Australia between 13,000 to 11,000 years ago the rate of marine transgression reached one metre a week (110 kilometres in 2000 years) (Mulvaney and Kamminga 1999:121). Consequences of the loss of land were far reaching. Vast territories, innumerable camping places, stone quarries, burial grounds and sacred features would have been submerged.

The South Coast of NSW has been subject of extensive archaeological investigations for more than thirty years, along the coastline and estuaries, and in the hinterland. These investigations include excavations of Aboriginal sites, mainly shell middens and rock shelters, systematic regional and local surveys as well as specific research projects (Oakley 2001). These investigations have contributed to the recording of at least 1363 sites in the Bega Valley Shire Local Government Area⁵.

⁴ This section was developed by Rob McKinnon of DECCW.

⁵ AHIMS data searched July 2010 by Jackie Taylor DECCW.

The majority of recorded coastal sites on the South Coast are less than 3,000 to 4,000 years old. Sites older than this would be rare as rising seas till 6,000 years ago would have submerged them. Two south coast sites, Bass Point and Burrill Lake date to 17,000 and 20,000 years ago respectively. Prior to the rise in sea levels these sites would have been located some 14km inland. A large number of sites have also been recorded in the coastal hinterland during surveys.

The dominant site types across the Bega Valley Shire are artefact scatters, middens and combined midden/campsites. Other site types include bora-ceremonial sites, scarred trees, grinding grooves, shelters containing midden, stone arrangements, shelters with art, burials, carved trees and stone quarries.

Coastal shell middens comprise mainly shells, which are the remains of shellfish meals. The majority of shells are of estuarine species (whelks, cockles/bimbulas and rock oyster) and some are from rock platforms (mussel, abalone, limpets, turban and triton shells) or open coast beaches (pipi). Stone artefacts are often found in the middens along with the bones of land animals. In shell middens along the South Coast dated older than about 1,000 years ago it is common to find a change in shellfish species from oyster and deep rock platform species in layers more than 600 years ago to mussel dominating the layers above (Sullivan 2006).

An excavation of a midden on the Pambula River showed regular occupation of the area for more than 4000 years. It showed evidence of shellfish collecting, extensive fishing and hunting of local land animals. It showed dogs had been present during occupation and that people had made stone artefacts at the site (Sullivan 2006).

There are many more archaeological sites across the landscape containing heritage value to the Aboriginal community that are yet to be recorded / rediscovered. Only those sites that have been recorded, usually as a result of development activity, are found on the AHIMS data based, held by DECCW. Although AHIMS sites are recorded across all environmental types across the Bega Valley Shire, the coverage of sites across the study area is particularly concentrated along the coastal zone and along estuarine waterways. Wallaga Lake, Beauty Point, Camel Rock, Mogareeka, Black Ada Swamp, Black Range, Jellat Jellat, Merimbula, Pambula River and Twofold Bay contain high concentrations of known archaeological sites.

In comparing the oral and historical layers with the archaeological sites layer (available from DECCW for this project) continuity of use and/or significance of places can be illustrated. Although a comprehensive comparison of the oral and historical layers with the archaeological sites layer to illustrate where there has been continuity of use and /or significance of places is beyond the scope of this project, a brief analysis is possible, as detailed in section 4.3 below.

4.2 Oral and documented history overview.

The expression of cultural values attributed to places across the landscape is multifaceted, complex and evolving, as revealed by systematically combining Aboriginal people's oral histories to places across the Bega LGA documented during the stage 3a oral history program, with stage 3 historical research [Goulding 2004] and stage 2 field assessment [Griffiths 2003]. Cultural connections in the Bega LGA range from mythological Dreamtime and totemic associations to links forged in the process of earning a pound by picking peas in a paddock. Aboriginal Cultural Heritage values, as detailed in documented and oral histories during this study, relate to resource collection, work, camping / living, spirituality, meeting up with kin, burying kin, education, traveling, conflict with settlers and other tribes and contact. The broad range of Aboriginal cultural heritage values in the region have been arranged in an extensive, yet summarized historical narrative in the time line found in appendix two.

The men and women who have participated in the oral history program have shared their memories about their working life, family life, their cultural and religious life, schooling experiences, fishing practices and the collection of natural resources. They recount the struggles and heartaches associated with racial segregation and the political obstacles they faced, contrasted by the grandeur of feasting on freshly caught seafoods and the marvelous times spent with extended families camped over summers in sheltered coves. Family get-togethers, no matter how big or small, continue to be a primary avenue for the transmission of cultural knowledge and the maintenance of connections to country.

Throughout the 1900s seasonal farming, whaling, fishing and laboring in the sawmills were the primary industries Aboriginal people in the region were involved in. As revealed in the stories, the majority of seasonal vegetable pickers were Aboriginal, at least until equal wages were demanded. The stories show how seasonal work was consistent with the traditional transient way of life in that entire Aboriginal families traveled along the coast to main picking centers, which included the Bega Valley, in search of work and kin.

Underlying the actual work undertaken by Aboriginal people across the Bega LGA a number of key historical obstacles serve to highlight why the contributions made by Aboriginal people were so significant. Much of the work was undertaken in exchange for little or no wages, or for rations (flour, sugar and tea) or in exchange for a place to live in close proximity to the work. Moreover, during the late 1800s and early 1900s, despite the official government policy ensuring that Aboriginal people were segregated from the European colonizers and classified as non-citizens, they self-determinedly forged alliances and found work. The local narrative expressed in these life stories reflects many of the experiences faced by Aboriginal people across Australia. The local landscape coupled with local kinship connections created distinctive meaning for the storytellers.

A summary list of cultural heritage places, combining oral history, documented history and field assessment can be found in appendix one. Places associated with Aboriginal cultural heritage values, have also been arranged according to heritage themes, as detailed on the chart below.

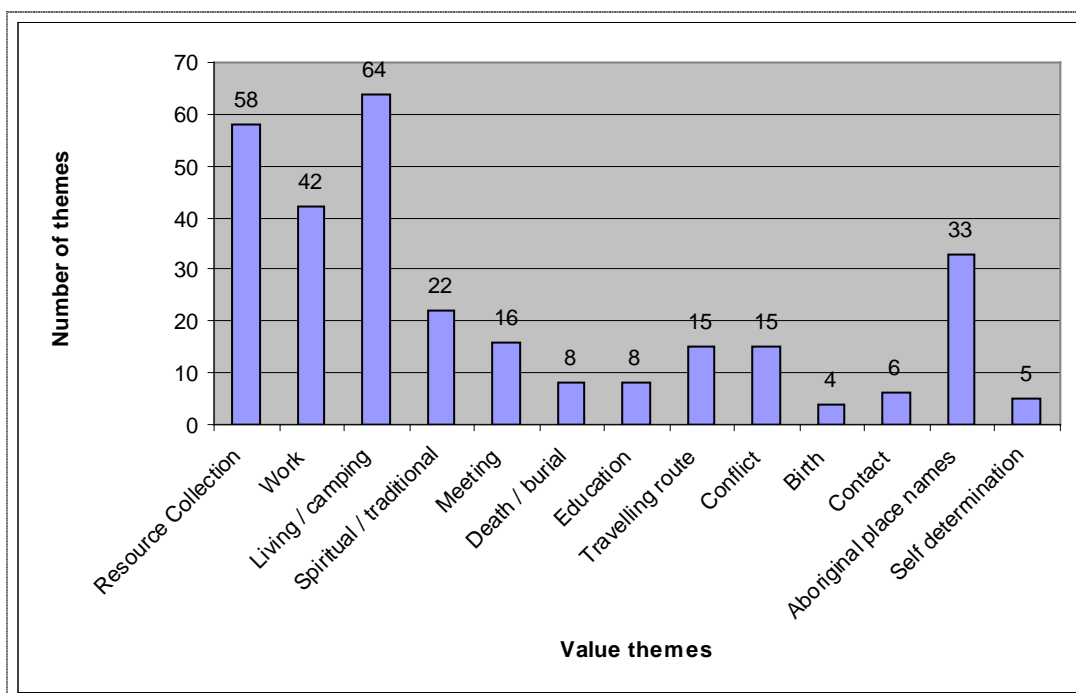


CHART ONE: Aboriginal Cultural Heritage places identified by primary cultural heritage theme [stages 2, 3 and 3a combined].

In total 296 places of cultural heritage values to the Aboriginal community have been identified during stages 2, 3, and 3a of the Bega Valley Shire Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study. The greatest number of places relate to the living / camping theme [64], followed by resource collection [58] and work places [42]. These three themes are interconnected and span the pre and post contact period.

Living / camping places throughout the early and mid 1900s were located around employment opportunities, people following seasonal picking work, the seasonal variations relating to fish stocks and the call for labor in the sawmill industry. Additionally, many people spoke of weekends and holiday periods where more traditional, pre contact camping sites were utilized such as Aragunnu and Haycock Point. On these occasions, large family gatherings would eventuate and cultural practices relating to resource collection, teaching and traveling along the coast would take place. Family get-togethers, no matter how big or small, continue to be a primary avenue for the transmission of cultural knowledge and the maintenance of spiritual links to the land.

A variety of living / camping places exist self determined camp, which in the main align with traditional campsites containing archaeological evidence; work camps close to available seasonal work; Government Reservations as formal living areas established by the government for Aboriginal people; and fringe camps where people resided on the outer limits of settler society, outside of established government reservations. These categories are not mutually exclusive.

The theme 'spiritual / traditional' encompasses mythological places, traditional boundary places, cultural teaching places, ceremonial grounds and places associated with spiritual beings. 22 spiritual / traditional places have been documented, although many more would exist. The 33 traditional Aboriginal place names are within a separate category 'Aboriginal place names' even though associated with the pre contact era. Most of the place names were documented by Robinson in 1844. The 15 traditional travelling routes have also been categorised separately, even though related to traditional practises. All but one of the 15 travelling routes documented were identified by Blay and Cruse [2006].

Meeting places include traditional and contemporary meeting places, including recreational sites such as cricket grounds and town halls. 16 meetings place have been documented across the study area.

Places associated with death and burial also span the pre and post-contact eras. Of the 8 places associated with death and burial, 3 are actually cemeteries, whilst the remaining 5 are known pre to early contact burial grounds of an archaeological nature. Regardless of the age / era of each burial, burial places are of extreme significance to Aboriginal people.

The 8 educational places documented in this study relate to government institutional forms of education, where Aboriginal people integrated into settler society. Traditional teaching places are listed within the category 'traditional', as detailed above.

Of the 15 places associated with the theme 'conflict', 10 are associated with conflict between settler society and local Aboriginal people, whilst the other 5 conflict places are associated with intertribal battles, as documented by early settlers.

The 4 birthplaces documented reveal a link to past living areas such as Dry River, Quaama, where Aboriginal families camped before being forcibly relocated to government reservations such as Wallaga Lake.

The 6 contacts places relate to the period between 1797 and 1820 when the survivors of the Sydney Cove, Bass and Flinders, the Edwardson and Raine recorded early interactions with local Aboriginal people. Many of these interactions are classified as 'first contact' places and hold great significance to the region and the state. These places are listed in the table of heritage places and in the heritage time line.

The 5 places relating to self-determination are in the main of political nature in the process of decolonisation. For instance, the formation of a tribal council and the establishment of Local Aboriginal Lands Councils and housing associations.

4.3 Continuity of Aboriginal heritage values over time – combining all information.

The thirty-six people's cultural links to places across the Bega LGA documented during the stage 3a oral history program, combined with stage 3 historical research [Goulding 2004], stage 2 field assessment [Griffiths 2003] and known archeological sites [AHIMS] reveal the nurturing elements of Aboriginal custodianship, the enduring connection, care and concern maintained over time for the land and waterways and the array of precious natural resources that they sustain. Specific place based cultural connections are evident in particular areas, as are cultural connections across the broader landscape.

The following areas clearly contain a combination of pre and post contact cultural heritage values, as based on AHIMS, oral and documented history. It is recommended that these places form part of a Development Control Plan [DCP] or be encompassed by individual Aboriginal Heritage Conservation Areas in the Local Environmental Plan [LEP]:

- Wallaga Lake foreshore and lake entrance including Camel Rock Reserve and surrounding lands;
- Merrimans Island Historical Aboriginal Reserve #43648 [now Aboriginal Place];
- Snake Island Historical Aboriginal Reserve #40698 [now National Park];
- Narara Creek and Beauty Point area;
- Bermagui township and River;
- Bermagui Historical Aboriginal Reserve #86062 [now Aboriginal Owned]
- Mumbulla Mountain [now part Aboriginal Place and National Park];
- Wallagoot;
- Mogareeka;
- Jellat Jellat Bega;
- Black Range Bega;
- Tathra Historical Aboriginal Reserve #20
- Cohen's Lake Historical Aboriginal Reserve #21
- Pambula River;
- Curalo Lake, Eden
- Kiah Historical Aboriginal Reserve #87736 [now Aboriginal Owned];
- Boydtown;
- Davidson Whaling Station;
- Greenglades, Wonboyn.

The following places contain extensive archeological values, but are not accompanied by detailed oral or documented historical accounts. It is recommended that these places be further examined in terms of contemporary associations:

- Merimbula township and lake;
- Wallagoot Lake
- Nadgee
- Nelsons Beach and Lagoon;

The following places are known through documented and oral history as containing Aboriginal cultural heritage values, but do not contain recorded archaeological sites. It is recommended that these places be the subject of archaeological surveys, prior to determining management arrangements:

- Wandella;
- Cobargo township;
- Dry River, Quaama;
- Barragga
- The Murrah
- Stoney Creek, Bega
- Murrays Flat
- Bega Historical Reserve #85253
- Tarraganda
- North Bega
- Black Fellows Lagoon
- Tathra Aboriginal Reserve #20
- Cohen's Lake Aboriginal Reserve #21
- Kiah River and Inlet;
- Mt Imlay

5. UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE PLACES AND LANDSCAPES

Custodianship of the land and waterways is a position inherited by Yuin people from their ancestors. Custodial obligations have been refined over thousands of years and originate in the spiritual connections between Aboriginal people and the land, as exemplified by the Dreamtime. To many Aboriginal people, the entire landscape is imbued with a spirituality, which is intertwined with them as custodians of the land for which they have ongoing responsibilities to care for. As previously noted, many places of heritage value are personal and have not been shared with me during this investigation, particularly those places relating to intangible spirituality.

Yuin custodianship can be understood as a culturally engrained care and concern for the natural world. Yuin custodianship can be valued through regular and meaningful communication between government and the Aboriginal custodians who hold traditional knowledge. A number of enduring, intangible cultural elements in the Bega Valley, for instance the Aboriginal origins of place names and the links between people and totemic species can be understood and valued within the framework of Aboriginal custodianship.

5.1 Understanding Aboriginal cultural heritage values

In order to understand the cultural value placed upon the landscape by Aboriginal people, the definition of Aboriginal heritage needs to be broad to capture the variety of ways Aboriginal people express their attachments to the landscape i.e. beyond the physical remains of pre historic Aboriginal societies [Goulding 2002: 25].

Aboriginal Heritage is defined by people in many different ways, depending on a range of factors. Heritage places directly relating to traditional ideologies and practices, for instance resource collection places, seasonally determined camp places, spiritually imbued places and traveling routes make up over 50 percent of the total heritage places identified. Those places that do not directly relate to traditional practices, such as work places, work camps, educational places and conflict places have some form of spatial and temporal connection with Aboriginal cultural practices and are thus considered of heritage value to the Aboriginal community.

Over the last decade DECCW has moved towards a broader definition that encompasses both intangible and tangible heritage⁶. This has been due largely to Aboriginal people having a greater say in cultural heritage management and their use of heritage to give cultural identity to present and future generations. If the definition remains broad then the spectrum of perspectives is encompassed and will support the process of reaching an

⁶ See Byrne D et al [2001] Social Significance. A discussion paper. Sydney NSW, National Parks and Wildlife Service.

agreement concerning the assessment and ongoing management of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Aboriginal cultural heritage has many dimensions and scales, across time and place. Historical narratives can provide a sense of changes over time. English identifies a number of primary 'types' of places in relation to use over time [2002: 22]. English applies these categories as a way to assess the relevance of government legislation and policies on different types of places, particularly in relation to the presence or absence of material culture and development activities. His categories, although designed to suit a similar project undertaken in the Gumbaingirr tribal area on the NSW mid north coast, his methodology may assist in the interpretation of the data collected in the Bega area. The categories are as follows:

1. Places that were used decades ago, but not since then. They contain no material evidence associated with this use and the area has not been altered by development.
2. As with [1] yet contains material evidence.
3. As with [1] yet has been developed / dramatically altered.
4. Places that have been used for decades continue to be used and contain material evidence of this use.
5. As with [4] yet have no material evidence associated with this use.
6. Places that contain valuable natural resource, but has not been used in the past because the same resources can be found elsewhere. Community members may wish to access and use these places now.

For these categories to be applied to data collected during the Bega Aboriginal Heritage Study, a systematic on the ground assessment of each place [or places from particular themes] would be required, particularly if it was unknown if material evidence was present. The presence of material evidence, or an 'object' under the National Parks and Wildlife Act, is important in relation to the legislative protection of places of Aboriginal Heritage. The 'objects' are only protected if they relate to the pre-contact period, so they don't protect objects relating to contemporary use.

In previous years, the perspectives of archaeologists endeavouring to reconstruct the past through scientific inquiry have dominated Aboriginal cultural heritage management. Thus, significance was assessed in terms of scientific values, and little attention was paid to the social values placed on sites by contemporary Aboriginal society. This tended to marginalise Aboriginal peoples' involvement in cultural heritage management and overshadowed the complex nature of Aboriginal heritage values.

The cultural value attributed to places identified in this study is multifaceted, complex and evolving. As such defining levels of cultural value is a difficult task. Tony English has attempted to define the social significance of wild resource use places as a way to facilitate decision-making process associated with heritage management. He notes 'understanding the social significance of wild resource use places can help ensure that these places

are correctly identified and assessed during future heritage assessments [2002: 24]. Based on English, the criteria that can be used for assessing the social significance of wild resource places are:

1. Past activities that are remembered by participants and or feature in stories passed down through the generations.
2. A natural resource that continues to be utilised.
3. Totemic or other spiritual significant species.
4. Independence during social and economic hardships.
5. Continuing interaction with the land and sea as an affirmation of cultural identity.
6. Physical remains, such as middens, as an affirmation of long term cultural associations.
7. Enjoying the use of and access to land and waterways.
8. Maintenance of custodial interests coupled with the opportunity to observe changes.

The reasons why the places identified during English's project were attributed cultural value generally accord with the sentiment of informants in the Bega Valley, for instance in relation to totems.

The term 'totem' is used to describe the complex inter-relationship between people and the natural world, the two providing mutual benefits to each other through a spiritual, yet tangible inter-dependency. There are a number of different forms or categories of totems including personal totems, gender totems, family or clan totems, tribal totems and totems relating to the specialised powers of 'clever people'. Totems can stand for or represent an aspect of the natural world as well as providing kinship links between the people or group whom identify with a particular totem, as well as kinship links to the natural world⁷. A number of totemic species have been identified as existing within the Bega Valley Shire. The identification and protection of totemic species and their habitat is a means of valuing a very important element of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

As identified by Donaldson [2006] and English [2002], heritage significance may shift over time as developed areas alter the landscape and access points to heritage places. For instance, if resources were damaged at one site, other sites containing the same resource may become more highly valued. Ranking the cultural landscape in terms of levels of significance is well beyond the scope of the current project. Although the current study area can be broken down into localised components in which specific heritage assessments can be undertaken, ranking places against each other appears to have little merit. Moreover, whilst certain processes raise the *profile* of some places over others, the enduring cultural attributes of specific places must be assessed temporarily [present and past] and spatially [local and regional] through cultural knowledge held by members of the local Aboriginal community.

⁷ Rose, James and Watson 2003: 3.

The fundamental basis driving these perspectives is the enduring concern for the land and waterways Aboriginal people inherit from their genealogical kin and or spiritual ancestors. This intangible link between people and places is known as *custodianship*.

Heritage values can be viewed on many scales; from the regional down to the family / clan scale. What is important at the family / clan level may not necessarily be of importance at the regional level. Within whichever scale a heritage place is considered, the value may vary in depth; some places being deeply significant, whilst other places are granted less value. Attributed values also vary over time, seasonal cycles and political and social contexts. No less value is attributed to a place if it is only utilised occasionally or if its significance has only been recently discovered.

It is important to note that heritage themes associated with the pre contact period, with traditional uses of the landscape, continue to be valued today. Shell middens, burial places and stone artefact assemblages for instance, provide a physical link to the past and affirm traditional connections to country. Reaffirmation of traditional relationships with the land and waterways takes place when these places continue to be used today for the same purposes.

5.1.1 Aboriginal perspectives

“.....The land up on the hills and the mountains and the flats and the rivers and the creeks was all connected and, you know, like we were hunting animals up on the high lands. You know, the old fellas were going to rituals up in the mountains. We were hunting animals on the lowlands, we were using the highlands as look outs. We used the rivers and the creeks to get to places” John Dixon 4.11.2009

“.....Camping is very important, it is very important for koori people to be able to camp. They've got to be taught, they've got to be learnt. I sit around with my grandchildren and that, even the grown ups sit there and listen, and I talk about what happened in the old days and all the stories, you can go on forever with stories, about camping with Aboriginal people and that. Well as I said, you can talk, but if you can show its better still. And I always tell everybody that. You can talk and talk and talk, but when you're out there and you're showin and campin and things, you don't have to go into real details of what's sacred and that, you don't talk about that, you go into things that, as a child, you're brought up with. Like how to fish, and gatherin - what to get, and those sort of things, and how to catch things and what you can make, cookin the damper. When you go into like, show the medications, what you get, but you don't tell them what you use them for. They know that, that's getting passed on, I can teach them a little thing, now and again. Now and again I tell them, that's for that, and this is for that, and I show them some scars and I used that to heal this, and that sort of thing.....” Georgina Parsons 25.11.09

".....Aboriginal cultural gathering, its about spearing, gathering shell fish, getting abalone. Its important because I'm an Aboriginal. We been doing it for 90,000 years. I don't want to lose it. I'm very upset if someone tries to stop me. And we helped a lot of these white people here through the war, We've got to teach white and Aboriginal kids, otherwise we're no good for the future. We've got to come together. We've got to have the understanding of black and white, and we've got to learn to live together. And that's why I'm doing what I'm doing. Stops the stigma, it does....". Lionel Mongta 2.2.2010

"...Cultural camping comes close to seasonal working days, cause it brings people together, from the very old to the young. When the old and young get together, they talk and it stimulates their memory. Say if a young fella catches a fish it stimulates the old persons memory 'oh that is a wargo or muckenty'. Culture camps help to maintain the culture in an unscheduled, unstructured way. Even though quota regulation denies us of a ceremonial harvest, we are still able to get enough of any species, to maintain that practise, catching, preparing and eating practises. Don't take the abalone too far from the ocean cause they will fret and toughen up. These laws are still passed on through everyday activities without a planned study or program. ...' Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

".....My family totem is the Tawny Frogmouth owl, and my personal totem is the echidna. The Tawny Frogmouth totem connects me to the Haddigaddi family. I s'pose totems are a spiritual connection to our ancestors who have passed on. They are like messengers, you know - from beyond. It's a belief that people have, it makes us aware that some things happening or about to happen. Sort of like a warning, not always a bad warning, just a warning to make us aware. When I use to visit Auntie Celia and Uncle Joe in Bega, they'd say ' we knew you were coming - the budjarn let us know'. I never told anyone when I when to Bega, I'd just jump on a bus and go!" Mary Duroux 22.4.2010

".....If a koori walks onto a sacred site, they know where they are not supposed to go. Our kids know not to go too far because of snakes, not go too close to the dam with out an adult, we learn them from when they are little, and places where they can't go. Every koori knows that feeling when they come across a place they cant go. Kids can't go around the rocks without an adult; someone would always be fishing and another looking out for the kids. That's the way it has always been. Most Koori people have a good sense and understanding of what other people can't see or feel. It's a cultural thing..." Faith Aldridge 21.10.2009

".....They used to always sit down to pay respect to the tribes and our older people who'd passed away. That was an important ritual. They sat down, had a feed, and they would always pay respect to the elders that were there and the people that had passed on. They'd just say, sit down here, pay a respect, then we'd have

something to eat. That used to go on all the time with the older fellas. No matter if they came from Victoria or up the coast, they'd do it. The elders would always visit family and other traditional people, and they'd talk about things or cultural interests, what was going on here and what was going on there. That always went on....." John Dixon
4.11.2009

"....Well I think its just a natural thing to enjoy, well we like swimming, fishing and diving and all together out there having a good time and having a good feed too. It's a cultural thing, we've always done it, and we'll always do it. That's why the courts will always be hounding our people because we'll always do it. 'We caught this man stealing 250 mutton fish'. I said it was crazy, it was like you saying you were stealing your own food from your own garden. Exactly the same thing. That's how we hunt and gather in the ocean. You've changed the law to make us criminals. Makes me feel angry a lot of the times. I actually worked on the UN Declaration of Indigenous Rights. they're going to adopt it with restraint. We're going to adopt it but we won't take any notice of it, that's what they say.' Ossie Cruse
27.10.2009

".....I am proud of who I am. Being Aboriginal, being one of the original inhabitants of this land, makes me proud. The land provided for my people, it gave them all they needed. I am part of the oldest living culture. What makes me strong is the elders that went before me, they are always with me. I have a European grandparent so I have blue eyes. It is really important, because we are all human beings. I am an Aboriginal in a European world, it is important to know who I am and where I am going.I use to complain that I had no shoes, until I met a man that had no feet. The Rudd apology meant nothing to me. I felt nothing from that apology. What was it for? Taking away country, killing our people and language, giving us small pox and poisoning our water. The government completely changed our culture, we did not ask for that....." Harold Harrison
15.9.2009

".....The old reserves mean a lot to us, particularly to people who grew up on them. At Wallaga Lake, my grandmother is named as one of the people who used to live there too, years ago. Her name was Dolly Walker; my father's mother. My other grandmother was Nellie Bundgel, she was from Bombala. She was a Monaro woman; that's on my dad's side. Even with the reserves, you can go back to all the reserves in the state and find that we have extended family in them. There's an affinity, to all of us, to Aboriginal people..." Ossie Cruse
27.10.2009

"....Although there were a lot of atrocities and things went on that should not have gone on, amongst Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people friendships were formed and them relationships continue

today, so it wasn't all bad. I hate racism cause it makes me remember the time I was in the Bellingen Hospital when the nurse was training me so that I could be obedient for a white family; and at Bairnsdale hiding in the blackberry burrow from the Aboriginal Protection Officer and when the Minister wanted me to take me. I always remember these things. Mum and dad weren't going to let me go. I've had a better life that I could have designed myself. I did things other kids just dream about. As a kid, you don't have the stress of your parents, they are doing all the looking after, it might have been hard for them, but we was ok...." Benjamin Cruse 18.11.2009

5.2 Managing Aboriginal cultural heritage values

In terms of management, an Aboriginal Heritage place may require acknowledgement, or on the other hand physical protection from development pressures. The management approach will thus depend on location, the estimated threats, type of place and level of heritage significance. The management approach, including which legislation to use, will also depend on the presence or absence of material culture.

At the community workshop, a number of primary themes arose in relation to cultural heritage management. Primary objectives and strategies as raised by the Aboriginal community as being the most important have been outlined below.

- Aboriginal involvement through self-representation [increased employment in cultural heritage management].
- Aboriginal control over cultural information
- Protocols of use of cultural information
- Improved communication between all stakeholders
- Improvement of assessment processes
- Protection of a broad range of heritage values
- Maintenance of use and access to cultural places in order to ensure heritage values are conserved.
- Employment of an Aboriginal Liaison Officer

DECCW has recently published information on Aboriginal cultural heritage values as part of the new Aboriginal cultural heritage consultation requirements for proponents (April 2010).

5.2.1 Aboriginal perspectives

".....I reckon Koorie rangers should keep an eye on things. You know, like a lot of parks they go and they keep an eye on it. It'd be no different, you know, if you've got someone there maintaining it, keep it clean and that, that'd be alright. That's a job for someone. I reckon it's very important for a Koorie to do it. Because they're learnin too, they're learnin. Cos we don't know all that, all our heritage and that, and by bein in a job like that, you know, you're gettin the

experience and you're learnin, then you pass that on. that's the way it would run...." John Stewart 5.11.2009

".....There should be koori workers in all areas. Like the inspectors, fishing inspectors, Parks and Wildlife, council definitely. I know there's two positions in Bega now, one's for a trainee to work with Parks and Wildlife to go out into the field, that's an apprentice actually, but the thing is they need drivers licence, that's the only thing though. The other one's to be Aboriginal, and there's another one in carpentry, but that's in, same positions, like same and that's full time. It would be good if there were more Koori workers in mainstream jobs....". Lisa Arvidson 6.11.2009

"...Let's start from the top. The places that are significant to us, the government has to adopt the point that local, state and federal, government have to adopt the point that burial grounds are non-negotiable. This business of moving headstones and building over the top of them don't exist in Aboriginal culture. The bodies of our people are there, and they must remain there until the end of time. Burial grounds are non-negotiable. The bodies of our forefathers will not be disturbed. I know that in European law a cemetery after so many years can be designated as a place for redevelopment. Well ours can't. Ours can't because we say the bodies of our forefathers are still there and they'll remain there till the end of time. That's a spiritual thing. The spirituality of our funerals is something that you should look at. The last three big funerals that I went to was my sister-in-law, there was between 1200 and 1500 people turned up for that, and her husband died just recently, Jeff Tungayi, and between 800 and a 1000 people turned up for that. And most even with people not well known, we know their family, we go there because we want to be with the family too. You may not have known the person, but that's the way we are. The spirituality of our people and our deaths is, well that won't change. And the same thing is when you put them in the ground, that won't change, their resting place is non-negotiable....."
"Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

"...What we're more worried about than anything in that regard is that people can do development without proper process. And that's the most worrying thing, cos you can't turn it around after they've turned the site, after they're already destroyed. ...And then with other areas where we really need the zoning to allow us to have, a share in the relation to the economy of this country. That means zoning for industry that can be culturally appropriate to us, and that's the fishing and shell-work, aquaculture, we need to have that type of zoning applied. Owned by us. And complimentary zoning on other lands beside us, we need to be able to work in that area and we need to recognise the fact..." Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

"...I think number one thing that the council should take notice of, and that is that they should get behind us 100% in the training and the positioning of at least 10 community rangers in this area, in the

Eden area. they'd be policing the areas that are culturally appropriate to us, even the camp sites, they should have positions of authority to police our hunting and gathering areas too, food areas, and they should be the ones who are consulted in any developments along with our site surveyors. They'd be part of the site surveying teams in this area for any developments. We would, at this stage because major part of this area is wilderness, we would do contract work with the National Parks and Wildlife as well as local government. As well as do guide tours along the Bundian way and all of that, looking after sites. That's our major project, we need the support to get those ten rangers in there. Our own young fellas and girls too, be trained as rangers trained under the land council and cultural centre... Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

".....Its very important that we have people feel more comfortable when they see one of their own people in the service, you know, see we got one in centrelink up there, so I was there the other day. We used to have someone in the council. Well they feel that they can relate to their own people, and the people's that's there, they understand, and they listen to them, and they understand their stories and their issues. Even in the others, when they go out, they'll ask for the Aboriginal worker, and it all depends on their experience with white people too, you know, if they have an OK relation with them they don't mind, but if they've had a bad one, they wont talk to them, they'd rather their own." OLGA Manton 28.10.2009

'.....there's only three policies ever in Australia - people don't like me saying this - there's only three policies, one was assassination, kill as many as you can, get rid of them, the other was separation - put them on reserves out of sight, and the last was assimilation - which is the worst - you don't exist as an Aboriginal no more, everything that's culturally appropriate to you will be erased. And we're fighting, struggling now, cos suddenly to be Aboriginal has become popular in the world. Aboriginal painting, Aboriginal dance, Aboriginal song, all this Aboriginal stuff's become popular, and the popularity of that's drawing in big bucks for the Australian government. So that's where we become so popular now in this particular age that we live in but there's still the assimilation, its still the end result. What happens is along the way, its sad the government has allowed it to exist, its this guilt complex that's behind it all, and they won't settle it. They come nearest to settling that guilt complex, when the Prime Minister gave an apology for the stolen generation. It was one of the most moving times in the history of Australia but he should have apologised for theft of the land, that's where the real issue is. If you apologise for the theft of the land and start to move towards making amends there, stolen generation and everything else that came after it would be appeased in the process. But they won't go that far.' Ossie Cruse 27.10.2009

'..... We need people in there to tell us what's going on. Be part of the management of this country. The first thing to do is to listen to what the community wants. The community want to be involved in management. They need employment, which they're not helping us get. Unskilled jobs are only short term. You're always at the bottom of the ladder, you're always at the bottom of the rung. It just goes back to the days when Indigenous people were used to do all the hard labour. Our people have aspirations and high expectations. The shire council under the MOU said that they would negotiate with large employers in the area to get employment for Indigenous people in the area. That has not happened. ..." John Dixon 4.11.2009

5.2.2 Relevant legal framework

Current legislation provides a number of limitations as well as opportunities in relation to the management of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage. Local governments responsibility for heritage management is enshrined within two acts; the *Heritage Act 1977* and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (EP&A) 1979*. Integrated Development [Section 91 EP&A 1979] takes place when a development relates to S58 of the *Heritage Act* or S90 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act*, in which case local and state governments work together. Development in coastal zones are assessed by the Department of Planning [Part 4A *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 [NSW]*], whilst the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (EP&A) 1979* requires heritage assessments of subdivisions.

As identified by English [2202: 9] exploring planning options at a *range of scales* is necessary when determining how heritage places should be taken into account under current land use planning processes in NSW. Options and constraints are present at the strategic planning level as well as on the ground at the operational level. As noted by Goulding the 'creative use of planning instruments may be one way in which to overcome the limits of heritage law' especially when the common assumption that the assessment and management of Aboriginal Heritage requires legislative mandate prevails [2002: 46].

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

The Bega Valley Shire Council's Aboriginal Heritage protection responsibilities are detailed in the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* where the definition of the 'environment' incorporates cultural and social values. Under this act, the Bega Shire Council's Local Environmental Plans [LEP] require a Heritage Impact Statement if a development is proposed at a place of known or potential Aboriginal heritage significance. If required, the Aboriginal Heritage Statement is to be submitted with the Development Application.

As a result of the 2005 ministerial directions under Section 117(2) of this act, the Minister for Planning has directed Councils to exercise functions under

Divisions 4 and 5 of Part 3 of the Act in relation to the preparation of a draft local environmental plan. Direction No.9 applies to all councils and relates to the Conservation and Management of Environmental and Indigenous Heritage. The objectives of this section are to:

- To conserve items, places and precincts of environmental heritage
- To conserve the heritage significance of existing significant fabric, relics, Aboriginal objects, settings and views associated with the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas.
- To conserve archaeological sites.
- To conserve places of Aboriginal heritage significance.

Development Control Plans [DCP] can provide guidelines on a broad range of develop issues, some of which may be useful in the ongoing management of identified Aboriginal Heritage Places.

Heritage Act 1977 [NSW]

In terms of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage, the Heritage Act can be applied to post 1950 'historic sites'. The 1999 amendments to the NSW Heritage Act passed the responsibility for identifying, assessing and managing items of local significance with local government. The *Local Government Heritage Guidelines* have been prepared to provide a better understanding of local government heritage management for all those who have some responsibility in this area. Local councils play an important role in heritage management by identifying, assessing and managing heritage places and items in their local government area. They fulfil their role through the preparation of local environmental plans, development control, strategic planning, heritage promotion and education. All of these activities are conducted under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act.

The NSW *Heritage Act 1977* offers protection to heritage places *if* these places have been assessed and in turn listed on the State Heritage Register. Like Aboriginal Place nominations under the NPW Act 1974 outlined below, the process of listing places of Aboriginal heritage value on the State Heritage Register identified within localised heritage impact assessments, is time consuming.

Although a number of significance criteria may apply to places identified in the Bega Aboriginal Heritage Study, namely a) an item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history and criteria d) an item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW for social, cultural or spiritual reasons, this legislation does not provide adequate protection to the multifaceted, intangible nature of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 [NSW]

In NSW heritage laws have evolved with the aim of protecting the archaeological remains of the pre contact period. As such, some of the heritage values identified during the Bega Aboriginal Heritage Study are not

protected under state laws. Although the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* [as amended] applies to all land tenure types across the state, it falls short of protecting Aboriginal Heritage values other than those defined as 'objects'. By legislative definition a object is any deposit, object or material evidence relating to indigenous and non European habitation of the area that comprises New South Wales, being habitation both prior to and concurrent with the occupation of that area by persons of European extraction, and included Aboriginal remains⁸. In this act Aboriginal 'objects' are protected regardless of their existence being 'registered' prior to their discovery / unearthing during development construction.

So although the AHIMS registers sites relating to Aboriginal Dreaming and Ceremony [feature category 1], as well as Aboriginal resource and gathering places [feature category 2], these places, even if registered, are not protected under the act if they exist in isolation from any physical remains. In this way, landscape features containing cultural significance, are not protected because they do not constitute a man made object⁹.

An Aboriginal Heritage place associated with non-archaeological, non-material features, can be protected under the NPW Act 1974¹⁰, if it has been assessed and recognised by the Minister as an 'Aboriginal Place'. As highlighted by Goulding the highly methodical and protracted nature of Aboriginal Place assessments [for potential Aboriginal Place declarations] means that the process is not easily applicable to intangible heritage place identified within localised heritage impact assessments [2002: 46].

NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983

The *NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* recognises that the State of NSW was traditionally owned and occupied by Aboriginal people and that land is an integral aspect of Aboriginal culture. It is illegal to disturb, damage, deface, or destroy an object or Aboriginal place without consent from the NPWS. Aboriginal Sites Officers at Local Aboriginal Lands Councils undertake Aboriginal Heritage Assessments [as described above]. The Local Aboriginal Land Councils statutory functions in relation to Aboriginal Heritage protection are detailed in section 52[1][m] of the *NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983*.

Native Title Act 1993

The Native Title Act provides for the statutory recognition of Aboriginal people's traditional title to land, it does not allow for the transfer of title even when Native Title rights are recognised. Indigenous Land Use Agreements [ILUA] are also provided for under the *Native Title Act 1993*, although a beneficial process in terms of Aboriginal land management strategies, there are no

⁸ NPW Act 1974, Section 5.

⁹ There is however merit in registering non-relic sites on the AHIMS if local government protocols are triggered by registered sites.

¹⁰ NPW Act 1974, Section 84.

registered Indigenous Land Use Agreements in the Eurobodalla Shire. An indigenous land use agreement (ILUA) is an agreement about native title and the use and management of land and waters made between one or more native title groups and other people.

An ILUA can be a most practical way to resolve native title issues. It allows people to make agreements about how land and waters are used without necessarily entering into the usual native title process. An ILUA may be a stepping-stone on the way to a native title determination, be part of the determination process or it may suit the parties better than a determination. ILUAs may be made about matters such as mining developments, sharing land and exercising native title rights and interests, and compensation. By making agreements, Indigenous Australians may gain benefits such as employment, compensation and recognition of their native title¹¹.

A step down from an ILUA, are Process Agreements, Framework Agreements and Memorandums of Understandings. These are all possible under the Native Title Act. These documents allow for parties to state their intentions [service delivery etc], their acknowledgments and respects [custodians of country] and outline management objectives [cultural heritage, town planning].

To date all previous Native Title applications within the Bega Valley Shire have either been withdrawn or failed to comply with registration tests. There are no current native title determinations within the study area and thus no statutorily defined 'native title holders'. As with the use of other statutory terms, people may still use the term Native title Holder, as a self defined label. There is one registered Indigenous Land Use Agreements in the Bega Valley Shire; the 'Twofold Bay ILUA' covering the multipurpose wharf.

Comprehensive Coastal Assessment 2006

Undertaken by the NSW Department of Planning, the NSW Comprehensive Coastal Assessment [CCA] involved a cultural heritage data audit [CCA # 10] and broad scale cultural values mapping [CCA #26]. One of the twelve maps produced relates to cultural areas of interest in the south coast region [Local Government boundaries within that region are detailed] and was utilised as a planning tool for the development of the *South Coast Regional Strategy 2006 – 2031* as detailed below.

South Coast Regional Strategy 2006 - 2031

¹¹ http://www.nntt.gov.au/publications/1021435535_10212.html. See for instance the Githabul Peoples Indigenous Land Use Agreement, northern NSW.
<http://www.atns.net.au/agreement.asp?EntityID=3992>

Devised by the NSW Government Department of Lands to guide the development of new LEPs and DCP for the Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla and Bega Valley local government areas. These plans will in turn guide future developments across the region.

One of the identified regional 'environmental' challenges, to improve the understanding of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage values and to be able to incorporate this information into land use planning and natural resource management processes, is complemented by the strategy to ensure that Aboriginal heritage values are protected and that development in significant cultural landscapes is limited [NSW 2007: 5, 9]. An identified outcome is to identify and map Aboriginal cultural heritage to assist in the conservation and maintenance of Aboriginal cultural heritage amidst the predicted urban growth and development [32]. Actions outlined include [33]:

- Councils are to ensure that Aboriginal cultural and community values are considered in the future planning and management of the local government area;
- The Department of Planning and Councils will review the scope and quality of the existing statutory lists of heritage items and ensure that all places of significance are included in the heritage schedules of local environmental plans;
- The cultural heritage values of major regional centres and major towns which are to be the focus of urban renewal projects, will be reviewed with the aim of protecting cultural heritage;
- Local environmental plans will include appropriate provisions to protect coastal towns, along with associated natural and cultural landscapes. The aim will be to protect conservation Aboriginal values, amongst other things, to reinforce with economic value for tourism.

Southern Rivers CMA Catchment Action Plan 2007

The Catchment Management Authority Catchment Action Plan, which incorporates other plans relating to the catchment, for instance estuary management plans, in order to achieve long-term sustainable environmental management throughout the catchment. Management target [#C3] identifies how indigenous communities will be better engaged in natural resource management planning and resources and opportunities to "Care for Country" are increased. As custodians of the land, Aboriginal people will be actively involved in natural resource planning and in land management on the ground.

5.2.3 Ways to recognise Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

The Aboriginal community has expressed a strong desire for the broader population of the Bega region to understand and appreciate some important themes including the presence of ancient Dreamtime pathways and travelling routes beneath many modern day highways; the Aboriginal origins of place names; the historical and cultural importance of places

associated with Government Reservations and the economic contribution Aboriginal people have made to the development of the Bega Shire.

Recognition can be achieved through a combination of interpretive signage, oral history publication, Development Control Planning, the public display of a locally relevant Aboriginal cultural heritage timeline and the development of a place name project.

Underlying the actual work undertaken by Aboriginal people across the Bega Shire since the introduction of colonial systems is a number of key historical factors, otherwise known as obstacles, which serve to highlight why the contributions made by Aboriginal people were so significant.

- Much of the work was undertaken in exchange for little or no wages and if a payment was made it was usually in the form of rations [basic foods] such as flour, sugar and tea; or in exchange for a place to live or merely a portion of land on which to camp.
- During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the government did not provide assistance to Aboriginal people, and official policy ensured that Aboriginal people were segregated from the European colonisers. So despite Aboriginal people being classified as non-citizens, they self-determinedly forged alliances and found work.
- Despite the fact that it was not compulsory for Aboriginal people to serve at WAR, Aboriginal soldiers fought for Australia. Upon return from serving, many Aboriginal servicemen found that because they were not legally classified as citizens in their own country, they could not go to the local pub with their fellow [non Aboriginal servicemen] and order a beer, without acting illegally.
- In the seasonal picking industry the majority of pickers were Aboriginal.

Seasonal farming work was consistent with the traditional transient way of life for Aboriginal people. This type of work encouraged the maintenance of kinship links and ensured cultural links to the land were maintained. Entire families travelled along the coast to main picking centres such as the Bodalla, Nerrigundah, Tuross River regions¹². The Aboriginal labour force supported the development and ongoing success of the seasonal vegetable industry across the Bega Shire. At the beginning of the 1900s, most if not all of the seasonal pickers were Aboriginal, until other 'cheap labour' forces immigrated to the region.

The Aboriginal community were, and continue to be, involved in the sawmill industry; which in the main employed the male members of the community. Families gathered at camps adjacent to sawmills, across the region. Most often the female members of the family found work at nearby farms, where children could also participate. The participation of Aboriginal families in the fishing industry is found in varying intensities the length of the coastline. From

¹² Aboriginal labour on the south coast has been investigated by Castel, R. and J. Hagan (1978). *Dependence and Independence: Aboriginal Workers on the Far South Coast on NSW 1920-75. Who are our enemies? Racism and the Working Class in Australia*. A. Curthoys and A. Markus. Sydney, The Australian Society for the Study of Labour History: 158-171.

catching fish to feed a family, to trading fish for butter and bread and hauling in tonnes of fish and selling at a marketable value. Each of these endeavours allowed Aboriginal families to remain close to their traditional waterways and adjacent lands, and maintain elements of traditional customary practises. Throughout this project, participants consistently identified as 'ocean people', 'fish eating people', with primary natural resource collection taking place along watercourses and gullies, and less emphasis on the vegetation of the hinterland.

The production of a time line incorporating the main historical themes of contact history has been a popular concept raised at the community workshop and small focus group sessions. The timeline can be found in appendix two of this report.

In accordance with instructions from Aboriginal knowledge holders, the time line depicts the shifts associated with colonisation and decolonisation processes; the imposition of colonial rule onto a traditional society guided by ancient customary laws, followed a century later by the movement to self-determination. As such, key themes are represented at various points of history, for instance spiritual / cultural places, contact and conflict places feature in the pre to early contact period when the two worldviews collided, whereas living and work places appear in the mid 1850s and continue onto the present day.

Although not widely acknowledged, many place names in the Bega have traditional Aboriginal origins. Named places and associated traditions have been handed down by generations of Aboriginal people through oral history and provide a connection with the ancestral past where the names where, according to Aboriginal mythology, the names were established. European development in the region had a devastating impact on the use and transmission of traditional Aboriginal languages. Aboriginal names are frequently contested due to the current knowledge of local languages and approaches to historical contexts.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Undertake cultural heritage mapping project in partnership with Aboriginal custodians, DECCW and BVSC with the aim of relocating recorded AHIMS sites, locating oral and documented history places and increase employment / involvement of Aboriginal people in Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management.

Giving consideration to the current management of AHIMS data it is recommended that the three relevant LALCS, Merrimans, Bega and Eden, work with DECCW and the Department of Planning to:

- Undertake fieldwork to relocate recorded AHIMS sites, where access is possible, to check accuracy and overlaps and recording new sites. A similar process was initiated by the Aboriginal Heritage Office [AHO] in North Sydney, with good results [per comm. Dave Watts and

Geoff Hunt 19.4.2010]. Community consultation and a training program should underpin this process.

- LALCs and DECCW to co operatively map Lot and DPs containing AHIMS sites. The BVSC could then be provided with a list and map of places of Aboriginal Heritage significance, as per Lot and DP. This way, cultural information can stay with DECCW and the LALCs, whilst BVSC can action the MOU between the Council and the LALCs that requires Council to notify the LALCs when DAs are submitted in culturally significant areas [currently they do not know where these areas are]. DECCW have indicated that they would support the plan to undertake more comprehensive assessments of those areas recommended for Heritage Conservation Areas¹³.
- Develop a broad scale regional archaeological predictive model to afford protection to sites that have not been recorded. It is noted that all Aboriginal objects are already protected in NSW regardless of whether they have been recorded or not¹⁴.
- As per the Aboriginal Heritage Office AHO [North Sydney] model, coordinate cultural heritage management across a number of LGA through a central office giving recognition to the fact that Aboriginal cultural heritage is not confined to government boundaries. For instance, Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla and Bega Valley Shire Local Governments could co jointly employ one or a number of Aboriginal Heritage Officers, considering the Yuin tribal area extends from the Shoalhaven in the north to Cape Howe in the south.

¹³Per comm. Jackie Taylor DECCW 2.8.2010.

¹⁴ Per comm. Jackie Taylor DECCW 2.8.2010.

2. Schedule Aboriginal Heritage Conservation Areas in Bega Valley Shire Local Environmental Plan (LEP).

A number of places identified by the Bega Valley Aboriginal Heritage Study should be subjected to a comprehensive assessment, including mapping, to determine each place's local heritage value (in accordance with the heritage significance assessment criteria under NSW Heritage Act 1977). The Aboriginal Heritage Conservation Area classification will ensure automatic Aboriginal community consultation and heritage assessment regarding development applications impacting on these highly sensitive cultural areas in the same manner as applies to European heritage conservation areas and minimise the risk of unintended damage as a result of new development.

It is recommended that the following places be further assessed for scheduling in the Bega Valley LEP as Aboriginal Heritage Conservation Areas. Archaeological survey is required in conjunction with determining the extent of significance:

- Wallaga Lake foreshore and lake entrance;
- Stoney Creek Camp, Angledale Rd, Bega;
- The Grange conflict, Pambula;
- Nungatta Station conflict, Nungatta;
- Bega Historical Reserve #85253, Bega;
- Tathra Historical Aboriginal Reserve #20, Kalaru;
- Cohen's Lake Historical Aboriginal Reserve #21, Kalaru.

Existing and future Aboriginal Places should also be listed as HCA in the LEP as a way to further their protection. Existing Aboriginal Places in the study area are:

- Bermagui Waterhole AP;
- Merrimans Island AP;
- Biamanga AP.

Community consultation should underpin this process. A public awareness / educational program should also be pursued in correspondence with the LEP process. DECCW may be able to offer strategic advice in relation to this.

3 Form a 'Culturally Sensitive Landscape' section for The Bega Valley Shire Development Control Plan (DCP).

It is recommended that a specific chapter on Aboriginal heritage form part of Council's DCP, incorporating the concept of Aboriginal Culturally Sensitive Lands (ACSL). DECCW would support the inclusion of a specific Aboriginal heritage chapter in the DCP to identify assessment and consultation requirements for development within the LGA¹⁵. This would assist Council in adequately protecting items not suitable for LEP Heritage Item or Heritage Conservation Area status. In most instances, a number of Heritage Conservation Areas will be located within any given Aboriginal Culturally Sensitive Landscape. The Department of Planning considers the less tangible spatial and spiritual elements are better addressed in the DCP, which offers greater flexibility.

Given the general and broad-ranging nature of spiritual heritage values, it is suggested the clause not invoke automatic consultation or overly elaborate assessment processes but generally be used to improve awareness that such areas have cultural sensitivity and seek for new development and works to respect such values. The following places / themes suit this classification [all require mapping]:

- Traditional Aboriginal travelling routes [as per Blay and Cruse 2003] especially those listed as highly sensitive in Blay's appendix H.
- Narara Creek and Beauty Point area;
- Bermagui township and River;
- Wallagoot;
- Hill Street Aboriginal Reserve, Bermagui
- Mumbulla Mountain - Biamanga / Dr George cultural landscape
- Murrabrine Creek inter tribal battle.
- Bega showground intertribal battle;
- The Murrah, Bega
- Murrays Flat, Bega
- Tarraganda, Bega
- North Bega
- Black Range Bega;
- Black Fellows Lagoon, Kalaru;
- Kiah River and Inlet;
- Meeting places including 'the willow tree', and 'the Junction' Bega.
- Grand Hotel intertribal battle, Bega
- Pambula River;
- Curalo Lake, Eden
- Mogareeka Inlet / Bega River mouth
- Pambula River middens and camps.
- Kiah House intertribal battle
- Boydtown;
- Davidson Whaling Station

¹⁵ Per comm. Jackie Taylor DECCW 2.8.2010

4 Aboriginal Place Nominations

Preliminary community consultations indicate that the following places have the potential to become declared Aboriginal Places.

- Cohen's Lake Historical Aboriginal Reserve, Tathra.
- Camel Rock Public Reserve, Murrinna Point.

Further consultations with the Aboriginal community are required for both of these areas. Given that Gulaga National Park, nearby Camel Rock Reserve, is managed co-operatively between Aboriginal Owners, government and others, this area could also potentially be incorporated into an extension of Gulaga National Park.

5 Development of the Bega Valley Aboriginal heritage timeline

The Bega Valley Shire Aboriginal Heritage Time line was developed throughout stage 3a of this study. The time line reveals a broad spectrum of local heritage values [living /camping places, work places, places associated with early contact with European explorers, birthplaces and meeting places] and if publically displayed, would assist in a greater appreciation and acknowledgement of local cultural heritage values. It is recommended that a public artistic display of the Time Line be developed for use as a community education tool promoting a broad definition of Aboriginal heritage values across the shire. Fixed and mobile versions could be established for use in schools, public areas, and libraries.

6 Research into the habitat of totemic species as a way to acknowledge and conserve related Aboriginal heritage values and increase participation of Aboriginal people's involvement in Natural Resource Management.

Although information pertaining to personal, family and tribal totems largely remains restricted, it is possible for environmental scientists and Aboriginal custodians to work collaboratively to identify the primary breeding grounds of, for instance, the Black Duck.

Currently operational GIS can cater for environmental features, which in turn would assist in the conservation [and acknowledgement] of interrelated totemic species. DCP processes can cater for environmental types, and should be able to offer protection to totemic species and their habitat. Further research is required in this area, including the correlation between totem species and threatened species. It has also been suggested that a totem related project incorporate an art mural in conjunction with the heritage time line [recommendation 6 above].

7 Acknowledgment of the broad range of local cultural heritage values through the publication of an oral history book.

Funding has been received for the development of an oral history publication as a way to acknowledge the broad range of local Aboriginal cultural heritage values. It is recommended that the oral history book cover

a number of key themes as well as detail some of the early documented accounts of the area, given these detailed descriptions are not featured in the oral record. It is recommended that be included in the book, including:

- Early Aboriginal camping places
- Aboriginal Reservations / Segregation
- Seasonal work places [picking, sawmilling, whaling, fishing etc]
- Seasonal work camps, particularly along the Bega River.
- Cultural maintenance – fishing, story telling
- Old pathways and trails

The table in appendix one identifies which areas suit an oral history book.

8 Acknowledgment of first contact places - Interpretive signage

Interpretive signage should be placed across the shire to highlight localised Aboriginal cultural heritage values, particularly in relation to places of first contact. A great deal of remarkable information was recorded about local Aboriginal people when settlers and others first arrived. The table in appendix one identifies which areas require interpretive signage.

9 Aboriginal place name project

Formal recognition of the Aboriginal origins of place names across the shire is recommended, for instance, Ponebine = Wonboyn. 20th Century place names also contain Aboriginal Heritage values, for instance, 'Reggie's Point' on the south side of Wallaga Lake named after Aboriginal man Reggie Walker and Blackfellows Lake east of Bega, previously known as Cohen's Lake after the Aboriginal man George Cohen.

The Geographical Names Board advises that they do not fund naming research projects, however they would facilitate / endorse naming projects. The placenames application form is at <http://www.gnb.nsw.gov.au/info/>, which the next step after the research phase.

10 Areas requiring further research

The following places contain extensive archaeological values, but are not accompanied by detailed oral or documented historical accounts. It is recommended that these places be further examined in terms of contemporary cultural associations:

- Merimbula township and lake;
- Wallagoot Lake
- Nadgee
- Nelsons Beach and Lagoon;

The following places are known through documented and oral history as containing Aboriginal cultural heritage values, but do not contain recorded archaeological sites. It is recommended that these places be the subject of archaeological surveys, prior to determining management arrangements:

- Wandella;
- Cobargo township;
- Dry River, Quaama;
- Barragga
- Eden Cemetery.
- Mt Imlay

11 Update Council's website: my place/ yuin.htm

It is recommended that the Bega Valley Shire 'My Place' web site in relation to 'Yuin' be updated, given the richness of the information collected throughout the course of this project. It is further recommended that an Aboriginal person be engaged to undertake this task, under specific program funding, as community consultations / information agreement protocols would need to be undertaken. The Commonwealth Department of Environment, Water and Heritage have the relevant funding under their 'Sharing our Heritage' program.

12 Future pathways and trail program

In partnership with the Aboriginal community, John Blay/ BJ Cruse [researchers and historian] and neighbouring local governments, the 2005 research and recommendations relating to old pathways and trails across the Bega Valley Region, should be integrated into future planning [see DCP recommendation above] and Aboriginal cultural heritage programming [see oral history publication recommendation above]. This report details many important recommendations, which remain relevant today.

13 Access to land for cultural camping and resource collection

The Bega Valley Shire should support Aboriginal aspirations to access and utilise public lands for cultural purposes, including camping and collection of natural resources. A number of places, which, through this study, have been highlighted for such purposes include:

- A place on the Kiah River reserved for public recreation - the area is locally known as the 'Whale Spit' or 'Mewtreys'.

14 Aboriginal participation in Natural Resource Management

As per research undertaken by Hunt et al [2009], Aboriginal cultural heritage and natural resource management are interrelated and provide a culturally appropriate avenue for Aboriginal people to become involved in the local economy. Many opportunities and restrictions for Aboriginal participation in NRM exist at the local government level, depending on LEP conditions and the networks and partnerships formed between the relevant players. A number of actions are required in order to facilitate this potential:

- A summary of the council's plans of management for public lands is required to ascertain opportunities for the Aboriginal community in NRM on these lands;
- Communication networks need to be established between the Aboriginal community and the council within the region to improve Aboriginal involvement in NRM;
- An assessment of LEP zonings on LALCs lands is required to identify NRM issues, potentials and restrictions.
- Formal processes should be established to enable the Aboriginal community to participate in the development of management plans for council managed lands; they are established and or renewed. This is particularly relevant to plan of management where little is know about the Aboriginal values of the land being managed.

15 Co-operative management of cultural heritage material held at local museums and historical societies.

A number of local museums and historical societies hold Aboriginal cultural heritage items in their collections. The Bega Historical Society are willing to work with the local Aboriginal community to seek funding to allow for the co-operative management of their collection through the actioning of the recommendations provided to them by historian Kate Waters [2006].

7 REFERENCES CITED

Aldridge s, Stewart L and Norman S 2008 Contemporary Aboriginal Attitudes to the Pambula River: Report to the National Parks and Wildlife Service. October 2008. Aboriginal Culture Centre Monaroo Bobberrer Gudu Archive Workers.

Bega Valley Shire Council 2008. Memorandum of Understanding between Bega, Eden and Merrimans Local Aboriginal Land Councils and the Native Title Holders and Bega Valley Shire Council, Bega Valley Shire Council, NSW.

Blay and Cruse [2006] Bega Valley Region Old Pathways and trails mapping project. Prepared for the Bega Valley Regional Aboriginal Heritage Study.

Boot P G [2002] Didthul, Bhundoo, Gulaga and Wadbilliga : an archaeological study of the Aboriginals of the New South Wales South Coast Hinterland. AIATSI MS 4351.

Byrne D et al [2001] Social Significance; a discussion paper. Sydney NSW, National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Byrne, D. and Nugent, M. 2004. Mapping Attachment: A Spatial Approach to Aboriginal Post-Contact Heritage, NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, Sydney.

Castel, R. and J. Hagan (1978). Dependence and Independence: Aboriginal Workers on the Far South Coast on NSW 1920-75. Who are our enemies? Racism and the Working Class in Australia. A. Curthoys and A. Markus. Sydney, The Australian Society for the Study of Labour History: 158-171.

Clarke, P. 2003, *Where the ancestors walked*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney.

Commonwealth Government [1998] NATIONAL REPORT VOLUME 2 - 10.4 FRONTIER PERIOD: DISEASE AND VIOLENCE.

Costermans, L [2002] Native Trees and Shrubs of Southeastern Australia. Reed: New Holland.

Cruse, Stewart and Norman [2005] Mutton Fish: The Surviving Culture of Aboriginal People and Abalone on the South Coast of NSW, Aboriginal Studies Press.

DECCW (April 2010). Aboriginal cultural heritage consultation requirements for _____ proponents. See website link: <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/licences/consultation.htm>

D'Arcy, D Southern Star Open Column 1922 in Pinoneer Families and Personalities.

Dixon 2009 Mogareeka Tribe - King Nelba Yukembruk Merung Ngarigo Consultancy PTY LTD.

Donaldson S [2006] Eurobodalla Aboriginal Heritage Study [Stage Two] Stories About the Eurobodalla by Aboriginal People: Eurobodalla Aboriginal Heritage Study. Eurobodalla Shire Council, Department of Conservation and Environmental and Cultural Services, NSW.

Dowling ACJ 11 August 1837 'R Vs Hall 1837 – verdict not guilty' in The Australian 15 August 1837. The case is also noted in the Proceedings of the Supreme Court Vol 141, State Records of NSW, 2/3326/Page 1.

Dowling [2008] Cohen's Lake Reserve Draft Report for Yukembruk Merung Ngarigo Consultancy PTY LTD.

Eades, D K [1976] The Dharawal and Dhurga Languages of the NSW Coast, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, Canberra.

Egloff B, Peterson N and Wesson S [2001] Biamanga National Park and Gulaga National Aboriginal Owners Research Report, Report to the Office of the Registrar, Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (AIATSIS).

Elias S, 1986 Tales of the Far South Coast Vol 3. Bega Valley Shire Bicentennial Committee. Kingfisher.

English A 2002 The Sea and the Rock gives us a feed: mapping and managing wild resource use places. National Parks & Wildlife Service, New South Wales.

Goodall [1996] Invasion to Embassy: Land in Aboriginal Politics in NSW 1770 – 1982. Sydney, Allen and Unwin in association with Black Books pp 147 – 8.

Goulding, M 2002. Cultural places, contested spaces: A study of Aboriginal peoples' historical attachments to landscape. Coffs Harbour Region Cultural Heritage Study – Stage 2. Report to the Cultural Heritage Division, National Parks & Wildlife Service, New South Wales.

Goulding M and Griffiths C 2004 Bega Valley Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study Stage 3: A report to the Department of Environment Climate Change and Water.

Griffiths C 2003 Bega Valley Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study Stage 2: A report to the Department of Environment Climate Change and Water and Bega Valley Shire Council.

Grootaert C 1998 Social Capital: the missing link? The World Bank Social Capital Initiative Working Paper #3.

Hale H 1846 [1968] Ethnography and Philology, Lea and Blanchard, Philadelphia [re-issued by The Gregg Press, Ridgewood, New York.

Hardwick, RJ [2001] Nature's Larder: A field Guide to the Native Food Plants of the NSW South Coast. Homosapien Books, NSW.

Howitt 1904 [1996] The Native Tribes of South –East Australia, Macmillan & Co London.

Hunt, J., Altman, J.C. and May, K. (2009) Social benefits of Aboriginal engagement in Natural Resource Management. CAPEPR Working Paper 60/2009. Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Australian National University.

ICOMOS [1999] Burra Charter: The Australian ICOMOS Charter for the conservation of places of cultural significance. Australia ICOMOS.

Kabaila P [2005] "High country Footprints: Aboriginal pathways and movement in the high country of south eastern Australia. Recognising the ancient paths beside modern highways". AIATSIS, Canberra.

Lampert R [1971] Coastal Aborigines of southeastern Australia. In Mulvaney, DJ and Golson, J [eds] *Aboriginal man and the environment in Australia*, ANU, Canberra, pp 115 – 132.

Mathews R H [1902] The Thoorga Language, Queensland Geographical Journal, Vol 17, pp 49 – 73.

McCarthy F D "Trade" in Aboriginal Australia [Part 1]. In *Oceania* Vol X 1939 pp405 - 438. Part 2 In *Oceania* Vol IV 1939 pp 81 - 104. The Australian National Research Council, NSW.

McGregor, C 2002 While There's Leaves in the Forest. Ginninderra Press, ACT.

McKenna, M 2002. Looking for Blackfella's Point: an Australian History of Place. University of New South Wales Press.

Mulvaney, J and Kamminga, J. 1999 Prehistory of Australia, Smithsonian, Washington.

Oakley.B, 2001. Indigenous Heritage Assessment Pambula River Midden Site Ben Boyd National Park Pambula NSW. Report to NPWS Merrimbula.

Rose D, James D and Watson C [2003] Indigenous Kinship with the Natural World in NSW, NSW NPWS.

Rose D [2007] Reports from a wild country: ethics for decolonisation.

Slater, Slater and Slater [1995] The Slater field guide to Australian Birds. Lansdowne, NSW.

Reference

Sullivan, M and Hughes P 2006 Assessment of the Pambula River Estuary Shell Midden, Far South Coast NSW. Unpublished report for NPWS, Merimbula

Weatherhead A [1891] Alexander Weatherhead diaries 'Leaves from my life'.

Weir, J. 2000. 'Aboriginal land ownership and joint management of National Parks in NSW', *Indigenous Law Bulletin*, 5 (3): 20–22.

Wesson S [2000] An Historical Atlas of the Aborigines of Eastern Victoria and Far South-eastern New South Wales, Monash Publications in Geography and Environmental Science # 53, Monash University, Melbourne.

APPENDIX ONE: SUMMARY OF ABORIGINAL HERITAGE PLACES

APPENDIX TWO: BEGA HERITAGE TIME LINE

APPENDIX THREE: INFORMATION AGREEMENT BEGA VALLEY ABORIGINAL HERITAGE STUDY

PURPOSE FOR WHICH THE INFORMATION WILL BE COLLECTED: The Bega Valley Shire Council in conjunction with the Department of Environment & Climate Change, Local Aboriginal Land Councils and community groups are conducting an Aboriginal Heritage Study of the Bega Valley Local Government Area aimed at exploring ways to acknowledge, maintain and protect Aboriginal heritage values

Through the collection of oral histories places of social, cultural, spiritual, economic and historical value can be documented. Information collected will be used to inform local government planning processes and maybe published at a future date, for wider public accessibility.

PUBLIC / CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION: Information will be treated in accordance with instructions received by individual informants. Information described as confidential will remain confidential. Information described as public, will be available to the public.

INDIGENOUS CULTURAL AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS: The Bega Valley Shire Council acknowledges the cultural and intellectual property rights of Aboriginal people whose cultural stories are featured in this report.

COPY RIGHT: Information collected for this project remains the property of the informants. Without written permission from individual informants information may not be used for purposes other than those agreed [see purpose above]. The Bega Valley Shire Council and Aboriginal informants will jointly hold the copyright to any publicly available information collected for the purposes of this project.

RETURN OF INFORMATION: all information collected for the purpose of this project will be returned to the informant, including any photos.

ABORIGINAL INFORMANT

INFORMATION COLLECTOR:

Name:
Contact:

Name:
Contact:

INFORMANT INSTRUCTIONS

THE INFORMATION WILL BE RECORDED USING [circle]:

Audio camera video written

APPROVAL FOR FUTURE USES OF THE INFORMATION [circle]:

A publicly available report YES / NO
A published booklet YES / NO
Incorporated into BVSC planning processes [eg LEP, DCP] YES / NO
Provided to participating LALCS [Eden, Merrimans, Bega] YES / NO

RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS TO THE INFORMATION [circle]:

Gender tribal family LALC OTHER

PERMISSION TO USE INFORMATION PREVIOUSLY COLLECTED: I do / do not give permission for information previously collected to become incorporated into the publicly accessible Bega Valley Aboriginal Heritage Study. Information previously collected related to the Bega Valley Aboriginal Heritage Study / [please name other project]:

SIGNATURES

Signature of information collector: Date:

Signature of Aboriginal informant: Date:

INFORMANT'S NEXT OF KIN?

Name:
Contact: