



# marli riverpark

An Interpretation Plan for the Swan and Canning Riverpark

The Final Report

April 2014



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Please be aware that this Plan includes images and names of deceased people that may cause sadness or distress to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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*“An interpretation plan is a management tool that provides a strategy for transmitting messages about the cultural heritage values of a heritage place to visitors. It identifies the most significant themes and stories about a place and the media most suited to exploring them.*

*The plan also provides a framework for managing visitors, providing them with a memorable and enriching experience while also ensuring the heritage values, including significant fabric, of the place are upheld. It also helps ensure that the interpretive strategies recommended are appropriate to the place.*

*An interpretation plan is expected to articulate the cultural heritage significance of the Place, the aims and objectives of the interpretation and a financing and implementation schedule. Its specific content will be affected by the nature of the Place and the ultimate aims of the interpretation.”*

*National Trust of Australia (WA)  
Interpretation Planning Guidelines*

# STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH TO INTERPRETATION

## NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (WA)

The principal aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation. The place should be presented as a space for public discourse and invite the visitor to share the excitement of thinking about the past, the present and the future. The visitor experience should thus be one of discovery or inspired insight. The local visitor should experience a degree of self-revelation while those from further afield should enjoy a richer insight into the place, the State and the country.

Interpretation should aim to present the whole rather than a part. It should resonate with voices that encourage open-minded consideration of different perspectives. The interpretation should celebrate the significance of the place by promoting the exploration of knowledge and ideas and by providing a dynamic forum for discussion and reflection. When challenging convention and encouraging debate, the interpretation may sometimes be controversial but never dull.

Interpretation is not mere information - it is revelation based upon information. But the information upon which it is based must be thematically organised, based on rigorous research and specific to each place. The interpretation should aim to relate to the place being displayed to something within the visitor.

Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts. Interpretive techniques should be appropriate to the place and the various, or multiple, audiences. They should reflect a contemporary perspective and clearly distinguish themselves from the historic fabric, artefacts or reality. They should be imaginative, reflecting the best in creativity and ingenuity.

There are, however, many options for interpreting a place. There is no single right way. The philosophical approach outlined above should be used to explore all the options<sup>1</sup>.

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# INTRODUCTION

In February 2013 the Swan River Trust commissioned the National Trust of Australia (WA) to prepare an Interpretation Plan for the Swan and Canning Riverpark to make accessible to residents and visitors the cultural heritage values (natural, Aboriginal and historic/built) of the Derbarl Yerrigan and Djarlgarro Beelier/the Swan and Canning Rivers. This Plan is the result of a 14 month investigation by a specialist interpretation team.

An appointed Noongar Advisory Panel worked with the team over the duration of the project to identify specific Whadjuk cultural outcomes as well as ways of sharing Aboriginal culture with the broader community.

Non-Aboriginal community representatives from business, cultural and educational institutions and officers from the twenty one Local Government Authorities involved in caring for the riverpark's heritage also contributed extensively to the resources and ideas represented in this Plan, while many others contributed informally during the process.

The Plan is underlined by recent reports including the initial Statement of Significance for the Swan River (2009), recommendations from the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (2010) an audit of heritage values associated with the Swan and Canning Rivers (2011), the River Protection Strategy (draft/2012) and the Swan and Canning Rivers Trails Master Plan (2013).

Native Title negotiations between the Noongar people and the State of Western Australia, a review of heritage legislation, amalgamation of local government authorities and a new direction in management of the riverpark continued to unfold during the development of this Plan and the outcomes from these initiatives will be critical to its implementation.

In addition, several new major developments are providing focal points and renewed connection with the Rivers including Elizabeth Quay due for completion in 2015. The \$2.6billion project 'will return the city's focus to the Swan River and enhance Perth's reputation as one of the most liveable cities in the world'<sup>2</sup>.

In 2014 there are 450 identified heritage sites in the riverpark<sup>3</sup> including the Rivers themselves. This unique place is located in one of the world's thirty four internationally recognised biodiversity hotspots<sup>4</sup>.

Rivers reveal and conceal and do not give up secrets easily. The plan encourages new awareness and understanding of the riverscape for the social, environmental and economic benefit of present and future generations.

## **Gina Pickering**

*Project Manager, National Trust of Australia (WA) and project team 2014*

# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key to this Interpretation Plan is the understanding that the Swan River Trust as well as Local Government Authorities, other agencies, business and community groups all play vital roles in the interpretation of the riverscape which offers many collaborative opportunities.

The Plan has been designed to value-add to existing public programs and government strategies. It makes recommendations based on strategies, policies and suggested actions to guide government, industry and the community in the effective management of the cultural heritage values of the riverpark while ensuring those values are accessible to a broad range of audiences.

It identifies an extensive range of emerging business opportunities and potential for economic leverage at local, state and international levels which complement the riverpark's established role as a major Perth tourism attraction. These opportunities align with major tourism and cultural heritage strategies including a commitment by the Western Australian Government to double the value of tourism to \$12billion by 2020.

The Plan provides a brief overview from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal points of view. An essential guiding concept of the plan is the creation of the *marli riverpark*, offering the

capacity for shared responsibility and reconciliation and an opportunity for all the community to re-experience and reconnect with Perth's exceptional and evolving cultural riverscape.

A major initiative is that of Nodal Pause Points providing arrival and departure points for the community and anchor points for tourism and business.

This initiative supports the Swan River Trust's commitment to river access for all the community through a continuous linked path network.

A detailed outline for an inaugural day and night event is one example of suggested practical actions for consideration by state and local government authorities as well as community groups. Other key initiatives draw on a long established oral tradition connected to the riverscape.

For the first time, an audit of the social values associated with the Rivers, has identified art, literature, photographs, oral histories, audio visual and film production. The resulting significant library of resources will be available to researchers from the Swan River Trust as part of the project outcomes.

Moreover, it is an invitation for the community to explore new ways of valuing the riverpark and itself.



## 2 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following key recommendations were determined during the course of the project. Each supports the implementation of the Plan and is complemented by Major Initiatives (refer section 8) and Suggested Actions detailed at the conclusion of each section in this document.

1. Adopt the Interpretation Plan and make accessible to community and visitors the Swan and Canning Rivers' unique cultural heritage values (natural, Aboriginal and historic/built).

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2. Adopt a 'whole of river' approach to the implementation of the Interpretation Plan.

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3. Support the wellbeing of the riverpark and in so doing, the community.

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4. Adopt a bilingual naming protocol to places within the riverpark.

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5. Adopt the name *marli riverpark*.

---

6. Register *marli riverpark* as a brand for promotion and marketing.

---

7. Implement a comprehensive communication plan for *marli riverpark* and its stakeholders.

---

8. Support sustainable business, employment and tourism development associated with *marli riverpark* which is guided by the values of the river and the recommendations of this report.

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9. Develop ethical interpretative outcomes specific to the Noongar community in addition to outcomes for the broader community.

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10. Support education which ensures future generations of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people have the opportunity to share knowledge, awareness, understanding and ultimately work together so the *marli riverpark* is protected and respected for all time.



Charmaine Cole Nyungah Dreaming along the Swan, 1999, acrylic on canvas  
Curtin University Art Collection, purchased 2000

© Charmaine Cole

## The river

This river once had a mouth  
that opened and closed.  
A mouth with limestone teeth  
and a tongue of sand.

The first rains woke it  
from its estuarine sleep,  
loosened its tongue, so the mixing,  
the darbaling could begin.

When rainbows became scarce  
the river sealed its mouth,  
it curled back and listened  
to the thousand voices  
informing it.

A river lives between course  
and discourse. It has business,  
the office of its whole catchment  
to fulfil.

Jennifer Kornberger, 2013

## **KURA YEYI BURDA**

*Long ago Waargle twisted and turned over Aboriginal land and created a river bed.*

*Then the waters came tumbling down, filling the river bed to create a river called Bilya.*

*This river gave us law, food, games and stories which we still share with everyone today.*

*Nyungar walked, swam, camped and celebrated, knowing Waargle was, is and always will be among us softly gliding;*

*As we swim, glide over and under or just walk and sit upon the shores of the land that embraces the river we know today as the Swan River.*

*Tomorrow the Swan River will continue to be everyone's heritage that links the Kura Yeyi Burda as it continues to flow and meander among all peoples ensuring we never forget its story.*



**MARIE TAYLOR**

**WADJUCK/BALARDONG  
BIRDIYIA YOGKA**

**NOONGAR ADVISORY PANEL**



# 3 THE BRIEF

The Derbarl Yerrigan (Swan River) and Djarlgarro Beelier (Canning River) are both listed on the Department of Aboriginal Affairs Sites Register. The Swan Canning Riverpark was created through the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act (2006) to enhance ecological and community benefits and amenity. In September 2013 the State Government announced the Swan River Trust would amalgamate with the newly formed Department of Parks and Wildlife to manage and protect the Swan and Canning River systems. A priority of the Swan River Trust and the Plan is to encourage and ensure continuity of a linked path network around the riverpark to maximise public access to the Rivers.

The Riverpark includes 72.1 square kilometres of public land and adjoining river reserve. The limits of the Riverpark stretch from the Fremantle Traffic Bridge to Moondyne Brook and Helena River from the lower diversion dam; and to the Southern River and Canning River from the Stinton Creek confluence. The Rivers themselves extend past these boundaries. The Swan River drains the Avon and coastal plain catchments which have a total area of about 121,000 km<sup>2</sup><sup>5</sup> while the stories and dreamtime associated with these waterways reach even further across distance to Wadjemup/Rottnest Island, across songlines and through deep time. The interpretation recommended in this Plan is not limited by boundaries.

In March 2013 the Swan River Trust commissioned the National Trust of Australia (WA) to develop an Interpretation Plan for the Swan Canning Riverpark including an audit of social values represented in art, literature, photographs, oral histories and audio visual productions associated with the Rivers.

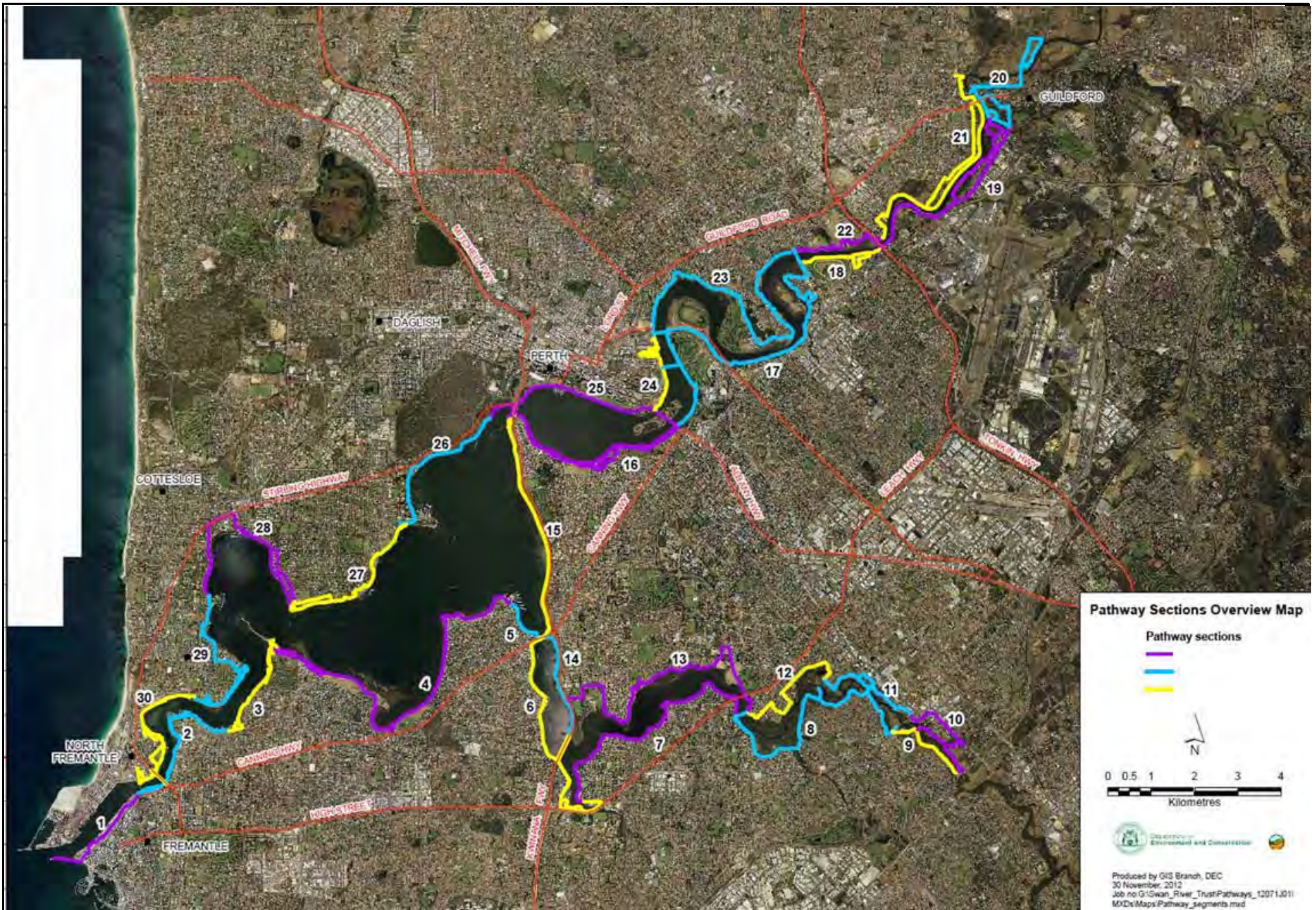
The Plan would make accessible Perth's heritage values (natural, Aboriginal and historic) to local, national and international visitors while contributing to a landscape of reconciliation that will benefit the entire community for generations to come.

A vital management tool for the Swan River Trust, local government authorities and the community, the Interpretation Plan for the Swan and Canning Riverpark would provide a framework, policies and recommendations for educating the community about natural and cultural heritage for the long-term social, economic and environmental benefit of the entire community.

The main internal SRT frameworks and systems which inform the Plan are the Swan River Trust 2012-2015 Reconciliation Action Plan<sup>6</sup>, the River Protection Strategy and the Swan Canning Riverpark Trails Master Plan 2013. The Swan River Trust identified nineteen Activity Nodes along the Swan and Canning Rivers and requested they be given consideration as part of the development of the Swan and Canning River Interpretation Plan. An additional five Nodes have been identified during the course of the project through consultation with the *Noongar* Advisory Panel.

The Plan would also outline strategic and interpretive approaches to increase literacy about this unique environment providing a foundation of knowledge, awareness, understanding and commitment for all who visit or experience the riverpark. A staged implementation strategy and budget estimates would guide the practical realisation of conservation and interpretation of the riverpark.





CONTINUITY OF A LINKED PATH NETWORK IS A RIVERPARK PRIORITY. COURTESY SWAN RIVER TRUST



***Rivers move, flowing over land, through history, and among diverse groups of people, changing considerably from their source to their destination; yet they also stay, permanent blue lines on our maps, constant way points and lasting landmarks.***

***Rivers connect – state with state, interior with exterior, one region with another, the past with the present; but they also separate nations, subcultures and families. In short, rivers do not cede their meanings easily.<sup>7</sup>***

## 4 A STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

While the Statement of Significance for the Swan and Canning Rivers (2011) remains fundamental to the assessment of the rivers heritage values, the unique political context of this contested site, including the Native Title claim, is integral to the statement. It is therefore recommended that the Statement of Significance (2011) be amended to include reference to the Native Title claim and forthcoming settlement.

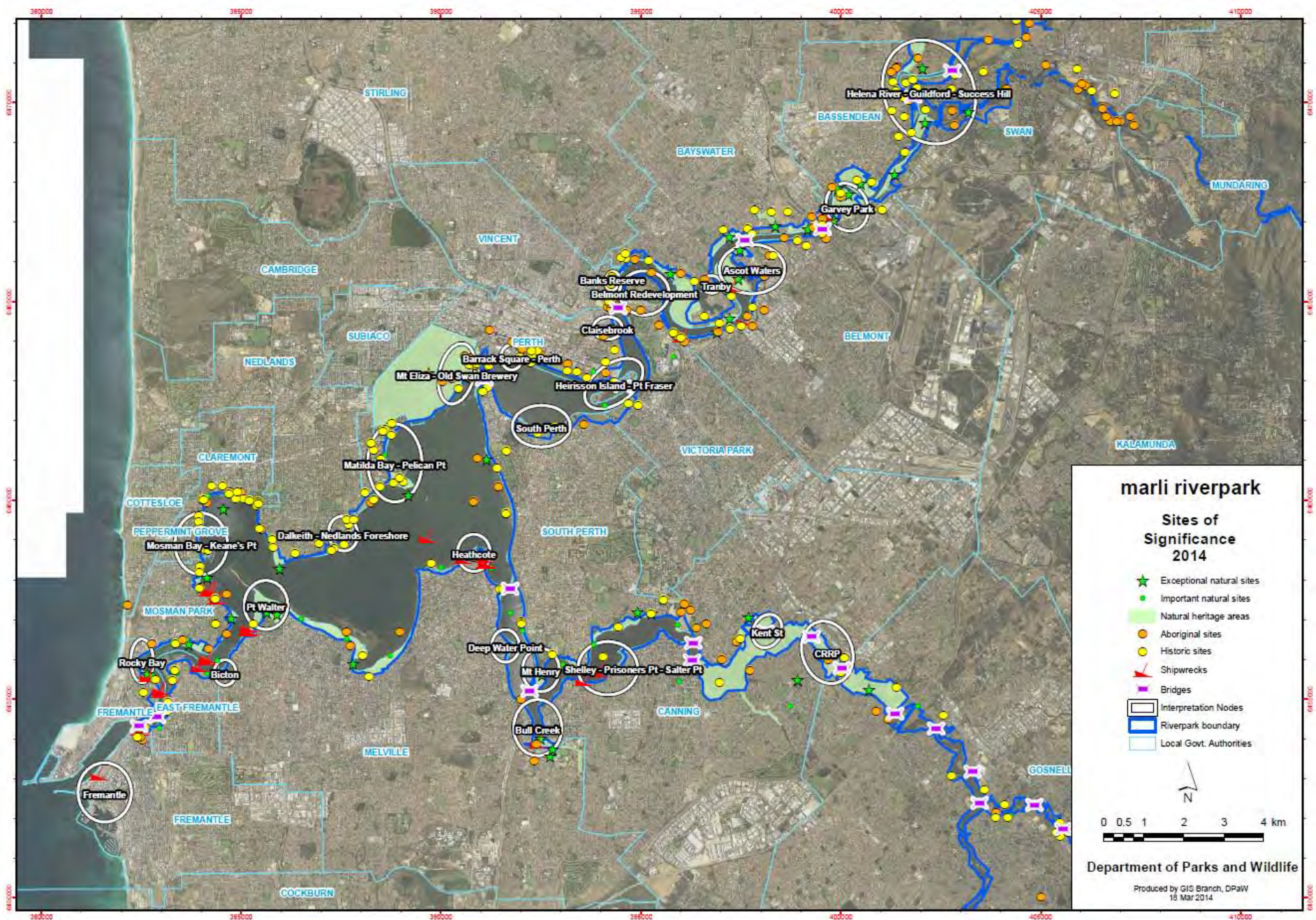
The Statement of Significance for the waterways and surrounds of the Swan, Canning, Helena and Southern Rivers (hereafter called the Rivers), in the study area bounded by the Swan and Canning Riverpark is based on a distinctive geological formation with an evolved ecosystem. Having been used intensively by humans for millennia, the defined area is characterised by a diverse range of heritage values.

Many of the individual places along the Rivers are themselves of specific heritage value, but outstanding value attaches to the overall landscape that has evolved over time. The following Statement of Significance identifies this area of the Rivers as a cultural landscape with natural and cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:

## A STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- the Rivers' landscape demonstrates the ending of the Gondwanaland period due to the breakup of the Indian and Australian tectonic plates following rifting along the Darling fault line;
- the Rivers were formed by the Waugyl according to Noongar tradition, and have continuing cultural importance related to past and contemporary Noongar culture;
- **Noongar bilya (rivers) and boodja (land) are central to the first and only native title claim over an Australian capital city;**
- the Rivers' environment is home to rare and priority flora and fauna listed on international and state based registers;
- archaeological discoveries in the river valley have extended the scientific knowledge of the great antiquity (at least 40 thousand years) of continuous human habitation in Australia;
- in 1829, the erroneous belief that the Rivers provided rich arable land, led to the establishment of the Swan River Colony, the first free (non-convict) colonial settlement in Australia;
- the Rivers link the scarp to the city and determined land allocation and the first settlements in the Rivers region of Perth, Fremantle, Guildford and Kelmscott;
- the Rivers provided Perth's first transport and communication corridor and demonstrate access to the upper reaches of the Swan and the Canning and downstream to Fremantle;
- the Rivers provide evidence of changing livelihoods, lifestyles and sustenance for all humans who have lived there over thousands of years;
- the changing use of the Rivers for industrial purposes from 1829 to the present demonstrate evidence of innovation and change in technology and industry;
- the Rivers and their banks have been used for passive and active recreation including swimming, fishing, prawning, crabbing, boating, walking, bird-watching, horse racing and picnics, and are linked to international sporting events including The Avon Descent White Water Race;
- the Rivers provide evidence of changing and contrasting systems of understanding, use and abuse, management and mismanagement;
- the Rivers demonstrate notions and understanding of personal, social and environmental wellbeing and malady;
- and the Rivers provide the opportunity for the development of greater understanding between people through the challenges of their conservation and rehabilitation as both a physical resource and a spiritual place.





## 4.1 MARLI RIVERPARK SITES OF SIGNIFICANCE



# 5 OVERARCHING META THEMES

Broader themes which link the natural, Aboriginal, historic and social values of the Rivers have been determined through the Australian Historic Themes framework and include Exploration, Aboriginal Contact and Early Settlement; Transport, Industry and Services; Gold Boom, Prosperity and Subdivision; Institutions and Recreation. Aboriginal sites have been grouped as Habitation/Subsistence, Mythological, Ceremonial, Natural Features and Burial, while the natural heritage sites of importance are considered in terms of Biodiversity, Habitat and Landscape and Geological features. By integrating rather than separating the natural, Aboriginal, historic and social values it is possible to transcend these environments and take the valued assessment to a higher level. The outcome is a core overarching framework for understanding the essential values of rivers and their surrounds. The following guiding meta themes were identified for the Swan and Helena Rivers during the process of defining the statement of significance for the Swan and Helena Rivers in 2009. They continue to guide higher level understanding of the riverscape and are vital to a whole of river perspective which is fundamental to the philosophical approach of this Plan.

## 5.1 RIVER OF LIFE

As an overarching theme, the River of Life considers the conservation of heritage places as part of environmental, social and community wellbeing. This notion of wellbeing is manifested in the physical environment through the actual health of the river, through preservation and conservation and the avoidance of chemical spills, sewerage release, nutrient loaded run off, fish kills and the like. For Aboriginal people the wellbeing of the river and the appropriate treatment of significant places have connotations for physical and psychological health. For the wider community, opportunities for connections with nature, recreation and

preservation of community heritage have an impact on the quality of life and identity of society as a whole. This overarching theme is central to the concept of healthy sustainable communities.

## 5.2 POWER OF THE LANDSCAPE

The location of Perth was determined by the river, while the form and character of Perth has been influenced by a range of specific factors including the geology of the region through topography and available construction materials. The qualities of the landscape have influenced the diet of the Noongar people and the food production practices of the colonial period including the orientation of ribbon land grants along the rivers. Architectural outcomes have also been geological and environmental assets. For example the availability of clay deposits along the Rivers resulted in a number of brick works and the use of bricks as a common building material. For these reasons, the Power of the Landscape is recommended as an overarching theme.

## 5.3 SUSTAINABILITY

This overarching theme explores notions and practices of custodianship versus a culture of exploitation, and of use and abuse of the Rivers. It encompasses the contrasting and changing treatment of the Rivers including management and mismanagement of the environment over thousands of years, in the present and into the future. This overarching theme draws together notions of caring and respect for the land and rivers, responsibility for the environment and the role of those who are connected with the continuing sustainability.

## 6 VISION STATEMENT

The Swan River Trust has identified its vision statement as; ‘a healthy river for all forever’.

This is a vital direction for the future of Perth’s rivers and a foundation to the work in this document.

This Interpretation Plan invites the community and visitors to take this vision further to enliven the evolving cultural landscape through the creation of the *marli riverpark*, while reflecting on its extraordinary history to date.

The *marli riverpark* reveals new perspectives; it brings us together and provides the prospect for re-imagining the riverscape.

# 7 INTERPRETATION POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES

The interpretation policies and principles have emerged during development of this plan and are articulated in the following sections. The policies guide recommendations and suggested actions in the plan. They are essential tools in decision making about future appropriate interpretation for the riverpark which consider the vision, significance of place and philosophical approach.



## 7.1 POLICIES

- Communicate to local and international audiences the outstanding value attached to the *marli riverpark* as an overall landscape comprising, natural, Aboriginal, historic (built), social and spiritual values.
- Adopt bicultural naming through a protocol supported by the Whadjuk community.
- Deliver social, environmental and economic benefits specific to the Whadjuk community and the broader community via interpretative outcomes.
- The Whadjuk people to determine the appropriate content and delivery of their cultural assets and their intellectual property through an established protocol.
- Ensure interpretation is consistent with the requirements of the Whadjuk people, the Burra Charter and Government legislation.
- Make available to visitors to *marli riverpark* experiences, themes and stories associated with pre-contact, contact and post-contact between *Whadjuk* and non-Aboriginal cultures.
- Free and paid interpretation experiences to be made available to visitors to *marli riverpark*.
- New heritage values should be imbedded within the riverscape to bring further social, environmental and economic benefits to the broader community.

## 7.2 PRINCIPLES

- Increase community literacy and capacity to understand the value the riverscape, leading to greater custodianship of the natural and cultural heritage environment.
- The rivers themselves provide the way finding and orientation.

- Reflect the continuing and unbroken connection of the Whadjuk people – one of the world’s oldest cultures – to the riverscape for more than 40,000 years.
- Ensure the fundamental sense of place intrinsic to the riverscape is not compromised by the interpretation.
- The ‘x’ axis plane is preferred for physical items. Horizontal and ground based objects for text and images provide the least visual impact in the riverscape. Seating and platforms should be the primary sign sites.
- Nodes are clearings and open spaces that cater for pro-social activities that enrich educational, economic and social outcomes.
- Dual language place naming in Noongar and English; scientific and multi lingual where appropriate.
- A flexible interpretation system minimises visual impact in the riverscape, and maximises visitor support.
- Oral delivery is the preferred method for delivery of stories and information. These communications are flexible and low cost.
- Hand held devices (tablets, phones, ipod touch and other electronic displays) are the preferred delivery method for images, text and audio for both onsite and offsite visits<sup>8</sup>.
- The preferred literary device for written interpretation material is creative non-fiction - including quotations, dialogue and the use of spoken word.
- Single episodes of interpretation (pages) should be limited to 140 words.
- Where appropriate and possible, any statutory and other warning signs should be in keeping with the interpretation system.
- The technical and management work of the riverpark is a compelling accessible story that should be available to all the community.

# 8 MAJOR INITIATIVES

## 8.1 *marli riverpark*

The creation of *marli riverpark* is the major guiding and transformative initiative of the Interpretation Plan. *marli*, *marlee*, *maali*, *marley* is the Noongar for Swan (*Cygnus atratus*),<sup>9 10</sup> The name 'marli' signals significance above, below, in and on the riverscape. The use of lower case 'marli' signals 'not' using the English conventions and grammar. We do not speak or listen in capitals hence *marli* signals a spoken and audio [listen] communication, not a written one.

The proposed naming and logotype concept (along with its symbol) has been chosen for the symmetry of letterforms and sounds that have been generated by the duplication/mirror of the 'ar' and 'i' sound in both words. *marli riverpark*. The name and symbol are linked to Riverpark via natural, Aboriginal and historic values. The *marli/swan* has been associated with Perth's waterways over time through Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures and is depicted through dreamtime stories, art, ceremony, poetry, photography, film recollections and through encounter. The swan is recognised as an iconic species for the Rivers and its continued presence as a mark of the ecological health of the Rivers.

Dutch explorer Willem de Vlamingh made the first European record of sighting a Black Swan in 1697, when he sailed into, and named, the Swarte Swaene-Revier.<sup>11</sup> More recently black swan theory is associated with a rare event that has come as a surprise and is beyond the realm of normal expectations.<sup>12</sup>

*marli/swan* has provided spiritual and nutritional sustenance for both Noongar and settler communities and is strongly associated with transformation. The concept of *marli* brings with it altitude, higher vision, a 'whole of river' perspective, while providing an enduring link between the past and the present.<sup>13</sup> *marli riverpark* respects the past and present, transcends its confluence and its physical boundaries to reach across to Wadjemup/Rottneest Island. *marli riverpark* brings a capacity to consider many perspectives at the one time.

### 8.1.1 Visual Identity and Orientation

A strong visual direction has been generated during the development of the plan to communicate the significance of *marli riverpark* and its cultural heritage values.

The combination of marli and the swan emblem conveys a whole of river approach to the riverpark and establishes a vital cohesion across the various land management areas and local government authorities, the past and the present. The emblem is made up of elements that include the riverpark name and typography (or logo)<sup>14</sup> the symbol, the colour way, support images and systems. The emblem will be used in a consistent way throughout the riverpark and will be featured in various media locally, nationally and internationally, in print, on line - still and animated.

The logo is an integral part of the project. It is a visual cue and carrier of information; a potent symbol illustrative of meaning and message associated with themes and values of the rivers. The logo acts as a brand, marking the project with an easily identifiable graphic identity. The logo is part of a suite of project elements (wayfinding, websites, education packages, signs) acting as the visual and vital glue linking various elements together as a whole.

The emblem and its style guide will be developed further to this Plan.<sup>15</sup> However, parameters have been set out from a briefing document. The design brief is guided by an initial concept stage that was used to generate the project naming recommendation, consultation and documents, including: AS2156. 1-2001 Walking tracks - Classification and signage State Trails Strategy 2009.



***A proposed logo for marli riverpark was developed during the project.***



*marli riverpark offers unexpected locations and experiences....*



*“And it shot straight out of the water and when he got so far up, he turned, and he went back down, and the water was spraying out from him. And he had a ... on the side, it was like a fish, but he had yellow and black squares on his side. Unusual. And silver, like you know silver fish on the stomach of a fish, and around the side, and black on top, kind of brownish black. It was like that...And I just stood there. I couldn’t move, I was stuck to the ground”.*

Bill Bodney (Toopey), 17 April 2006 (Freshwater Bay Museum)

## 8.2 BILINGUAL PLACE NAMING

The introduction of bilingual place naming in the Riverpark is a priority of the Noongar Advisory Panel (NAP), a principle of this Plan and reflects recommendations made by the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council in 2010.<sup>16</sup> The NAP has provided advice on place names during the development of the Plan and Professor Len Collard has developed a naming protocol to support the implementation of Noongar place names in the Riverpark. The NAP members provided information linked to activity nodes which had been identified in the Riverpark by the Swan River Trust. NAP members also identified additional priority nodes which have cultural significance to the Noongar community. This detailed information related to these nodes is available in the resource section of the Plan. Many official place names in the south west of WA are of Noongar-language origin. Moving to introduce additional official names in Noongar language requires consideration of the following:

### 8.2.1 Consulting Historical Records

Archival research of Noongar place names may help provide examples and options for Noongar-language names to reintroduce as official place names. The 'paper trail' may be useful in generating public support for the re-adoption of a name. While a number of early colonists recorded Noongar place names and locations, often the accompanying translations (if provided at all) are of questionable validity. Similarly, no trained linguists recorded Noongar language until 1931, so the various Noongar orthographies utilised in early colonial records are inconsistent, idiosyncratic and sometimes misleading. These require careful analysis by experts.

### 8.2.2 Translations

Awareness of the meanings of Noongar place names can enhance a 'sense of place' for locals and visitors, while also providing opportunities for interpretive tours and educational activities. The use of dual names without explanation can result in confusion. For example *Derbal Yerrigan* is a name Noongar use to describe the Swan River. However, *Derbal Yerrigan* does not *mean* 'swan river', but has been interpreted as something more like 'estuary rising'. Noongar language experts should be consulted to explain the meaning (or possible/probable meanings) of existing official place-names and un-official names shortlisted for becoming new official names.

### 8.2.3 Community Consultation (Regional Traditional Owners, South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council and non-affiliated Elders)

Shortlisted options for official names in Noongar language should be provided to a reference group of local traditional owners for discussion and approval. This ongoing dialogue would provide opportunities for local traditional owners to critique the suggestions and add additional regional expertise to the process. The reference group should include members of the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC), or the various local representative bodies which may replace it in the near future. The reference group should also include traditional owners who are *not* SWALSC members, but are nonetheless active in the promotion, maintenance and transmission of Noongar culture. When selecting reference group members, familial connections to the local area, seniority and expertise should be determining factors.

### 8.2.4 Orthographic Considerations

A standardised Noongar language orthography was developed in the 1990s by Noongar Elders for language teachers and is used to teach Noongar in primary and secondary schools today.<sup>17</sup> Use of this orthography in official Noongar-language place names may increase the usefulness of these names in educational contexts. However, this orthography should be used to record the pronunciation suggested by language experts and preferred by local traditional owners so regional dialectic diversity is appropriately reflected.

### 8.2.5 Culturally Specific Outcomes

A key aim of the Interpretation Plan is to convey the natural and cultural values of the riverpark to a variety of audiences. However, it is also an imperative of the Plan that culturally sensitive information is respected, protected and shared only with suitable appropriate advice from the Noongar community. While the NAP has signalled and shared a range of stories and information to benefit broader audiences, the traditional owners have also actively supported Whadjuk specific interpretative outcomes.

The initiatives described within this plan embrace these requirements and can be applied to provide culturally discrete outcomes under advice of the Noongar community.

## 8.3 NODAL PAUSE POINTS

Nodal Pause Points are a key means of landmarking and place making areas that provide amenities, services, focus points, launch/departure, destination/arrival places, pause points and potential event venues. The nodes are pro-social areas that feed into the surrounding social and economic systems.

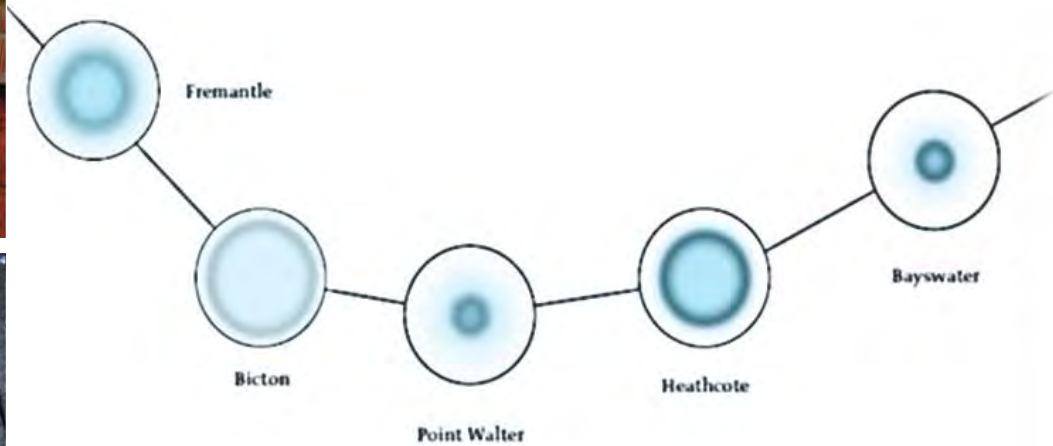
Nineteen nodes were identified by the Swan River Trust during the initial phase of the project and additional nodes were identified by the Noongar Advisory Panel during the development of the Plan. These places substantially support diverse visitor needs including: ease of access, parking, comfort, orientation, facilities, to be child/family friendly, offer fun/engaging, attractions and activities, to be peaceful and uncluttered.

Nodes provide clearings with introduced ground based surfaces or works, or with elevated structures that hover or are perched in the landscape – such as an expansive bench. The preferred material is timber with durable and changeable elements that can name the place in relevant languages and provide links via hand held devices to pages of interpretation.

The benches have no requirement for railing or bollards and can be produced as flat pack items which can be walked in and installed in the riverpark and support a 'light footprint' approach to interpretation within the Riverscape.

Accessing *marli riverpark* stories is enabled by proven technology, network coverage and Open Source programming<sup>18</sup> delivered through handhelds - both Android and iOS.





The 'x' axis plane is preferred for physical items. Horizontal and ground based objects for text and images provide the least visual impact in the riverscape. Seating and platforms should be the primary sign sites.

QR codes will be used to link low cost external items to provide fluid and expansive interpretation

## 8.4 ANNUAL RIVER FESTIVAL

The Riverscape communities, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, have continuously articulated high regard for the Rivers through activities including ceremony, celebration and performance. Creation of the *marli riverpark* illuminates the ‘whole of river’ idea which can be expressed, promoted and enjoyed through an annual Riverpark Festival.

The momentum for the Festival is seeded by the development of this Plan and can grow organically and creatively through community, industry and government support.

A plan for Stage One of the annual River Festival outlines an initial program of events held over a weekend.<sup>19</sup> The important reflections and priorities of the Noongar Advisory Panel are key to the inaugural *waugyl walk* which invites the community to experience wellbeing, openness, action, understanding and joy in the riverscape through collaboration and consideration.

Imbedding world class events in the riverscape further enhances the significance of the riverpark and this is explored later in the Plan.



***Pilgrims walk along the banks of the Swan River in Walyunga National Park during the 2013 Camino Salvado.***

G Pickering

## 8.5 STEP BY STEP TO WELLBEING

The Noongar community for thousands of years has created tracks and trails and walked their culture into the riverscape. More recently non-Aboriginal people have enjoyed the river foreshore for health and recreation. In 2013 more than 200km of walking and bicycle trails are available for public use in the Riverpark. The dedicated Noongar Advisory Panel for this plan has strongly supported an initiative to develop a suite of walks for both the Whadjuk people and broader community to share.

The action and practice of walking has emerged as a key focus of this plan. It can unite community and cause, family and friends and lead to better physical and mental health. Walking can bring with it powerful new relationships with the landscape and with each other. Described as both a 'journey and destination', walking exercises the heart and soul. It can be a singular or shared activity and it's free. Walking aligns with the overarching theme of 'wellbeing' for the Rivers which was determined in 2009 and should be encourage in links to programs and initiatives across community.

The existing Whadjuk trails, some of which intersect with the river foreshore trail provide established support for this intention.

The practice of walking brings with it an opportunity to embody the experience of the riverscape while increasing knowledge and awareness of its special qualities. Mindful walks alone, shared or led by specialists also reinforce community relationship with the Rivers.

Walking can at once strengthen the Whadjuk people's connection to culture and its spiritual heart, while encouraging the broader community to better understand its heritage and health.

The riverscape offers a unique and shared platform to promote joint responsibility across the entire community<sup>20</sup> and walking in its simplicity and complexity is one way to achieve this end. There are dynamic opportunities to promote the long term wellbeing of the Whadjuk, broader community and the flora and fauna of the riverscape itself through guided and unguided walks, while at the same time accessing and imbedding positive and powerful spiritual and cultural experiences.

While walking is currently the most popular form of physical activity,<sup>21</sup> it is also one of the least expensive and most broadly accessible forms of physical activity.

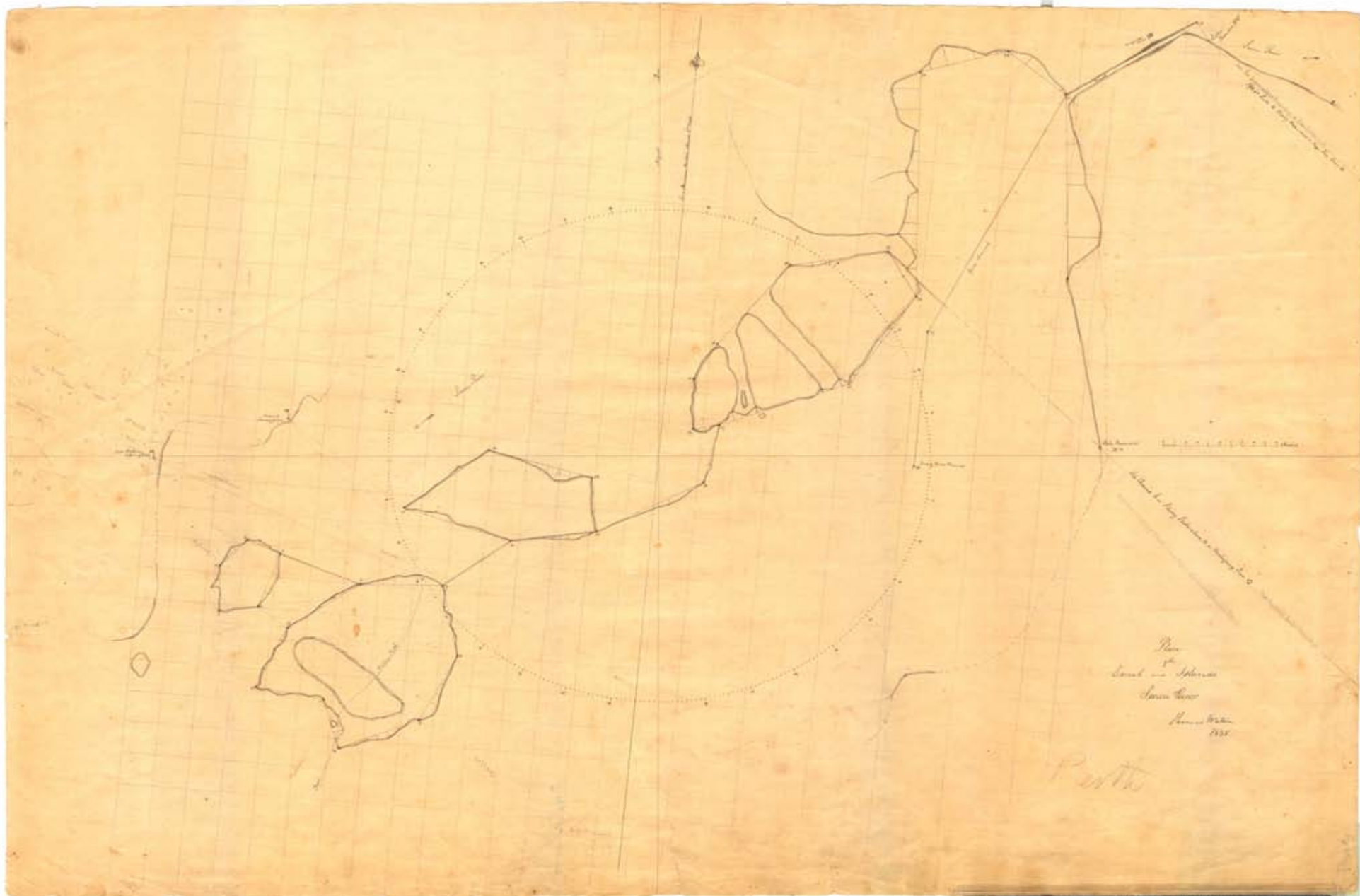
In addition, there are potential cost savings to be made – one Australian study estimated that if all inactive adult Australians walked for an hour a day on at least five days of the week, the annual cost savings would be Aus \$419.9million.<sup>22</sup>

There is substantial evidence worldwide of the physical and mental health benefits of walking, providing a rationale to increase walking opportunities in the Riverpark through linkages to cultural and health programs.



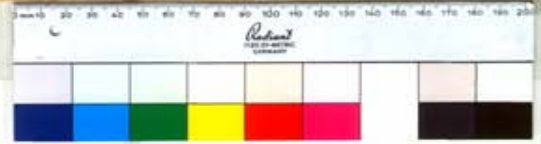
**“Walking, ideally, is a state in which the mind, body, and the world are aligned, as though they were three characters finally in conversation together making a chord. Walking allows us to be in our bodies and in the world without being made busy by them. It leaves us free to think without being wholly lost in our thoughts. The rhythm of walking generates a kind of rhythm of thinking, and the passage through a landscape echoes or stimulates the passage through a series of thoughts. This creates an odd consonance between internal and external passage, one that suggests that the mind is also a landscape of sorts and that walking is one way to traverse it. And so one aspect of the history of walking is the history of thinking made concrete – for the motions of the mind cannot be traced, but those of the feet can.”<sup>23</sup>**

Rebecca Solnit



*The  
land in Swan  
River  
Surveyed  
1835*

*P. Watson*



Map of the canal and islands, Swan River by T. Watson (Heirisson Island), 1835, series234\_cons3844\_item025[1]

## 8.6 A CALENDAR OF RIVERPARK EVENTS

The rivers are an established inspiration, catalyst and theatre for events for Perth's community. Coordinating a Riverpark calendar of events in collaboration with community and local government creates linkages with existing events such as heritage festivals while providing scope for innovative natural and cultural heritage programs unique to the riverpark. This innovation will provide leverage for riverpark business opportunities.

## 8.7 SITES OF CONSCIENCE

The riverscape brings with it a powerful capacity to conceal and reveal. A major initiative of this plan is to implement with the guidance of the Noongar community and broader community a pilot program focusing on *Sites of Conscience*<sup>24</sup> at important places within the riverpark to reconnect the past and the present in a transformative way. The Lower Lands of Heathcote have been identified as one of the initial sites to undertake the development and implementation of a conservation management plan. The project would create employment and training of Aboriginal people, revegetation using native plants, educational and tour opportunities. The project site is adjacent to Heathcote, the Former Mental Reception Home, now Museum and Recreational Centre and an important initiation site for the Whadjuk. The site offers recognition of natural, Aboriginal and historic values and through this plan innovative links to wellbeing and transformation which deliver social, environment and economic benefits.

## 8.8 RIVER VOICES

The importance of the oral tradition of communicating and conveying stories has long standing and valued links to the riverscape that reach into deep time and through centuries of international contact. The Rivers have determined the lives and stories of one of the oldest cultures over more than 40,000 years and more recently settler and migrant cultures from 1829 to the present. Storytelling has emerged as a foundation of the Interpretation Plan process and as a primary source and method of gaining understanding about the Riverpark's rich heritage.

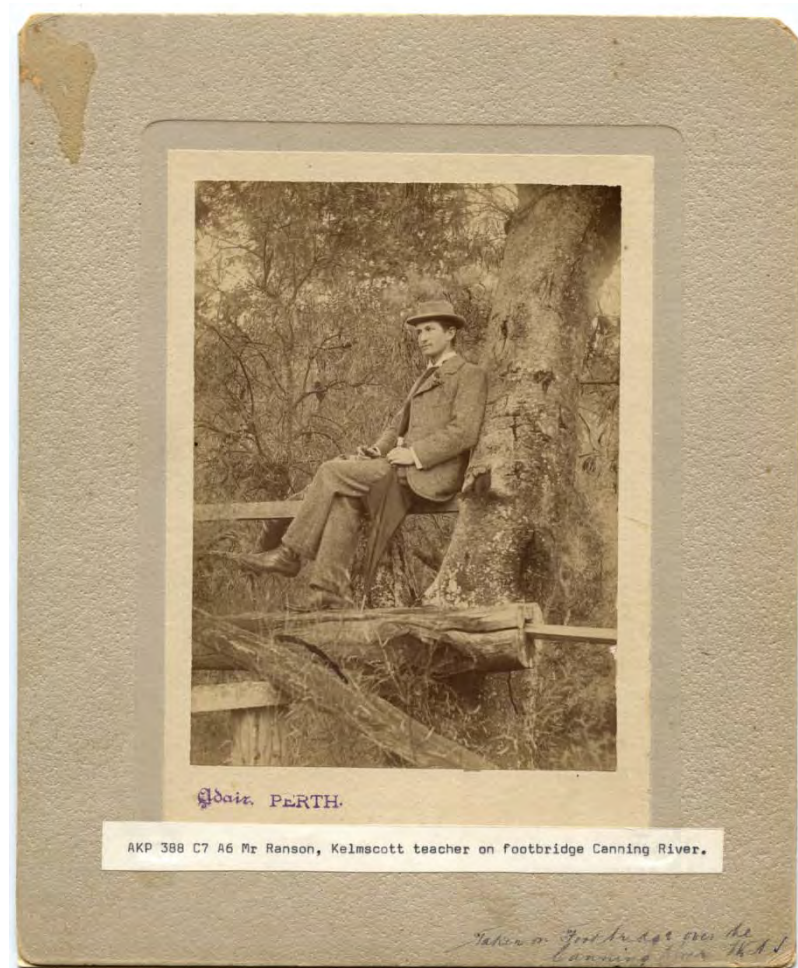
*River Voices* is a major initiative for the Riverpark. It provides access to a range of specialist knowledge and expertise across disciplines. River Voices supports education and encourages many perspectives. It can be story driven, experience driven and can reach across many cultures connected to the riverpark. It addresses the production of cultural assets for Noongar only audiences as endorsed by the Noongar Advisory Panel and provides substantial and dedicated Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal stories for broader audiences. A suite of Aboriginal stories specifically produced for the Riverpark would enhance the understanding and profile of the Noongar cultural connections to the riverscape. This initiative could also add to State Library of Western Australia archives and the Storylines initiative which is uniquely capable of adhering to cultural protocols, and supports cultural tagging as well as video and audio content. A suite of *River Voices* can be available for a range of audiences. It can be updated and include fee for service and free options via the web or live on site.



## 8.9 RIVER JOURNEYS FRAMEWORK

The overarching meta themes, Australian Historic Themes Framework, Heritage Tourism Strategy (WA) 2006, Noongar Advisory Panel and current research (including links to walking) have informed the creation of *River Journeys* to access social, spiritual and heritage values of the Rivers from specific locations and from a whole of river perspective.

*River Journeys* offers a thematic framework for ideas, stories and experiences. It provides options for families, individuals, locals and visitors to explore social, natural and cultural heritage values within the Riverpark through the intimacy of a guided tour or the convenience of using hand held digital technology on a self-guided walk. New journeys can easily be added, updated or changed ensuring a real time response to the Riverscape and its evolving cultural landscape. River Journeys encourages everyone to spend more time in the Riverpark and increase understanding and wellbeing through the experience. The program should be coordinated through the Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW) and developed through community and local government authority contribution utilising existing collections of photographs, oral history material and the wide ranging expertise of both the Noongar and broader communities. A range of River Journeys is outlined in the following table.<sup>25</sup>



FPH197 Mr Ranson tchr Kelm\_Canning R footbridge\_ca1906

Courtesy City of Armadale

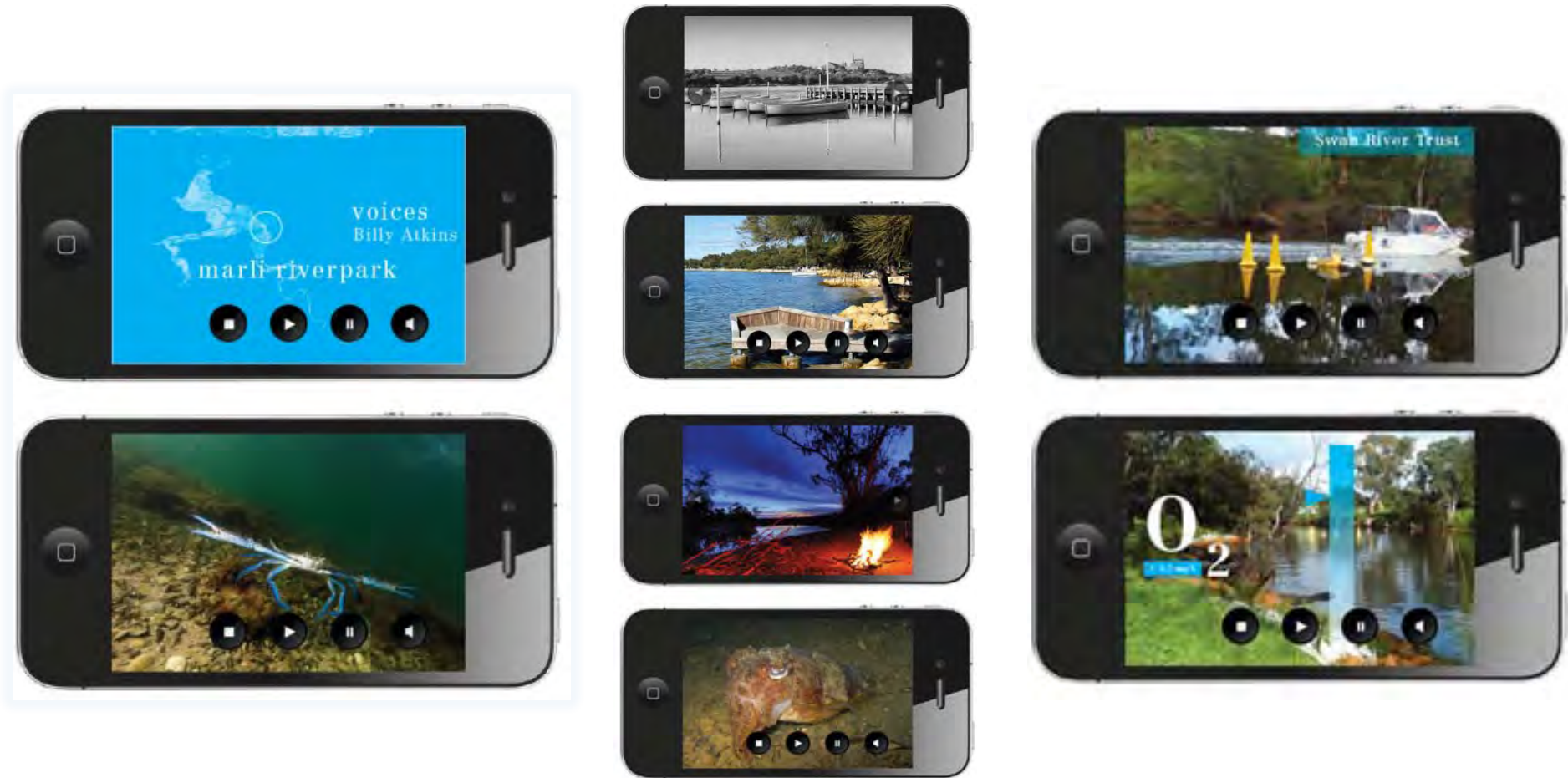
# TABLE OF RIVER JOURNEYS

Concept titles	Meta themes	Theme	Stories	Whole of River/Location	Type of Interpretation
<b>A spiritual home</b>	River of Life	Family and belonging	Family connections The third community – dolphins Arrivals and departures – Swans, Stints and prawns and others	Whole of river + locations + nodes	Tours, audio, AV, festival, pop up events
<b>Seasons</b>	Power of the Landscape	Seasonal change flora and fauna	The riverscape features unique plants and animals Changing vegetation and medicines	Locations + nodes	Tours, audio, AV, festival, pop up events
<b>Rivers of Emotion</b>	River of Life	Sense of self in the landscape	Emotional connections to the River Impact of a damaged environment Lost heritage	Outlooks + view scapes + nodes Kings Park, Heathcote, Cantonment Hill	Existing website
<b>Conflict and contact</b>	Power of the Landscape	Remembering and forgetting	Place of conflict Power of the people to protect	As directed by the Elders As directed by environmentalists and historians	Tours, audio, AV, app, festival, pop up events
<b>What's in a name</b>	Power of the Landscape	Origins of names in the riverscape	Noongar naming and links to European naming of the landscape, people flora and fauna	Whole of river + locations + nodes	Tours, audio, AV, festival, pop up events
<b>A sticking point</b>	Power of the Landscape	Imbedding significance	Noongar, Dutch, English, French connections. Notions of locals and visitors and global connections. Heirisson as a 'sticking point' physically and politically including recent protests.	Heirisson Island	Tours, audio, AV The Philosopher's circle – a forum for discussion, storytelling and performance imbedded in the landscape. Potential collaboration with the Centre for the History of Emotion.
<b>Tides of change</b>	Sustainability	An evolving cultural landscape The health of the river	Unique and remnant flora and fauna. Use/misuse of the river. The work of the Swan River Trust Nutrients, invaders, climate change, environmental change Changes in riverscape condition, Noongar occupation and management, A European perspective on landscape	Whole of river + location	Tours, audio, AV, festival, pop up events

Concept titles	Meta themes	Theme	Stories	Whole of River/Location	Type of Interpretation
<b>Bridges and boundaries</b>	Power of the Landscape	Politics of the landscape	The river both separates and joins the community Native title Valuing the river/ the river's values	Bridges (special markers)	Tours , audio, AV walk/ride/swim/row events,
<b>Confluence</b>	Sustainability	The intersection of two forces	An evolving riverscape Conservation	Heathcote, Walter's Brook	Tours, conservation, planting, storytelling, pop up events
<b>Heroes and Villains</b>	River of Life	High profile people High profile creatures + plants	Midgegooroo/Yagan/Yellagonga/Munday/Weeip /Stirling/ Moore/Roe Sports greats/Swimmers/America's Cup/ Dolphins, pelicans, red necked stints Rare and significant plants and animals Invading plants and animals	Whole of river +nodes + other locations Heirisson Island	Tours, audio, AV, festival, pop up events
<b>Waugyl's way</b>	River of Life	Spiritual connection	Key places of Waugyl Noongar/ Wadjella connection Was CY O'Connor 'sung to death'	Whole of river + locations + nodes	Tour, audio, AV, pop up events Biennial waugyl walk, festival links
<b>Undercurrents</b>	Power of the Landscape	Above and below	Deaths, suicides, other tragedies A bridge of sighs Springs Wrecks	'Bunna bridge' Springs at Mt Eliza, Spring St, Success Hill Whole of river	Tour, audio, AV, pop up events, festival links, Wrecks App(funding approved 2013)
<b>Perspectives</b>	River of Life	River as inspiration	What the river brings out in us and how we respond Art + poetry + song + events [ex. Noongar song and dance, Narrows Bridge song, Swan River Song]	Whole of river + locations + nodes Narrows Bridge	Tours, audio, AV, pop up events, festival links, exhibitions
<b>River tracks</b>	Power of the Landscape	Decolonising the landscape	Fauna /Noongars / settlers/ newcomers all have followed paths around the river... who is following who? Walk original pathways	Along the trail + off the trail + the river as trail + arrival departure points	Tours, audio, AV, pop up events, festival links
<b>Spirit of the River</b>	River of Life	Religion and the River	Noongar spiritual links European religious link to the river Camino Salvado; Baptisms	Whole of river + locations + nodes All Saints Church	Tours, audio, AV, pop up events, festival links



handheld technology is central to the *marli riverpark* interpretative experience...



...the story of the Swan River Trust is a key story of the *marli riverpark*

## 8.10 MAJOR INITIATIVES SUGGESTED ACTIONS

### Swan River Trust in collaboration with others

1. Update the Statement of Significance of the Rivers to reflect the international importance of the South West Native Title claim.
2. Develop a *marli riverpark* induction program delivered by volunteers and riverpark officers.
3. Adopt Open Source programming to ensure continued flexibility of riverpark interpretation.
4. Integrate *marli riverpark* and Elizabeth Quay interpretation access systems to facilitate visitor experiences.
5. Reflect the spiritual significance of *marli riverpark* with guidance from the Noongar community.
6. Develop and promote seasonal specialist talks and guided walks reflecting natural, Aboriginal and historic heritage values including Noongar Elders, scientists, scholars, curators, artists, botanists and others.
7. Make available a *marli riverpark* digital library based on the assets identified during the project and expand it further as content is developed over time.
8. Promote the *marli riverpark* by leveraging existing walks and events such as the *Global Corporate Challenge* and *Camino Salvado*.
9. Establish a database of *River Voices* comprising cross disciplinary expertise to present live tours and available to the public at fee for service rates.
10. Initiate the *River Journeys* framework to grow a selection of experiences reflecting key riverpark themes based on existing oral histories, new riverpark interviews and images identified in social value audit.
11. Develop and promote a calendar of events with riverpark managers, community and Local Government Authorities.

### Community, Local Government Authorities and other agencies

1. Produce a series of mini documentaries based on audio visual content identified in pre 1950s films, conservation history footage and other audio visual assets.
2. Respond to breaks in the existing pathway network with interpretative initiatives during festivals and other events to grow public awareness of the 'whole of riverpark' approach.
3. Initiate an annual *marli riverpark* festival and align it with major events, anniversaries and celebrations.
4. Develop a collaborative biennial *waugyl walk* within the annual *marli riverpark* festival program, promoting the health of Waugyl and the community.
5. Develop a once- off whole of community reconciliation and healing walk and ceremony led by Whadjuk community members to coincide with the resolution of the South West Native Title claim.
6. Produce digital outcomes including a documentary for use in riverpark interpretation and broader distribution as an outcome of major events.<sup>26</sup>
7. Link state and national health initiatives to river activities and use the bridges as a metaphor for change.
8. Develop an annual river tour within the Heritage Festival program in collaboration with commercial operators.<sup>27</sup>
9. Initiate a *Site of Conscience* at Heathcote to engage community, raise awareness and bring environmental outcomes to the riverscape.

# 9 CONSULTATION

Consultation for this project involved hundreds of people and many organisations in formal and informal meetings, discussions and workshops. The Rivers brought out great generosity and commitment across the community.

## 9.1 THE NOONGAR ADVISORY PANEL

The Noongar Advisory Panel (NAP) was established by the Swan River Trust (SRT) with the assistance of the SWALSC<sup>28</sup> whose Whadjuk Working Group recommended a list of participants. Eighteen dedicated positions represented nine Noongar families during the course of the project. The model allowed for additional input from the Noongar community who could not attend meetings. Five meetings were held with Elders and Traditional Owners, most often at riverside locations.

Advice was sought from the (NAP) on cultural priorities, significant riverscape locations and a range of interpretative strategies discussed to serve both the Noongar community and the broader community.

## 9.2 SOCIAL VALUES WORKSHOPS

Two half workshops held at the National Trust on 30 May 2013 with Local Government Authority officers informed the social values audit for photographs, oral histories and audio visual collections. Representatives from the LGAs contributed key themes, images and oral histories as part of the audit of social values.

## 9.3 TOURISM AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Economic development officers and other business stakeholders contributed ideas and recommendations at a half day workshop held at the Town of Mosman Park on 6 June 2013. Additions were made to the business audit and opportunities identified to align future tourism and business activities with State and local government initiatives underway or planned in areas of events, attractions, accommodation, tours, transport and activities.



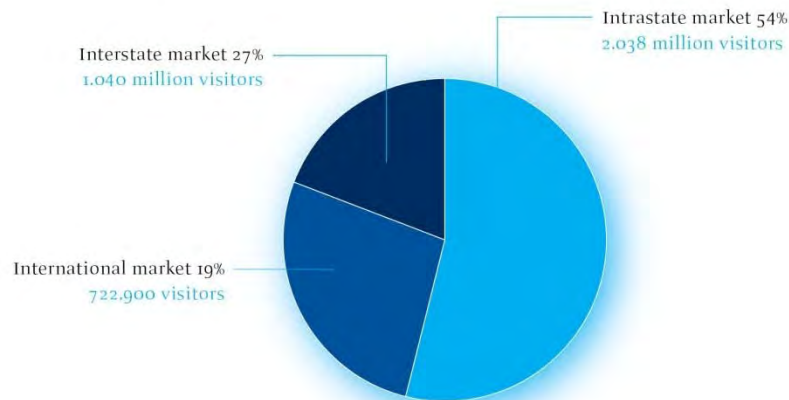
**Inaugural Noongar Advisory Panel meeting  
Royal Perth Yacht Club, 26 February 2013. B Strahan**



# 10 TOURISM AND BUSINESS

## 10.1 AUDIENCE

While estimates of the number and profile of people specifically visiting the Riverpark are not collected, the SRT has commissioned visitor satisfaction surveys annually since 2011 and visitor profiles are expected in the future. Information about visitors to Perth from within the state, interstate and international markets can be drawn from visitor surveys undertaken by Tourism Research Australia.



### 10.1.1 Audience Analysis

The Riverpark is located in the Experience Perth tourism region which received an estimated 3.8 million visitors from all markets in the year ended 30 June 2013. Over the past three years the region has experienced a 7.6 percent average annual growth rate in overall visitor numbers and 12.4 percent growth in visitor nights. The largest source market for Experience Perth is the

intrastate market which provided 2.038 million visitors or 54 percent of all visitors to the region in the year ended 30 June 2013. The intrastate market is divided into daytrip visitors and visitors staying overnight. Experience Perth received 67 percent of the State's daytrip market and 38 percent of its overnight market in the same period.

Interstate markets provided 1.040 million visitors or 27 percent of all visitors to the Experience Perth region in the year ended 30 June 2013. New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland are the largest interstate markets for Western Australia, providing 30 percent, 27 percent and 24 percent of visitors respectively in the period.

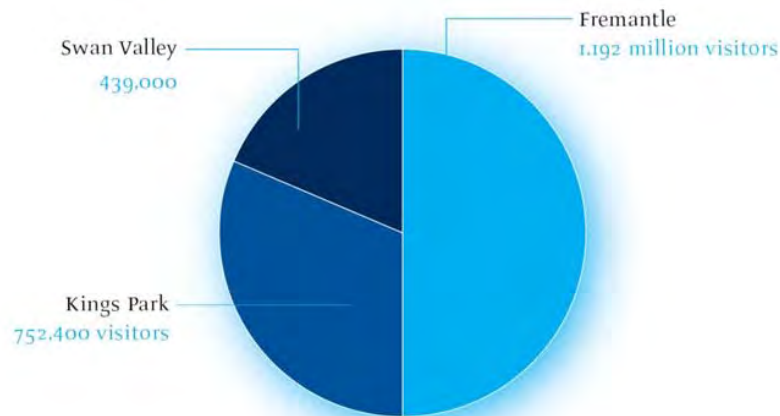
International markets provided 722,900 visitors or 19 percent of all visitors to the Experience Perth region in the year ended 30 June 2013. These visitors came from the following top ten source countries: UK, NZ, Singapore, Malaysia, USA, Indonesia, China, Germany, Ireland and South Africa.

### 10.1.2 Audience Destination

Three nodes identified within the riverpark at Fremantle, Kings Park and the Swan Valley are also amongst the top ten places visited in Western Australia.

In the year ended 30 June 2013 these places received 1.192 million, 752,400 and 439,000 visitors respectively. The Swan Valley and Kings Park increased in popularity during the year ended 30 June 2013 showing growth in visitors of (+) 28.5 percent (+97,200) and (+) 18.4 percent (+116,900) respectively.

Over the past three years all three places have experienced the following average annual growth rate: Fremantle 10.5 percent Kings Park 14.9 percent and Swan Valley 10.6 percent



### 10.1.3 Future Target Audiences and Requirements

Potential future audiences for interpretive experiences in the riverscape are residents of the Perth and surrounding area plus intrastate, interstate and international visitors to the Experience Perth region.

#### 10.1.3.1 Domestic

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics<sup>29</sup> the resident population of Perth and surrounds or Greater Perth at June 2012 was 1.9million people, which equates to 78 percent of the state’s total population. Between 2011 and 2012, the population of Greater Perth increased by 65,400 people, or 3.6 percent, the fastest of any capital city in the country.

Some in this local population are actively and frequently engaged in formal activities in the riverscape through recreational pursuits<sup>30</sup>, citizen science<sup>31</sup>, environment and conservation<sup>32</sup> and built heritage conservation<sup>33</sup> activities. Others engage on a less frequent basis in social activities with family and friends such as foreshore picnics and community events.<sup>34</sup>

## 10.2 STRATEGIC BUSINESS AND TOURISM CONTEXT

The Riverpark offers wide ranging potential for sustainable business and tourism development to meet projected growth in both the resident population and visitors to Perth.

This plan identifies opportunities for existing business to refresh and expand their offerings and for new business entrants in areas including soft adventure activities, eco and cultural tours, events and water taxi transport. Tourism and business development in the riverscape can align and leverage interpretation plan initiatives as they are implemented.

Alignment with existing strategies and plans that foster broader cultural heritage and Aboriginal tourism in Western Australia will assist in developing these and other business opportunities.

The unprecedented commercial and government investment planned and underway in and adjacent to the Riverpark provides opportunities for partnerships across all sectors to realise a range of business and tourism outcomes.

The State Government Strategy for Tourism in Western Australia 2020 aims to double the value of tourism to the State, to reach \$12 billion by 2020. This overarching strategy is guiding

government and industry activity in seven focus areas including Aboriginal tourism and events, both areas are highlighted in this plan as critical to interpreting values of the riverscape. The Strategy also encourages innovation in the development of product and events that align in delivering on the State's tourism brand promise – Experience Extraordinary Western Australia.

Separate strategies guide development of Aboriginal and Heritage tourism in this State.

The Aboriginal Tourism Strategy for Western Australia 2011-2015<sup>35</sup>, developed through a partnership between Tourism WA and the WA Indigenous Tour Operators Council (WAITOC), seeks outcomes in the three areas.

1. Position and marketing
2. Industry and government partnerships
3. Quality product

The strategy identifies the continuing need to assist Aboriginal tourism businesses in their business planning, marketing, access to funding and other support, including employment and training.

A proposed extension of WAITOC's role beyond marketing to provision of support to the development of Aboriginal tourism product would assist Noongar people to realise their community education, employment, tourism enterprise and conservation objectives for the riverscape.

The employment of *Whadjuk* people has been raised by the NAP as one of the most important outcomes of the Interpretation Plan to ensure the ongoing care and maintenance of the Rivers within *Whadjuk* custom. The interpretation team has taken this

onboard and reflected this priority in its business recommendations and interpretation initiatives.

*"An outcome of this, I can see, is Aboriginal employment...to care for the River. Not just to be a tourism attraction, it needs to be an Aboriginal employment program, to be responsible for caring for the River, for maintaining the River... to show people that we can be responsible like the old people were in the past."*

Marie Taylor, NAP Meeting 13<sup>th</sup> September 2013

The riverscape can play a greater role in assisting the state to meet its aim to "Position WA as a recognised events destination, attractive to locals and visitors"<sup>36</sup> while attracting best world heritage practice. New interpretation frameworks and initiatives encourage worldwide linkages by showcasing the Riverpark's natural and cultural values. These qualities can underpin events, programs and festivals.

Western Australia's Noongar culture can expand WAITOC's relationship with First Nations activities, networking and heritage practice throughout the world, while established events such as The Perth International Arts Festival can anchor innovative program experiences in the riverscape.

The Heritage Tourism Strategy for Western Australia should be a guiding document for all tourism product development in the riverscape<sup>37</sup>. The Key Heritage Tourism Thematic Assessment informs the Strategy by identifying nine key heritage themes.

These include:

- Indigenous
- Maritime
- Convict
- Ecclesiastical
- Gold Rush

- Rail
- Military
- Timber
- Kimberley\* ( The Kimberley is location specific).

These State heritage tourism themes are of enduring significance to the State, are most likely to resonate with cultural and heritage visitors and provide the greatest potential for development as Tourism product.

These themes also have relevance to the riverscape which boasts a rich cluster of complementary products – nature-based, Aboriginal, arts – all integrated by the common thread of heritage.

The interpretation plan has aligned with these themes in its development of river storylines or ‘Journeys’ which enable the linking of the heritage values of the riverscape, through interpretive experiences.

### 10.3 EXISTING RIVERPARK BUSINESS AND TOURISM EXPERIENCES

Images of the riverscape feature prominently in promotional materials used by governments, industry and the corporate sector to attract investor interest, to encourage workers to relocate and to entice visitors to Perth. This prominence reflects how crucial the river is to Perth’s brand. However, there is often surprise and disappointment at how little commercial tourism activity actually occurs to enable visitors to experience the rivers as more than a magnificent photographic opportunity from Kings Park.

#### An overview of existing business and tourism activity:

##### Self-guided tours

Recreational equipment hire and instruction for sightseeing and soft adventure activities including kayak, Segway, cycle, quad bike, scooter, wind surf, surf cat, paddle board, wake board and parasail. These activities are largely undertaken on a self-guided basis after basic ‘How to’ instruction and are offered at Matilda Bay, Pelican Point, South Perth, Canning Eco Centre, Barrack Square, Point Fraser and Swan Valley.

##### Guided Tours

- General sight-seeing tours by one or a combination of coach, tram, motorbike, cruise boat, plane and helicopter.
- Nature based and cultural tours - walking, cycling and kayaking.
- Soft adventure tours - cycling, sailing, parasailing, kayaking and diving.
- Guided tours incorporate one or more of the following nodes – Perth CBD, Kings Park, South Perth, Fremantle, Canning River, Ascot Waters, Melville Waters and Swan Valley.

##### Hospitality

- Refreshment kiosks - Matilda Bay, Garvey Park, Freshwater Bay, Riverside Gardens, South Perth, Deep Water Point and Point Walter.
- Cafés - Guildford, Peninsula Farm(Tranby), East Perth, Barrack Square, Ascot, South Perth, Canning River Regional Park, Deep Water Point, Canning Bridge, Heathcote, Point Walter, Fremantle and East Fremantle.



- Fine dining – east and north Fremantle, Barrack Square, East Perth, Kings Park, Matilda Bay, Nedlands, Freshwater Bay, Heathcote, South Perth and Canning Bridge.

### Retail

Souvenirs, art, craft and clothing.

Nodes – Swan Valley, South Perth, CBD, Fremantle and Kings Park.

### Events

Event management companies and equipment suppliers service local government authorities and the private sector to stage local and major events.

Event nodes include various locations in the Swan Valley, Garvey Park, Sandy Point, Riverside Gardens, Banks Reserve, Claisebrook, CBD foreshore, Nedlands foreshore, Matilda Bay, Bicton, Point Walter, Deep Water Point, Shelley foreshore, Canning Eco Centre/Kent Street Weir, South Perth foreshore and Burswood Peninsula.

### Attractions

- Major – South Perth, Kings Park, Fremantle harbour,
- Elizabeth Quay and Swan Valley.
- Historic – Perth CBD, Fremantle, Tranby (Maylands), Bassendean, Guildford, South Perth and Heathcote.
- Museums – Fremantle, Perth CBD, Wireless Hill, East Perth, Heathcote and Guildford
- Public Art galleries – Fremantle, Perth CBD, Kings Park and Heathcote.

## 10.4 FUTURE BUSINESS AND TOURISM EXPERIENCES

This plan encourages future business and tourism development to achieve a diverse range of interpretive experiences that disperse custom and associated economic, social and environmental impacts.

The significant commercial and residential developments underway in and adjacent to the river foreshore provide opportunities to partner with government and developers in creating interpretive infrastructure and facilitating associated commercial activities. Notable priority locations undergoing development that will increase population density along the foreshore and in turn demand for interpretive experiences, activities and attractions include:

Belmont (Springs and racecourse), Burswood Peninsula, East Perth, Point Fraser, Heirisson Island, Elizabeth Quay and Canning Bridge.<sup>38</sup>

Development of a complementary suite of interpretive experiences across the riverscape will facilitate the commercial viability of individual businesses; collaboration amongst business operators within and between activity nodes and; longer and repeat visitation to the whole riverscape as a destination. It is intended that the interpretive themes and associated audit material within this plan will:

- stimulate existing businesses to refresh and expand their product offerings, and
- attract creative and entrepreneurial new business offerings.

Of primary importance is the protection of the unique values of the river. Protection can be achieved through planning and management that integrates environmental, social, cultural and economic goals. An important component of managing commercial activities in natural environments such as the riverscape, is the licensing of businesses/operators and the requirement for business accreditation to ensure the highest standards of business practice is met.

Business accreditation programs do not address cultural protocols associated with use and delivery of information at the level required to assure cultural competency of staff delivering interpretive information. The view of the NAP is that, apart from use of dual place names by mainstream tour operators, the design and delivery of tours based in Aboriginal content should be undertaken by Noongar people using knowledge imparted by Elders. This intention is reflected in the major initiatives of this Plan.



**Canoes at the ready.** G Pickering

## 10.5 TOUR EXPERIENCES

There is significant opportunity to enhance existing self-guided experiences in the Riverpark with the interpretation approach outlined in this plan.

‘Whole of river’ and location specific tour experiences can be delivered at foreshore nodes or by linking nodes. Modes of transport to and between nodes may include one or a combination of walk, cycle, kayak, train, bus, ferry or cruise.

Impediments to developing, accessing and connecting interpretive experiences and associated businesses at nodes within the riverscape include:

1. Insufficient population density/potential demand
2. Absence of water transport and associated jetty mooring facilities
3. The practice of some local governments to charge visitors to park along the river foreshore.

The present Transperth ferry service between Barrack Street Jetty and South Perth foreshore is the only form of scheduled public transport on the rivers. To date, feasibility assessments for public transport on the rivers have been based on ferry type services and deemed unviable on that basis. The significant growth in population density/potential demand generated by the cluster of developments underway and planned in and adjacent to the river (Elizabeth Quay, Riverside East, Belmont and Burswood Peninsula, Point Fraser, Heirisson Island and Canning Bridge) makes it timely to retest the feasibility with a focus initially on connecting these nodes plus the existing South Perth node via commercially operated water taxi service/s.

Guided tour experiences suit mobile or pop-up business models which provide the added benefits of minimising capital outlay

and statutory and other approval processes associated with installing infrastructure. Consideration should be given to establishing a collaborative space at a foreshore node for emerging river businesses. Such a space could accommodate equipment storage, training space and office infrastructure. Local government may be in the best position to negotiate such a space as a developer contribution within one of the significant developments planned or underway in the riverscape.

The Plan recommends a range of cultural information is made available on location, through QR codes site linked to electronic interpretation (proximity trigger, RFID, beacon, GPS, QR code scan) and nodes around the riverscape via hand held devices. Existing equipment hire businesses can enhance their offering by making available hand held technology for hire.

## 10.6 NEW BUSINESS TOUR OPPORTUNITIES

The following expanded range of new business tour opportunities was recommended during research for the interpretation plan.

### Eco Tours

The riverscape boasts unique flora and fauna and guided tours could both observe iconic and migratory species and contribute to citizen science activities. For example, Dolphin Watch program.<sup>39</sup>

There is opportunity to expand commercial kayak tours by developing trails that link nodes in quieter stretches of the rivers e.g. eastern reaches. This would be assisted by the installation of kayak launching areas.

Bushland areas in the riverscape provide opportunity for guided wildflower tours. For example, Canning River Regional Park. Restoration of the natural environment is of increasing interest and provides opportunity for guided tours of habitat, wetland and general foreshore regeneration projects.

Participation in ‘hands on’ restoration projects delivered by community based Natural Resource Management organisations could enhance tour experiences and fulfil the desire of some visitors to contribute to the environment of places they visit whilst on holiday.

Opportunity also exists to promote participation in regeneration projects within shore excursions for the growing cruise ship passenger market, some of whom seek experiences to “give back” to the communities they visit.

### ‘Round the Bridges’ walk and cycle tours<sup>40</sup>

‘Round the Bridges’ began with walking and cycling around the Perth CBD and South Perth foreshores between the Causeway and Narrows Bridge. The inclusion of Fremantle Bridge extended the cycle experience to foreshores north and south of the river between Perth and Fremantle. Construction of Windan Bridge extended the experience to East Perth and Burswood peninsula foreshores. Local governments in the eastern reaches of the Swan River made further extensions by creating looping cycle rides to the river foreshore, accessed from stations along the Midland railway line, linking Windan, Garratt, Redcliffe and Guildford bridges.

The opportunity exists to extend this approach to and around the Canning River by linking Narrows, Canning, Mt Henry, Riverton, Shelley, Kent Street Weir and Roe Hwy bridges. The

rides could be accessed from the Canning Bridge and Bullcreek stations along the Mandurah train line.

The suite of 'Round the Bridges' experiences provides opportunity for guided tours and can leverage the growing interest worldwide in recreational cycling and cycle tourism.

### Trail Tours

There are many trails within the riverscape that are or could be connected to the main foreshore trail. These include:

- Swan Valley food and wine cycle trail from Guildford node
- Whadjuk trail network – four trails have a river focus
- City of Fremantle network – five trails in the network have a river focus - Waterfront trail, Maritime heritage trail, CY O'Connor Trail, Manjaree Heritage trail, Discovery trail
- City of Perth network - Parks & Gardens Trail has a river focus
- City of Belmont - River Walk and Garvey Park Walk
- Town of Bassendean Wicked Walk trails – Ashfield Flats
- Kings Park – Law Trail and Federation walkway, Boodja Gnarning (Six Seasons Walk)
- Canning River Regional Park Interpretative Trails network
- Noongar Coastal Trail – linking sites between Two Rocks and Rockingham

In addition, most local governments have developed heritage trails many of which are accessible from the river foreshore. This network of trails provides for diversions and loops to and from nodes along the main foreshore trail. Currently these trails are self-guided but the opportunity exists for guided half,

full and extended tours, enhanced by the interpretive material in this plan.

Trails extend beyond the riverscape into the catchment and provide an opportunity for guided or semi-guided trail tour experiences of several days duration. Examples include:

- *Camino Salvado* pilgrimage walk – from Subiaco, along the river to Walyunga and Avon Valley National Parks and on to New Norcia.
- Forest Heritage Trail – walk or cycle from Middle Swan up to Mundaring along the old railway line, linking on to other iconic distance trails including KepTrack, Bibbulmun and Munda Biddi.

### Niche market tours and experiences

Consultation with Local Government Authorities and business development professionals generated many ideas for guided tours tailored to special interests including: maritime archaeology, geology, ecology, architecture, art and photography.

## 10.7 ABORIGINAL TOURS

The NAP has identified flora and fauna, seasons, spiritual stories, rituals and naming of places as essential elements for guided tours, interpretive experiences and events along the trails, and at appropriate nodes and other locations within the Riverscape.

A specific story of significance to the Whadjuk is that of Aboriginal leader and warrior Yagan. The NAP has advised that this story can be best told through interpretation experiences at Heirisson Island and the Yagan Memorial Park.

Development of interpretive tour experiences to share Aboriginal cultural values requires the continued engagement of



the Noongar community, both elders and youth. It necessitates the fostering of training and employment opportunities to gain the technical knowledge and skills required to operate successful tourism businesses.

## 10.8 LEVERAGING ATTRACTIONS

Recent audits have identified 450 listed significant places in the riverscape including the rivers themselves. There is substantial scope for greater inclusion of attractions to refresh and expand existing tour offerings. Some attractions are accessible by water with functional jetty infrastructure while others rely on coach or walk linkages. The interpretive themes within this plan provide a means to link these elements within tour design and packaging.

Cultural centres are proposed by various groups at several nodes around the river foreshore, including Elizabeth Quay, Heirrisson Island, Swan Valley (Whadjuk Gateway Centre), Canning and South Perth. It is important that these developments complement and collectively present the diversity of the riverscape values and aspirations of host communities. Achievement of ongoing commercial viability of cultural centres has proven a challenge around the State. It requires their location at highly accessible nodes where a cluster of experiences is offered that will attract sufficient volume of customers. The proposed cultural centres are all at the concept and preliminary design stage providing scope to make strategic and coordinated decisions going forward.

## 10.9 TOURISM AND BUSINESS SUGGESTED ACTIONS

### Swan River Trust in collaboration with others

1. Align product development and marketing in the riverscape with the *Experience Extraordinary* tourism brand to elevate *marli riverpark* as an 'extraordinary' experience.
2. Promote the *marli riverpark* and Interpretation Plan to international partners including First Nation Communities and festival programs.
3. Capitalise on the wellbeing potential of Perth's growing population through the riverpark experiences.
4. Develop and implement strategies specific to key target audiences in the promotion of riverpark interpretation and public programs.
5. Encourage training and employment, particularly amongst young Aboriginal people, in the technical knowledge and skills required for delivery of tours and the operation and management of tourism businesses.
6. Promote cultural protocols associated with use and delivery of Aboriginal knowledge to riverpark businesses.
7. Contribute to planning of the cultural and interpretive centres proposed for Elizabeth Quay, Heirisson Island, Swan Valley (Whadjuk Gateway Centre), Canning and South Perth to achieve complementary outcomes.

### Community, Local government Authorities and other agencies

1. Develop and deliver training and product development services for riverscape cultural tourism experiences with the support of WA Indigenous Tour Operators Council.
2. Local Government Authorities to collaborate with developers undertaking major projects around the river foreshore to secure contributions towards implementing this plan.
3. Extend licensing and accreditation<sup>41</sup> requirements to commercial tourism businesses operating in the riverpark.
4. Commission an independent feasibility study into the potential for water taxis in the riverpark that link existing and planned high density nodes.
5. Introduce free parking on Sundays to increase riverpark visitation and community wellbeing
6. Local Government Authorities to assess the feasibility of establishing a collaborative space at foreshore nodes for emerging businesses.
7. Local Government Authorities to enhance existing self-guided trails with new live and hand held riverpark experiences.
8. Extend 'Round the Bridges' walk and cycle tours to include the Canning River and integrate with public transport and interpretation initiatives.
9. Develop riverpark cultural experiences which align with heritage themes identified in the WA Heritage Tourism Strategy.
10. Develop and promote a specifically Noongar focused program of guided and self-guided experiences that grows business capacity within the Noongar and broader business community.
11. Promote participation in regeneration projects packaged as shore excursions for the growing cruise ship passenger market.





Morning swim north of Chidley Point Reserve, Mosman Park. G Pickering

# 11 RIVER CONTEXTS

The following sections provide brief overviews of the riverscape from both an Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal viewpoints. The Aboriginal perspective was prepared by Professor Len Collard and Assistant Professor Clint Bracknell from the School of Indigenous Studies at the University of Western Australia. The historic overview was prepared by Dr Sue Graham-Taylor AM lead historian for the Plan.

## 11.1 DERBARL YIRAGAN<sup>42</sup> & DJARLGARRO BEELIER

*Noongar boodjar*, or land, lies in the South-West corner of Western Australia. Whichever way you spell it, *Noongar* (*Nyungar*, *Noongar*, *Nyoongar*, *Nyungah*, *Nungar*, *Njunga* etc.) is the generic term that means a human being/s and it describes the people whose ancestors originally occupied and continue to occupy the whole South-West *boodjar*.<sup>43</sup> In *Noongar* language, *boodjar* means land and *boodjarri* refers to pregnancy. This semantic link emphasises the deep and inextricable connection between Noongar and their Country.

Our *boodjar* extends from eastward past Esperance on the south coast, moving in an arc north-west of Esperance across close to the small wheat-belt town of Nyoongah, and west-north-west towards Coorow to south of Geraldton on the west coast of Western Australia. Noongar language has long echoed through this region. The language changes as you move across the *boodjar*, and different Noongar have described their interlinked regional groups using terms including *Amangu*, *Yued*, *Whadjuk*, *Binjareb*, *Wardandi*, *Balardong*, *Nyakinyaki*, *Wilman*, *Ganeang*, *Wirlomin*, *Bibulman*, *Kwetjman*, *Mineng*, *Goreng*, *Wudjari* and

*Ngokgurring*.<sup>44</sup> For *kura kura*, or a long, long time, in accordance with our *Noongar* cosmology within the *Whadjuk* (Greater Perth), *Balardong* (Wheatbelt) areas around the *Derbal Yiragan* and *Djarlgarro Beelier*, or the Swan-Canning Riverscape, *katitjin*, the knowledge, *boodjar*, the land, and *moort*, the family, have been brought together in *wangkiny*, dialogue, to inform us of the relationships between knowledge, people and places.

Stories of our *boodjar* or country follow our oral traditions of storytelling handed down through the *Noongar moort* that have been continual for well over 40,000 years. Our *Noongar* cosmology, worldviews, theories and ideologies have existed for all these years and, in that time, we *Noongar* have occupied and managed the landscape and all its resources in the south-west of Western Australia.<sup>45</sup>

## 11.2 WAAKAL, CREATOR OF THE RIVERSCAPE

*Noongar* cultural ideologies, language and social mores have been based on the same tenets since *kura kura*, a long time ago and are transmitted and maintained via stories. While the content of these stories may change in accordance with the narrator, location and audience, the *Waakal* (*Waugal*, *Wagyl*, *Waugyl*, *Wagul* etc.) or Noongar Rainbow Serpent is commonly depicted as the creator.<sup>46</sup> Many *Noongar* consider the Swan-Canning Riverscape sacred due to stories associated with the *Waakal* and its continued presence in the area. Noongar Elder Everett Kickett theorised that the *Waakal* created the *Derbal Yiragan*, which means where the estuary is filled up by the winding river, now known as the Swan River.<sup>47</sup>



Furthermore, Noongar Elder Ralph Winmar wrote that the Waakal made all 'rivers, swamps, lakes and waterholes'.<sup>48</sup> If one were to look at *Derbal Yiragan* (as the Perth waters of the Swan River) from the top of *Kaart Djinanginy Bo*, or Mount Eliza (Kings Park), it would be easy to visualise this huge *Waakal* twisting and turning as it made its way to the coast. Noongar Elder Albert Corunna said, during the Dreamtime the *Waakal* 'moved across the landscapes of Perth and as he moved the waterways were created which included the Swan River'. He explained, '(t)his is the way the rivers were made as told by my old people'.<sup>49</sup>

*Noongar* believe that the *Waakal* is the giver of life because of its role in creating and maintaining freshwater sources.<sup>50</sup> Belief in the *Waakal* and its control over fresh water is as relevant today as it has been for millennia.<sup>51</sup> Speaking of the inherent connection between the *Waakal* and fresh water, *Noongar* Elder Dorothy Winmar said 'without the *Waakal* around they would have no water ... There is a *Waakal* in the Swan River and he very rarely shows himself. If the water was muddy, the old grannies used to say don't swim in there ... They wanted the water, so they wanted the snake to stay alive'.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, *Noongar* Elder Tom Bennell explained '... the real water snake oh, oh he is pretty, that carpet snake ... the *Noongar* call him *Waarkal kierp wirnitch*. That means that carpet snake, he belongs to the water. You musn't touch that snake ... If you kill that carpet snake *noonook barminy* that *Waakal ngulla kierp uart*; that means our water dries up – none'.<sup>53</sup>

Furthermore, *Noongar* Elder Janet Hayden revealed her Elders advised young people to be particularly cautious around *Derbal Yerrigan* due to its significance to the *Waakal*.

*They wouldn't let us go near there, the Guilford Bridge, because of the heading of the Swan River, that is where the Waakal would*

*run, from there right down to Kings Park ... We weren't allowed there, that is wirrin, devil or bad spirits. Bulai, Waakal – look out, you know ... But the Swan River, to a lot of Noongar even then, they weren't allowed near the Swan River. I used to wonder why because, when we were back home in Brookton, the Avon River was not sacred to us. It was where you got everything – jilgies, turtles, whatever came out of the river. We just took it. The Avon River was our lifeline, where the Swan River wasn't. It was taboo to us. We weren't allowed to go there.*<sup>54</sup>

Telling an ancestral *Noongar* story, Elder Sealin Garlett explained how the *Waakal* once saved seven righteous people stranded on top of Mount Eliza (King Park) after causing the Perth waters to flood.

*There were seven people on this hill ... the Waakal ... helped all these fellas on his back and they moved out. All the other people got on the rocks and jumped on the Waakal's back, but they slid off. They tried to hang on to his tail, but the Waakal pushed them off. He then circled the ground and mixed the sand up where he circled. He then went out over the Swan River where the Narrows is now, out over where the Causeway is, out past where Trinity College was built, and he made a track to York. When he got to York, he stopped and had a rest ... the Waakal went down towards Beverly and Brookton and they reckon the last place he camped was at Boyagin Rock. That was his last resting place or ngoondiny – sleeping place of the Waakal.*<sup>55</sup>

These and other stories and theories are just a few of many told by *Noongar* about the Swan-Canning Riverscape. *Noongar* consider the vitality of this knowledge, the riverscape, the people and the local ecosystem crucially interlinked. Albert Corunna said 'I see it important for us to help in the protecting of these river sites. When we go to the rivers one of the customs

is to throw sand in to let the Waugyl (sic.) know we are here. This is a sign of respect which our ancestors can see we are doing the right thing.<sup>56</sup>

### 11.3 KOONDARN, RESPECT, VALUES AND SIGNIFICANCE

Wadjuk and Balardong Noongar have referred to the social significance of specific places along the *Derbal Yiragan* and *Djarlgarro Beelier*, or Swan-Canning Riverscape as ancestral birthing, burial, camping and fishing sites, which are still visited by Noongar today.<sup>57</sup> Albert Corunna explained 'I believe the old people's spirits are still protecting the landscapes'.<sup>58</sup> Highlighting the significance of birthing sites, Janet Hayden particularly emphasised the importance of the riverscape for women.

*The history of the whole Swan River, the history of any waterway, any river or any waterway, that comes under Noongar country – because Noongar country is matriarch country, it's not a male country, it's a matriarch country and it's always been that way – and the waterway has always been a symbol of women and a symbol of women's birth, and that in itself has to be highlighted as our spiritual and physical connection to the Swan River. And that doesn't only mean the Swan River that means the whole waterways.*<sup>59</sup>

In light of this, conservation of the entire riverscape, including particular sites, is a priority for many Noongar, including Elder Beverly Port-Louis, who considers the riverscape a 'giver of life'.<sup>60</sup> Noongar Elder Wayne Collard expressed concern that recent changes to the riverscape have damaged ancestral Noongar heritage sites.

*From Narrows to Kings Park side, right near the brewery, before they flooded that area was an outcrop of rocks, fish traps with everything was there from which our people used from in olden times. Since they put that Narrows Bridge in the single time, single lane first time, you could see in the photos that all the rocks are there, rocky outcrops were there. And they re-routed the river to cover it now. Died Aboriginal's heritage that's what I believe and I know I'm right what I say.*<sup>61</sup>

In efforts to protect heritage and assert sovereignty since the 1970s and up to the present day, Noongar people have organised community action at areas along the Swan-Canning riverscape including *Marta Garrup*, Heirisson Island and *Gooninup*, the Old Swan Brewery.<sup>62</sup> These protests and rallies have reflected commitment to long-held Noongar values and have functioned to embed the riverscape with contemporary issues including Native Title.<sup>63</sup> While still a contested landscape, the Swan-Canning riverscape has been central to various Noongar cultural celebrations in recent decades, emphasising continuity with the pre-colonial past.<sup>64</sup> For countless generations, Noongar people living around the Swan-Canning riverscape have lived a healthy, leisurely and sustainable lifestyle, following the seasonal patterns of the local ecosystem much like those who lived in other parts of Noongar territory in the south-west.<sup>65</sup> Many Noongar continue to access the rivers and estuary waters for sustenance, knowledge, spiritual renewal and to practise distinct cultural activities.<sup>66</sup> As Noongar Elder Shirley Harris has explained, the riverscape is 'part of us as Aboriginal people and the ever flowing water'.<sup>67</sup>



Native camp at Crawley Point. Courtesy State Library of Western Australia, The Battye Library, 5033P



## 11.4 AN HISTORIC OVERVIEW

The Swan and Canning Rivers are no different from rivers anywhere. To grasp their meaning we must understand their characteristics, their past and the way that, as a culture comprising diverse groups, we have altered them through our actions. Rivers and their riverscapes are linked. Rivers make riverscapes and riverscapes then determine the rivers.

Riverscapes can be seen in three parts – first, their natural capital including topography and geology, soils and water as well flora and fauna; secondly, the cultural and social infrastructure that has resulted in changes to the natural environment; thirdly, the history of the riverscape, the emotions, inspiration, love, attachment, ongoing connections that the place inspires, the sounds, smells and colours that makes it unique and creates a sense of place.

The Swan and Canning rivers flow through the heart of metropolitan Perth draining, together with their tributaries, a catchment area of 2,090 square kilometres. The Swan River emerges from the Avon River at Walyunga National Park, 72km from the river mouth at Fremantle. The combined Swan-Avon River is 280 kilometres long; its source is near Wickpin and the catchment covers approximately 126,000 square kilometres.

The lower reaches of the Swan and Canning rivers form an estuary created by geological conditions more than 10,000 years ago. The Swan River was mostly brackish before settlers removed the rock bar at Fremantle in the late 1890s and dredged the large flood delta nearby. The Swan and Canning rivers are now a permanently open estuary that changes from fresh/brackish conditions in winter and spring, to salty conditions during summer and autumn.

The political boundaries of the riverscape have changed over time. Before settlement the riverscape was associated with four territories led by Yellagonga, Weeip, Munday and Midgegooroo. In 2013, 21 local government authorities were bordering the river. Through a proposed amalgamation process the number of Local Government authorities will be reduced significantly. This process does not impact on the existing heritage and social values associated with the rivers and their surrounds.

The Dutch mapped the Swan River in 1697 but did not explore the Canning. The first Europeans to report seeing the Canning River were the French in June 1801. A party from Nicholas Baudin's *Naturaliste* led by Heirisson first explored the Swan, encountering difficulty at the 'flats' which they named Heirisson Islands. They then turned their attention to the Canning River entrance they called Entrée Moreau, after a member of their party, midshipman Moreau. They did not explore further but commented that it probably linked with the sea. The first Europeans to explore the Canning River, so named by Captain Stirling, was a small team from the party on their return from the journey along the Swan in 1827. The natural environment impressed botanist Fraser who described the view from Pelican Point to the entrance of the Moreau:

*Here the country is diversified with hills of gentle elevation, and with narrow valleys, magnificently clothed with trees of the richest green. Here genus Banksia appears in all its grandeur, consisting of three species, of which B. grandis is the most conspicuous.*

Captain Charles Fremantle and a party both on foot and in boats followed the course of the Canning River in May 1829. Fremantle described features of the River we recognise today – islands, shallow wetlands and sandbanks. He commented on the 'wild



ducks and divers 'of which the river abounds' as well as the black swans, pelicans, curlews, gulls and 'an amazing number of a black species of Shag with a red eye, a handsome bird'. In the following month a party of officers and men explored the Canning further and acknowledged that Stirling had wrongly mapped the River.

In July 1829 a more detailed survey was made about 12 miles upriver. Fremantle commented on the rich soils, the difficulty of getting up river with access blocked by large trees in the water and islands.

In October 1829 a group including Surveyor-General John Septimus Roe and settlers interested in land grants around the Canning River journeyed up the waterway to look at prospects for settlement. They found a river difficult to navigate, obviously salty in summer with soils suitable to cultivate only found in a narrow strip close to the river. Below what is presently the Kent Street Weir there were areas low lying ground and saltmarsh clearly unsuitable for cultivation. Although land was allocated along the river, the isolation of the district meant that settlement was slow. The upper reaches of the river were used for timber cutting for sleepers, roof timbers and shingles as well as for firewood. The river was navigated in flat bottomed barges to allow access over the sandbanks and rapids. In the 1880s to 1890s as road transport took over, large grants on the north side of the river were subdivided.



**Working bee on the Canning River sand bag dam, c 1912.**

Courtesy City of Gosnells

## 11.5 ABORIGINAL PRESENCE

Lyon's 1833 map of Aboriginal groups around Perth has the Canning River as Munday's Beelo territory on the north of the river with Midgegooroo's Beeliar territory to the south. These groups feature prominently in the early European exploration and settlement of the Canning River.

The river provided rich resources for the various groups as they travelled through and camped in the area. Early European explorers noted a widespread Aboriginal presence and relationships were relatively friendly. The waters of the Canning provided rich resources for the Noongar people in the area and the banks provided materials for everyday life. The area was one of significant activity for Aboriginal people with intense movement along the riverside tracks and across the landscape. The upper reaches of the Canning River provided easy access through the Darling Ranges.

As European presence along the Canning increased, there was increasing Aboriginal resistance to the loss of their traditional lands and way of life. Europeans too responded to protect their stock and homes. The Canning was for a while a centre of settler and European conflict, with lives lost on both sides. Between 1831 and 1838 four men were fatally speared and five others and one woman were wounded in incidents along the Canning River. Eleven houses were destroyed and 500 head of stock run off or killed. (*Perth Gazette*, 28 July 1838).<sup>68</sup>

Midgegooroo and his son Yagan fought and died resisting the invasion of their lands by British colonists. The landscape harbours tales of frontier violence and conflict as settlement advanced, a legacy that must be grappled with.

## 11.6 GEOLOGY AND GEOMORPHOLOGY

The geology of the Swan Coastal Plain consists of deep layers of sediments and sedimentary rocks dating back to the Cretaceous Period, 146-65 million years ago.<sup>69</sup> The youngest of these, from the Quaternary Period (2.6 million years to the present), are intersected by the Swan and Canning river systems and are visible along the river banks and estuary foreshores.

Interestingly, this period also saw the evolution of the human race and the eventual habitation of the Coastal Plain by Aboriginal people. The Quaternary is described as "characterized by a series of large-scale environmental changes that have profoundly affected and shaped both landscapes and life on Earth", with an estimated 30-50 glacial cycles occurring.<sup>70</sup> Over 40,000 years, Aboriginal people saw the effects of at least one glacial cycle with the rising and falling sea levels and warming and cooling climates which resulted in the Swan and Canning systems as they existed at the time of European settlement.

Around 20,000 years ago, sea level was about 130m below today's level, Rottneest was just a hill, and the Swan River met the ocean somewhere to the north-west of that hill.<sup>71</sup> By 7,000 years ago, Rottneest was still connected to the mainland, but only just. Sea levels peaked around 5,000 years ago and have since fallen a few metres to the current level. The former Swan and Canning River valleys have been largely flooded by the ocean and filled with sandy and muddy sediments to become the Swan Canning Estuary.

## 11.7 FLORA AND FAUNA

The Swan and Canning Rivers support a diverse array of plant and animal life. There are over 130 species of fish that utilise the estuary including herring, cobbler, mullet, black bream, whiting, crustaceans (including two species of prawns), bottlenose dolphins, long-necked turtles, frogs, seahorses and at least two species of jellyfish. Birds include waterbirds dependent on wetlands for feeding, resting and breeding as well as those migratory species that visit each year. The most well known birds on the rivers are black swans, four species of cormorants, herons, darters, pelicans, ducks, ibises and egret.

Terrestrial animals include woodland and forest birds, mammals such as water rats, brush-tail possums, large reptiles including the dugite, bob-tailed skink and smaller lizards as well as many spiders and insects.

There are over 1500 species of plant associated with the Swan Coastal Plain. Plant communities along the rivers include saltmarsh, sedge and rush communities, and fringing forest communities with dominant overstorey species comprising saltwater sheoak, swamp paperbark, freshwater paperbark and flooded gum. Aquatic plants include a wide array of aquatic macrophytes and macroalgae, seagrass species and hundreds of species of microalgae (phytoplankton). The riverscape is also home to a wide array of weeds and a number of feral fish including the Australian Mud Whelk and the pearl cichlid.

### 11.7.1 Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*)

The black swan/marli is now the symbol of the Swan River. Dutch explorer Willem de Vlamingh surveyed and named the river *Swarte Swaene-Revier* in 1696 when his exploration party saw many of the birds. In reporting on his journey up the Swan

River with Captain Stirling in 1827, botanist Charles Fraser described in some detail the abundant bird life around Point Fraser and the sustenance it provided:

*The quantity of black swans, ducks, pelicans and aquatic birds seen on the river was truly astonishing. Without any exaggeration, I have seen a number of black swans, which could not be estimated at less than five hundred rise at once, exhibiting a spectacle which, if the size and colour of the bird be taken into account, and the noise and rushing occasioned by the flapping of their wings, previous to their rising, is quite unique in its kind. We frequently had from twelve to fifteen of them in the boats, and the crews thought nothing of devouring eight roasted swans in a day.<sup>72</sup>*

Swans were a popular target and resource for Perth residents in the early days of the colony. By 1870 they had largely disappeared from the Swan River. Loss of habitat impacted as shorelines were filled in or degraded. Today black swans are becoming more common on the rivers but disturbance by people, dogs, cats and foxes is still a threat.

The birds are entirely black except for the white outer flight feathers of the wings, with an orange to dark red beak. The white eye becomes red during breeding season. The cygnets (chicks) are covered with light grey down. Males grow about 1.3 metres long and females grow to 1.2 metres.

Females also have slightly shorter necks than males. Black Swans have a trumpet-like call. On the Swan and Canning Rivers these swans are seen in areas of shallow, vegetated foreshore and are also found close to seagrass meadows in the lower estuary. They prefer sheltered, vegetated sites.

### 11.7.2 Dolphins (delphini)

Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops aduncus*) have been a valued component of the Swan and Canning Rivers since the earliest days of the colony, but relatively little is known about the health and ecology of the small community. In 2009 six river dolphins died, with *cetacean morbillivirus* playing a role in at least two of the deaths. A recent report identified at least 20 dolphins (16 adults and four calves) making up the resident community within the Swan and Canning rivers.<sup>73</sup> These dolphins also use coastal areas off Fremantle. The Coastal and Estuarine Dolphin Project (CEDP) is a collaborative, multi-institution project, combining the research expertise of Curtin University and Murdoch University with the support of a variety of corporate, community, and government partners. CEDP is studying the health, ecology, and conservation of dolphins inhabiting the metropolitan waters of Perth, including the Swan Canning Riverpark and Cockburn Sound. The Swan River Trust, together with Murdoch and Curtin Universities, launched Dolphin Watch in 2009 as a collaborative, citizen science research and education project. Dolphin Watch recognises the importance of dolphins as potential indicators of river health and aims to provide better understanding of dolphin ecology and their interactions with human activities, to better understand our iconic riverpark.

### 11.7.3 Brown Jellyfish (*Phyllorhiza punctate*)

Brown Jellyfish are thought to have been introduced into the Swan Canning Rivers by ships that visited the Swan River colony between 1829 and 1837. However, some point to the southward movement of jellyfish with the Leeuwin Current. They are characterised by a bell that is usually saucer-shaped and brown

with white spots. These jellyfish are brown in colour due to a dinoflagellate alga that lives in the jellyfish tissues. The mouth, surrounded by long stinging tentacles, is found under the bell. These animals have a stomach cavity and reproductive organs inside the thick jelly of the bell. The jellyfish grow to a width of 50cm and are most common in summer and in highly saline areas. They are absent when surface waters are dominated by low salinity water after winter rainfall.

### 11.7.4 Bull Sharks - River Whaler (*Carcharhinus leucas*)

The Bull Shark can be recognised by its stout body, short blunt snout, triangular serrated teeth in the upper jaw and no fin markings as an adult. The species has a rather large second dorsal fin and small eyes, and no skin ridge between two dorsal fins. It is grey above and pale below, sometimes with a pale stripe on the flank. The species grows to a length of 3.4m and is the only shark species known to stay for extended periods in freshwater. A Bull Shark is thought to have been responsible for at least one death in the Swan River but there have been several attacks and the sharks have been caught as far upstream as the Maylands Yacht Club.



### 11.7.5 Vegetation

The Swan-Canning river system supports a variety of fringing plant types – trees, shrubs, sedges and rushes, samphires, herbs and grasses – and a number of different plant communities according to whether the water in which they grow is saline, brackish or fresh.

Fringing plant communities exist on the river banks and on the strips of land along the banks. Salt marsh communities of salt-tolerant plants occur in areas subjected to tidal flooding. Upstream on higher land there may be a fringing forest community of salt-tolerant paperbarks and sheoaks. Still further back, in low-lying areas beyond the influence of salt water, freshwater paperbark and flooded gums may be found. The fringing vegetation provides food and shelter for reptiles, frogs and birds, prevents erosion but also has a key role in helping to filter the water entering the estuary, removing some pollutants and taking up excess nutrients.

There is now little remaining of the original vegetation along the banks of the Swan River. Fraser's description of Claisebrook in 1827 gives us some idea of the original riverine environment in the area of present day East Perth:

*One mile up the river from the last point is a small creek of fresh water, issuing from an extensive lagoon clothed with arborescent species of Metrosideros of great beauty. The banks are covered with the most interesting plants, amongst which I observed two species of Calytris, a species of Acacia with a scolopendrous-stem, and several Papilionaceous plants. The Angophoras on the flats are gigantic. These flats are formed of tolerable loam, of great depth, and capable of producing fair crops. ... The Zamia seen from the islands was here observed to attain the height of 30 feet. Xanthorrhoea arborea, too, was of equal size, and associated with the splendid Banksias, imparted to the forest a character perfectly tropical.<sup>74</sup>*



Claisebrook in 2013. G Pickering



Swim Thru Guildford, c1938, Courtesy City of Swan

***Over the entire area surveyed along the Swan and Canning Rivers, only 527 ha (20 percent) of the foreshore vegetation was considered in good condition.<sup>75</sup>***

The present day riverscape is a result of differing perceptions of the rivers over time, reflecting past and present community values. The rivers' banks have been straightened, walled to 'beautify' and 'improve' and eroded over time. The Swan River Trust's *Foreshore Assessment and Management Strategy* divides the Rivers into three zones. The condition of *Zone 1, the Estuary* foreshore, Perth and Melville Waters downstream of the Causeway and Mount Henry Bridge is described as follows:

*The Estuary foreshore is characterised by its loss of riparian vegetation through infilling and dredging, shore levelling and clearing. Along the Estuary, modifications to the shore have been significant, with approximately 21.7 km featuring built retaining structures, which have been used to construct an artificial shore. Generally, these areas were once the lower lying saltmarsh, mudflat or swamp environments. Where native vegetation remains fringing the river, it is often in narrow bands, discontinuous or isolated and is therefore vulnerable to further degradation.<sup>76</sup>*

The main issues facing *Zone 2, the Swan zone* or the Swan, Helena and Lower Avon rivers upstream of the Causeway, are related to inadequate natural stability. This is mainly due to an insufficient width in vegetation and the banks will continue to collapse until the shore is no longer maintained by trees and/or sedges. This will result in exacerbated bank migration and erosion.<sup>77</sup> The foreshores of *Zone 3, the Canning and Southern Rivers* have been impacted by the disturbance of sediment transport through flow regulation due to dam creation for metropolitan water supply. There is insufficient flow to scour the river of sediment, and other sediment inputs come from tributary modification and sediment entering from drains

resulting in widespread sedimentation. Vegetation clearing has encouraged weeds and led to reduced bank stability.<sup>78</sup>

Over the entire area surveyed along the Swan and Canning rivers, only 527 ha (20 per cent) of the foreshore vegetation was considered in good condition. Another 1278 ha (50 per cent) was considered to be in moderate condition with the remaining 30 per cent in poor condition. The Canning foreshores contributed the largest area of good condition vegetation (252 ha), which is concentrated within regionally significant areas of the lower Canning River. Approximately 30 per cent of vegetation within the Canning foreshore was in good condition, with the majority of the area in moderate condition 40 per cent and the remaining 30 per cent in poor condition. Good condition vegetation occurred within only 14 per cent of the Swan foreshore and was scattered across the lower Swan River, with a few sites along the Helena River foreshore.<sup>79</sup>

Progress in restoration has been based on priorities outlined in the above Strategy and the Swan River Trust has conducted foreshore management works through its Riverbank Program funding initiatives, distributing more than \$7.9 million across 162 projects since 2002.

### 11.7.6 Canning River Environment

The lowlying islands in the Canning River provide a link to the past, as they are possibly not much different now to when they were seen and described from 1827 on. They were seen in terms of their beauty as well as the problem they caused for river traffic. The islands and the adjoining wetlands are now an important conservation area and as full of bird life as they were in colonial days. The Canning River Regional Park extends for approximately six kilometres along both sides of the Canning

River from the Nicholson Road Bridge in Cannington, to the Shelley Bridge (Leach Highway) in Riverton.



Boat wakes have an impact on tree root systems near Garrett Road Street Bridge. G Pickering

The Park covers an area of 266 hectares and is of regional significance because of its conservation and recreation resources in a suburban setting. It contains the best estuarine vegetation in the entire Swan-Canning River system and is recognised as a regionally significant Bush Forever site. However, it is severely threatened by the invasion of exotic species. The Park contains a wide diversity of habitats which include: saltwater estuary and deltine Islands; saltmarshes and riverine environment; freshwater environment; billabong; modified forest and woodlands on the flood plain. The Park, listed on the Register of the National Estate, is also highly valued as a refuge for birds and other wildlife. The best example of estuarine habitat found along the Swan and Canning Rivers occurs between Riverton Bridge



and Kent Street. Past land uses, and urban development, have impacted on the vegetation. The indigenous plant community structure and species composition have been altered by past agricultural practices, clearing, fires, landfill, rubbish dumping and stormwater disposal and has resulted in the Park having a problem with weed invasion and displacement of native

vegetation. The degradation and loss of understorey species occurs in the mid and upper Canning and Southern Rivers. The construction of Kent Street Weir changed the river from saline to freshwater upstream to Nicholson Road, which has subsequently altered the streamside vegetation. A number of exotic or introduced plants have been planted in the Park.



Canning River above Kent Street Weir. G Pickering



# 12 RIVER PERSPECTIVES

## 12.1 A WHOLE OF RIVER PERSPECTIVE

Much of the cultural significance of the Rivers comes from the Rivers themselves as a single entity. Interpretation of the Whadjuk connections with the Rivers should take into account the ideology of the river system in addition to the specific beliefs associated with individual nodes along the river banks. Where possible, visitors would benefit from understanding how the place where they are physically located connects to other places along the Rivers. This method of interpretation is more in keeping with how the Whadjuk people view the Rivers as a single system of intertwined stories and practices. While some aspects of cultural beliefs, resources and history of the Whadjuk people within this area cannot be easily broken up into separate, discrete nodes, other stories are site specific. The NAP has responded to the activity nodes highlighted by the SRT and provided advice on additional riverpark nodes to support the Plan. The whole of river perspective is accompanied by many points of view which are often available from practical locations in the riverscape and which are detailed in this section.

## 12.2 SPIRITUALITY

The spirituality of the Whadjuk people forms the basis of their connection with the Rivers and is a guiding intention of the Interpretation Plan, reflected in the meta theme River of Life. Spirituality is more than just the mythological stories and beliefs that are associated with whole of river ideas or specific nodes. Other themes (historical events, the use of resources, and the lifestyles of the Whadjuk people, for example) are all underpinned by the spirituality of the Whadjuk people. Places

and natural features, rather than human creations such as buildings, are central to Aboriginal spirituality and the events and practices that occurred within these places are directed by their mythological beliefs. Places of spiritual danger were and still are avoided, such as the caves in Rocky Bay. As the largest natural features within the Perth landscape, the Swan and Canning Rivers are central to this spirituality. Integrating this theme within the Interpretation Plan brings perhaps the most important aspect of the Whadjuk people to the work. Ceremonial and ritualistic practices are closely associated with spirituality and should be reflected in a range of interpretative experiences. The NAP acknowledged as a high priority the recording of Elders' stories linked to the riverscape for both broader community and Whadjuk specific interpretative outcomes. Advice on the appropriate storytellers must be determined by the Whadjuk community. The Plan acknowledges this approach in Stage One of its implementation and its initiatives provide a capacity to reflect a range of stories by a range of appropriate people and over time.

“One point that comes to mind is the reverence of death for us... I always look back at the old picture of the... Aboriginal burial at Kojonup. Our Aboriginal burials differ from white fella's burials, you know what I'm saying? They buried this fellow here and they created a little whirly around him and he's sort of in a mummified position, and he's placed in facing the east. His body's put to half... he's sits up facing the east, he's bound up and he's been waiting for the new dawn. He's looking for the Dreamtime. That's very special.”

Noel Morich, NAP Meeting 13th September 2013

“That’s something in our law. When you’re ready to pass on they all come back to greet you. You’re not in hell or heaven, you’re on this earth, your spirit is still there, and when they pass on the spirits come back to welcome you into the next world. That’s our law. That’s how it’s always been, and it still is. Someone said, a very sick one, said ‘I seen so-and-so last night’ and I said ‘yeah, he came to you’. And there’s another thing too, when there’s a woman pass away, she’ll always take a baby with her. They’re called cot deaths. When a woman dies, she always takes a baby with her.” Teresa Walley, NAP Meeting 13th September 2013

## 12.3 A BALANCED APPROACH

The NAP has highlighted a balanced approach to the Interpretation Plan during its discussions. While acknowledging negative histories of massacres, stolen generations and the general mistreatment of the broader Noongar community by European settlers, the Whadjuk culture brings much to celebrate in the riverpark including understanding and experience of campsites, water sources and traditional foods as well as places and natural features to be both visited and avoided. The NAP has also emphasised the importance of ensuring the Whadjuk community is responsible for determining the appropriate people to tell whole of river and location specific stories in the Riverpark. The initiatives within this plan have the capacity to support these requirements.

“When we were in [the New Norcia Mission], this was during the [19]50s they put us in there, and they used to get all us little Aboriginal boys there ... and, this is the [Benedictine] monks, used to say to us, ‘if any of you boys talk in your Aboriginal tongue or talk about your

Aboriginal culture, God is coming down from Heaven to send you to Hell. No more you see your mums and dads’... a lot of kids, Aboriginal culture and that, you know, threw it out the window and said ‘I want to see my mum and dad again.’ Alf Taylor, NAP Meeting 13th September 2013

“Highlight the fact that the first Australians who were in Noongar country, in this area, are the Whadjuk people.” Marie Taylor, NAP Meeting 13th September 2013

## 12.4 SOLASTALGIA

The notion of Solastalgia,<sup>80</sup> a concept in human health and identity, articulates the connect between wellbeing and environmental change and the impact of loading the riverscape with elements that, on balance, do not benefit the environment or its inhabitants. The reinstatement of foreshore beaches and flora - with fauna following - bears out the use of Solastalgia in critical thinking about the riverscape. The riverscape is impacted by introduced visual elements and this project supports the benefits of minimising the introduction of frequent or large scale interpretation pieces and the negative visual demands they place on the environment.

While there is always the need for things to be mandated [speed, litter] there are opportunities for local government authorities and the community to activate health, sustainability and vibrancy within the Riverpark which can in turn lead to changes in behaviour and custodianship of the river system on many levels. Knowledge awareness of the natural and cultural heritage values provides vital support for these outcomes.

## 12.5 IN THE RIVER

The story of the state of Swan and Canning waters is a story of human settlement along and around the river. Current water quality problems in the Swan-Canning estuary are largely due to the combined nutrient inputs from diffuse and small point sources spread across the urban and rural catchments over many years.

Pollution from industry, boat yards, market gardens, farms, waste disposal sites around the river and drains bringing water from areas well away from the rivers is a legacy with which management authorities continue to grapple. Algae are a natural part of the rivers but the Swan estuary is prone to algal blooms because it is surrounded by poor sandy soils that allow fertilisers and other nutrients to leach quickly into groundwater and into the rivers.

Our climate is dry and in hot summers, the rivers are not flushed and conditions are ideal to create algal blooms. The upper and middle reaches of the Canning River are cut off from the marine estuarine influences of the Swan estuary as a result of the construction of the Kent Street Weir. The weir prevents the salty marine water moving upstream with the tides, between late spring and early autumn. In the summer the upper Canning River is impounded as a freshwater weir pool.

Low oxygen levels are another issue with which the Swan River Trust is grappling. The major cause is the microbial breakdown of organic matter. Organic material such as leaves and algae enters the river system, and naturally occurring microbes use oxygen to break down the matter. Oxygen levels can often drop quickly as the microbes respond to organic matter loading events, particularly in warm weather. In some cases, when the saltwater moves in a wedge from the estuary mouth at Fremantle during

the summer, water at the surface of the river does not mix with the saline water which is heavier and sinks to the bottom. Microbial activity in the salty bottom water continues to consume oxygen, but this oxygen does not get replenished from surface water.

As well as dealing with the issues of the organic and nutrient load entering the system, the Swan River Trust monitors water quality and has a short term solution to deal with the issue. The oxygenation program provides oxygen to targeted areas of the river through four oxygenation plants; at Caversham and Guildford on the Swan River, and two plants upstream of the Kent Street Weir on the Canning River.

Beside nutrient input in the form of phosphorous and nitrogen, non-nutrient contaminants are present as a result of historic and present day agricultural, urban and industrial usage of chemicals. Contaminants can also enter the river system through the use of antifoulants such as the past use of Tributyltin at boating facilities. Groundwater continues to flow through urban and industrial areas, including some 22 historic waste sites around the rivers.

Disturbance of acid sulphate soils can also release metals from the soil into nearby waterways. Many of these contaminants are brought to the river through urban drainage lines and sumps once natural streams and wetlands, but these have been highly modified to cope with the increased runoff caused by urban development.

The Swan River Trust, through its Drainage Nutrient Intervention Program, is working with partner organisations to remove nutrients from drains and tributaries in catchments that contribute high nutrient loads to the Swan and Canning River

system. Best Management Practice stormwater treatment measures including rain gardens, wetlands, swales and living streams are encouraged in order to improve water quality, habitat and amenity. The Swan River Trust is also piloting intensive community education programs to raise awareness about the impact of nutrient laden gardening practices that further compromise on the river.



**Water sampling.** Courtesy Swan River Trust



### 12.5.1 Living Streams - Bannister Creek

A 'Living Stream' is a drain that has been changed into a functioning ecosystem, becoming a haven for plants and animals and helping to remove excess nutrients before they enter waterways. Since 1996 the Bannister Creek Catchment Group (BCCG) Inc has worked to transform a one kilometre section of high walled drain that directed water straight into the Canning River into a 'living stream'. The Creek now has fringing sedges, gently sloping and well vegetated banks that birds and turtles can enjoy. The BCCG operates with the South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare Inc (SERCUL).



Bannister Creek 1997  
Courtesy SERCUL



After transformation into a 'Living Stream' in 2010  
Courtesy SERCUL

The Swan and Canning Rivers are repositories of past lives as they have always had the power to kill. Murders have taken place on the rivers and dead bodies dumped in the rivers. In December 1909 a brutal murder described at the time as 'similar in nearly every respect to the horrible Jack the Ripper tragedies of Whitechapel', was committed at Mill Point on the cutter yacht *Banshea* then at anchor. After killing 62 year old Marion Curedale, alias Mary Ann Hardman, 'a woman of the unfortunate class with a long record in the Perth and Fremantle Courts for drunkenness, larceny and other petty offences', the murderer, a 30 year old sailor named Thomas Jas, took his own life by jumping into the river. He left a note:

*I committed this rash act in a moment of frenzy whilst under the influence of drink, and you will find my body in the river just under the yacht with a small cable attached. Please don't look on me as a criminal, for truly I was unconscious.*<sup>81</sup>

The photograph and story of the mutilated body of taxi driver John McNeill, dumped in the Swan River at Crawley in April 1924, attracted wide public interest. The trial and conviction of George Auburn attracted national attention.<sup>82</sup>

The waters of the Swan and Canning were treacherous for the many early settlers who could not swim and there were many accidental drownings. The winds and the deep water of Freshwater Bay for instance took many sailors and river boat excursionists who were unable to swim. Women's long dresses proved problematic once in the water and many people on recreational trips often consumed too much alcohol. Inquests commented on the fact that lights and life-saving equipment on boats should be compulsory.



The Body of John O'Neil was dumped in the Swan River at Crawley (1924)

The Rivers have always been attractive for those committing or planning to commit suicide. The old Bunbury railway bridge at East Perth was often the site from where people either jumped or ended their lives by whatever means chosen. Old Mick Ryan, a fisherman, lived on the river at East Perth for around 30 years and in that time pulled many dead bodies from the water under the Bunbury bridge. In 1940 when over seventy years old, Ryan reflected that 'if the bridge 'had a tongue to speak with, what a story it could tell of the tragedies it had seen'.<sup>83</sup> He dubbed it Perth's Bridge of Sighs and elaborated 'the old bridge is a greedy cuss, takes them all, young and old.'<sup>84</sup> One of the most chilling finds was the body of a hangman who had used the skills gained in his profession to lash his hands to his chest and tie a bag of stones around his neck. Another was the body of a man who had jumped into the waters to land deep in the mud where he stood erect nine days later. Foreshore residents recalled hearing a 'crazed farmer' herding an imaginary herd of cows over the bridge, 'his job done he lay face down in a foot of water and 'all his worries were over' before Mick got to him.<sup>85</sup>

The Swan and Canning Rivers hold the ashes of many deceased to whom the waters meant much. In 1932 there were about fifty Sikhs resident in Western Australia. In response to their request, half an acre of land was set aside on the south bank of the Canning River near Riverton Bridge for a cemetery site. The Sikhs followed the practice of requiring bodies of the deceased to be burnt on a funeral pyre and then scattered on the water. This Reserve, vested in two members of the Sikh community, was cancelled when a rubbish tip was created in 1977. There is no record of cremations that took place apart from that reported in June 1934 when a Sikh funeral pyre of Banksia logs was built.

Senator W Carroll's last request was to be 'brought to Perth and distributed by aeroplane, over the Swan River, near the city' after his death. The Western Australian Aero Club performed the ceremony in July 1936.

In 1944 the ashes of Sea Scout Commissioner Hal McKail were scattered in accordance with his will and in tribute to his long years in sea scouting when he rescued many from the depths of the Swan River.

In 1950 returned serviceman William Hamilton died in the Sydney Repatriation Hospital. He had asked to be returned to his beloved Swan River after his death. The NSW and WA RSL branches cooperated to ensure his wish was granted and the last post was sounded as his ashes were scattered.

The Rivers have also been rivers of life – of new life, or rebirth, used for baptisms, both infant and adult immersion. The earliest account of adult baptism in the waters of the Swan River is 1890 when on a Sunday afternoon, a religious service was held near the Mill street jetty. Thomas H Bates, the leader of the

evangelistic services which were then being held in the Barrack Street Temperance Hall, Barrack Street baptised two young people, a Miss Myles and Mr B Jennings.<sup>86</sup>

In November 1953 over one hundred Jehovah's Witnesses were baptised in the Swan River at Crawley, watched by a crowd of over 400. The Dalkeith Hot Pool where baptisms had previously taken place was closed by this time.

In March 1965 a similar crowd, members of St Alban's Anglican Church 'gloved and hatted in their Sunday best' and picnickers gathered at the water's edge to see 23 year old bread carter Leslie Ross baptised.<sup>87</sup> Ross had asked for the river baptism, full immersion, as a public profession of his faith in the hope, he said, that it would make the baptism service more meaningful to others. He claimed that in doing so, he said, he was following the example of Christ.



*Women's Weekly*, 17 March 1965



## 12.6 OVERLOOKING THE RIVERS

There is one kind of 'overlooking' that has been a feature of our management of the Rivers in the past. That is, overlooking the natural features and functioning of the Rivers and imposing our own ideas of beauty and improvement. However, the few high points around our rivers have been places for reflection, art, recreation and enjoyment for Aboriginal and non Aboriginal people alike. Places such as Point Resolution, Kings Park and Blackwall Reach, Cantonment Hill<sup>88</sup> are locations of great cultural and also environmental value.

Kings Park comprising unique and valuable natural bushland is the most visited tourist destination in Western Australia and provides an important recreation space. It remains the place from which the growth of the city including buildings, roads and bridges and the alteration of the rivers has been documented, photographed and painted. The vista from the terraces of Kings Park was and continues to be painted and photographed and has been used as an argument against change. Seddon sees this use of the vista as 'the promotional use of the landscape'. He argues that:

*The view from Kings Park, looking down over the township, allowed the construction of an Arcadian image that lasted for over 120 years, although this was as much self-justificatory as promotional; those who had chosen to come to the isolated little Swan River Colony needed constantly to reassure themselves with this consoling vision, which bore little relation to the reality of their early lives.<sup>89</sup>*

This vista was used as an argument against River reclamation for the Narrows interchange and continues to be used today as an argument against high rise buildings in front of the city.

Richard Wilkes and Corrie Bodney have reported that *Midgegooroo* and *Yagan* used Point Heathcote as a lookout and that Noongar people would signal to *Yellagonga* that they wished to visit him by lighting a fire at Point Heathcote. *Yellagonga* would reply if it was acceptable for them to visit by lighting another fire in the Kings Park area.

On 22 February 1929 the Lieutenant Governor of Western Australia opened what was to be called Heathcote, a series of 'fine buildings on a magnificent site' for the treatment of those with mental or nervous disorders.<sup>90</sup> He added that he had always hoped that the site would become a public reserve but that 'if it cannot be that' then the provision of a place for the mentally ill was 'the best purpose to which it could be put.' The site, surrounded by bush, commanded views up and down the river and he saw it as ideal, providing 'quietude in an age of hurry, haste and noise.'

Noongar people had used the high land and the adjoining riverside land, its springs and wetlands for camping and fishing for thousands of years before Captain Stirling landed there during his 1827 exploration of the Swan River. It was a significant site for Noongar men as a place for initiations. Stirling saw Heathcote as a possible site for the capital of the Swan River Colony. The land was sold to private interests, much to the disappointment of the Melville Road Board which lobbied in 1921 for the government to purchase it for recreation. In 1924 the state government purchased 20 acres for a mental hospital and building started in 1927.

The Heathcote Mental Reception Home operated from 1929 to 1994. The upper lands of Heathcote were redeveloped in 2000 by reusing heritage buildings and landscaping gardens. The site is



now enjoyed by the community for recreational and cultural pursuits. The Heathcote lower lands comprise sedgeland and low shrubland, with banksia woodland covering the slopes. The land remains undeveloped, with problems of erosion on the slopes, weed invasion and degradation of remnant native vegetation. Vegetation comprises 107 taxa, 53 percent of the total being introduced species, the majority weeds.<sup>91</sup>

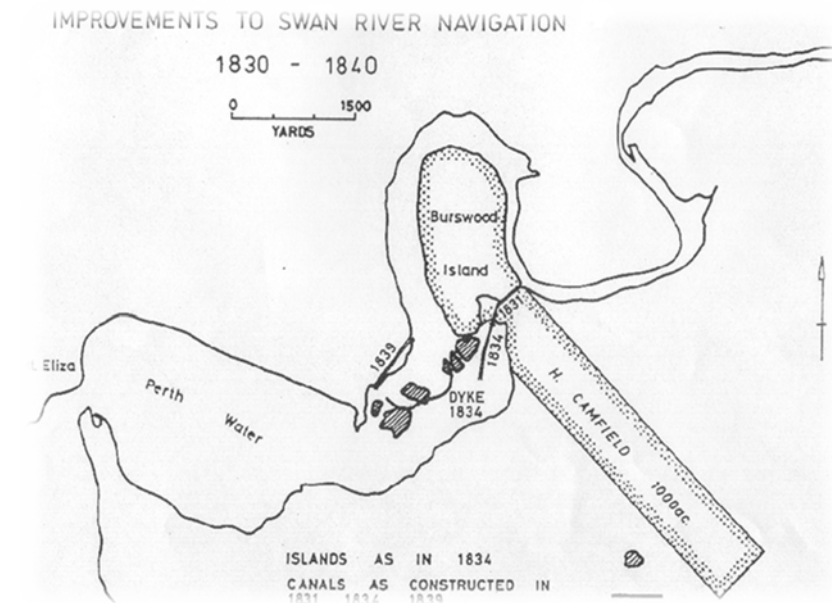
The Heathcote sites, both high and low, hold stories of a painful past for both Aboriginal and non Aboriginal. It was the place where many died, a place of suicides, but also a place where many dedicated to a working life of care and many entered hoping for a cure. A secure future for the Heathcote lower lands is urgent. It could be a demonstration site for the riverscape. It will require communities to work together to show just what the river means and how the riverscape can be restored and conserved. By vesting this place in the public it will remain a place where mental wellbeing is paramount.

*"... a really important part of Noongar stories [traditionally the site of Heathcote Mental Health Institution]...Lots of Noongars have been brought to that place when it was an institution...my grandmother was brought there once."*

Glenn Pearson, Swan River Trust Office Posters

## 12.7 ON THE RIVERS

Be it boating, riding a ferry, sailing or swimming, the community has always been 'on the river'. The Swan River from the earliest days of settlement was a working river, a transport and trading route that moved on from low key 'flats' that had to be dragged to higher speed steam boats. Shallow water and muddy banks initially limited navigation beyond Perth Water, with only flat-bottomed boats being used and cargoes manhandled from one side of the muddy 'flats' to the other.



The first changes made to the natural environment were canals cut for navigation – in 1831 the first canal made Burswood into an island and when that was relatively unsuccessful, the second was cut in 1834<sup>92</sup>. The Swan River provided the transport link between the port at Fremantle, Perth Port and Guildford, the gateway to the agricultural areas. In 1830, a year after settlement, there were 40 boats on the River. Barges, punts,

ferries and 'flats' were the earliest forms of river transport. The establishment of the Fremantle to Guildford railway in 1881 and the spread of suburban settlement meant a decline in River transport for a period. However the late 1890s to the 1920s was a boom time for river transport, particularly pleasure craft and ferries. Jetties were constructed to cater for the growing tourist and holiday trade. The river was popular with yachtsmen and boating enthusiasts and on weekends and public holidays pleasure steamers ran excursion trips to Canning Bridge, Point Walter, Peppermint Grove, Claremont and Fremantle. Steamers were always packed with holiday makers. The closure of Perth Port and increased road transport since the 1930s means that activity on the River now is mainly for pleasure. There has been a sustained growth in boating and sailing and a large increase in boating registrations and demand on facilities. The Swan River Trust's Boating Management Strategy seeks to deal with concerns regarding loss of amenity exacerbated foreshore erosion, fuel and oil spills and contamination of river sediments, limiting public access and use of river beds and banks.<sup>93</sup>

The Rivers are under stress and the possible impacts of a changing climate heighten the urgency to engage government and community. In 2007 a Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) to the Swan River Trust published a report on the *Potential Impacts of Climate Change on the Swan and Canning Rivers*.<sup>94</sup> The report pointed to possible ecological and cultural changes, including a renewed emphasis on human health. Global warming could bring changes in the distribution and density of fringing vegetation and increasing and ongoing problems associated with eutrophication such as algal blooms and fish kills.<sup>95</sup> Physical changes in the Swan and Canning Rivers could include 'reductions in and changing patterns of runoff and riverine discharge, increased tidal amplitude (storm surges) and elevated water temperatures'.<sup>96</sup> The Report also points to possible

cultural implications including impacts on Noongar heritage sites.<sup>97</sup> To this must be added possible impacts on places with broad cultural heritage significance. It is suggested that health threats could be exacerbated, with increases in mosquitoes tolerant to warm and somewhat saline conditions as well as increased water temperatures and the generation of acid sulphate acidity having the potential to mobilise many toxic substances in the water.<sup>98</sup>

The future of our waterways depends on the level of community understanding of the impact individual and other actions can have. The community wants to be further engaged with the Rivers and the interpretation strategies in this Plan propose some ways in which this can be done. The clear emotional connection to the Rivers<sup>99</sup> needs to be harnessed.



Freshwater Bay. G Pickering

## 12.8 ALONG THE RIVERS

Campsites were located along the length of the Swan and Canning Rivers, with the exception of locations that are considered winnaitch, or taboo. Early descriptions of campsites detail huts to post-contact campsites and include buildings made from a range of materials such as galvanised iron and packed earth floors. Whadjuk walking trails closely followed both sides of the Swan River; however the location of many of these cannot be ascertained. It has been suggested that the 1829 river shoreline would loosely follow the same route as the trails that existed before European settlement (Gibbs 1988:32). Detailed knowledge of these trails was required for reasons of safety. River crossings may not have been appropriate for women and children or for strong swimmers only. Other trails, particularly those leading into the Perth hills, were suitable only during certain seasons.

“I can remember going into a camp because I was related to them, and all the floors would be kept swept clean, and what they used to do, they used to put tea-leaves on the floor. They’d spread the wet tea-leaves around and then they’d brush that out and the floor would get sort of very hard with clay that was on the floor, and it would make a very hard floor but very clean – like a cement floor. Then they’d just keep brushing. The women were continuously cleaning their camp.” Ken Colbung (dec), in an interview with Erica Harvey for the East Perth Redevelopment Authority, 30th January 1994, available at the Battye Library

*“The tributaries of these two rivers, feeding each other, those little streams that come off like the Wungon Brook and all those little brooks that may or may not be there [any more], they were places where [the old people] travelled, little tracks, following the streams.”* Noel Morich, NAP Meeting 13th September 2013

### 12.8.1 River Resources

Water sources along the Swan and Canning Rivers included freshwater streams and springs, and rainwater collected in naturally occurring ‘containers’, such as a hollowed tree that once existed nearby to the current location of the Queen Victoria statue in Kings Park. The rivers and waterways also produced resources for Whadjuk people including ideal stones for grinding both seeds and ochre.

The traditional Whadjuk uses of flora provide a valuable wide ranging topic throughout the riverpark that will not only educate the wider community but will also assist in reconnecting the Whadjuk people with the Rivers and their culture. Some should not be picked in accordance with Whadjuk traditional beliefs and practices, and the members of the NAP have advised that these plants should be highlighted as part of the Interpretation Plan. Further assistance with traditional flora may be sourced from Murdoch University’s Environmental Restoration Group, who has previously undertaken work on the restoration of nature trails taking into account the Noongar traditional use.

*“They got two flowers unpickable, down [Pinjarra] way, probably Perth here too – the Christmas tree and the banksia, and they always saying, these fellas that are picking these flowers and drying them and hanging them up, you know, that’s winnaitch because these are sacred flowers, not to be picked.”* Noel Morich, NAP Meeting 13th September 2013

*“Same with the sheoak tree, that’s not allowed to be touched, because they’re the spirit of the dead.”* Marie Taylor, NAP Meeting 13th September 2013



### 12.8.2 River access

The rivers have been dredged and the banks straightened and walled to reflect community views of beauty and of health. In 1893 the editor of the West Australian commented that:

*“Steps should be taken to add to the attractions of the River. Nature has lavished her gifts upon the river Swan ... it should not be difficult to make Perth as regards its surroundings one of the most beautiful of the capital cities of the world. The reclamation of the foreshore of the river is a work of pressing and immediate necessity. Not only does ornament require it but health demands it. To the stench – no less emphatic word will do it justice – which at low water arises from the muddy marshes which adjoin the Esplanade, much of the sickness of the population of Perth is probably attributable”.*<sup>100</sup>

He added that *“a walk or drive along the banks of a broad and beautiful river lined with trees and covered with turf would be a delight to both visitors and residents of the capital of the colony.”*<sup>101</sup>

Paths were first made along the rivers purely for promenading, for taking in the air and enjoying the waters. The 1930s saw the start of the hiking craze in Perth and the rivers as well as the hills were places for the ‘healthy pastime’:

Hiking has become a popular pastime with every section of the community. It is a sport that necessitates very little equipment and preparation and can be enjoyed by young and old alike, so long as they are possessors of ‘well behaved’ feet and legs that do not tire too easily<sup>102</sup>.

The Swan and Canning rivers were walked by crowds and many walkers travelled by train to the hills to walk from Kalamunda to Mundaring. We might no longer see groups of hundreds of hikers followed by a truck carrying equipment and first aid assistance, but walking along the rivers for both health and wellbeing has remained a popular pastime. Walkers and runners of all ages have been joined by cyclists.

### 12.9 CROSSING THE RIVER

Walking beside a river, upstream or downstream, can be a meditative or reflective experience where ‘one is driven, by one’s own will or by the river itself.’<sup>103</sup> Crossing the river, on the other hand, ‘turns direction on its side, it is a transverse movement, only remotely connected to the river.’<sup>104</sup> Crossing to get to the other side is an active decision that creates possibilities and different meanings for the river which acts more as an obstacle, or a marker.

The Swan and Canning Rivers have been crossed for generations, by wading, by swimming, by riding across by horse or bicycle, by boat and car – even by tightrope.<sup>105</sup>

Noongar people had been crossing the Swan and Canning Rivers for thousands of years before the Dutch and French explorers arrived. One such crossing was that which we now know as the Causeway.

Aboriginal people used the muddy shallows around what is now Heirisson Island to cross the river and to fish and hunt. They called the area at the Causeway ‘Mattagarup’:

*Matta meaning a thigh, gar means a water and up means a place – it’s a ford . . . the water is as high as you can walk.*<sup>106</sup>

The Beeloo Noongar people gave other groups the rite of passage across the river and Aboriginal people from the north and south traversed the flats for the purpose of trade, religious ceremony and social interaction.

It was the mud flats here that prevented Willem de Vlamingh from going further inland in 1696. He recorded that the River became very shallow: so that our men had to leave the boats to push the same, rounding a corner we found the end of the river which divides itself into many veins, [so] that we could not proceed any more.<sup>107</sup>

The Swan River in the vicinity of Heirisson Island was also explored during Baudin's 1801-4 expedition to Australia. During this visit, led by Sub-Lieutenant Heirisson from 17-22 June 1801, mineralogist Joseph Bailly reported on progress. The party named the string of small, low wet islands in honour of the commanding officer. Bailly described the land up river as low almost under water, with a bed of coarse sand covered with a bank of thick, reddish and sticky clay. He spoke of the large trees which grew along the banks, - trees 15m to 18m high with circumferences between three and five metres.<sup>108</sup> The expedition was the first to map and mention what was to be later known as Clause Brook, later Claise Brook.

In 1697 De Vlamingh and his party had noted the obvious presence of Aboriginal people along the banks of the Swan River in the vicinity of Burswood but did not see anyone. This party also saw many swans and fish, footprints, fires and huts, but did not meet any Aboriginal people:

*All around we saw several footsteps and the impression of a hand on the sand, and marks of the thumb and fingers*

*showing plainly that it was done not long ago. Proceeding further we found a fire which had just been lighted, and three small huts ... Towards noon we could not go any further ... we decided to return, having already ascended the river for six or seven miles without having seen anything of importance.<sup>109</sup>*

In 1827 Fraser commented on the people he met at what is now Point Fraser.<sup>110</sup> Camfield too noted the presence of Aboriginal people when writing about his Burswood property in 1832:

*Friday Natives stole bag of sugar from a boat on Flats this morning; it was the Governor's.*

*Sat March 1 Heat intense ... Midger Carew (Midgegooroo) three women and picaninnies have been on this side canal for some days; very civil; collect zamia nuts...<sup>111</sup>*

*As to the natives I consider it only a present drawback. From first to last I have been friendly with them, and have never hurt them; only in an extreme case would I now. I have found five springs on my grant.....<sup>112</sup>*

There was continual movement across these shallows. Thomas Watson's important 1835 map (see page 30) in fact depicts a 'native path' across the low lying muddy ground of this area.

A bridge across the causeway was an early necessity for the European settlers and the original bridge opened in 1843 allowed a better connection between Guildford, the Upper Swan, York and Fremantle. The bridge was widened and altered over time until the increase in traffic in the 1930s meant a new bridge was needed. A site was chosen upstream of the existing bridges and work took place in conjunction with new channels

and reclamation after the 1925 Swan River Improvement Act. The two bridge structure meeting at Heirisson Island was finally completed in 1952.

Although Claise Brook was on the opposite side of the Swan River from Burswood, the development and fortunes of these two sites was linked from the late nineteenth century. From 1893, the wooden Bunbury Railway Bridge from East Perth, with its pedestrian access, crossed and divided Burswood, but linked East Perth and Burswood. People walked across the river to the races or to work at the Swan Portland or Hardies' facilities on Burswood. It was replaced downstream by a temporary bridge in 1932 and by a modern two track concrete bridge, with a path for pedestrians and cyclists, in 1995. Work had already begun on a new Bunbury rail bridge (Goongoonup) and the Burswood bridge, two metres away, was required to be of the same design so they appeared as one. This six lane Windan Bridge was opened in April 2000 taking the Northern Bypass Freeway across to Burswood Island.

From the earliest days of settlement there were calls to bridge the River at the Narrows, particularly as the population of South Perth and surrounding areas increased. By the 1940s the Causeway had reached capacity and was still the only bridge between North Fremantle and Belmont. Tenders for the Narrows bridge were accepted in March 1957 and the bridge, after complex site works, was opened on 13 November 1959. In 2001 a second bridge was built to cope with increased traffic volumes and in 2007 a third bridge between the first two was constructed to take the train line to Mandurah.

As well as the main Canning River bridges, the Canning, Mt Henry and Riverton, there were stone fords and many smaller pedestrian bridges linking both sides of the Canning. The

Canning Bridge was used by the infantry for military manoeuvres. In 1932 a 'war' was waged between the 16th (City of Perth Regiment) and the 44th Battalion (West Australian Rifles) – or the forces of the Northland and the Southland. Those from the south had early success and blew up the Canning Bridge! <sup>113</sup> Scouts at camps along the Canning River were often required to build suspension bridges over the river. <sup>114</sup>

The crossings at Fremantle were subject to an element of danger and it is recorded that women and children who could not swim would cross elsewhere and meet up with their group at Bibra Lake. <sup>115</sup>

.  
*"This was the main crossing for the women and children (Point Walter)...they has to always make sure there was a crossing for the kids."* Noel Morrison in Swan River Trust Office Poster, August 2008

King Winjan is said to have camped in Perth near the corner of George and Hay Streets when he fell ill, and from there he was carried on a stretcher made of bush sticks by a number of Aboriginal woman to Mandurah, where he passed away. On this journey, the group camped overnight on the eastern bank of the Canning River, opposite Deep Water Point and nearby to a sandbar, which made a suitable crossing point.

Swimming races across the River from the Nedlands Baths to Applecross and back were popular from 1912. The Hunt Club crossed the River at Canning Bridge on horseback. <sup>116</sup>

## 12.10 COMMUNITY VALUING THE RIVERS

In terms of community involvement for change, the history of the Swan and Canning Rivers has been one of the harnessing of emotions. It has been the community that has since European settlement been active in “protecting” the River. The state of the River was the focus of community attention and community action from early in the twentieth century.

In 1908 Justice Parker publicly complained about the reclamation of the River and the straightening of the foreshore along the Esplanade and into Mounts Bay. Parker commented that:

*The Public Works Department apparently is under the impression that Nature should be corrected by making the shorelines perfectly straight. One only has to view Perth from Mt Eliza to see how the naturally picturesque appearance of the north shore of Perth water has been destroyed by the perfectly straight line formed by the reclaiming wall.*<sup>117</sup>

The first large and representative public meeting in relation to the River took place in response to the problems arising from the Government’s sewerage filter beds on Burswood Island. From 1910, complaints about the smell and the build-up of weed on river beaches and the cost of its collection were numerous. It was community intervention that led to the public River Pollution Conference in 1922, with 34 local authorities, aquatic clubs, schools, engineers and scientists taking part. The Conference was told that the increasing algal problems could not simply be blamed on the filter beds but also actions in agricultural areas, waste from two breweries, silt from cultivated land, street sweepings and washings.<sup>118</sup>

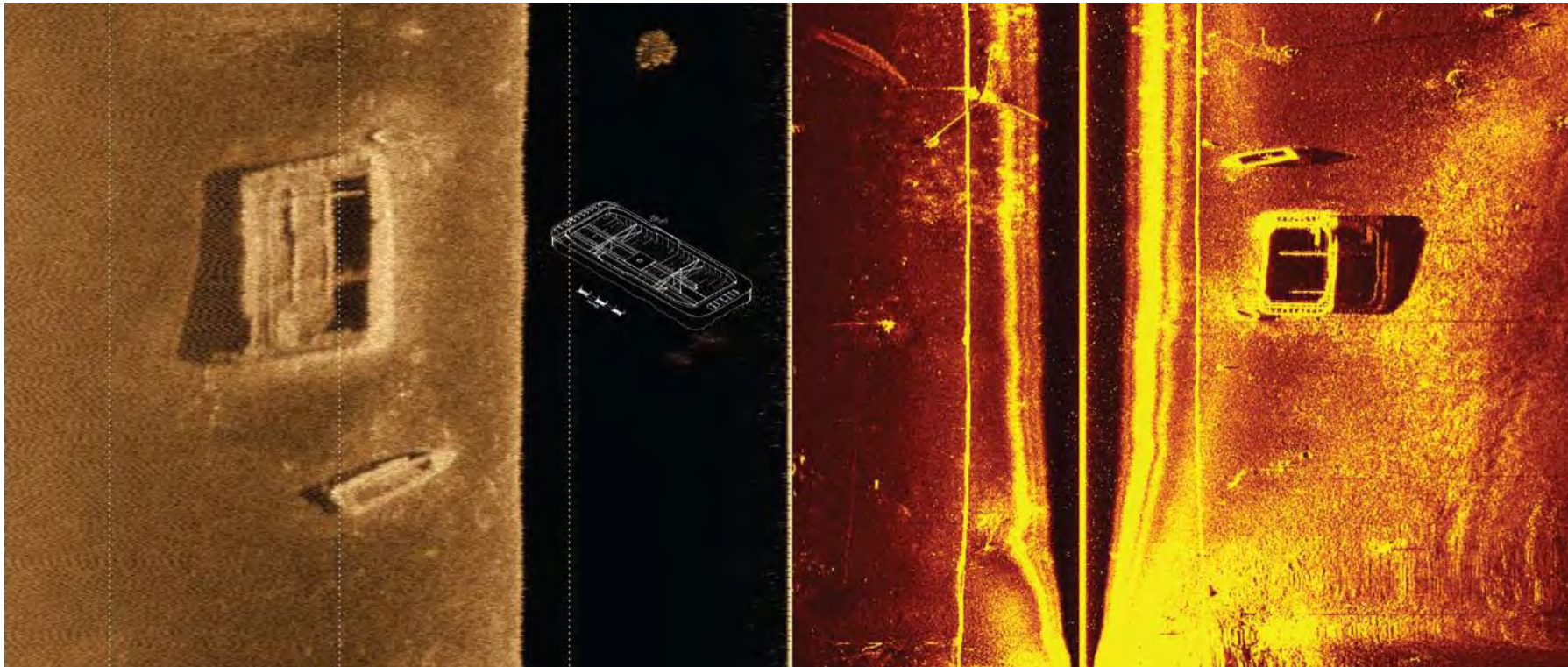
One major source of pollution and ongoing public complaint was removed by the closure of the filter beds and the commencement of ocean outfall in 1936. However the algal problem continued with the second major public meeting on River pollution held in 1948 and the establishment of the very effective action group in the Swan River Pollution Committee (later the Swan River Conservation Committee).<sup>119</sup>

South Perth saw strong protests against the reclamation of Miller’s Pool in the 1930s and there was also strong community action from 1964 to protect the river from further reclamation for carparks and freeway interchanges. It was the community that proposed an administrative agency for the Swan River in the face of the plethora of government agencies and local governments responsible for the river. The 1958 legislation to establish the Swan River Conservation Board was based on a community draft Bill.<sup>120</sup> By the late 1980s ten government agencies and twenty local government authorities carried responsibilities for planning and management of all or parts of, the Swan and Canning Rivers.

The Swan River Trust Act 1988 was a bold attempt to deal with a range of problems involved in River management including the overlapping responsibilities of various Government agencies and the inadequate coordination of agencies, especially in relation to development applications. The legislation established the Swan River Trust, an eight member body representing the community, State and local government authorities with an interest in the Swan and Canning Rivers. The aim of the legislation was to provide for “a single body that will be a central contact for all matters to do with the Swan and Canning Rivers”.<sup>121</sup>



Many community members use the Rivers for active recreation such as swimming, fishing and boating. Although fishing and swimming in the Rivers have declined, recreational boating has increased in popularity, with recreational licences increasing by 50 percent since 1997, more than half of that increase taking place in the Perth region. Many contribute their time to undertake a range of practical work such as planting sedges or converting drains into functioning ecosystems or 'living streams' around the River as part of the more than 300 community groups based in the Swan Canning catchment.



**Side scan sonar images of river wrecks.** Courtesy Maritime Archaeology Association of WA (MAAWA)

## 12.11 RIVER PERSPECTIVES SUGGESTED ACTIONS

### Swan River Trust in collaboration with others

1. Engage the Noongar Advisory Panel as an advisory committee to provide guiding advice during the implementation of the Interpretation Plan.
2. Reflect the spiritual significance of the rivers through interpretation strategies with the guidance of the Noongar community including places and natural features.
3. Promote all community groups connected with the riverscape through a centralised website presence.
4. Develop a range of interpretation options with appropriate specialist knowledge for broader audiences and Noongar specific audiences in collaboration with the Whadjuk.

### Community, Local Government Authorities and other agencies

1. Introduce pilot projects at specific locations to conserve and interpret the riverscape Heathcote, Banks Reserve and Kent Street Weir.
2. Showcase sites of positive and negative transformation in the riverpark through collaborative experiences, tours and educational programs and other interpretive strategies.
3. Develop Heathcote as a key pilot node and community interpretative initiative within the Riverpark.
4. Design printable downloadable activity maps for *marli riverpark* reflecting major nodes, distances, access, attractions and experiences and link to SRT Recreational Map.
5. Develop a digital mapping project to reveal and promote the changing landscape of the riverscape with WA Universities.

## BLACK SWAN BALLE

The ballet premiered in Melbourne on 17 November 1951.

The work was presented in Perth 20 June 1952.

### Premiere of 'Black Swan'

**BALLET ... *The Argus* 19 November 1951** (by Frank Doherty)

"The ballet written by Edouard Borovansky for the Jubilee season by his company, had its Melbourne premiere at His Majesty's on Saturday night. Like the other - "Out-law" - it has some loose connection with historical fact, since M. Borovansky took the discovery of the Swan River in 1697 for his basis, as he took incidents from Ned Kelly's life for "Outlaw." But as entertainment it is inclined to be thin in substance, lacking sufficient force (whether dramatic, romantic, or even humorous) to bind it into a satisfying, solid whole.

The best part of it, from the viewpoint of both choreography and spectacle, is Act II, in which Brandt (Kenn Gillespie), a young Dutchman on his way to Australia with Vlaming, discoverer of the Swan River, dreams of falling in love with a Black Swan (Edna Busse). This scene is ballet in one of its oldest and purest forms, and M. Borovansky's work is delightfully danced by both principals. William Constable's decor for "The Black Swan" is worth seeing for itself, a fact which the audience realised immediately on Saturday. It is bold, vividly colourful, and beautifully painted".



**Photo caption reads:** On the banks of the Swan River, Dutch sailors hold aloft the black swan which has fascinated a young lieutenant - a scene from 'The Black Swan' presented by the Borovansky Ballet in Perth last night. The ballet is based on the visit of a Dutch ship to this State in the 17th Century. The role of the swan is danced by Edna Busse and that of Lieut. Brandt (right) by Graham Smith. ***Western Mail* 19 June 1952**



# 13 SOCIAL VALUES AND CULTURAL ASSETS

*“A sense of place shows most clearly in the way a community feels about and uses the landscape.”<sup>122</sup>*

## 13.1 REVEALING SOCIAL VALUES

Renowned photographers, directors, artists, historians, scholars and others have also contributed their unique perceptions about the social values of the Swan and Canning Rivers to this project. Their insights bring specialist perspectives about the power of the riverscape, social values connected to it and the community's complex relationships with the defining waterway over time. Linked to environment, time, heritage values as well as notions of identity and belonging, they provide a context to better realise the importance of connections between community wellbeing and the Rivers.

*“The Swan is a living sculpture”.*<sup>123</sup>

Richard Woldendorp

Richard Woldendorp, photographer and author has a relationship with Perth's riverscape spanning more than fifty years. He has documented most of the rivers on the west coast and believes the Western Australian landscape imposes a discipline on its communities. The Swan River, he says, is important because it offers an isolated piece of quiet water and demonstrates changes in moral attitudes.

*“The recreational possibilities in WA are limited because of the prevailing westerly which is incredibly important in forming and maintaining the degree of how we are able to experience quiet moments.”*<sup>124</sup>

Richard Woldendorp

Glen Stasiuk's examination of the penal history of Wadjemup/Rottnest Island<sup>125</sup> highlights a centre of trauma in Australia's history - Wadjemup is the largest Aboriginal deaths in custody site in the country. While identifying the cosmological, spiritual, cultural and historical perspectives of landscapes in his films, this director/academic draws attention to perceived boundaries and connections to the river over time and the requirement of healing these places.

*“The river (Derbal Yerrigan Beeliar) has a cosmological and spiritual connection to the island (Wadjemup is Nyoongar for "place across the river") when it was connected to the mainland some 6-7000 years ago.”*

Glen Stasiuk

Professor Glenn Albrecht, Murdoch University is pioneering the research domain of 'psychoterratic' or earth related mental health conditions with the concept of 'solastalgia' or the lived experience of negative environmental change.

*“Solastalgia is the distress caused by lived experience of the transformation of one's home and sense of belonging and is experienced through the feeling of desolation about its change.”*

Professor Glenn Albrecht.

Professor Peter Read articulates in his book *Return to Nothing*, how detrimental loss to our community can be when he writes,



*“Let us not underestimate the effect which the loss of dead and dying places has on our own self-identity, mental well being and sense of belonging.”*

Professor Peter Read

Professor Carmen Lawrence, Chair Australian Heritage Council in 2014, highlights the broad range of benefits heritage places bring to the community including reinforcing our cultural identity, maintaining our memories in a familiar landscape, providing spiritual renewal and aesthetic enjoyment, inspiring artistic expression and providing valuable opportunities for recreation and tourism.

*“Our heritage shapes and expresses who we are; it gives meaning and depth to our lives, whether we are aware of it or not – and, too often, it appears, we are not. Each of us has both a unique as well as a shared heritage; and some of that heritage will be directly experienced, understood and incorporated into our sense of ourselves; some of it only dimly apprehended, requiring a respectful recognition and willingness to learn – like Australia’s Indigenous heritage to most Australians”.*

Professor Carmen Lawrence

In 2013 the Australian Research Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions Europe 1100-1800 worked closely with the National Trust of Australia (WA) to bring its worldwide connections and expertise to Perth’s Rivers.

*“An important research priority for our centre is to understand and enable all Australians to appreciate emotions in the European past upon which the foundations of Australia have been built, for European emotions have shaped, and continue to shape, our*

*interactions with the Rivers in profound ways. Rivers would be key to how Europeans interpreted the landscapes they experienced in the Great Southern land from their first recorded encounters in the seventeenth century.”*

Winthrop Professor Susan Broomhall

## 13.2 AUDIT OF SOCIAL VALUES

An audit of social values revealing the community’s past and present uses and connections to the riverscape is a significant component of this Interpretation Plan. Perth’s unique rivers and surrounding landscape have been a vital and continuing source of social values for the Whadjuk people over thousands of years and more recently for settler and migrant communities. These values are embodied in a diverse range of recreational, emotional, experiential, spiritual and creative endeavours.

Information and knowledge is held by the *Whadjuk* family groups and is passed from the Elders to the younger generations, who will in turn become their successors. The oldest living member of the family, provided they are in reasonable health, should be the person to reveal the family’s knowledge. Both men and women have the right to hold and pass on information, while younger *Whadjuk* people will usually defer to their elders (Baines, 1989:1).

Multiple families may hold knowledge of specific places. This knowledge may be different to that held by other family groups. When gathering *Whadjuk* stories, representatives from each family group with this knowledge need to be included to ensure that all views are heard.

Ken Colbung expressed the need to be cautious when telling stories, emphasising a need to find out if the stories are still alive

(Ken Colbung, recorded interview 28 March 1988, available from the Fremantle City Library). While NAP members acknowledged their concern about representing the broader *Whadjuk* community's views and beliefs about the Swan and Canning Rivers, a benefit of the NAP is that it brought a contemporary snapshot of *Whadjuk* advice specific to the Rivers in 2013. Information is held by different *Whadjuk* people in the community and stories need to be told by the appropriate people for the specific areas.<sup>126</sup>

The scope of this project includes a substantial and representational audit of art and literature, photographs, oral histories and audio visual productions associated with the riverscape.

The social values are inherent in art and literature, stories and images, films and footage, activities and experiences associated with community engagement with the rivers. They are represented in collections - public and private - and reveal community values as well as changes in practice and community priorities over time.

A variety of community-held outcomes and perspectives about riverscape values has been rendered by changes in technology over time including aerials, postcards, panoramas, stereoscopic pictures and current mobile phone technologies. Identifying the social values is vital to the conservation of cultural heritage, both Noongar and non-Aboriginal. Social values are expressed through community relationship with the rivers and linked to customs, traditions and practices. Social values are expressed and maintained by artists, writers and photographers; through a diverse range of recreational activities including boating, fishing, crabbing and swimming. Sailors, rowers, walkers and those who

value the rivers for its spiritual and regenerative properties all contribute to the social values of Perth's unique rivers over time.

Local government authorities bordering the Rivers were invited to identify assets, key themes and social values specific to their oral history, pictorial and audio visual collections during two workshops arranged by the National Trust of Australia (WA) as part of the research undertaken for the Interpretation Plan. The Rivers make possible a range of social values for which the Swan and Canning Riverpark is cherished. A separate and extensive audit of art and literature has been undertaken involving private and public collections and identifying more than 700 paintings.

A range of audio visual productions linked to the Rivers has also been identified. An initiative entitled *Rivers of Emotion* invited the community to share their experiences and feelings about the river in a unique web-based 2012/2013 snapshot of social values design to specifically inform the Interpretation Plan.

The social values audits in this report are necessarily representational not exhaustive and highlight a broad range of community engagement with the Rivers which can be explored through new interpretative opportunities. The social values inherent in these cultural assets (art, literature, image, oral history and footage) can be repurposed to create interpretative opportunities and contribute to new understanding about the riverscape and the community. A library of cultural assets has been produced as part of this project.



Archibald Bertram Webb, *Shags*, c1922, colour woodcut Collection: National Trust of Australia (WA)



## 13.3 ART AND LITERATURE

In his internationally acclaimed book “The Shock of the New”, Australian art critic Robert Hughes explains that art relies on feeling rather than argument to convey meaning: “It’s not something that committees can do. It’s not a task achieved by groups or by movements. It’s done by individuals, each person mediating in some way between a sense of history and an experience of the world.”<sup>127</sup>

Individually and collectively, visual and literary artworks about the Swan and Canning Rivers allow us to mediate between a sense of their unique history and our own experiences. Whether by paint and pencil, sentence and verse, the alternative languages of the artist provide a powerful means by which we can consider the physical and metaphysical dimensions of these rivers and our relationship to them; past, present and into the future.<sup>128</sup>

The research and review undertaken as part of this project has identified several hundred individual works of art that reference the Swan and/or Canning Rivers. Such a large volume of material, created in such a relatively short period of time, clearly highlights the profound and enduring importance of these rivers to countless artists and writers. Unsurprisingly then, the relationship between the artistic community and the Swan and Canning Rivers has been and continues to be rich and complex, offering multiples ways of looking at and talking about the rivers from the artist’s point of reference.

Remarkably, the role played by the Swan and Canning Rivers in the visual and literary culture of Western Australia has received relatively little detailed research, and remains largely undocumented. Rather than taking a chronological approach to the extensive number and range of artworks that have been

identified, this report takes a taxonomic and thematic approach in order to:

1. Propose a series of frames through which to appreciate and understand how artists and writers assist us to mediate a sense of history and experience of the rivers;
2. Highlight a number of key themes, identified from the myriad of artistic approaches to the rivers;
3. Suggest a variety of ways that the river art research can be used in exhibition, display and public program activities so as to create opportunities for the wider community to engage with their rivers; and
4. Provide a comprehensive audit of all artworks identified as part of this project.

### 13.3.1 Framing the Art of the Rivers

Visual and literary art forms such as those created in relation to the Swan and Canning Rivers can often reveal as much about the context in which they were created as they do about the creators themselves. As expressions of the human imagination as much as objects of art made in a specific time and place, these pieces are significant for their social and historic value as well as their aesthetic appeal.

### 13.3.2 Artistic Intention

Among the many ways in which depictions of the Swan and Canning Rivers can be enjoyed and understood, one of the most interesting is through the frame of the artists’ own intentions and inspirations. Some artists place importance on their ability to be an exact observer and accurate recorder of life, providing us with art that offers careful, almost scientifically detailed views of the geography, topography and physiology of the river. Others are less concerned with observing the visible realities of the rivers, preferring to articulate ideas around perception, emotion,



psychology and other more intangible notions of the river. While artistic styles can therefore range from the highly representational to more abstract approaches to their subject, from the earliest colonial times to the present, artists have been inspired to be close and careful observers of the Swan and Canning Rivers.

Another enduring role of the artist is that of storyteller, with narratives connected to the Swan and Canning Rivers becoming the primary intention of their artworks. Stories and the act of storytelling have enduring, universal appeal and the strength of art that is inspired by narrative lies in their potential to unite audiences through time and across social, cultural and historical divides. While the exclusion of a human presence in a work of art can create powerful narratives in and of itself, the representation of people above, alongside or on the rivers, can elevate a painting or poem to a scene of drama, action and interaction. The inclusion of buildings and other identifiable landmarks transform spaces into sites; places in which to create real and imaginary narratives of the rivers.

The large body of artworks that share a focus on the river also demonstrate the way that artists push boundaries and explore new concepts in their art. The artists' experimentation with materials, techniques, processes and conceptual ideas provide us with a range of innovative ways of looking at the rivers. A visual artist's use of the formal elements such as colour, line, shape, texture and composition can transform the river from something known and familiar to the exciting and unexpected. Similarly, a writer's experimentation with language, grammar, rhythm and meter can transport the reader from the quotidian to the extraordinary, exploring challenging, new territory in river related literature.

### 13.3.3 Sources of Inspiration

The breadth and depth of visual art and literature about the Swan and Canning Rivers reflect important artistic ideas and inspirations that extend far beyond Perth and into national and international cultural realm. A comparison of the artworks that share a local subject matter provides compelling insights into how art traditions from abroad have had strong and lasting influences on the local art and literature scene. While there will always be artists who choose to create their own personal and highly individual interpretations of local river places and spaces, there will also always be artists with more global knowledge and identities. In the work of these artists, the river is often repositioned so as to reflect international styles and cultural sensibilities.

Another vital role of the artist is their capacity to respond to the social, political, and cultural climate of their time. Artists and their artworks are shaped by their history, politics and contemporary culture and even works that conform to the conventions of the landscape genre can still directly critique or indirectly reflect broader issues of importance to the artist, such as current events, gender, race, politics and the environment. Interpretations of the Swan and Canning Rivers as seen, heard and felt by the artist, can therefore tell us much about our wider social, political and cultural world of the past and present.

### 13.3.4 Transition and Change

Even the most personal interpretations of the Swan and Canning Rivers remain expressions of a broader time and place, and as such, can be seen as social and historical as well as aesthetic documents. While we can accurately view these artworks as responses from individuals, it is important to acknowledge that they simultaneously reflect a broader social identity; intentionally or unknowingly capturing the ideas and aspirations

of the world informing and shaping the artist and his/her sensibilities.

Certain early European visions of the rivers, for example, capture the fear and fascination of a people newly arrived in the landscape. Reflecting the spirit of the times, the river is often imbued with such majestic beauty, sublime atmospheric effects and awe-inspiring vistas so as to overshadow the presence of its indigenous and non-indigenous inhabitants. In contrast, the rivers in art of the twentieth century mirror changes in social attitudes, economic fortunes and cultural identity. The concerns of contemporary artists continue to reflect the concerns of the community more generally as art about the river today draws attention to issues such as the health of the river, the impact of industrialisation and indigenous identity as well as paying homage to the unique character and beauty that has long been admired.

By allowing us to visit and revisit the Swan and Canning Rivers through word and image, the artworks identified in this project provide us with a unique opportunity to observe and understand the nature of social change through time. They not only bear witness to significant shifts in the rivers' relationship with the land and people that surround it, but on occasion allow us to discern the more subtle, almost imperceptible changes that pass over time.

### 13.3.5 Reading the Rivers

The number of ways of understanding and appreciating the rich body of artworks relating to the Swan and Canning Rivers are limited only by one's imagination. However, by focussing on the various ways that artists approach the river as a subject matter, as a source of inspiration and as a vehicle to communicate their

wider ideas and concerns, a number of key themes can be identified.

### 13.3.6 The Physical River

Artists have approached decisions on how to depict the physicality of the rivers and their location in the landscape, from a number of different angles.

- Aerial perspectives that map the lines and contours of the rivers across the surface of the land. While the rivers might be the dominant feature of these works, they remain only a part of a much larger environment.
- Panoramic views that fill the audience's field of vision. The length and breadth of the rivers is the focus, emphasising their dominating presence in the local landscape.
- River portraits that focus attention on the character and personality of a certain section of the rivers through careful observation and description.
- Sweeping angles that trace around bays and river foreshores highlight the spectacular views afforded in specific parts of the rivers.
- Distant yet ubiquitous band of water, an ever-present backdrop to city and suburban life.
- Views interrupted and unexpectedly encountered.
- Fleeting glimpses, implied or incidental features to the real subject.

### 13.3.7 Ways of Seeing

Artists must decide where in a painting to position their viewer while writers must decide in which narrative voice they will speak to their reader. There are many different ways to formally position the audience in an artwork, each one affecting the relationship that is established with the river.

- Specific vantage points, used with remarkable regularity through the decades, create iconic and instantly recognizable views including Perth and Melville Waters from Mount Eliza/Kings Park, the view of the city of Perth from the South Perth Foreshore and the view of Perth Water and Mill Point from St Georges Terrace.
- Specific sites of interest and visitation located along the river that are popular among artists and the broader community alike, including the Old Mill and Miller's Pond area, the parkland at Crawley Bay, the beach at Point Walter, and the islands around the Causeway.
- High points of the rivers' banks provide opportunities to create panoramic views and dramatic, sweeping vistas from an elevated height. This composition can intentionally encourage the audience to feel small and relatively insignificant compared to the expanse and majesty of the river and surrounding landscape.
- Low points at the banks of the river, meandering pathways and along shorelines can evoke a sense of intimacy and close contact with the scene. This composition might offer a privileged view on a secluded, little known setting or welcome the audience to be an active participant.
- Positioning the audience in, on or under water seeks to maximise a feeling of total immersion in the experience of the river. The artist is often seeking to remove any barrier between their audience and the subject matter, inviting us to take an imaginary leap of faith into the formal and conceptual core of the artwork.

### 13.3.8 A Theatre for Performance

For as long as there has been a human presence on the Swan and Canning Rivers, they have been the scene of a wide variety

of activity and a source of inspiration to artists working in all forms of creative expression.

- Recreational activities provide an immediate source of material for artists, embracing an extensive range of human movement such as boating, swimming, walking and fishing.
- The rivers found in artworks are commonly central to its narrative or provide a natural backdrop to stories of fact and fiction that lie at the centre of identity for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.
- The rivers have witnessed all manner of social, cultural and political events of local, national or international significance. Some no longer resonate with contemporary audiences; others are in the process of rediscovery while many continue to be remembered through tradition, ceremonies and the art that commemorates them.

### 13.3.9 A Force of Nature

Artists who find inspiration and meaning in the natural world have found an endless source of subject matter in the Swan and Canning Rivers.

- Indigenous and introduced flowers, grasses, trees and shrubs found along the rivers are the focus or setting in numerous artworks.
- Similar attention is paid to native fauna, with the number and variety of birdlife remaining a particular source of fascination.
- Contemporary artists' concern in exploring the creative capacity and expressive potential of the ethereal world finds a ready source of inspiration in the river and its constituent elements. Wind, water, light and time all inform the art pertaining to the more inscrutable qualities of the rivers.

- Seasonal change, patterns in the weather and the rise and fall of river tides can all be found among the artworks that seek to capture the unique character and personality of the Swan and Canning Rivers.

### 13.3.10 A Site for Structures

Art of the past provides unique references to those sites and structures once valued for their aesthetic, social or economic importance by past generations. Bridges and jetties, factories and brickworks, boatsheds and bollards; many of the structures to be found on and around the rivers form part of the artist's vernacular. Where they no longer survive, artworks might provide the only evidence of their past existence. For structures still present and closely associated with the rivers, art can reflect and possibly even reinforce a continued sense of ownership, identity and connectedness with the built environment.

### 13.3.11 Engaging with the Rivers

The subject, size, relevance and availability of the river art research undertaken to date ensures there are excellent and ample opportunities for future exhibitions, displays, cultural events and educational programs.

## 13.4 PHOTOGRAPHS, ORAL HISTORIES, FILMS AND AUDIO VISUAL PRODUCTIONS

The rivers bring a flood of stories. It is possible to harvest an impressive number of them from catalogues and collections, loved ones and libraries and stimulate the creation of new stories through innovative community projects. The riverscape has been a sophisticated memory maker for thousands of years and many of these stories and memories have been captured in image and sound, movies and interviews.

The audits undertaken for this report provide a starting point and an indication of a diversity of cultural assets. Some are accessible while others, culturally sensitive, are not available for broader audiences. They are all valuable resources to draw upon in wide ranging circumstances.

The challenge for community and government is to decide how to collaborate when using these resources to create new encounters with and within the riverscape, the waterways and all who call the rivers home.

Riverscape experiences will continue to create social, environmental and economic legacies for present and future generations and for the next span of historians.

There are some beautiful and difficult choices to be made. The Rivers are a contact zone for remembering and forgetting and still flow with political tensions. The Riverpark offers an extraordinary capacity for fresh literacy, shared responsibility and an opportunity to reconcile our histories and relationships with the rivers themselves using archival and new images, sounds and footage.

Cultural assets related to the *Whadjuk* people are held in a range of government and non-government organisations and a study of these has been conducted as part of the audit of social values required for the plan.<sup>129</sup> The National Trust of Australia (WA) has created, participated in and prepared numerous documents relating to the management and care of Aboriginal heritage, both specifically in relation to the Swan and Canning Rivers, and to Aboriginal culture as a whole. These documents are often made available online or by request.



### 13.4.1 Telling Stories

One of the unique qualities of the NAP is that it has delivered a 2013 snapshot of priorities held by the Noongar community regarding the Rivers. The following sections of the plan reflect the key aspects of the meetings. The NAP members acknowledged their concern that the NAP would be expected to represent the broader *Whadjuk* community's views and beliefs of the Swan and Canning Rivers. These beliefs are broad and differ between family groups, and the members of the NAP did not wish to offend other family groups if their views were not heard. Information is held by different *Whadjuk* people in the community and stories need to be told by the appropriate people for the specific areas.<sup>130</sup> The frameworks within this plan have the capacity to support this requirement.

“Highlight the fact that the first Australians who were in Noongar country, in this area, are the *Whadjuk* people.”

Marie Taylor, NAP Meeting 13<sup>th</sup> September 2013

### 13.4.2 Spirituality and Education

The members of the NAP emphasised the importance of spiritual connections between the *Whadjuk* people and the Swan and Canning Rivers and identified spirituality as a priority for the Interpretation Plan. The NAP members would like to see a range of methods utilised to educate the broader Perth community, in particular the younger members of the community, including links to the Aboriginal studies program within the current curriculum.

### 13.4.3 Future Projects and Consultation

The NAP acknowledged as a high priority the recording of Elders stories linked to the riverscape for both broader community and *Whadjuk* specific interpretative outcomes. Advice on the appropriate storytellers must be determined by the *Whadjuk*

community. The plan acknowledges this approach in stage one of its implementation and its initiatives provide a capacity to reflect a range of stories by a range of appropriate people and over time.

Cultural assets held by Local Government Authorities have been audited as part of the Plan. A review of the Fremantle City Library Local History Collection (FCL-LHC) revealed original audio recordings on cassette tape of fifteen interviews with Aboriginal people regarding the history and *Noongar* cultural beliefs of the Fremantle area and Swan River, and from further afield throughout Western Australia. These interviews were recorded as part of the Fremantle City Library Oral History Project from 1988 until 2004. The majority of these interviews are biographical, however the interviews with Ken Colbung (deceased) provided a historical and cultural account of the Fremantle area. Ken Colbung and Patrick Hume's interviews should be considered of particular importance to the Plan's Cultural assets as they deal in depth with the *Noongar* people's history and connections with the Swan River<sup>131</sup>.

The South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC) maintains the following website containing publically accessible *Whadjuk* and *Noongar* heritage data: *Kaartdigin Noongar – Noongar Knowledge*.



<http://www.noongarculture.org.au>

The mandate of this website is to share *Noongar* history and culture with both the *Noongar* community and the wider community, to continue passing this information on to future generations. SWALSC holds further information with restricted access to members of the *Noongar* community.

### 13.5 A CREATIVE FOCUS

Perth's unique riverscape has been a vital and continuing source of social values for the *Whadjuk* people over thousands of years and more recently for settler and migrant communities. These values are embodied in a range of recreational, experiential, spiritual and creative endeavours. The social values are inherent in stories and images, films and footage, activities and experiences associated with community engagement with the

Rivers. They are held in public and private collections and reveal community values as well as changes in practice and priorities over time.

The riverscape has inspired thousands of images and hundreds and more are taken each day by visitors and locals during their encounters. In 2014, everyone can be a photographer and within moments of capturing an image, it can be uploaded, emailed or messaged around the world.

Individual images and collections from the J S Battye Library of West Australian History collections include some of the earliest images of the Rivers. The Alfred Hawes Stone collection dating to the 1860s provides some of the first photographic frames of the riverscape while many images contributed to the Rivers of Emotion website have been taken and published during 2013. Both photography specialists and private collectors have generously made available rare images from their collections to benefit this project.

The riverscape brings a determination to photography. The environment, time, light, activities, drama, inspiration be it natural, built, human or a combination of each, is located 'on the river', 'in the river', 'by the river', 'under the river' or 'overlooking the river'. The concept of River as theatre is essential and the themes associated with art and literature are in many ways valid for this section too.

An extensive range of cultural assets including photographs, oral histories and audio visual assets is detailed in the project library and includes details of more than 1300 images from public and private collections. The number of oral histories and audio visual productions includes more than 100 from the SLWA and contributing local government authorities. Broadcast television

assets as well as films and documentaries also provide substantial resources to draw upon.

Members of the NAP advised that if *Whadjuk* people possess photographs that they are happy to share and give permission to use, and that the donation of the photograph was recognised, it would be acceptable for those photographs to be used within the Interpretation Plan and Trails Project<sup>132</sup>.

The range of photographs, oral histories and AV/film productions and input from the Local Government Authorities bordering the rivers provides a starting point for interpretive outcomes, while reminding each of us how central the Rivers are to life in Perth.

### 13.6 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES

Local government authorities bordering the rivers were invited to contribute images and oral histories to the plan. Some of these are evident in this Plan. Oral histories were delivered in both digital and text form and while they tend to conform to the themes outlined in this section the digital versions bring with them the emotion of the interviewees. Drownings for example, resulted in much more than the death of a stranger or a friend, they changed the use of the riverscape, while battles to conserve the rivers are regaled and the beauty of the day is indelibly recalled. The abundance of fish, crabs, jilgies and birdlife, the courage to sail or swim across a testing tide; the recollections bring with them a tangible passion, a vitality and often joy and despair. For the listener or the reader, the recollections also release and reveal a sense of wellbeing imbedded in both the person telling the story and the riverscape itself.

### 13.7 AUDIT OF RIVER GUARDIANS PHOTOGRAPHY

The Swan River Trust has initiated a range of community engagement programs to increase community awareness about and custodianship of the river. An audit of almost 200 images selected for inclusion in the Swan River Trust's River Guardians Photography Albums (2009/2011) revealed images of natural riverscape, sport and landscape including built environment, fauna and people in the landscape.





Canning Bridge Picnic, c 1930, p406 Courtesy City of Melville



*I used to swim across the river and come up the other side and we never thought of sharks or anything but here were lots of porpoises in the river and you were never afraid of those.*

*We used to swim back and forth and never think of sharks!*

Betty Lee

*As a child I ran wild mostly. We had marvelous things to do. We lived right on the river's edge and we used to go down prawning and crabbing and get up at 4:30 in the morning and go down to the jetty and fish – it was a wonderful life.*

Alisa W. Shaw

*One of the US aircraft stalled in take-off. I'm not sure in take-off or in landing. Anyway we saw it hit the river. The fellow was out on the cockpit. But he drowned, and we were witness to that. And they didn't find it, because of the current with the river; they didn't find his body for two or three days.*

Grenville Courtland

*It was so clean in the river you could put sand in a bottle and throw it and it would go to the bottom and we'd dive and pick it up. You could see it. You could see the bottom of the river where we swam. That was in a little bay mostly where the younger kids swam. There was a little bay there. But also at that site it was called the Horse Landing. Have you heard of that?*

Nora Mellor

## 13.8 AUDIO VISUAL ASSETS

An audit of State Library of Western Australia's heritage collection revealed 101 results for videos and films relating to the Swan and Canning Rivers. A closer investigation of shot lists pertaining to thirty pre-1950 films depicting the Rivers in Kaylene Heard's Biography of 16mm film revealed the recreational activities of rowing, sailing and swimming were the most popular activities featured in these privately shot films. A detailed shot list of these films has been produced as part of the audit and it is available in the library produced for the project.

ABC TARA Online data base contains detailed records of selected ABC produced news and current affairs, TV programs, and stock footage. An initial desktop search of the ABC archive revealed 498 items connected with the Swan River and 60 connected to the Canning River, while a more detailed audit undertaken with the assistance of the ABC<sup>133</sup> has revealed trends in coverage of river stories and issues for each decade between 1960 - 2013. These details provide an insight into community priorities and social values over time. The earliest river story transmitted by ABC TV (then known as ABW) occurred 11 May 1960. The story was entitled 'Swan River Inspection'<sup>134</sup> and focused on the members of the Swan River Conservation Board making their first inspection of the river by launch. The health of the river was a focus of ABW television which had begun transmitting in Perth for the first time only four days earlier on 7 May 1960<sup>135</sup>.

An audit of 36 stories from the 1960s revealed stories about bridge construction (5) to be most numerous followed by boating stories (4) including sunken boats, cargo boats and attempts at record speeds. There was a presence of the newly created Swan River Conservation Board during the 60s (3) as well as stories on reclamation works (3), transport (3) and river fauna (3). In the 70s heritage stories were most numerous (11),

followed by bridge construction (8) and sailing (7) conservation (6) and pollution (5) were also evident. One drowning was also recorded in the database.

The 80s saw a significant shift to sport (25) and sporting events (15) including waterski championships, marathons, rowing championships, dragon boat racing and speed boat races to name a few. There was also an emphasis on riverside development including support for and protest against (20), accidents (10) and at least three deaths. Flooding also had an impact during the 1980s (4).

The 1990s revealed an emphasis on pollution (21), the Rivers' health and protection (20), development issues were still evident (20). Yachting continued its high profile (20) and general sporting events (15), while algal blooms (18), accidents, danger and deaths (17) still rated highly.

Between 2000-2012 pollution, sewerage spills and cleanups rated (30), algal blooms (24) and the general health of the river (13). The dolphin deaths (six in five months) received strong coverage (7), fish kills (9) and coverage of accidents and deaths in the river reached (16).

While these stories reveal individual social values linked with activities such as sailing, rowing, recreation and conservation for example, they also provide evidence of broader community shifts and priorities over time and particularly towards an awareness of the growing health crisis for the Rivers.

Thematically these social values include: the health of the river; valuing the river; river as theatre; river under threat; the practical river; river as home; and river as danger; the spectacle

of the river and river as inspiration. These broader themes and individual stories can provide valuable starting points for interpretation outcomes including exhibitions, while the collections provide tangible audio visual assets for use in the *River Journeys* Framework which is detailed in this Plan. In addition, there is the potential to utilize the ABC's rich assets for the production of a timely documentary on the new future of the Riverpark.

### 13.9 FILM PRODUCTION

The riverscape has been central to film production in Perth through its aesthetic, symbolic and political roles. Most recently in 2013, the riverscape featured in the film *Yagan*, by Spear Point productions. It was a focus of the mini-series *Cloudstreet* by Tim Winton, while the political documentary *Always was Always will be* by Martha Ansara focused on the 1989 dispute over the redevelopment of the Swan Brewery on the Swan River.

The film *Wadjemup: Black Prison-White playground* was in production during 2013<sup>136</sup>. This film focuses on the healing required at Wadjemup/Rottneest to address its tragic deaths in custody history. The film also provides an opportunity to create understanding about the links between the river and Wadjemup through cosmology and extends perspectives about boundaries and extensions of the riverpark which are supported by the Nodal Pause point approach and *marli riverpark* name.

### 13.10 RIVERS OF EMOTION

*Rivers of Emotion* was a partnership program between the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions Europe 1100-1800 and the National Trust of Australia (WA). This federally funded project offered the community an opportunity to share their experiences and feelings and about the Rivers on an

innovative website. Other outcomes included a symposium and the production of a booklet entitled *Rivers of Emotion: An emotional history of Derbarl Yerrigan and Djarlgarro Beelier/ the Swan and Canning Rivers*.

A key result of the project has been community contribution including over 200 discrete uploads to the Rivers of Emotion website of stories, images, sounds and movies. The project has delivered a 2012/2013 snapshot of community feelings and connections to the Rivers through an emotional lens, while providing a contemporary glimpse into some of the most recent social values associated with Perth's waterways. The website attracted more than 2500 local visitors.

Community contributions included 14 Riverscenes (movies), 98 Riversights (images), 18 Riversounds (soundscapes), and 74 Rivers stories (text stories, commentary and poems). The outcomes also include a series of soundscapes. Unique recordings mid-river and along the shoreline at a range of places and times capture different moods of the river and provide a record of the sound of the river in 2013. There are also sounds/voices of the dolphin community featured in the collection.

Contributions associated with 'witnessing' nature and the spectacle of the riverscape featured highly in the content, followed by activities associated with being 'in' landscape - River as theatre. Particular emotional references were made to calmness and peace, happiness and sadness, as well as fear and courage. Connections to suicide, drowning and death featured as subject matter. However, creative outcomes such as river as inspiration, a diverse range of events and a sense of wellbeing associated with the riverscape dominated the content of the Rivers of Emotion site.

### 13.11 WORKING WITH MAPS

Mapping, once the domain of experts, has now, with widely available software, become democratised. The riverscape offers an opportunity to interrogate the concept of 'map' using digital technologies to map the emotions, spirit or sense of a place<sup>137</sup> rather than just the topography of the rivers, the lines on the map. With GPS tracking and satellite navigators in your pocket there is no need to ask, 'How do I get there?' The modern map is answering, in much more personal, complex and interesting ways, the question, 'Where am I?' Map making is being used to find the way, not just in a geographical but also a personal sense. The *Rivers of Emotion* project is one example of this mapping. It reveals emotions connected to the riverscape and the rivers themselves. It also reveals favoured outlooks and community clusters that have an emotional intensity attached to them.<sup>138</sup> Software can be used to harness the themes and stories recommended in this Plan to make them available in a range elegant and accessible formats. It can also be used to demonstrate changes in the landscape over time<sup>139</sup>.



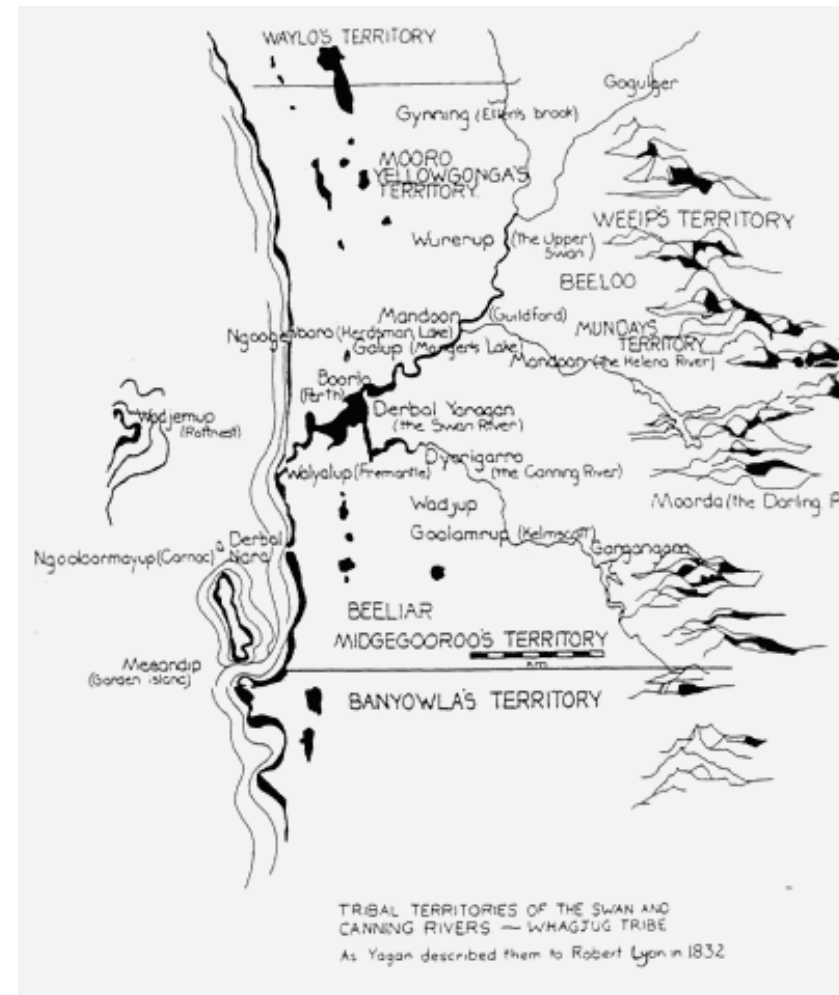
## WHADJUK CLAN BOUNDARIES

During the early years of European colonisation of the Swan and Canning Rivers, the Whadjuk people who inhabited the riverscape were divided into four main groups.

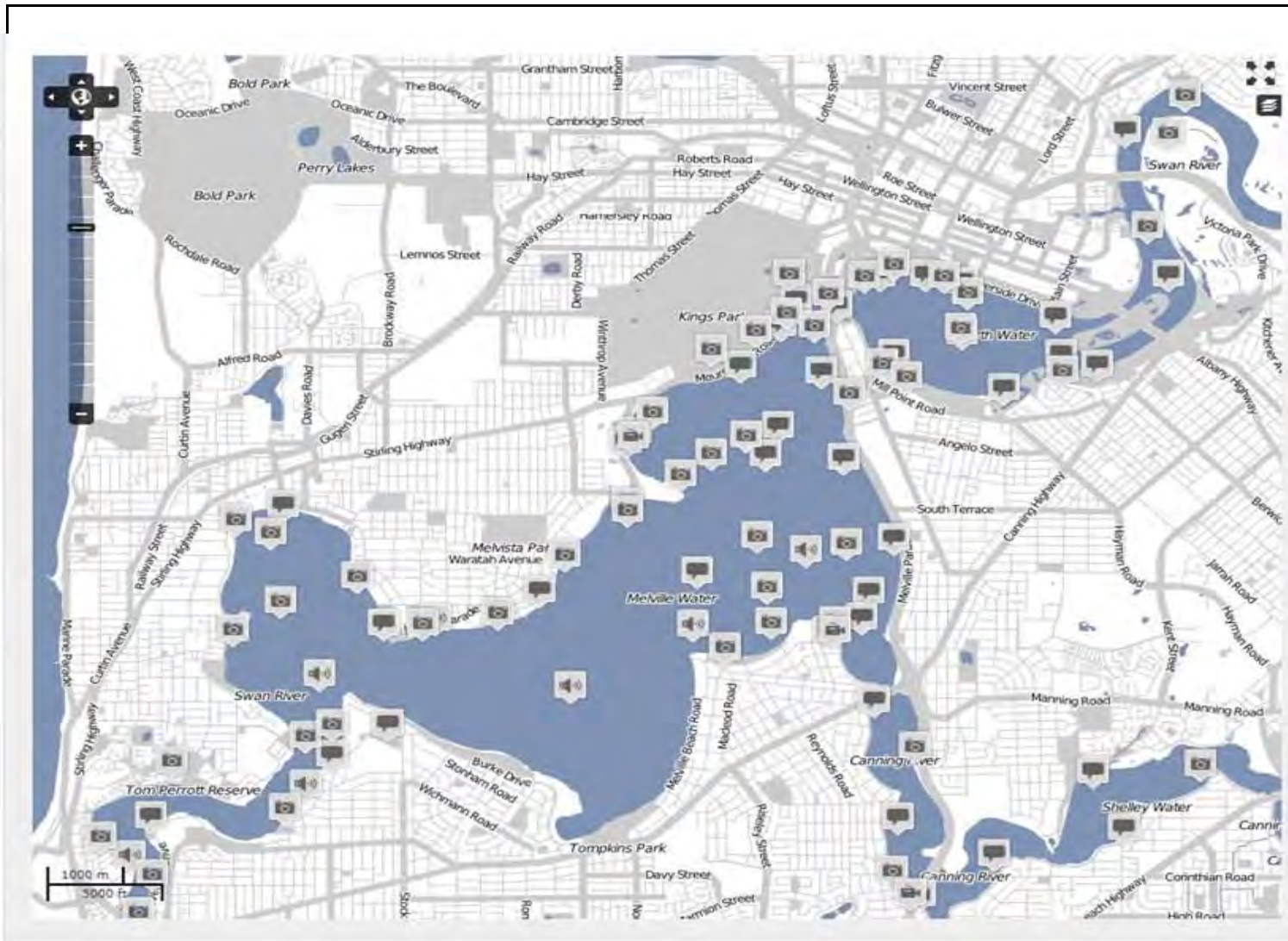
- The Mooro, led by Yellagonga;
- The Beeliar, led by Midgegooroo and Yagan;
- The Beeloo, led by Munday; and
- The Wurerup, led by Weep to the north east, outside of the scope of the Trails Project.

“ It is important to highlight too that [the northern side] of the [Swan] River was the Mooro, which was Yellagonga’s land ... and between Helena River and Canning River it was Beeloo, which was Munday’s area... and then from the Canning River down to the sea was Beeliar, Midjeegooroo and Yagan”.


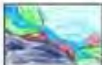



Marie Taylor, NAP Meeting 13th September 2013








Map of the Whadjuk territories and boundaries as described to Robert Lyon by Yagan in 1832.<sup>140</sup>



### Top Riversights

-  Fun on a hot summer's day
-  People of the Swan River
-  Current seating arrangements at Mount Pleasant foreshore
-  Maali
-  Leap Of Faith

### Top Riverstories

-  Unhappy Mr Peel!
-  'Waalber' - The last of the black swan group.
-  Clontarf Boys' Home
-  The vagaries of wind and water
-  A River afternoon

tense homesick loving Watchful Inspiring disappointed inspired pleasure thrilled warm resolved relief fascinated interest furious depression content trust collected enthralled  
 excited cold courageous excitement peaceful Lovingly despair unhappy anticipation lively exhilaration love mercy eager surprise sweet satisfied left  
 happy lazy calm apprehensive fun proud passionate dark fear sad needed delight happiness worry blue love bliss strong scared sensitive overwhelmed  
 hope

Interactive map from the Rivers of Emotion project<sup>141</sup>

## 13.12 WHADJUK NAMING OF PLACES

The use of the *Whadjuk* names for places along the Swan and Canning Rivers provides a method of identifying cultural and social connections between the *Whadjuk* people and specific places. Names can provide a description of spiritual beliefs and stories, resources that can be found and utilised, descriptions of activities that take place there, or warning of potential sources of danger.

The members of the NAP advised that recognition of the *Whadjuk* names of locations along the Swan and Canning Rivers would be an important aspect of the Interpretation Plan Project. Richard Wilkes advised that once the *Whadjuk* names are established, stories could be told that centred on these names and that education and information about the names could be provided.<sup>142</sup>

It is difficult to determine the spelling of *Whadjuk* words as there are many alternative spellings to the same words that are used by different people within the *Noongar* community. When asked about the spelling of the name of the spiritual serpent that created the Swan River, the members of the NAP advised the following:

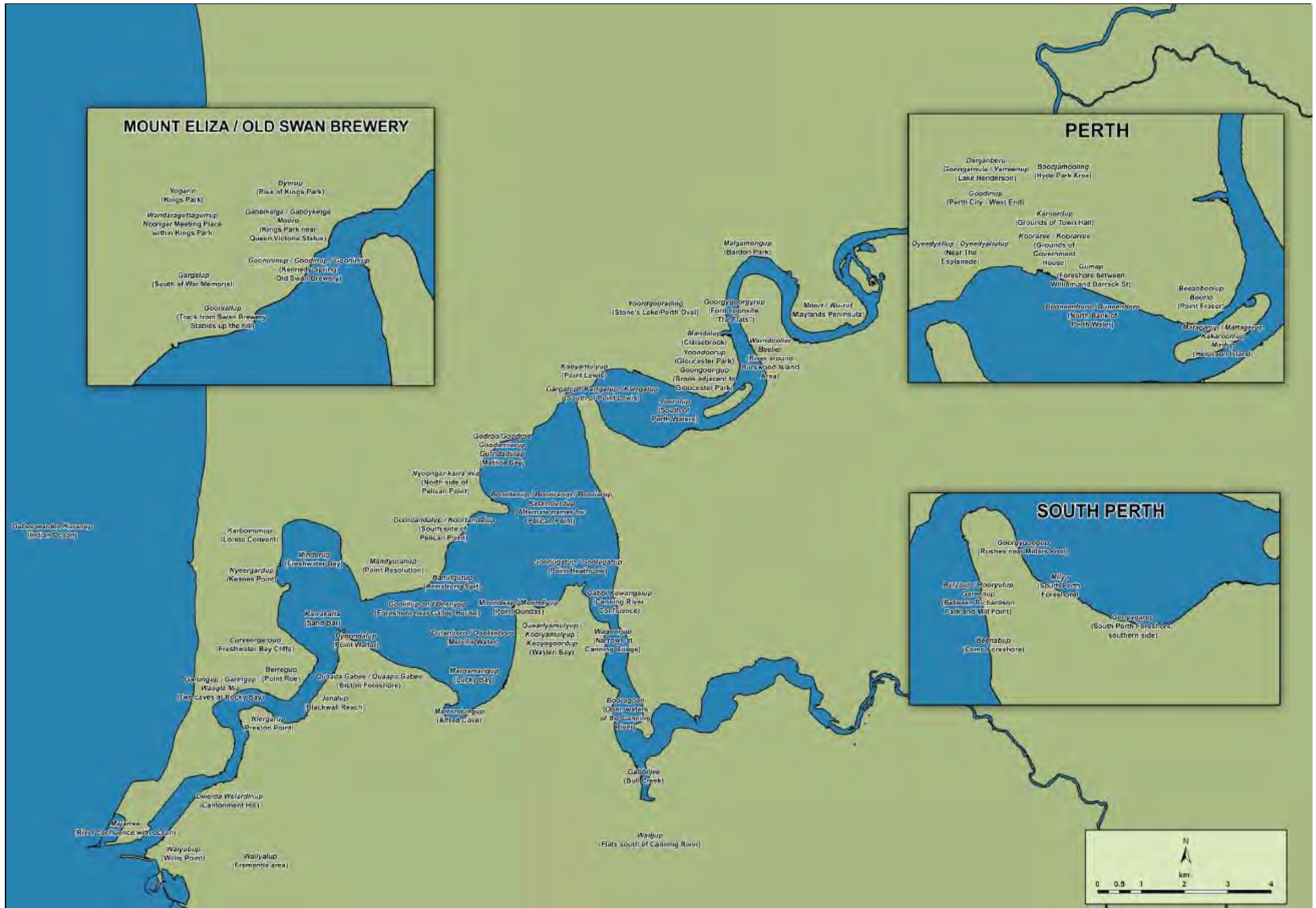
*“I wouldn’t say I’m right in spelling it because, I mean I spell it Whaagle, but different tribes spell it their own way... there’s no wrong or right because everyone spells it their own way.”* Doolann-Leisha Eatts, NAP Meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2013

Marie Taylor, at the same meeting, advised that she personally spells the word ‘*Waagle*’, and within the existing literature the

word is often seen spelt as, and not limited to, ‘*Waagle*’, ‘*Waugyl*’ or ‘*Wargle*.’<sup>143</sup>

Members of the *Whadjuk* community have previously expressed concern over the sensitivities that could arise in regards to the spelling of *Whadjuk* words and names as particular spellings could offend members of the *Whadjuk* community.<sup>144</sup> A naming protocol is detailed in this Plan and a Noongar oral tradition of delivery is foundational to the delivery of cultural information particularly within the major initiatives.





Map of Noongar names along the Swan and Canning Rivers identified during the NAP meetings.





Map of Activity Nodes identified by the Swan River Trust



Map of Additional Nodes identified by the Noongar Advisory Panel

### 13.13 PRIORITY NODES

All areas along the Swan and Canning Rivers are culturally important to the *Noongar* people, as the Rivers themselves are central to their beliefs and history within the greater Perth area. The NAP advice and subsequent research has identified the following Nodes as priority locations in the riverpark.

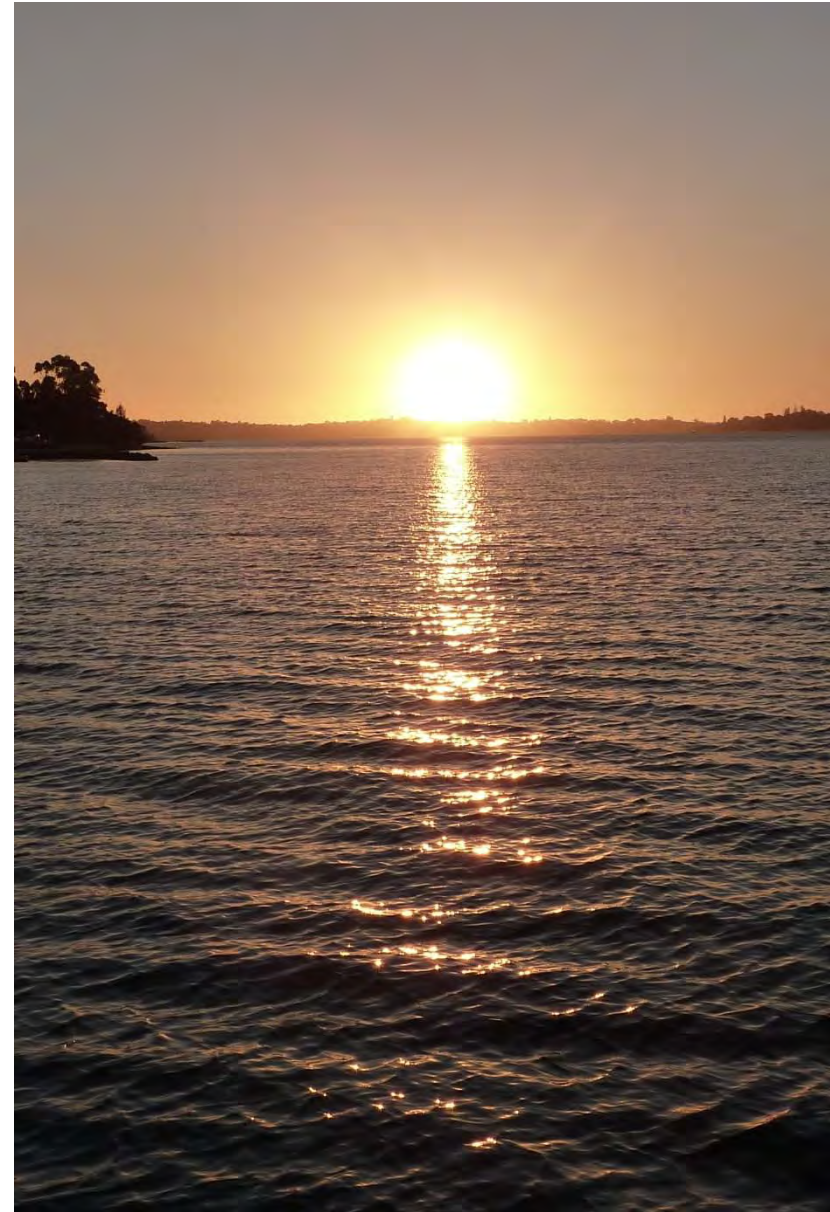
- NAP Node 1: Fremantle;
- SRT Node 1: Rocky Bay;
- SRT Node 5: Mt Eliza and Old Swan Brewery;
- SRT Node 6: Heathcote; and
- SRT Node 12: Heirisson Island and Point Fraser.

These Nodes have been highlighted due to the importance of the *Whadjuk* cultural connections, including mythological and religious beliefs, and the intensity of the historical events that have occurred at these locations.

### 13.14 RECONCILIATION AND HEALING NODES

Discussions with the NAP revealed certain sites within the Swan and Canning Rivers require healing and may become the focus of reconciliation events. These Interpretation Nodes highlighted by the NAP for these purposes include:

- NAP Node 1: Fremantle (specifically Cantonment Hill);
- NAP Node 2: Mosman Bay;
- NAP Node 4: Bull Creek;
- SRT Node 5: Heathcote; and
- SRT Node 14: Banks Reserve.



Swan River near Heathcote G Pickering

## 13.15 SOCIAL VALUES SUGGESTED ACTIONS

### Swan River Trust in collaboration with others

1. Collaborate with leading Western Australian cultural organisations including the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Western Australian Museum, State Library of Western Australia to bring artists responses to the Swan and Canning Rivers to established audiences of cultural and educational institutions.
2. Collaborate with national institutions with touring venues including National Library of Australia, National Gallery of Australia, National Portrait Gallery and Mitchell Library and bring artists responses to audiences through a national touring exhibition.
3. Collaborate with cultural agencies to bring the stories of the Rivers to rural and remote regional communities of Western Australia, supported by a public program, artist and curatorial floor talks and schools education kit.
4. Collaborate with the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) to initiate additional exhibition opportunities at WALGA State Conference and WALGA's Banners in the Terrace Schools Competition.
5. Communicate and promote the aims, process and results of research undertaken in this Plan to academic and cultural organisations in Australia and overseas through conference papers and links to national and international academic, science and cultural sectors.
6. Ensure consideration of appropriate and available SWALSC held cultural assets is made during development of riverpark interpretation for both broader and *Whadjuk* specific outcomes with assistance from the Noongar Advisory Panel.

7. Increase community engagement and presence by including oral history assets in whole of river online exhibitions to encourage further community response to the riverpark.
8. Collaborate with television broadcasters to produce a series of audiovisual micro documentaries based on archived news.
9. Develop a pilot node program which reflects priorities of both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community.
10. Showcase priority nodes and events identified by the Noongar Advisory Panel in initial interpretative initiatives.

### Community, Local Government Authorities and other agencies

1. Display artists responses to the Swan and Canning Rivers to local communities using visual art on loan from local government art collections, displayed alongside selected literary references in temporary exhibitions.
2. Collaborate with venues which offer quality display capacity such as Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, Perth Concert Hall, Council House and the foyers of corporate and office buildings such as Woodside to showcase art depicting the Swan and Canning Rivers.
3. Bring artists responses to the Swan and Canning Rivers to a global audience via an online exhibition using selected visual art, literary works and photo gallery with additional material for schools or adult education centres and link to related websites.
4. Bring artists responses to the Swan and Canning Rivers to audiences of cultural festivals including annual state festivals such as Perth International Art Festival and Perth Writers Festival, WA Heritage Festival and various local festivals.
5. Collaborate with public, private and independent schools and cultural agencies to develop and promote visits to



primary and secondary schools, providing students with access to a visual artist or writing practitioner who is inspired by the Swan and Canning Rivers. Link curriculum outcomes and/or production of new work by artist and students.

6. Provide accommodation and studio space to visual artists and/or writing practitioners who are inspired by the Swan and Canning Rivers, with a focus on interaction of artists and local community and the production of new work in a dedicated environment.
7. Provide public access to artists, temporary displays, public talks and practical workshops through an 'Open Studio' arrangement.
8. Provide a dedicated environment that allows interaction with visual artists and/or writing practitioners, other practitioners and the broader community to share the artists' responses to the Swan and Canning Rivers, with a focus on the production of new work, developing connections with cultural organisations.
9. Develop creative workshops which support the public programs of organised artist groups, local government arts centres, corporations and other organisations, conducted by visual artists and writers with adult education training. Include case studies of selected works of art, practical 'en plein air' (on site) session at the rivers and studio sessions dedicated to creative expression.
10. Promote and feature films about the Rivers' environment, inhabitants and cultural connections at festivals and pop up events in the riverpark.
11. Develop and pursue a range of project scopes which encourage the community to reveal further emotional connections to the riverpark on the *Rivers of Emotion* website.
12. Embed a series of micro documentaries in the *Rivers of Emotion* website that demonstrate the evolving conservation issues of the riverscape over the past 50 years.
13. Explore production of a broadcast documentary about the riverpark's environmental and political context.
14. Develop and make available printable visitor maps reflecting Riverpark nodes and distances and experiential options for walking and cycling through tourism outlets and local government authorities.<sup>145</sup>

# 14 SHARED VISION AND COLLABORATION

## 14.1 A SHARED VISION THROUGH EDUCATION

The Swan and Canning Rivers' longstanding cultural connections with Europe have continuing relevance to the future of the riverpark. Sourcing best cultural heritage practice at World Heritage river landscapes in France and England has been an important resource for this Plan as have the resources of leading museum collections.

The French produced the first map of the Swan River in 1801 during the Baudin expedition and the valuable original is held by the State Library of Western Australia. In addition, the statement of significance for the Rivers is based on a UNESCO model informed by experience of the World Heritage riverscape Val de Loire in 2007, while a subsequent visit to the management body Mission Val de Loire in 2012 was made specifically to inform the Interpretation Plan and its strategies.

The ARC Centre for the History of Emotions Europe 1100-1800 has links to universities in Australia and Europe and is investigating the individual and communal emotions of this period to improve the social, cultural and emotional welfare of modern Australians. The Centre partnered with the National Trust in 2012/2013 to deliver the River of Emotions program which includes an innovative website and has contributed to the social values of the rivers in this Plan. There is potential over the next four years for the Centre to further collaborate with community in the riverscape and initiate innovative performances and events as part of its program.

In 2012/2013 Directors of the Thames River Festival international program provided a valued showcase and resource for Western Australia. In 2013, students from London partnered with students in Dubai (UAE), Sylhet (Bangladesh), Surakarta (Indonesia) and Jhelum (Pakistan) as part of the Rivers of the World initiative. The program is dedicated to increasing the understanding of rivers and students work with professional artists to produce artworks for public display.

### 14.1.1 Storylines

*Storylines* is a State Library of Western Australia initiative to create a central access point for digitised collections relating to Aboriginal History in Western Australia. *Storylines* will assist in the digital return of photos and other materials directly to Aboriginal families, communities and people, and help to identify many of the photographs in the J.S. Battye Library of West Australian History at the State Library of Western Australia which are currently unidentified and unknown. The system has the capacity to record highly detailed profiles of people, places, plants, animals and events as well as foods, medicines and technology. It is envisaged that the database will strengthen information literacy in Aboriginal communities and assist people in collecting and preserving their own family, social and cultural history.

### 14.1.2 Globalization, Photography and Race

In 2013, almost 100 images depicting Aboriginal people from Western Australia's southwest including the former Swan Colony were identified in five key European collections as part of an Australian Research Council initiative at the University of Western Australia. The project led by Dr Jane Lydon explores the

global circulation of photographs of Australian Aboriginal people that began in the 1840s. It investigates the significance of colonial photography to Indigenous communities, and through international collaboration returns photographs to descendants, providing an important Indigenous heritage resource. This project brings an opportunity to produce a world first exhibition to Perth focusing on the *Whadjuk* community - the River people - through the newly identified photographs, as well as the opportunity to produce audio and audio visual assets for visitors to the riverpark.

### 14.1.3 The National Trust

The National Trust of Australia (WA) is a leading independent heritage organisation promoting the conservation and interpretation of Western Australia's heritage. The National Trust has worked with the Swan River Trust, local government authorities and community on the significance of the rivers since 2008 to ensure the heritage values of Perth's waterways are recognised as a vital contribution to the social, environmental and economic benefit of the State. The Trust has a holistic approach to Western Australia's natural, Aboriginal and historic heritage which aligns with the UNESCO world heritage philosophy behind the rivers significance and brings with it educational and community lifelong learning opportunities.

The National Trust is custodian for a number of significant heritage places adjacent to, overlooking or inherently connected with the Rivers. A brief description of each property demonstrates not only its river connection; it offers an insight into why these places are deemed so significant to the city and the state. The Interpretation Plan provides new and valuable ways to link these properties to the community within the context of the riverscape.

Further, the National Trust is the co-founder with Perth Natural Resource Management of the Maali Foundation. The Maali Foundation can play a pivotal role in the ongoing conservation and interpretation of the Riverscape which is detailed in the Major Initiatives section.

National Trust properties in the metropolitan region that have specific links to the Swan and Canning Rivers are East Perth Cemeteries to the east of the CBD, Peninsula Farm (Tranby) in Maylands and Woodbridge, near Guildford and Gallop House at Dalkeith. Other places that have links to the Rivers and are visited by school students on a regular basis are Samson House in Fremantle and No 1 Pump Station at Mundaring Weir. Programs offered at the first three properties have strong educational connections with the Rivers and connections for the early settlers and pioneers of the Swan River colony.

The Hardey family of Peninsula Farm transported all the goods they had carried from Whitby in England, up-river from Fremantle, on a home built 'flat'. It took several months to do this and set up home on the peninsula. They lost their first home and second homes to flood and the third was more carefully positioned on a higher point. Students gain an understanding of the significance of the river to this family when they stand on site and consider early transportation and the hazards of being in such an unfamiliar environment in the days before roads. A program offered to students in collaboration with the WA Art Gallery highlights some of the earliest European artworks of Western Australia at the Gallery followed by a workshop at Peninsula Farm where the students paint a landscape as it would have been when the Hardeys arrived there.

Charles Harper chose a site near Guildford for his family when he built Woodbridge. The land was originally owned by Captain

James Stirling and named after Stirling's wife's home in Surrey, England. Both Stirling and Harper were attracted by the position of the land by the river. Many of the Harper children's activities as they grew up centred around using the river for recreation. The horticultural business owned by Charles Harper relied on water from the river for reticulation. During school visits today, Harper family photographs are used to help children recognise how the land has changed and the different childhood they had.

East Perth Cemeteries sit on the hill above the Swan River. From the establishment of the first cemetery in 1829 to the closure of the seven cemeteries in 1899, almost all of the people who died in Perth, from the wealthy and prominent to the poor or unknown, were buried here including many who drowned in the Rivers.

Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, typhoid and dysentery outbreaks took many lives and, as the only cemeteries in this area, the bodies were interred here. At this time some people in Perth were using the river for washing and other daily requirements so there was considerable concern about the burial of contaminated bodies in the land above the river. Students visiting today learn about the positioning of the East Perth Cemeteries in the early days of the Swan River Colony and how and why in 1899 the cemeteries were closed and alternative burial grounds found.

Since 2012, most National Trust Education & Learning programs offered to schools link to the Australian Curriculum and although the common connection is through the History content, other learning areas are used to make the connection broader and more relevant to both primary and secondary school students. Many other National Trust programs have strong links and special connections to the rivers, people and events. National

Trust Education & Learning makes curriculum links where appropriate.

#### 14.1.4 Heritage Festival

The National Trust of Australia (WA) has an annual commitment to coordinate the Western Australia heritage festival. In 2012, over 30,000 people participated in 140 events during this state wide festival which included the *River of Emotion* boat cruise. In 2014 the heritage Festival Theme is *Journeys* and in 2015 the theme is *Conflict and Compassion*.

#### 14.1.5 National Trust Heritage Appeal

As a "Trust" for the government and the community, the National Trust is committed to the conservation and interpretation of the *marli riverpark* and is prepared to establish a public tax deductible appeal for it. The Trust, at no charge to the Government, can ensure all public donations over two dollars are tax deductible and that 100% of all donations are spent on the project.

This appeal will more than likely attract a high level of public participation and can serve as a base for both corporate sponsorship and grants.

#### 14.1.6 Imbedding Innovation and Increasing Significance

There are many opportunities to add further significance to Perth's riverscape by imbedding leading research, programs and events in the riverscape. This practice is undertaken internationally and demonstrated in specific World Heritage landscapes including the Loire Valley in France and the Thames riverscape in the UK. Further, the outcomes of this research and the specialists associated with the work can contribute to a range of interpretive outcomes during and at the conclusion of programs.



### 14.1.7 Scientific Research Programs

The Ernest Hodgkin Trust for Estuary Education and Research continues the work of Ernest Hodgkin into Western Australian estuaries so that they can be better managed. Current projects fund scholarships for student research with projects such as *Habitat Use by Black Swans in the Swan River Estuary* (Edith Cowan's Centre for Ecosystem Management) and *Bioavailability of dissolved organic matter in source catchments of the Canning River Estuary* (UWA School of Plant Biology).

The Swan River Trust's *Swan Canning Research and Innovation Program* (SCRIP) has aimed to improve the scientific knowledge underpinning management of the Swan Canning River system. It supported collaborative research between the Swan River Trust and education and research organisations to develop innovative solutions to challenges in the river system. Investment is focused on six research priority areas: including:

- fish and aquatic fauna
- aquatic flora
- decision support systems
- catchment and estuary issues
- climate change
- community and behaviour change

Between 2007 and 2009 research grants were awarded to projects addressing the above priorities at Universities and the CSIRO. Some of these projects have been completed, others are still underway. *The Coastal and Estuarine Dolphin Project*, a partnership between Curtin University and Murdoch researchers working closely with the Swan River Trust has supported the Trust's community monitoring program, Dolphin Watch. The project reported on the *Swan Canning Riverpark Dolphin Population Ecology and Health Investigations* in November 2012.<sup>146</sup>

The SCRIP program, part of the Healthy Rivers Action Plan (2008) was completed in June 2013 and is to be replaced with another revised and updated research and innovation strategy linked to social science and community behaviour change.

The Prawn Watch initiative was launched in April 2014 as part of the Swan River Trust's Citizen Science approach to engage community and monitor the Western School Prawns in the Riverpark. While the Swan River Trust, Challenger Institute of Technology, Murdoch University, Recfishwest, the WA Fish Foundation and the Department of Fisheries are working together on the project to find the key to river prawn survival and growth, the project is encouraging the community to reinstate one of the riverscape's significant recreational pastimes.

UWA School of Agricultural and Resource Economics with ARC and Swan River Trust funding are seeking to analyse expert and public preferences for environmental and social outcomes for the Swan River. The aim of the project led by Winthrop Professor David Pannell is to identify divergence between experts and non-experts in preferences for social and environmental outcomes from investments in an iconic natural asset, and to understand the consequences and implications for decision makers under varying policy scenarios.

The Swan River Trust is also involved with the CRC for Water Sensitive Cities which is delivering research towards socio-technical water management solutions.

In an effort to maximise networking and support across organisations undertaking research on the Swan and Canning Rivers, the catchment and the community relationship to them,

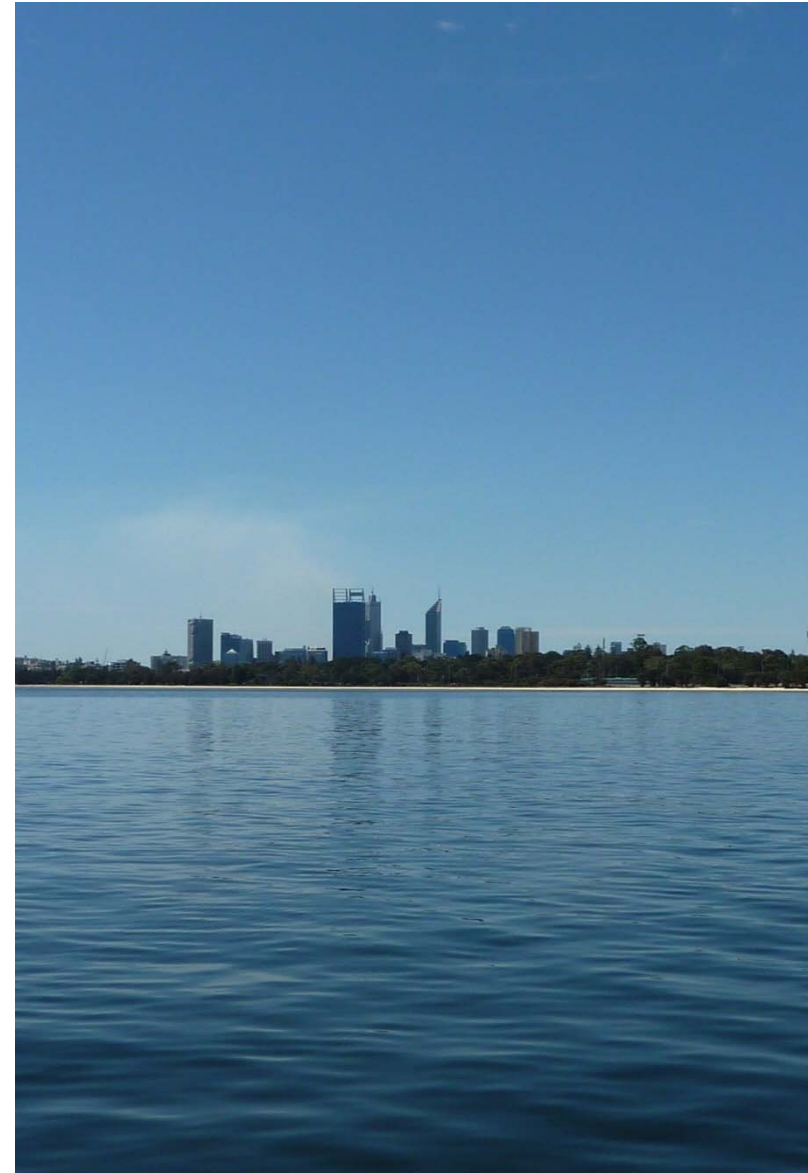
the Swan River Trust plans to host an on-line portal to the Swan Canning Research and Innovation Community Space.

#### 14.1.8 Nature Neurons and the Power of Water

Marine biologist Wallace J. Nichols in his 'Blue Mind' initiative demonstrates how cutting edge neuroscience and personal stories can encourage protection of oceans. Nichols documents the positive effects of water on health and wellbeing. What is emerging is a new branch of neuroscience that shows that proximity to water can reduce stress, diminish anxiety and lead to improved performance and professional success. This in turn can lead to understanding and more positive practices:

*An appreciation of the vast cognitive benefits and services provided by healthy ecosystems may help advance more sustainable policies and practices. New research suggests that time spent with nature, in particular near water, significantly reduces stress, accelerates healing, boosts feelings of wellbeing, enhances creativity, improves cognitive function, increases attention and focus, and may help build new neurons – 'nature neurons'.<sup>147</sup>*

This emerging field of neuro-conservation is equally applicable to rivers. The annual BlueMind Summit brings together top neuroscientists, oceanographers, artists and educators and helps provide insights into the science of what is described as "our brains on water". The 'services' the environment provides are expanded to include the broad cognitive value offered by clean, healthy waterways.<sup>148</sup> A great deal of research is taking place in this area of what has been called 'blue space' and public health and wellbeing. What is clear is that emotional connection to waterways can be harnessed to bring change.



'Blue space' on the Swan River. G Pickering

# 15 RIVERS AS CATALYST

A range of current innovative programs and research link the riverscape to better understanding, new experience and educational outcomes. Some of these projects include:

## **15.1 ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions Europe 1100-1800**

The Centre uses historical knowledge from Europe, 1100-1800, to understand the long history of emotional behaviours. Its work included performance, research and European links.

## **15.2 Kings Park and Botanic Garden**

50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Western Australian Botanic Garden in 2015/ ongoing education programs/ Wild Flower Festival

## **15.3 New Museum for WA**

Major themes include: Being Western Australian, Discovering Western Australia and Exploring the World

## **15.4 Art Gallery of Western Australia**

Collection / exhibition support

## **15.5 Interpreting Aboriginal Heritage in the City of Perth: Aboriginal Heritage Maps**

Professor Len Collard and Dr Tod Jones

## **15.6 Sustaining Indigenous Cultures and Wellbeing through the Performing Arts**

Professor Anna Haebich

## **15.7 A History of Mary Ann Friend**

Associate Professor Deborah Gare

## **15.8 The Age of Solastalgia**

Professor Glen Albrecht

## **15.9 Globalization, Photography, and Race: the Circulation and Return of Aboriginal Photographs in Europe.**

Dr Jane Lydon

## **15.10 Yirra Yarken is Australia's Largest Aboriginal-led Theatre Company Theatre**

21<sup>st</sup> anniversary in 2014

Yirra Yarkin's stories have reached 13 countries in 5 continents and won awards for our theatre, governance and our partnerships

## **15.11 Showcase Day/Night Event for *marli riverpark***

The following outline for a two day pilot event was developed to provide a practical guide to an inaugural *marli riverpark* experience. It is fully costed in stage one of the implementation plan.

## waugyl walk pilot (south of the river edition)

Day 10.00am - 3.00pm

### Inclusions:

- communication material
- 3 sets of facilities that leapfrog along the walk and where the three congregate at termination point [Elizabeth Quay or Heathcote]
- (Each facility includes shelter, toilets + water)
- volunteer/paid First Aid [surf lifesavers]
- food and beverage outlets (self funded)
- speakers
- choir/singers
- rangers/guides
- shuttle buses for the wearied +/- wounded
- demonstrations of the tablet/smart phone/ipod interpretation scheme
- Booths for Dolphin/ Swan/ Nutrient information/Rivers division within Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW) and the Department of Environment Regulation (DER)
- documentation
- no security [bumping in and out same day]
- Fremantle to Perth via Heathcote [catches the Canning]
- 6 pause points with events with some pause points tapping into existing food + beverage [F+B] outlets/facilities e.g. Heathcote

## river spectacle pilot (south of the river edition)

Night 8.00pm - 11.00pm

### Inclusions:

- same event at 3 locations over same weekend: Heathcote, Under a bridge, Elizabeth Quay
- features light projection onto + into the riverscape with voice + sound.
- part installation, performance, theatre and concert
- international quality sourced from the local and thriving performance and visual/digital artist community.
- taps into existing food and beverage outlets/facilities in addition to pop up beverage areas
- volunteer First Aid
- shuttle buses
- security
- documentation

[north of river edition in following year] i.e. these north + south are biennale events



## 15.12 SHARED VISION AND COLLABORATION SUGGESTED ACTION

### Swan River Trust in collaboration with others

1. Develop the *marli riverpark* logo, style guide and way finding elements. Where appropriate and possible, any statutory and other warning signs should be designed in keeping with the style guide.
2. Promote collaboration with cultural institutions, universities and community organisations to expand the riverpark's profile and vital educational role.
3. Develop relationships with a range of international educational, scientific, environmental and cultural organisations to promote and inform research about the riverpark.
4. Promote the aspiration for national heritage listing of the *marli riverpark*.
5. Donate a copy of the collection of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal audio visual stories purpose made for the Riverpark to the SLWA.

### Community, Local Government Authorities and other agencies

1. Collaborate with cultural institutions, universities and community organisations to expand the riverpark's profile and vital educational role.
2. Collaborate with the Noongar community to produce an exhibition, tours and audio visual outcomes based on repatriated photographs for specific Noongar audiences and where culturally appropriate the broader community.
3. Collaborate further with the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions 1100-1800 to determine unique events in the riverscape.
4. Contribute copies of purpose produced riverpark audio visual stories to the SLWA *Storylines* initiative to provide a contemporary snapshot of Noongar cultural values associated with the riverscape.
5. Invite the Noongar community to contribute SLWA *Storylines* with additional cultural knowledge related to the story or place.
6. Coordinate river related events for the Western Australian Heritage Festival and schedule discrete international events such as the Bluemind Summit within the riverpark.
7. Link the National Trust's property portfolio to river initiatives, frameworks, education and public programs.
8. Establish a tax deductible appeal for the riverpark to allow for direct community support of conservation and interpretation projects.
9. Host a visit by Mission Val de Loire executives to Perth to inform social, environmental and economic best practice and leverage French/Australian WWI commemorations in 2014.<sup>149</sup>

# 16 RESOURCES AND IMPLEMENTATION

A two stage implementation plan has been developed and detailed cost estimates prepared on 2014 pricing. The cost estimate of implementing Stage 1 is \$1.5million including a government commitment of under \$500,000 to establish the project. Stage 2 has been costed at \$1.9 million across agencies. The financial commitment from the Swan River Trust, Local Government Authorities, other agencies and including the community will determine the Plan's implementation.

## Stage 1 - Time Frame 2014/2016

Initiative	Action	Implementation
Adopt the Interpretation Plan	Undertake staged strategy	Internal
Engage the Noongar Advisory Panel as an advisory committee	Reach agreement with NAP	Internal
Program management to implement the Interpretation Plan	Engage coordinator	Internal
Development of logo and style guide	Engage designer	Internal
First generation interpretation system - physical and electronic	Develop and install	Internal
Host <i>marli riverpark</i> website with principal management agency	Initiate through DPaW	Internal
Initiate communication strategy including community and LGA workshops	Initiate through DPaW	Internal
Implement a <i>marli riverpark</i> tax deductible heritage appeal	Establish heritage appeal	Internal/External
Collaborate with Kings Park Botanic Garden on 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary 2015	Liaise with KPBP	Internal/External
Heathcote Pilot Node project + conservation management plan	Initiate project and develop	External
Initial curatorial words, images and recordings (Content site linked to electronic interpretation including proximity trigger, RFID, beacon, GPS, QR code scan)	Engage curator and develop	Internal
Inaugural waagyl walk and interpretation episode (day event)	Initiate waagyl walk project	External
River spectacle + associated pop events 3 locations (night event)	Engage consultant	External
Develop training in product development and business operation for Indigenous Tour operators providing riverscape cultural tourism experiences.	Engage with WA Indigenous Tour Operators Council	External
Record the Elders stories (Staged 1/2 –10 Elders) 20 stories (Content)	Engage producer	External
Produce 5 Riverpark 'Journeys' (Content)	Engage consultant	External
Establish 'River Voices' (Content)	In house	External
Produce first series of 100 micro docs on riverpark conservation history +embed in existing Rivers of Emotion site (Content)	Engage producer to undertake 50 micro docs	External
Develop oral history program with LGAs and community groups (Content)	Engage consultant	External
Rivers of Emotion Cruise II for 2014 WA Heritage Festival	Develop cruise content	External
Establish School Curriculum links with National Trust properties	Develop and deliver	External
Fund and host a visit by Mission Val de Loire executives to Perth	Funding secured	External
Initiate links to 'Rivers of the World' program	Partner with Thames River Festival	External
Develop a state touring art exhibition	Engage exhibition curator	External
Implement two Pause Point Nodes at Fremantle and Elizabeth Quay	Develop and install	External

## Stage 2 - Time Frame 2016/2018

Initiative	Action	Implementation
Establish annual River Festival	Implement through LGAs	External
Program management to implement the Interpretation Plan	Engage coordinator	Internal
Establish further priority nodes (10) @ \$86,000	LGAs implement	External
Second generation interpretation system - physical and electronic	Develop and install	Internal
Record the Elders stories (Staged 2/2 –10 Elders) 20 stories	Engage producer	External
Produce second series of 100 micro docs on riverpark conservation history	Engage producer to undertake 50 micro docs	External
Produce 5 Riverpark 'Journeys'	Engage consultant	External
Online exhibitions - Photographic/oral histories/interviews/art (Natural/Aboriginal/historic heritage for education programs) x 5	Develop and install	External
Provide copies to Storylines project SLWA	Deliver	External
Initiate Free Parking on Sundays	LGAs consideration	External
Deliver training in product development and business operations for Indigenous Tour operators providing riverpark cultural tourism experiences	Engage with WA Indigenous Tour Operators Council	External
Conduct a feasibility study for water taxis	Engage consultant	External
Profile users of the riverpark	DPaW	Internal
Introduce licensing for commercial tourism businesses in the riverpark	DPaW	Internal
Accreditation of commercial tourism businesses (requirement of licensing)	Implement program (pro-rata) *\$149 - \$874	External
Extend 'Round the Bridges' walk and cycle tours to include the Canning River and integrate with public transport and interpretation initiatives.	LGAs consideration	External



# 17 APPENDIX

## A - STYLE GUIDE

The Rivers Project has generated a unique and specific style to its visual manifestations in 2D, 3D, systems and electronic communications/interpretation. Each of the images provided including the project name, illustrative elements, and typography set out the style to guide the project from inception to its pilot/implementation stages.

The Interpretation Plan has outlined some broad based concepts that deliver an understanding of how the interpretation has developed and been visualised. Every element has been carefully considered to work with the project aims and to generate outcomes in situ. The following notes identify a range of elements that form the project style guide contained in the project to date:

- project name
  - project symbol [emblem]
  - project typography [including upper and lowercase]
  - project animation sequence
  - project colour way
  - 3D guide to implementation [use of engraving, deboss, x axis implementation]
  - event/experience orientated interpretation [pop up events, walks]
  - site specific interpretation experiences [use of bridges, use of water as a 2D surface for images - forms part of the x axis implementation]
- project node
  - node architecture/materials
  - node plaque inserts
  - nomenclature - multi named places and concepts
  - node branding style
  - path direction/amenities
  - value adding elements into existing structures
  - node location triggers
  - interpretation audio visual system
  - interpretation delivery system to allow for audio and multi images [multi media and the mechanics of a project library]
  - interpretation navigation system
  - interpretation content scope and depth [to include the work of the SRT and the inclusion of the emotional and spiritual dimension [loops back into experience orientated interpretation]
  - Some style guide elements have been developed beyond the current scope of works - simply to enable cohesion and to convey the project aims in a tested way. Some elements are indicative and follow the idea of providing a framework or a guide to the project style, however, all elements have been considered in the whole of river context and visualised to a high level to convey the intent. All elements will be further developed and described in the implementation stage.

## B - IDENTIFIED NODES AND THEMES

NODE	ENVIRONMENTAL THEMES – incorporating landscape, habitat, biodiversity and geodiversity	ABORIGINAL THEMES – incorporating spirituality, historical events, ceremonial and ritualistic practices, habitat and lifestyle	HISTORIC THEMES – incorporating exploration, Aboriginal contact and Early Settlement, Transport, Industry and Services, Institutions and Recreation
<b>Rocky Bay</b>	Steep outcrops of coastal limestone. Quarried and thus changed landscape and natural vegetation. Small amount of high quality native vegetation	The role of the <i>Waakle</i> in the creation of the landscape; Commonality and sharing between Aboriginal communities; and Places of safety and danger.	<b>Transport, Industry and Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burford’s Soap and Candle Works factory – waste</li> <li>• Superphosphate works to 1969</li> <li>• State Engineering Works</li> <li>• Quarrying</li> </ul> <b>Recreation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swimming, fishing</li> </ul>
<b>Bicton</b>	Blackwall Reach – an important relatively untouched area of weathered river limestone – in pinnacles. Northern Spearwood shrublands and woodlands – priority 3 ecological community, priority flora species. Regional ecological linkage	Utilisation of natural resources; Camps and habitation; Mythology – the story of the Charnok woman.	<b>Recreation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• swimming, water polo, rock climbing, baths.</li> </ul>
<b>Point Walter</b>	Some good condition native vegetation. Regional ecological linkage with Blackwall Reach Reserve. Habitat for rich and diverse number of aquatic and terrestrial flora and fauna.	Utilisation of Natural Resources; Movement of people and pre-existing <i>Noongar</i> trails; A river crossing point.	<b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact and early settlement</b> <b>Recreation.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• long history of use as a camping site – resort and place of entertainment</li> <li>• swimming, boating</li> </ul> <b>Transport, Industry and Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tram access/canal, steamers</li> </ul>
<b>Matilda Bay Pelican Point</b>	Bush Forever Site, small seasonally inundated wetland, ecologically important area including tidal flats. One of three significant habitats for wading birds left on the Swan River, part of Swan Estuary Marine Park. Important sanctuary for international	Fish increase site; Water source; Camping place	<b>Recreation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• long history of use as a camping, picnic site, fishing, boating and bathing, yachting</li> </ul> <b>Transport, Industry and Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• river steamers and jetty activities</li> </ul>

	migratory birds.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tram service</li> <li>• UWA</li> </ul>
<b>Mt Eliza Old Swan Brewery</b>	Mt Eliza limestone scarp below Kings Park supports a closed scrub community. Park provides 270 hectares of native vegetation, priority flora species, high value for connectivity with other bushland. Freeway interchange lakes created after reclamation for Freeway construction support bird life	Women's site; Possible node to explain cultural gender restrictions; The <i>Waagle</i> ; Historical events	<b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact and early settlement</b> <b>Recreation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• boating, swimming, baths</li> <li>• Institutions</li> <li>• Swan Brewery</li> <li>• Old Men's Home</li> </ul> <b>Transport, Industry and Services</b>
<b>Heathcote</b>	Point Heathcote foreshore and slope behind the point is a rocky headland of coastal limestone with a number of native shrubs. Low open woodland along Waylen Bay - a recognised Bush Forever Site containing remnant vegetation in a modified surrounding of mixed land use. Bays around Point Dundas to Canning Bridge are shallow, well-protected, wide shallow banks, seagrass beds.	Registered Aboriginal Site ID 18623. Node for discussion of: Health of Aboriginal people, connection with Heathcote Mental Reception Home from 1929 and Cultural restrictions on knowledge and access to locations, relating to men's site at bottom of cliff. Place of food source, camps and habitation	<b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact and early settlement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stirling 1827</li> </ul> <b>Institutions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heathcote Mental Reception Home 1929 to 1994</li> </ul>
<b>Deep Water Point</b>	Foreshore with sedges and melaleucas. Extensive foreshore erosion and ecosystem degradation	Mythological stories; Role of King <i>Winjan</i> , leadership within the <i>Noongar</i> community and the role of Elders	<b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact and early settlement</b> <b>Recreation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• popular river and shore based - power boat area</li> </ul>
<b>Shelley/ Prisoner's Point/Salter Point</b>	Narrow sections of fringing sedgeland or woodland with sedges. Salter Point Lagoon unique to the southern Canning River- is an intact sedge-dominated vegetation system. Supports biodiversity including priority flora species. An important waterbird habitat site		<b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact and early settlement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convict period – convict fence – associated with the timber industry and transport.</li> </ul> <b>Transportation, industry and services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crossing – Canning and Mt Henry Bridges</li> </ul>
<b>Kent Street</b>	Demarcation, freshwater and saltwater. Construction of Kent Street Weir 1927 brought major ecological change. Weir Pool – freshwater dependent flora and fauna.	Archaeological sites located at some distance from Canning River. Fauna – place of <i>kwents</i> (bandicoots)	<b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact and early settlement</b> <b>Aboriginal contact</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal-European conflict</li> </ul> <b>Transport, Industry and Services</b>

	Oxygenation plant – useful node to tell story of river problems and scientific intervention.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Weir and its purpose</li> <li>agricultural and horticultural industry</li> <li>timber industry</li> <li>river crossings – bridges</li> </ul> <b>Recreation</b> swimming, kayaking
<b>Canning River Regional Park</b>	Most intact estuarine vegetation of the Swan Canning Riverpark. Comprises diversity of habitats from estuarine to freshwater riverine and modified floodplain woodlands. Important habitat for birds and threatened and priority flora species. Very high conservation value Major part of a regional ecological linkage and has good connectivity value	The archaeological record, scarred trees and artefacts A site of conflict between European and Aboriginal people Proposed healing place	<b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact and early settlement</b> <b>Transport, Industry and Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>timber industry</li> <li>Old Mill and Cottage</li> <li>Market gardens/agriculture</li> <li>Waste disposal/reclamation</li> </ul> <b>Institutions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sikh cremation site</li> </ul> <b>Recreation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>canoeing, kayaking, swimming, fishing</li> </ul>
<b>South Perth</b>	Small patches remnant melaleucas, wetlands (Sir James Mitchell Park). Milyu Nature Reserve in Swan Estuary Marine Park- narrow strip of samphire, tidal flats. International wading bird habitat	Historic value (connection with the battle and massacre at Pinjarra). Fishing methods (fish trap, located 10 metres from the shore at Como).	<b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact early settlement</b> <b>Transport, Industry and Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>River crossing - Narrows Bridge and earlier connections at 'the Narrows/Causeway</li> <li>Jetties</li> </ul> <b>Recreation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>jet skiing, swimming, boating</li> </ul> <b>Institutions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zoo</li> </ul> <b>Reclamation</b>
<b>Heirisson Island/Pt Fraser</b>	Pt Fraser constructed wetlands on largely reclaimed land. Vegetation healthy and spreading. Supports bird and invertebrate species. Heirisson Island - few important habitat trees – birds. Southern part of the Island an important riverine environment	The Island is said to be the resting place of the <i>Waagle</i> . Interactions and trade between <i>Noongar</i> groups; Campsite, hunting and fishing place and water source; Crossing point and meeting place;	<b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact, early settlement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>European explorers descriptions - why and how river has been dredged/recreated</li> </ul> <b>Transport, Industry and Services</b>



		Ochre source. Yagan's head – statue and its significance. Place could be used to take steps towards Reconciliation and the repatriation of Aboriginal remains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>River crossing – bridge – Causeway</li> </ul> <b>Recreation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Swimming, fishing, kayaking, canoeing</li> </ul>
<b>Claisebrook</b>	Claisebrook and its catchment once an extensive system of lakes and swamps. Story of environmental change and industrial development.	Camps and habitation on the shores of the Swan River. Prohibitions placed on Aboriginal people. The Native Welfare Department and the removal of Aboriginal children from their families.	<b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact, early settlement</b> <b>Transport</b> <b>Industry and Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Claisebrook Canal</li> <li>Sewerage facility – filter beds on Burswood</li> <li>Connection with Burswood – Bunbury Railway Bridge/Windan Bridge</li> <li>Industry – pollution and waste</li> </ul> <b>Urban transformation</b> <b>Recreation</b>
<b>Banks Reserve</b>	Local native riparian vegetation being protected, revegetation work being undertaken. Bank stabilisation and erosion control.	Camps and habitation. Use of the resources available eg Tea Tree. Need for environmental management to take <i>Noongar</i> knowledge into account.	<b>Recreation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>River fishing and swimming – ‘the Mucks’</li> </ul> <b>Transport, Industry and Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bridges-Bunbury Railway Bridge/Windan Bridge</li> <li>Impacts of industry - Industry – pollution and waste</li> </ul>
<b>Belmont</b>	Riverbank and remnant vegetation – poor condition. River banks susceptible to boat and wave wash, destabilising the banks and causing erosion. Ongoing foreshore revegetation works.	Two registered camp sites. Depression era – sharing between European and Aboriginal communities. Burial site Windan's wife of Yellagonga. Execution of Aboriginal Prisoners in area around Redcastle.	<b>Recreation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>golf, racing, football</li> <li>Belmont Park</li> <li>Racecourse</li> </ul> <b>Transport Industry and Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Old Burswood Canal</li> <li>Sewerage scheme, bridge connection</li> <li>Portland Cement</li> <li>Impacts of industry - Industry –</li> </ul>

			<p>pollution and waste</p> <p><b>Gold Boom, prosperity and Subdivision</b></p> <p><b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact and early settlement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tranby House</li> </ul>
<b>Tranby</b>	Extensive riverbank restoration taking place to stabilise banks, fence and significant erosion		
<b>Ascot Waters</b>	Samphire and sedgelands on southern bank. Important bird habitat and wetland fauna.	<i>Noongar</i> participation at the races; Ascot racecourse swamp, mostly drained, used to be source of gilgies and turtle. Stories of the <i>Waagle</i> . Popular swimming place.	<p><b>Transport, Industry and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brickworks/kilns</li> <li>• Industry pollution and waste</li> </ul> <p><b>Recreation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ascot Racecourse</li> <li>• Swimming</li> </ul>
<b>Garvey Park</b>	Remnant vegetation of high conservation value. Extensive and ongoing foreshore revegetation to deal with site of ongoing erosion. Previously connected to Ron Courtney Island prior to 1969 channel cut to alleviate forces of erosion due to river flow.	Many camping places. At Gobba Lake, west of Garvey Park, the water body was fed from an underground spring. The area included an historical campsite, soak and walking trail, and turtles were sourced from the lake. Archaeological importance, several scarred trees. Traditional <i>Noongar</i> walking routes; Ochre Source; Swimming location. Employment	<p><b>Transport, Industry and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early brickworks and use of narrow gauge railway to transport clay</li> <li>• Gobba Lake was formerly a clay pit used by surrounding brickworks.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recreation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kayaking, picnics, riverside walking trail</li> </ul>
<b>Helena River/Guildford /Success Hill</b>	Helena River a naturally vegetated watercourse, providing habitat, linkage. Success Hill riverbank erosion and weed control. Steep scarp banks. Guildford bridge oxygenation plant – useful node to tell story of river problems and scientific intervention. Fossil shell evidence dated 6600 years ago.	Many campsites and habitation including at Susannah Brook and Walyunga. Ceremonial occasions and the use of ochre; Historical events. The Guildford Gaol and Courthouse Precinct is Registered Aboriginal. Archaeological remains. Success Hill is a closed registered Aboriginal site listed as ceremonial, mythological. Repository/cache, man-made structure, fish trap, quarry, artefacts/scatter, and additional information includes a birthplace, meeting place, camp and water source.	<p><b>Aboriginal contact, early exploration and settlement</b></p> <p><b>Transport, Industry and Services</b></p> <p><b>Institutions</b></p> <p><b>Gold Boom, prosperity and Subdivision</b></p> <p><b>Recreation</b></p>

<b>Fremantle</b>	North Bank including Crab Bay and Sorrell Park contain some native trees and shrubs – links for fauna. Prawn Bay (Gilbert Fraser Reserve) is reclaimed and revegetated - a sedge-dominated tidal wetland. The river mouth was blocked by a coralline bar.	Many campsites both sides of the River. Food sources and methods of preparation. The river confluence was the intersection of numerous Aboriginal trails - formed the location of a meeting place. Historical events; Roundhouse and Yagan connection; Ceremonial occasions corroborees; Mythological stories - the Eaglehawk ( <i>Walja</i> ) and the <i>Waagle</i> . Possible massacre and need for healing at Cantonment Hill.	<b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact, early settlement</b> <b>Transport, Industry and Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• River Crossing - bridges, railway</li> <li>• Port</li> </ul> <b>Institutions</b>
<b>Mosman Bay/Keanes Point</b>	Sandy river beach, steep limestone cliffs, fossilised shell beds from the Pleistocene Era, natural limestone formations - Mosman Bay Pinnacles. Northern end of reserve uncleared, some priority flora species and closed shrub community. Parts of the shoreline susceptible to erosion and instability.	Mythological stories, The limestone ridges known as the Mosman Bay Pinnacles symbolise the 'old people' and relate to a mythological story involving the Kimberley people and the <i>Waagle</i> . Campsites	<b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact, early settlement</b> <b>Transport, Industry and Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yachting, river steamers, boat houses</li> </ul> <b>Institutions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freshwater Bay Yacht Club</li> </ul> <b>Recreation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• picnics, yachting, boating, swimming, fishing</li> </ul>
<b>Dalkeith/Nedlands foreshore</b>	Reclaimed and now grassed foreshore area, river walling. Some native trees and shrubs. Point Resolution area comprises coastal limestone pinnacles and emergent rocks within a beach area and an ancient reef. This section of the reserve supports local indigenous vegetation with priority flora and important bird habitat.	Campsites and habitation in the area. Employment of Aboriginal people – at Gallop's Farm. Use of springs - the Dalkeith Hot Springs.	<b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact, early settlement</b> <b>Transport, Industry and Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tram route</li> <li>• Catalina base World War II</li> <li>• River steamers</li> </ul> <b>Recreation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swimming, Hot Spring, Nedlands baths, camping, sporting fields</li> </ul> <b>Institutions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunset Hospital</li> <li>• Nedlands Park Hotel</li> </ul>
<b>Bull Creek</b>	Dense River Gum and melaleuca vegetation. Bushland supports significant and priority flora and fauna species. Important sheltered	Food source – turtles and fish. Site of early Aboriginal /European conflict. Proposed place of healing.	<b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact, early settlement</b> <b>Recreation</b>

	habitat for birds and dolphins. Important natural drainage landscape function. Remnant vegetation reminiscent of pre European settlement.		
<b>Mt Henry</b>	Prominent limestone outcrop headland. Supporting open woodland of jarrah, marri, tuart and WA Christmas tree, varied understorey. Part of regional ecological linkage.	Dolphin breeding area. Food source as dolphins stirred up the mullet and other fish that were a <i>Noongar</i> food source.	<p><b>Transport, Industry and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of Canning River for transport of timber</li> </ul> <p><b>Recreation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popular river and shore based</li> </ul>
<b>Barrack Square/Perth</b>	Important Node for understanding the state of the River/vegetation, riverine flora and fauna at time of European settlement, reasons for reclamation, walling and straightening. Uses of riverside reserves.	Food sources and preparation – mud flat provided rich source of food. Several large and well known campsites and habitation, corroborees. Esplanade is also recorded as a campsite and hunting place. Source of clay or ochre for ceremonial use. Aboriginal burials - <i>Moojurngul</i> , Fanny Balbuk's grandmother, is recorded as having been buried within the grounds of Government House.	<p><b>Exploration, Aboriginal contact, early settlement</b></p> <p><b>Transport</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ferries, steamers, yacht clubs and general river activities</li> </ul> <p><b>Industry and services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• boat building</li> <li>• Link with Fremantle and Guildford</li> <li>• River crossings</li> <li>• Drains</li> </ul> <p><b>Recreation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perth Baths, sailing, ferries, dinghies,</li> </ul>



## C - KEY AUDIENCES TARGETED IN STATE TOURISM MARKETING ACTIVITIES

### Dedicated Discoverers

Working families with parents aged 35-64 years whose motivations for travel include self-development, adventure and engaged observation.

- Wanting to discover something new
- Community minded and socially active
- Drawn to 'undiscovered' destinations and a large percentage like to holiday in Australia
- Large percentage have household income in excess of \$100,000 pa
- Classed as big discretionary spenders

### Grey Explorers

Also known as 'grey nomads' and represent the older demographic 60+ years whose motivations for travel are to experience what they have not yet done, or missed out on. It is their time to explore.

- Have lots of time to explore and experience new things and cherish opportunities to connect with loved ones on their travels.
- Often travel in caravans and self contained recreational vehicles thereby reducing accommodation costs while travelling, so their trip can last longer.
- Spend time sightseeing and visiting friends and relatives.
- Generally budget conscious.

### Aspirational Achievers

Working families with parents aged 35-64 years whose motivations for travel include indulgence, relaxation and variety.

- Have achieved success in their chosen field

- Travel frequently but often look for strong value proposition
- Spend big on holidays as a means of reward
- Enjoy holidays that involve resorts, wine, food and activities
- Are generally 'pressed for time' and therefore likely to take shorter, more frequent breaks
- Look for variety but travel to aspirational destinations
- Large percentage have household income in excess of \$100,000
- Classed as big discretionary spenders

### Family Connectors

Generally represented through a wide age demographic (families of all ages) whose motivations for travel are to connect with children, partners and other family members.

- Devote a lot of their time to building the home/lifestyle for their children
- Generally self-drive and rented accommodation
- Travel to traditional family destinations

## International

Research commissioned by Tourism Australia<sup>150</sup> has identified common segments across different cultures that would be receptive to the Australian experience and called them the 'Experience Seeker'. This target market is looking for unique, involving and personal experiences from their holidays. Experience Seekers are more informed, interested and curious about potential travel destinations and can be found among all age groups, income levels and geographic locations. They constitute around 30 to 50 percent of all potential long haul outbound travellers from Australia's key source markets.

The Experience Seeker has a number of key 'wants' to satisfy their travel experience:

- Authentic personal experiences
- Social interactions
- Meeting and interacting with the locals
- Experiencing something different from their normal day-to-day life
- Understanding and learning about different lifestyles and cultures
- Participating in the lifestyle and experiencing it, rather than observing it
- Challenging themselves – physically, emotionally and/or mentally
- Visiting authentic destinations that are not necessarily part of the tourist route
- Exposure to unique and compelling experiences

Typically, Experience Seekers are more likely to be experienced international travellers, opinion leaders, open minded and selective in their media consumption. Other features of Experience Seekers are:

- Travel is an important part of their lifestyle;

- They stay longer and spend more;
- They travel beyond the major cities;
- They are less materialistic;
- They have a higher than average household income; and
- They are well educated and informed on a range of subjects.

The riverscape has potential to appeal to all audiences in the domestic and international markets if experiences are designed and marketed with consideration to audience characteristics and motivations.

The Indigenous Tourism Product Seeker participates in at least one of the following during their trip:

- Goes on a tour with an Indigenous guide
- Stays in Indigenous accommodation
- Visits an Indigenous cultural centre or location
- Visits an Indigenous gallery
- Attends an Indigenous festival
- Sees Indigenous dance or theatre performance

While heritage tourists are attracted to tours, even more pursue self-guided experiences. International examples demonstrate heritage tourists enjoy trails, tracks and routes linked by common themes and concentrate on rich clusters of heritage places.<sup>151</sup>

- Sees any Indigenous art, craft or cultural display
- Sees an Indigenous site or Indigenous community
- Purchases Indigenous art, craft or souvenirs
- Some other interaction with Indigenous people<sup>152</sup>

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# 19 FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Authors: Mulloway Studio/ Paul Kloeden 2005

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.mra.wa.gov.au/Projects/Elizabeth-Quay/About-the-Project/>

<sup>3</sup> *Swan and Helena Rivers Management Framework Heritage Audit and Statement of Significance (2009)*, and *Heritage Audit of the Swan Canning Riverpark to inform an Interpretation plan for the Iconic Trails Project (2011)*.

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.conservation.org/where/priority\\_areas/hotspots/Pages/hotspots\\_main.aspx](http://www.conservation.org/where/priority_areas/hotspots/Pages/hotspots_main.aspx)

<sup>5</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swan\\_River\\_\(Western\\_Australia\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swan_River_(Western_Australia))

<sup>6</sup> The Swan River Trust's vision for reconciliation is as follows: *The Swan River Trust recognises and celebrates Aboriginal culture and heritage and respects the significance that Derbal Yerrigan (the Swan River) and Djarlgarro Beelier (the Canning River) hold for Aboriginal people. Our vision for reconciliation is to provide opportunities or genuine partnerships with Aboriginal people that encompass all aspects of the Trust's business, ultimately leading to a healthy river for all, forever.* In honouring its Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), the SRT commenced cultural awareness training for its staff in 2004, and identified the need to involve the Aboriginal community in its projects. An internal *Noongar* Working Group was established to discuss all aspects of the SRT's work on the Riverpark, particularly by seeking a more active engagement of the *Noongar* (*Whadjuk*) community *in river management, through meaningful ongoing partnerships* (RAP: 3).

<sup>7</sup> McMillan, T S *The Meaning of Rivers – Flow and Reflection, American Literature*, Iowa City, 2011 pxii

<sup>8</sup> Annual smartphone sales have doubled in two years from 500 million to 1 billion and it will likely grow to 1.7 billion annually by 2017. "The smartphone has gone from being a cutting-edge communications tool to becoming an essential component in the everyday lives of billions of consumers." (Ramon Llamas, Research Manager, International Data Corp's mobile). <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/technology/smartphone-sales-to-hit-1-billion-in-2013/story-e6frgakx-1226711012761#sthash.Vt3R4Oi9.dpuf>

<sup>9</sup> *The Trilogy of Budjar, Moort & Katadjin (Country, Family & Knowledge)* April 2009 (L. Collard)

<sup>10</sup> Bindoon, P & Chadwick, R ( 1992) *A Nyoongar Wordlist from the South-West of Western Australia* (1992)

<sup>11</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black\\_Swan\\_emblems\\_and\\_popular\\_culture#European\\_myth\\_and\\_metaphor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Swan_emblems_and_popular_culture#European_myth_and_metaphor)

<sup>12</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black\\_swan\\_theory](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_swan_theory)

<sup>13</sup> Deborah Bonar, <http://www.riversofemotion.org.au/content/maali>

<sup>14</sup> Logo is the abbreviation of logogram or logotype, which in turn came from the Greek: logos meaning word.

<sup>15</sup> Further details regarding the style guide are located in the appendix

<sup>16</sup> South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, *Final Report Swan and Canning Rivers Iconic Trails Project Living Culture- Living Land and its people*, Perth 2010, P4.

<sup>17</sup> R. Whitehurst, *Noongar Dictionary: Noongar to English and English to Noongar*, Bunbury, Noongar Language and Cultural Centre, 1992.

<sup>18</sup> ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open\\_source](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_source))

<sup>19</sup> Refer appendix

<sup>20</sup> Witcomb, A and Gregory, K (2010) *From the Barracks to the Burrup*, University of NSW Press Pty Ltd, Sydney.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.c3health.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/C3-report-on-walking-v-1-20120911.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> *ibid*

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<sup>23</sup> Solnit, R (2000). *Wanderlust, A History of Walking*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

<sup>24</sup> <http://tellusworld.org/entry/international-coalition-sites-conscience> <http://www.sitesofconscience.org/>

The International Coalition of Sites of Conscience is the only worldwide network specifically dedicated to transforming places that preserve the past into spaces that promote civic action. We are sites, individuals, and initiatives activating the power of places of memory to engage the public in connecting past and present in order to envision and shape a more just and humane future. There is a network of more than 300 sites in 47 countries, engaging tens of millions of people every year in using the lessons of history to take action on challenges to democracy and human rights today.

<sup>25</sup> The themes present in the *marli riverpark* are many, varied and ever changing. Many are detailed in the *Heritage Audit of the Swan Canning Riverpark, 2011*. The Aboriginal themes are informed by and recognise the important outcomes of the NAP. Those detailed in the appendix should not be seen as comprehensive but instead provide a basis for interpretation outcomes. Each node should not be seen in isolation but as part of the broader *marli riverpark* and the values it holds for the wider community.

<sup>26</sup> Celebrate the arrival of the Red Necked Stints from Siberia, wild flowers and other flora and fauna events organised through community groups and local government authorities.

<sup>27</sup> The Heritage Festival theme for 2014, *Journeys* aligns with a major initiative detailed in this Plan. The 2015 theme is *Conflict and Compassion*.

<sup>28</sup> The Swan River Trust in consultation with the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC) formed the *Noongar* Advisory Panel (NAP) in January 2013. The role of the NAP was to:

- Provide heritage information and advice for inclusion into the Interpretation Plan;
- Make recommendations in the selection of heritage sites for interpretative activities (including areas needing cultural sensitivity);
- Advise on interpretative methods for each site; and
- Provide feedback to the Interpretation Plan Project Team on the recommendations of the draft and final documents.

The NAP consisted of members who have a connection to the Swan Canning Riverpark.

Of these eighteen potential members, thirteen people confirmed their membership and participated in some or all of the subsequent NAP Meetings. The remaining five potential members were invited to join and were included in subsequent correspondence, however were unable to join or participate in the NAP for personal reasons. In addition, four Noongar people were nominated by the confirmed NAP Members and SWALSC and participated in one or more NAP Meetings.

<sup>29</sup> Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011 – Greater Capital City Statistical Area

<sup>30</sup> Aquatic Use Review and Management Framework, prepared for the Swan River Trust by Sustainable Development Facilitation, 2011

<sup>31</sup> Swan River Guardians program – <http://www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au/be-part-of-the-action/get-involved/river-guardians>

<sup>32</sup> Natural Resource Management organisations – <http://www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au/be-part-of-the-action/get-involved/volunteering-opportunities>

<sup>33</sup> Heritage conservation volunteering - <http://www.nationaltrust.org.au/wa/volunteers>

<sup>34</sup> Key audiences targeted in State tourism marketing activities are profiled in the appendix.

<sup>35</sup> Making a Difference: Aboriginal Tourism Strategy for Western Australia: 2011-2015, Tourism Western Australia.

<sup>36</sup> State Government Strategy for Tourism in Western Australia 2020, Tourism Western Australia

<sup>37</sup> A Heritage Tourism Strategy for Western Australia (2006) Heritage Council of Western Australia and Tourism WA

<sup>38</sup> Experience Perth Tourism Development Priorities 2010-2015, Tourism Western Australia 2010

<sup>39</sup> Dolphin Watch is an activity of the River Guardians program



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<sup>40</sup> <http://www.transport.wa.gov.au/activetransport/24817.asp>

<sup>41</sup> Australian Tourism Accreditation Program administered by Tourism Council Western Australia

Eco Certification and Respecting our Culture program administered by Ecotourism Australia

<sup>42</sup> Also written as Yerrigan.

<sup>43</sup> A. Mountford and L. Collard, *Nidja Noongar Boodjar Noonook Nyininy (This is Noongar Country You are Sitting In)*, Perth, Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2000.

<sup>44</sup> N. Tindale, *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia: their terrain, environmental controls, distribution, limits and proper names*. Berkley, University of California Press, 1974; Douglas, W. 1976. *The Aboriginal Languages of the South West of Western Australia*. Canberra, AIAS; C. Taylor, 'Vocabulary of the Ngokourring or Shell People' in E. Curr (ed.), *The Australian Race: its origin, languages, customs, place of landing in Australia, and the routes by which it spread itself over that continent*. Melbourne, Government Printer, 1886, pp. 392-393; K. Scott and L. Roberts, *Noongar Mambara Bakitj*, Crawley, UWA Publishing, 2011.

<sup>45</sup> S. Hallam, 'The First Western Australians', in C.T. Stannage (ed.), *A New History of Western Australia*. Nedlands, University of Western Australia Press, 1981, pp. 35-71.

<sup>46</sup> L. Collard, 'The Cosmology: The Creator of the Trilogy Waakal or Nyungar Rainbow Serpent', in M. Leybourne and A. Gaynor (eds.), *Water: Histories, Cultures, Ecologies*, Crawley, University of Western Australia Press, 2006, pp. 121-130.

<sup>47</sup> E. Kickett, *The Trails of the Rainbow Serpents*, Midland, Chatham Road Publications, 1995, p. 4.

<sup>48</sup> R. Winmar, *Walwalinj the Hill that Cries*, Perth, Nyungar Language and Culture, 1996, p. 21.

<sup>49</sup> Mr Albert Corunna, interviewed by Gina Pickering, 2008, in *Statement of Significance Swan and Helena Rivers*, Perth, National Trust WA, 2008, p. 49

<sup>50</sup> L. Collard, 'The Cosmology: The Creator of the Trilogy Waakal or Nyungar Rainbow Serpent', in M. Leybourne and A. Gaynor (eds.), *Water: Histories, Cultures, Ecologies*, Crawley, University of Western Australia Press, 2006, pp. 121-130.

<sup>51</sup> Chalmers, Lisa, 'Swan River System Landscape Description', Report to the Swan River Trust: 27, September 1997, pp. 39-42.

<sup>52</sup> Mrs Dorothy Winmar, interviewed by Len Collard, 2002, Perth.

<sup>53</sup> Mr Tom Bennell, interview, 1978, Perth.

<sup>54</sup> Mrs Janet Hayden, interviewed by Len Collard, 2002, Perth.

<sup>55</sup> Mr Sealin Garlett, interviewed by Len Collard, 2002, Perth.

<sup>56</sup> Mr Albert Corunna, interviewed by Gina Pickering, 2008, in *Statement of Significance Swan and Helena Rivers*, Perth, National Trust WA, 2008, p. 48.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. p. 16, 49; Mr Hilleroy Collard and Mr Wayne Collard, interview, 2010, in *Final Report Swan and Canning Rivers Iconic Trails Project*, Perth, South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, p. 17.

<sup>58</sup> Mr Albert Corunna, interviewed by Gina Pickering, 2008, in *Statement of Significance Swan and Helena Rivers*, Perth, National Trust WA, 2008, p. 49.

<sup>59</sup> Mrs Janet Hayden, interview at the Aboriginal Women's Meeting, Eco Centre, Wilson, 2009, in *Final Report Swan and Canning Rivers Iconic Trails Project*, Perth, South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, p. 4.

<sup>60</sup> Mrs Bev Port-Louis, interview, 2010, in *Final Report Swan and Canning Rivers Iconic Trails Project*, Perth, South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, p. 8.

<sup>61</sup> Mr Wayne Collard, interview, 2010, in *Final Report Swan and Canning Rivers Iconic Trails Project*, Perth, South West Aboriginal Land and Sea

Council, p. 20.

<sup>62</sup> M. Ansara, *Always was, Always will be: the sacred grounds of the Waugal, Kings Park, Perth WA: the Old Swan Brewery dispute*, Balmain, M. Ansara, 1989; T. Kerr and S. Cox, *Setting Up the Nyoongar Tent Embassy: A Report on Perth Media*, Perth, Ctrl-Z Press, 2013.

<sup>63</sup> J. Host, C. Owens and The South West Aboriginal Land & Sea Council (2009) *'It's Still in My Heart, This Is My Country': The single Noongar claim history*, University of Western Australia Press, Crawley.

<sup>64</sup> K. Neuenfeldt, 'The Kyana Corroboree: cultural production of indigenous ethnogenesis (Western Australia's Noongah Aborigines)', *Sociological Inquiry*, vol. 65, no.1, 1995, pp. 21-46; R. Eggington, *Kyana: Nyoongah Corroboree, Perth 1991-1993: In Unity and Strength*, Waterford, Dubartung Aboriginal Corporation; Perth International Arts Festival, 'Noongar Boodja', [http://2007.perthfestival.com.au/2006\\_archive/noongar-boodja.html](http://2007.perthfestival.com.au/2006_archive/noongar-boodja.html), 2006, (Accessed 8 October 2013); NAIDOC Perth, 'Smokefree WA Survival Perth 2013 "Jin-unginy ngullah Derbarl Yerrigan, kura kura, nitcha, moonboorli" (Honouring our Swan River, past, present and future)', [http://www.naidocperth.org/index.php?id=26&option=com\\_content&view=article](http://www.naidocperth.org/index.php?id=26&option=com_content&view=article), 2013, (Accessed 8 October 2013).

<sup>65</sup> Hammond J E (1933) *Winjan's People: The Story of the South-West Australian Aborigines*, Hesperian, Perth.

<sup>66</sup> Mr Richard Walley, Interviewed by Len Collard, 2002; Mr Joe Walley, Interviewed by Len Collard, 2002; Mr Sealin Garlett, Interviewed by Len Collard, 2002; Mrs Janet Hayden, Interviewed by Len Collard, 2002; Mrs Dorothy Winmar, Interviewed by Len Collard, 2002; R. Eggington, *Kyana: Nyoongah Corroboree, Perth 1991-1993: In Unity and Strength*, Waterford, Dubartung Aboriginal Corporation, 1993; L. Tillbrook, *Nyungar tradition: glimpses of Aborigines of south-western Australia, 1829-1914*, Nedlands, University of Western Australia Press, 1983.

<sup>67</sup> Interview with Shirley Harris, 9 June 2010: In *Final Report Swan and Canning Rivers Iconic Trails Project*. South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, Perth, WA, p. 15.

<sup>68</sup> Garden, F. G., *Along the Canning*, Perth, 1968, p. 18

<sup>69</sup> Swanland, p72, p4

<sup>70</sup> [https://notendur.hi.is/oi/quaternary\\_geology.htm](https://notendur.hi.is/oi/quaternary_geology.htm)

<sup>71</sup> Swanland, p9

<sup>72</sup> Charles Fraser, 'Observations on the soil, &c, &c, of the banks of Swan River', 1827, *Western Australian Exploration Vol 1 1826-1835*, Hesperian Press, 2005, p 53.

<sup>73</sup> D. Chabanne, L.M. Harrison, C. Holyoake, H. Finn, N. Stephens, & L. Bejder, for the Cetacean Research Unit, Murdoch University, *Swan Canning Riverpark Dolphin population ecology and health investigations*, Final Report to the Swan River Trust, December 2012

<sup>74</sup> Quoted in R.T. Appleyard and Toby Manford, *The Beginning*, UWA Press, 1979, p. 97, p. 181

<sup>75</sup> *ibid*

<sup>76</sup> Swan River Trust, *Swan and Canning Rivers Foreshore Assessment and Management Strategy*, March 2008, p. 82

<sup>77</sup> *ibid.*, p. 83

<sup>78</sup> *ibid.*, 83

<sup>79</sup> *ibid.*, p. 7

<sup>80</sup> G. Albrecht, *Solastalgia Philosophy Activism Nature*, 3:14-44 (2005)

<sup>81</sup> *West Australian* 25 December 1909

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<sup>82</sup> Auburn, George William, defendant. The tragic passing of John O'Neil [electronic resource]: [a complete file of cuttings from the Perth *Daily News* reporting the trial of George William Auburn in the Supreme Court of Western Australia for the murder of John George O'Neil : 10th June 1924 - 10th July 1924], 1924

<sup>83</sup> *Mirror*, 20 January 1940

<sup>84</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *Western Mail*, 22 November 1890

<sup>87</sup> *Women's Weekly*, 17 March 1965

<sup>88</sup> The *Noongar* members of the *Noongar* Advisory Committee have identified Cantonment Hill as a priority place of healing.

<sup>89</sup> Seddon, *Landprints*, Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 21.

<sup>90</sup> *West Australian*, 23 February 1929

<sup>91</sup> GHD, City of Melville, *Report for Heathcote Lower Land Flora and Fauna Assessment*,

Also *Point Heathcote Foreshore Reserve Rehabilitation Plan*, March 2008

<sup>92</sup> See diagram of canals, J.S.H. Le Page, *Building a State*, Water Authority, 1986.

<sup>93</sup> Swan River Trust, *Boating Management Strategy for the Swan Canning Riverpark*. February 2009

<sup>94</sup> Swan River Trust, *Potential Impacts of Climate Change on the Swan and Canning Rivers*, December 2008. Prepared for the Swan River Trust by the Technical Advisory Panel

<sup>95</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> *ibid.*, p 47

<sup>97</sup> *ibid.*, p. 52

<sup>98</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> Evidenced through the Rivers of Emotion project 2012/2013

<sup>100</sup> *West Australian*, 26 January 1893

<sup>101</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> *West Australian*, 16 June 1936

<sup>103</sup> McMillin, T S *The Meaning of Rivers - Flow and Reflection in American Literature*, Iowa City, 2011, p. 127

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>105</sup> In 1874 the world's most famous tightrope walker, Blondin, visited Australia. His visit started a craze for tightrope walking in Australia and spawned many imitators. Australia's own Blondin announced in 1883 that he would cross the Swan River on a rope 100 feet above the water. It is not known whether he did this as during his visit he seemed to be accident prone and the weather was not in his favour.

<sup>106</sup> Ken Colbung, Interview, OH 2546/3, 30 January 1994, State Library of Western Australia, SLWA

<sup>107</sup> Quoted in R.T. Appleyard and Tody Manford, *The Beginning*, UWA Press, 1979, p. 76.

<sup>108</sup> *ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>109</sup> Appleyard R. T. and Manford Toby, *The Beginning European Discovery and Early Settlement of Swan River Western Australia*, p. 76

<sup>110</sup> Charles Fraser, 'Observations on the soil, &c, &c, of the banks of Swan River', 1827, *Western Australian Exploration*, Vol 1 1826-1835, p 50

<sup>111</sup> H. Camfield, Extracts from Letters, 1829-1850, Burswood 9 June 1832, SLWA

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- <sup>112</sup> *ibid.*, June 6 1832
- <sup>113</sup> *Daily News*, 8 November 1932
- <sup>114</sup> *Daily News*, 21 March 1949
- <sup>115</sup> Hammond 1933 in Gibbs 1988:38
- <sup>116</sup> *Sunday Times*, 2 June 1912
- <sup>117</sup> *West Australian* 5 May 1908.
- <sup>118</sup> Swan River Reference Committee, *Report by Sub-Committee on Pollution of Swan River*, Perth 1955, Appendix II.
- <sup>119</sup> *History of the Swan River Conservation Committee*, Perth 1961.
- <sup>120</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>121</sup> WAPD, Vol. 270, 1988, p. 861.
- <sup>122</sup> G.Seddon, 1972, *A Sense of Place* p262.
- <sup>123</sup> *pers. comm.* with Richard Woldendorp, 2013
- <sup>124</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>125</sup> In 2013 Glen Stasiuk was completing in PhD.
- <sup>126</sup> *pers. comm.* Noel Morich, NAP Meeting 23rd May 2013
- <sup>127</sup> Hughes, Robert (1981) *The Shock of the New*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York
- <sup>128</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>129</sup> The review undertaken by Anthropos Australis (WA) Pty Ltd notes the most significant reports only that investigate the *Whadjuk* connections with the Rivers in their entirety were interrogated.
- <sup>130</sup> *pers. comm.* Noel Morich, NAP Meeting 23rd May 2013
- <sup>131</sup> Oral history details are compiled in the resources component of the plan.
- <sup>132</sup> NAP Meeting 13<sup>th</sup> September 2013
- <sup>133</sup> Lisa Williams, Coordinator Archives and Libraries.
- <sup>134</sup> ABC ID (Accession number) Number: 446449
- <sup>135</sup> Channel 7 Perth's first transmission was 16 October, 1959.
- <sup>136</sup> This film is directed by Glen Stasiuk and is part of the completion of a PhD.
- <sup>137</sup> A starting place is the Rivers of Emotion website [www.riversofemotion.org.au](http://www.riversofemotion.org.au)
- <sup>138</sup> Also visit <http://vectorsdev.usc.edu/NYCsound/777b.html> to see how sound and audio visual can be added to this site.
- <sup>139</sup> After a decade of research (1999 – 2009), **the Mannahatta Project** at the Wildlife Conservation Society uncovered the original ecology of Manhattan, one of New York City's five boroughs. **The Welikia Project** (2010 – 2013) goes beyond Mannahatta to encompass the entire city, discover its original ecology and compare it with what exists today. The projects provide the basis for the people of New York to appreciate, conserve and re-invigorate the natural heritage of their city. The original natural landscape of valleys, hills, forests, fields, wetlands and springs supported a rich biodiversity. <http://welikia.org/explore/mannahatta-map/>
- <sup>140</sup> Green, N., *Broken Spears* Aboriginals and Europeans in the southwest of Australia (1984)
- <sup>141</sup> ARC Centre for the History of Emotions 1100-1800 (2012), Rivers of Emotion available at <http://www.riversofemotion.org.au> (Accessed January 2014)
- <sup>142</sup> *pers. comm.* Richard Wilkes, 26<sup>th</sup> February 2013



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<sup>143</sup> Within this Report, the spelling *Waagle* has been used unless quoting a source that has used a different spelling. This was the spelling that was discussed and agreed to within the NAP Meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May 2013.

<sup>144</sup> Anthropos Australis (WA) Pty Ltd 2013:26-27

<sup>145</sup> There are leading international examples on which to draw as well as advice from Trails WA.

[http://d2mns3z2df8ldk.cloudfront.net/assets/travel/getting\\_around/thamescyclemap\\_large.pdf](http://d2mns3z2df8ldk.cloudfront.net/assets/travel/getting_around/thamescyclemap_large.pdf)

<sup>146</sup> <http://www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au/docs/technical-reports/swan-canning-riverpark-dolphin-population-ecology-and-health-investigations.pdf>

<sup>147</sup> *The Guardian*, 16 May 2013

<sup>148</sup> Blue Mind, <http://www.wallacejnichols.org/122/bluemind.html>, accessed 30 August 2013

<sup>149</sup> As at October 2013 the funding commitment for airfares from the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions Europe 1100-1800 and accommodation from National Trust of Australia (WA) confirmed.

<sup>150</sup> Experience Seeker research [www.tra.gov.au](http://www.tra.gov.au)

<sup>151</sup> Heritage and Tourism themes for Western Australia, Heritage Council of Western Australia 2005

<sup>152</sup> Tourism Research Australia (2010): Indigenous tourism in Australia: Profiling the domestic market



South West Aboriginal  
Land & Sea Council



Department of  
Parks and Wildlife



City of  
Fremantle



CITY OF BAYSWATER



TOWN OF  
BASSEMANDEAN  
Home by the Swan



City of  
South Perth



CITY OF VINCENT



CITY OF ARMADALE



TOWN OF  
CLAREMONT  
Est 1899



Shire of  
MUNDARING



CITY OF  
Armadale



TOWN OF  
VICTORIA PARK



city of swan



City of Nedlands



TOWN OF  
EAST FREMANTLE



CITY OF  
SUBIACO



CITY OF CANNING



City of  
Melville



CITY OF GOSNELLS



SHIRE OF PEPPERMINT GROVE



shire of  
kalamunda