

# Rivers of Emotion



An emotional history of Derbarl Yerrigan  
and Djarlgarro Beelier / the Swan and Canning Rivers

sensitive gloomy  
embarrassment  
zest homesick  
fear amazed  
regret  
love bewildered  
enlightened  
animosity  
compassion  
resp  
de

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

Front cover image: Shane Pickett  
Waagle – Rainbow Serpent, 1983  
oil on canvas  
91.5 x 183.5 cm  
State Art Collection,  
Art Gallery of Western Australia  
Purchased 1996

This image depicts the birth of the Nyoongar people of the south-west of Western Australia – the people arising from the water, as part of the Waagle – the Rainbow Serpent – as it creates the actual physical landscape of Nyoongar boodja – Nyoongar country – but also its people, who came into physical being at that time.

Rivers of Emotion:  
An Emotional History of Derbarl Yerrigan  
and Djarlgarro Beelieer/  
the Swan and Canning Rivers,  
Edited by Susan Broomhall  
and Gina Pickering  
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# Rivers of Emotion

The Rivers tell us about ourselves, our communities and our values.

The Rivers hold deep emotional significance for historic and contemporary peoples who have drawn upon them as a functional, pleasure and spiritual resource.

There are now more than 1.5 million people living in the wider Swan Catchment which covers about 2000 square kilometres. There is not one story but many; stories bound by and experienced through emotions.

An innovative website has been created for the community to share their experiences and feelings about the Rivers. These can be oral or written memories and stories, as well as soundscapes, landscapes, visual, aural and emotionscapes.

These experiences will contribute to understanding this unique cultural landscape, and will inform an interpretation plan for riverside heritage trails.

The Swan Canning Riverpark includes 72.1 square kilometres of public land and adjoining river reserve. The limits of the Riverpark stretch from Fremantle Traffic Bridge to Moondyne Brook just south of Avon Valley National Park, and Helena River, from the lower diversion dam; and Southern River from Allen Road crossing; and Canning River from Stinton Creek confluence.



Swan River behind All Saints Church, Henley Brook © Gina Pickering



# Towards Community Education and Wellbeing



Frederick Rushbrook Clause, Setting Camp of the Naval Survey Expedition Clause's Lagoon, Perth, Western Australia, c 1832, watercolour over soft pencil on paper, 22.2 x 33.6 cm, Janet Holmes à Court Collection.

***The past the Trust is fighting for is not only more inclusive and reaching back to deep time - it is also a landscape in which it is possible, indeed necessary, to practise a politics of care for one another.<sup>1</sup>***

The National Trust of Australia (WA) conserves and interprets Western Australia's heritage (natural, Aboriginal and historic) for present and future generations. It is custodian of four places of outstanding heritage value along the Rivers including No 1 Pump Station at Mundaring, Woodbridge at Woodbridge, Peninsula Farm (Tranby) at Maylands and Gallop House in Dalkeith.

In 2008 the Trust developed the statement of significance for the Swan River based on the UNESCO world heritage model and in 2011 completed an audit of heritage values of the Swan Canning Riverpark.

The National Trust of Australia (WA) is both a Trust for government and community. Since 1959 the Trust has worked to promote cultural heritage for the long-term social, economic and environmental benefits it brings to the community.

The Trust continues to work in partnership with government agencies and the Perth community to provide stewardship, heritage services and innovative programs which lead to greater understanding, engagement and appreciation of the heritage values of Perth's unique river landscape.

Gina Pickering  
The National Trust of Australia (WA)

# Hydraulic Affections

*For even as little brookes lose their names by their running and fall into great Rivers, and the very name and memorie of great Rivers swallowed up in the Ocean; so by the conjunction of divers little Kingdomes in one, are all these private differences and questions swallowed up.<sup>2</sup>*

When James I opened Parliament with the above speech in 1604, he was calling for unity among the diverse communities or tributaries of his kingdom, to focus on what they shared rather than their differences.

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 were vital to the identities and economies of early modern society. The motto of Paris, for example, is *fluctuat nec mergitur* (we are tossed by the waves but do not sink) derived from the powerful guild of the Seine River boatmen and versions of it appeared on commemorative coins as early as 1581.

Rivers would be key to how Europeans interpreted the landscapes they experienced in the Great Southland from their first recorded encounters in the seventeenth century. The Dutch, whose expertise in hydrology was well known in Europe, struggled to assess the Rivers

here in terms familiar to them; they left frustrated and disappointed.

By the eighteenth century, fluvial technologies were re-shaping European agricultural productivity. Water, and its active management, was a critical component to continental economies, and it was with this interventionist mentality that the French and then English approached the Rivers. Were they resources to assist settlement, or a hindrance to travel, communication, and transplanted agricultural systems from Europe? Their differing expectations and answers to this question help to explain British rather than French settlement in the area.

Although emotions – from greed and pride, to love, frustration, and despair – spurred on their activities and filled their journals and letters home, only a few of the newcomers troubled themselves to consider the deeply-held feelings about the waterways of the people they came to dispossess. What are the emotional traces of these long-ago actions as we experience the Rivers today?

Additionally, can we perhaps draw upon emotions to find common ground to care for the Rivers today? As 22-year-old Wadjuk Noongar Ezra Jacobs-Smith has argued,

“Our rivers have seen many changes in how we value and manage them, from the pre-colonial Noongar inhabitants and their beliefs and traditions to colonial settlement and a philosophy towards development and commercialisation. Today support for the conservation of our river system is no longer partitioned by cultural barriers, and the Noongar and Caucasian communities are just two cultures amongst many who now call Perth home. If we, the population of Perth, expect that it is our right to reap the rewards our environment provides (land, water, plants and animals) then we must accept as equally hasty our overarching responsibility to do the right thing by an environment which provides so completely - not the most viable or the easiest, but the right thing. Ultimately we are united through our common responsibility.”<sup>3</sup>

Susan Broomhall  
Australian Research Council Centre of  
Excellence for the History of Emotions,  
Europe 1100 – 1800

# A Statement of Significance for the Riverpark

In 2011, a new Statement of Significance for the Swan and Canning Riverpark was adopted by the Swan River Trust following an audit of heritage values.<sup>4</sup> The work was undertaken by the National Trust of Australia (WA) and completed a study which began in 2008 to identify the natural, Aboriginal and historic values of the Swan and Canning Rivers. Twenty-one local government authorities which border the Swan Canning Riverpark along with a range of cultural agencies contributed to the successful completion of this work. The following Statement of Significance has been prepared on the model used by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) for the purpose of establishing world heritage listing.

Local and international communities share a future in the use, care and understanding of Perth's most important natural and cultural landscape.

The Statement of Significance for the waterways and surrounds of the Swan, Canning, Helena and Southern Rivers, bounded by the Swan Canning Riverpark, is based on a distinctive geological formation with an evolved ecosystem used extensively by humans for millennia. 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.

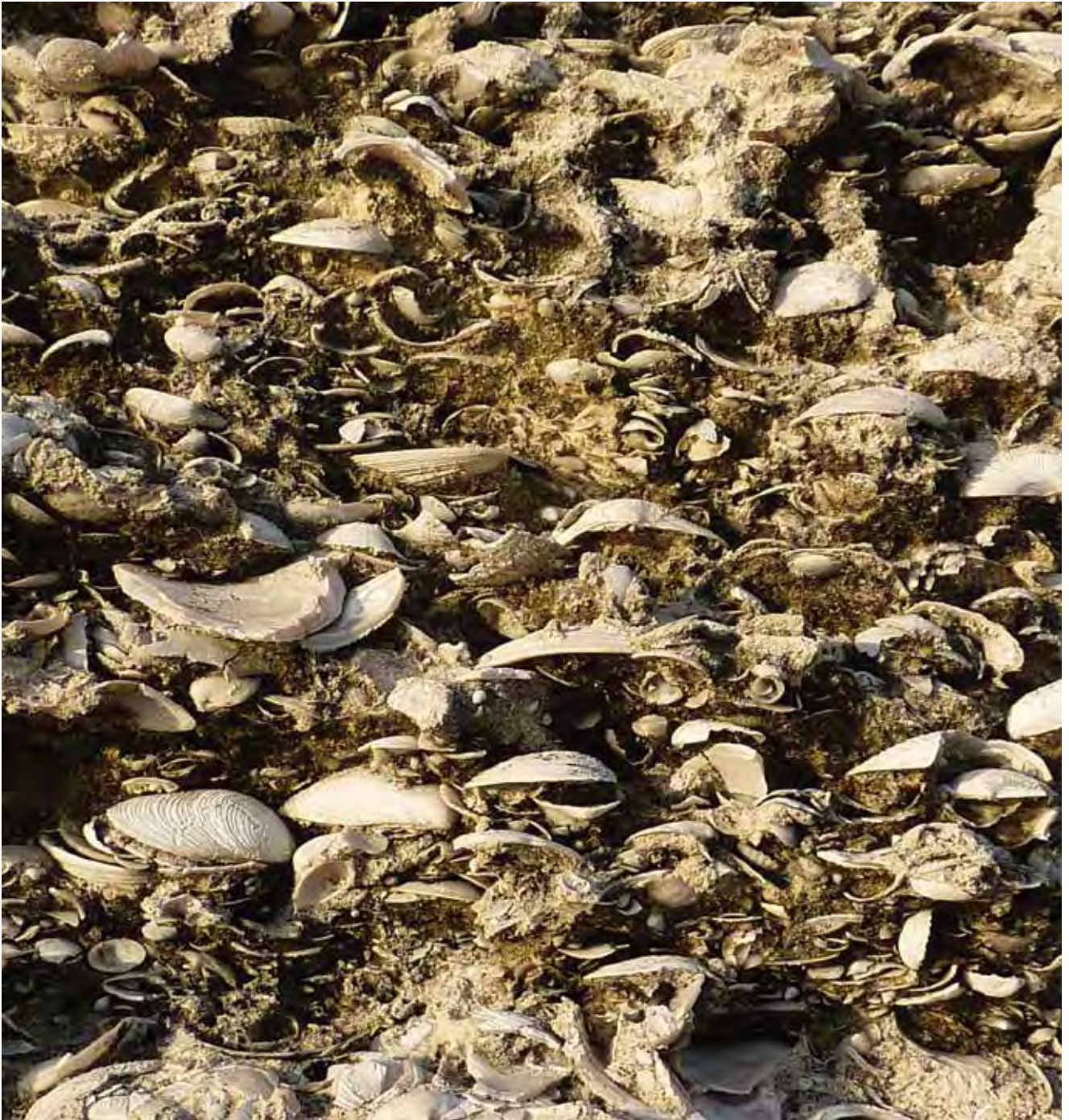
The following Statement of Significance identified this area of the Rivers as a cultural landscape with natural and cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:

- 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 mythological serpent the Waugyl according to Noongar tradition, and have continuing cultural importance related to past and contemporary Noongar culture.
- the Rivers' environment is home to rare and priority flora 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, determined land allocation and the first settlements in the Rivers regions of Perth, Fremantle, Guildford and Kelmscott.

- the Rivers provided Perth's first transport and communication corridor and demonstrate access to the upper reaches 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.







Geological formations, Minim Cove, Mosman Park © Gina Pickering

# Discover Your Rivers

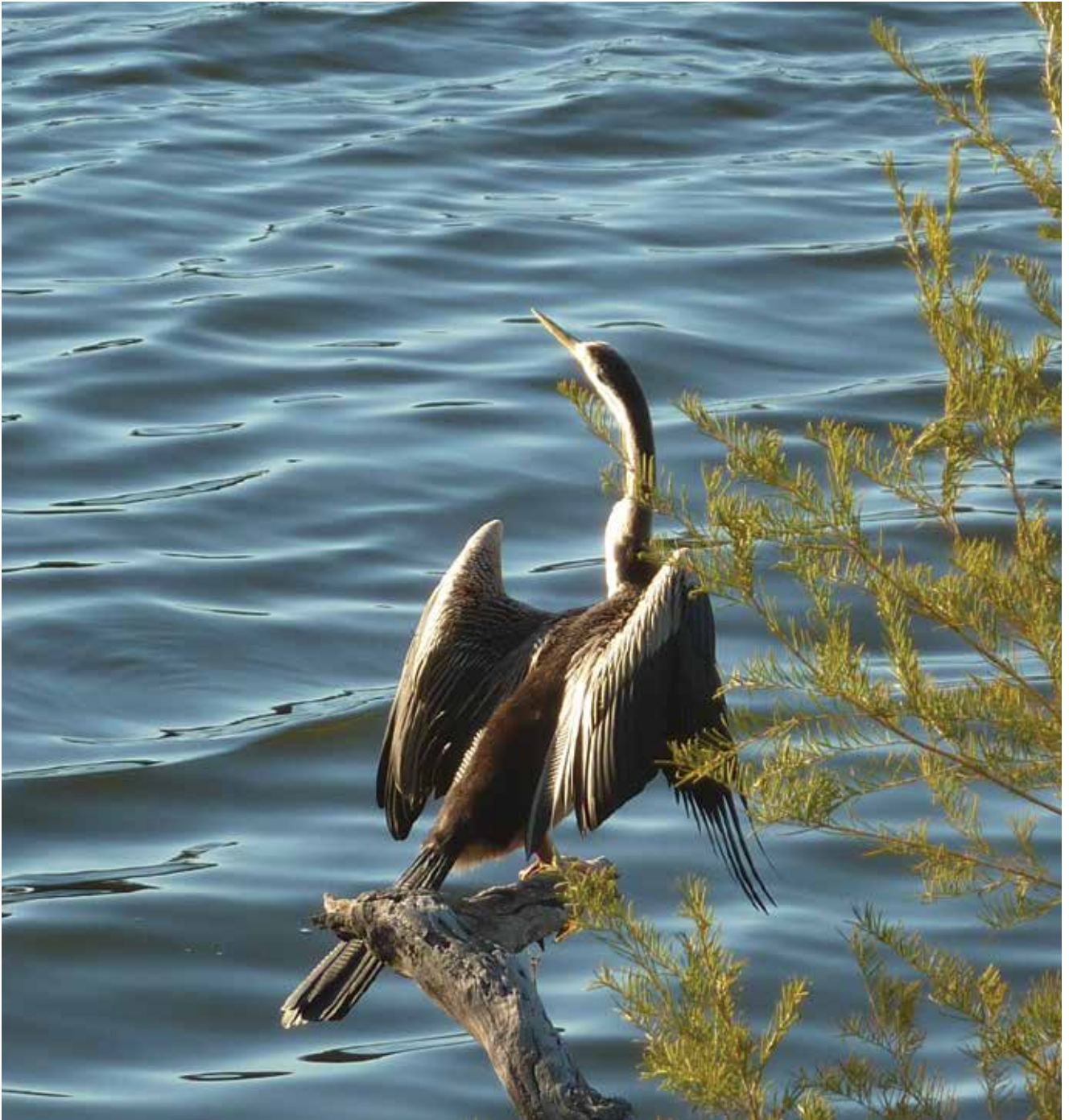
www.riversofemotion.org.au

The Rivers of Emotion website aims to capture your stories, memories, experiences and feelings about the Rivers. What do they mean to you?





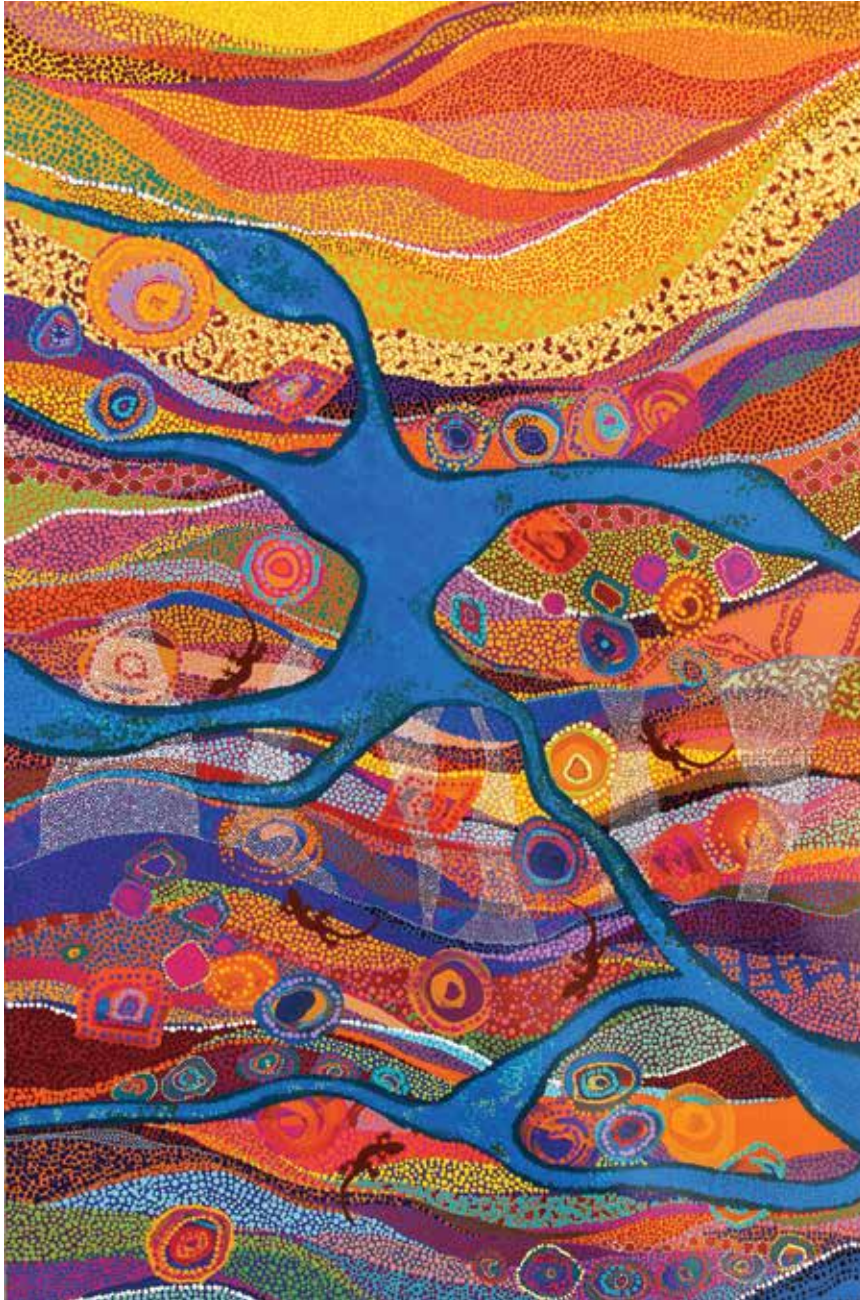
love bewildered respect loneliness sadness sorrow  
enlightened .happy optimistic  
animosity delirious inspired  
compassion



Swan River Darter © Gina Pickering

# Riversights

What do you see when you look at the River? What do you feel when you picture the river in your mind? How does it reflect your emotions?



“Maali the black swan and Derbarl Yerrigan, the Swan River are iconic images of Perth. Both were very important to Nyoongar culture. British settlers adopted the black swan as the emblem for the fledgling Swan River Colony. The colours featured on this abstract landscape reflect the beauty and vibrancy of the heart of the city of Perth. The black swan provides an enduring link between the past and the present.” (Deborah Bonar)

Deborah Bonar, Maali 2012, acrylic on canvas, 150 x 85 cm, City of Perth Art Collection





The first European map detailing the Swan River was drawn by François-Antoine Boniface Heirsson of the *Naturaliste* from direct observation after his journey by longboat along the Swan River from 17–22 June 1801. State Library of Western Australia, Freycinet Collection, Chart 5907A/1.

“On the 11th, at break of day, we again ascended the river, and saw many swans (our boat knocked over nine or ten) some rotganzen, geese, some divers, etc., also a quantity of fish, which were frisking on the water. For want of water, we could not go any further south, and being nearly high and dry with the boats in the sand, we resolved, to return, having already ascended the



Alan Muller, *Derbarl Yerrigan Whadjuk Boodja II* (Diptych), 2011 acrylic on canvas, 50 x 50 cm, Private Collection

river six or seven leagues (some thought it was ten) without having discovered anything of importance.” (unknown diarist from the *Nyptangh* which accompanied Vlamingh’s explorations, 1697)<sup>5</sup>

“The channel is obstructed by a bar of rocks, which it is very difficult to pass over, and, indeed, impracticable if the wind blows from the sea.” (Louis de Freycinet, cartographer-surveyor who sailed in *Le Naturaliste*, June 1801)<sup>6</sup>

The “magnificent basin” surrounded by a ‘succession of natural cliffs or wharves’ about a mile inside the heads would be “the finest Harbour in the World if it had an entrance.” (James Stirling, in the *Success*, March 1827)<sup>7</sup>

“The Whadjuk Nyoongar people shaped and changed the landscape in rhythm of the Seasons over many thousands of years. The managed landscapes surrounding the River were created by the Whadjuk Nyoongar through regular burning over millennia. These managed landscapes were attractive to early English explorers who used the term ‘park-like’ to describe them. E W Landor wrote in 1827 the ‘whole country of the middle and upper Swan resembles a vast English park’.” (Alan Muller)





Frederick Garling, View from Mount Eliza, 1827, watercolour, 15 x 37 cm, Janet Holmes à Court Collection.



Garling accompanied Stirling's expedition and produced a large number of images of the Swan River. Frederick Garling, Red Bank - 30 miles up the Swan, 1827, watercolour, ink and pencil, 22.4 x 32.9 cm, State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Purchased 1957.

"As far as the eye could carry Northward, Southward and Westward lay extended an immense plain covered in general with forest and varied by occasional eminences and glimpses of the River winding through it." (James Stirling, in the Success, March 1827)<sup>8</sup>

"a bieuiful (sic) reach of the river" and country "covered with brazen grass and studded by a few green trees." (James Stirling, in the Success, March 1827)<sup>9</sup>

pessimistic  
 gloomy  
 affection  
 crassment  
 love bewildered  
 homesick  
 enlightened  
 amazed  
 animosity  
 compassion  
 regret  
 SHY  
 Isolatic



The vital presence of the river can be seen by the design of ribbon grants. Survey of right bank of Swan River and of locations abutting thereon. 1 January 1841. State Records Office of Western Australia, Series 238, Consignment No. 3848, Swan 2.

“The river is about 60 to 70 yards from the house. I can not make it, but the ground slopes first smartly then more gently down to it. At present it is about 30 yards wide, just opposite me, smooth, clear, and without perceptible current except as driven by the alternate land and sea breeze.” (George Fletcher Moore, *letter*, 30 March 1831)<sup>10</sup>

“The Helena River is also important to me because we talked about country near the river for the 2003 Metropolitan Native Title Claim. A number of sites near the rivers were chosen for the claimants’ Court hearings. Hearings happened at the Helena River between Roe Highway and Military Rd in Midland. Another court hearing was held near Meadows Oval where the Helena River enters the Swan River. At both these places I acted as the legal representative for our Native Title claim. The Helena Rivers and the Swan Rivers are important for it is near these rivers that evidence for connection to our country was made.” (Albert Corunna)<sup>11</sup>



Confluence of the Helena and Swan Rivers  
© Gina Pickering









Christopher Pease, The Round House, 2007, oil on canvas, 123 x 213 cm

“The painting is based on a work by Wallace Bickley. The etching and aquatint entitled ‘View of Fremantle, Western Australia (from the Canning Road)’ was created in 1832 and depicted a panoramic view of Fremantle. I have taken this image and placed the Wagul – a mythical serpent that created the Beela (rivers) as it moved across the

land. The Wagul rises from the water like a giant sea monster ready to engulf passing ships. The foreground of the painting is overrun with white rabbits (a metaphor for the introduction of western beliefs, eroding and destroying indigenous way of life as well as the environment).

On the street is a chain gang being escorted to the ‘Round House’, an infamous jail that was the drop off point from which indigenous people were shipped to Wadjemup (Rottneest Island).”  
(Christopher Pease)

Anxiety  
respect  
lonely  
delirious  
inspired  
vengeful  
troubled  
sadness  
sorrow  
happy  
optimistic



Reclamation plan at Melville Water, the site of the Swan Brewery. Plan showing Swan Brewery, Perth with cottages, sheds, stable and well in 1838 noted within Lot "L" 69, State Records Office of Western Australia. Series 235, Consignment No. 3868, Perth 18/36.

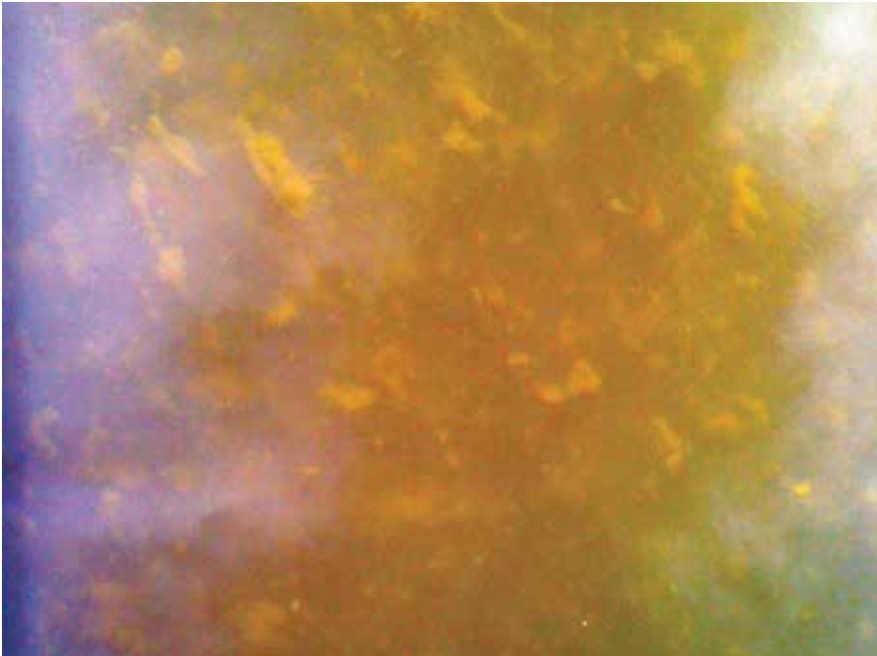
Gooniniup (place of the faeces of the Waugyl), Swan Brewery Site: "they could see who was coming ... if boats were coming into Perth they had to come down this way ... and this was all bush, so they could hide away from the white people." (Beryl Harp)<sup>13</sup>

"Ascott River race course was known to the Nyoongars as place where the fighting Waugyls were seen. It was said that the Waugyls looked like they were fighting each other but they were mating. ... it was against the law to see the Waugyls mating and if you did you would end up with heart problems and die". (Oswald, Frances and Leoni Humphries)<sup>14</sup>

"Mr Chau 'fell in love with Perth at once.' He liked its spacious streets, its bright shops, its beautiful gardens and its meandering river, its tempo. ... 'I have not been "chinked" or 'chowed.'" On the contrary I have met with every courtesy. 'We are cobbbers all!'" (*The Daily News*, 28 October 1944)



John Campbell, Untitled, 1910, oil on canvas, 44.5 x 75 cm, Janet Holmes à Court Collection.



Recent Karloidinium sp. bloom in the Maylands area, 2012. © Swan River Trust

“Anything but a beauty spot ... algae is growing there to such an extent that instead of the Swan River being a beauty spot and a natural feature of which Western Australia may be proud, it is fast developing into a nuisance. Water in the backwash of the Causeway at present is nearly as thick as mud, and the algae is growing to such an extent that during the hot evenings it gives off a most offensive odour. That marshy part of the foreshore is a breeding ground for mosquitoes and is by no means a healthy or picturesque spot.” (Causeway to Maylands, WA Parliamentary Debate, 1925)<sup>15</sup>

“The leading article ‘Save the Swan’ is both interesting and important. Of course there are many sides to so large a matter. Where is the storm water from the drains of City and suburbs to go to if not into the river? The sand and deposits caused by

such can be dredged and dumped out to sea when required, as is done with the rivers Thames and Medway of England. If Perth is to go ahead and become really a city then utility and the practicable must come before beauty. How is the stone wall so ugly or bordering on canalisation? London, Paris and other cities have stone embankments and many bridges. Are they ugly because of them? To expect to keep a river in nature’s state where man is city building and population-expanding is somewhat absurd. – JUST MY THOUGHTS, Perth.” (*The Daily News*, November 2 1943)

“Men back from the islands need not feel homesick for the jungle, towering undergrowth, and all their insect ‘friends’ during the next ten days. Health inspector J. E. Adamson for Maylands can lead them right to a little bit of old New Guinea



Chaetomorpha sp., a filamentous green alga that grows rapidly in the lower estuary in the warm water of spring. The Swan River Trust has a program to remove it. Waylen Bay © Swan River Trust

within a few minutes of their stepping off a 34 tram. He is conducting Perth Road Board’s campaign to eradicate the mosquito from some of its strongholds – the marshy breeding grounds near the Swan River at Maylands. Expected to take ten days, the clearing of channels to drain this jungle-like area involves working in conditions similar to those experienced in New Guinea. One of the men clearing the channels was fighting in the islands. ... Area is dense with giant ‘Chinese potatoes,’ a variety of yam introduced by Chinese market gardeners years ago, which grows to a height of ten feet, and has taken control of the water channels. Vieing with the yam for every inch of ground are rushes, paper-bark trees, giant Sudan grass, and flourishing thickets of cannas. In the front line of the battle are the men with shovels, mattocks and ‘slashers.’ They are being assisted by a fifth column of DDT and Gambusia fish, which are expected to wipe out the mosquitoes in this area. Mr Adamson has the greatest faith in the insect-destroying. Said he: ‘I sprayed the sanitary depot with DDT a month ago and flies are still dying.’ (*The Daily News*, 29 December 1945)





The first ever Dragon Boat Race at Canning Bridge in 1982.

“The Fremantle Swan Dragon Boat Club’s association with the Swan River began in late 1980 when the club was formed with the help of Fremantle Rowing Club and Fremantle Surf Life Saving Club members. Initially the club operated from the Fremantle Rowing Club and in 1985 was headquartered at the Swan Yacht Club East Fremantle. After spending the next 31 years training in the Swan River the dragon boat paddlers know the Swan River extremely well from the Fremantle Traffic Bridge to Mosman Bay – their usual training course. They too have competed at Maylands, McCallum Park South Perth, Bassendean, Canning Bridge, Bicton Foreshore, Belmont, between Upper Swan to Baywater as a prelude to the finish of the Avon Descent, and the annual Bridge to Bridge Marathon from the Narrows Bridge Perth to the Fremantle Traffic Bridge.

Competition is in daylight hours but training winter and summer weeknights are usually between twilight and darkness. The club teams have experienced the tranquility of the river with accompanying dolphins, paddling through the myriad of King Prawn fishers with their lights glowing against the black sky. Daylight paddling on weekends is amazing and exciting



Walter Paterson Meston, Swan River View, c 1910, oil on wood panel, 25.5 x 36 cm, Janet Holmes à Court Collection.

with the beautiful scenery and the great number of sailing and motorized vessels making ‘waves’ that calls for skilful boatsmanship. The club is indeed fortunate to be headquartered right on the river bank, a beautiful location most would ‘give their eye-teeth for’. The Swan River can boast that it is home for the Oldest Dragon Boat Club in Australia.” (David Blackley, President)

“I see the dolphins and their lives. They are like us in so much – long, complex lives, lives lived in the company of others. Their minds, like ours, are the sums of their emotions. They feel, they breathe — there is joy and anger and frustration and sorrow. They grieve for their dead. And if I think that they do not laugh or cry or dream, not like we do, not like we do at all — I do not think their world is any the lesser for it.

It must be more, other, something we cannot all together understand. And so, in unity, is there also that which escapes, that we cannot ever know. Emotions are the lens by which we comprehend the world, and the glass by which we see all that is impenetrable, and beautiful, to us.”  
(Dr Hugh Finn)



After William John Huggins, engraved by Edward Duncan, Published in London by W.J. Huggins, Swan River (Bivouac of Captain James Stirling, View of the Swan River 50 Miles Up), 1828-9, hand coloured aquatint etching, 29 x 30 cm. City of Perth Art Collection.

“The scenery was delightful, – the Trees growing to the water’s edge, – the transparency of the River, – the Mountains and plains alternately appearing, – and this place only requires a little assistance from Art to render it one of the most delightful spots on earth.” (W. C. Gilbert, an Officer on the Success, March 1827)<sup>16</sup>

“Swan River would require the language of a poet to describe it. The scenery on its banks is lovely beyond description; its course is beautifully serpentine. To this river there is one objection, and that is a

very great one – a bar stretched across its entrance, so that it is impossible for any vessel to pass, drawing more than four feet of water, and in blowy weather, the sea breaks over it so furiously that no boat can approach near it.” (Letter sent from from the Sulphur, Cockburn Sound, Western Australia, 12 September 1829 in *Glasgow Courier*, 13 February 1830)<sup>17</sup>

excited  
sensitive gloomy  
embarrassment  
zest homesick  
fear amazed



Elise Blumann, *On the Swan, Crawley*, 1938, oil on cardboard, 61.3 x 74.0 cm, State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Purchased 1976

“The pioneers of Western Australia chose wisely when they selected the site of the capital of the State. The magnificent waterway on whose banks the city has upreared itself must ever remain the chief glory and charm of Perth. The view which is unfolded to the eye of the beholder who takes his stand on an eminence of King’s Park has excited the rhapsodies of

visitors from every part of the world, and long familiarity with its constant, though ever-changing beauties can never bring satiety to the senses. It is a tribute to the aesthetic perceptions of the citizens of Perth that they have resisted all attempts to commercialise the Swan River. Stern economists may lament that the commercial possibilities of the river have

not been exploited by making it navigable to trading vessels from overseas; but to prostitute this glorious gift of Nature to such utilitarian purposes would be a degradation which could not fail to react on our civic psychology. Were the menace to its scenic charm alone involved such action would be unpardonable”.  
*(The West Australian, 30 January 1923)*





Fionn Pitman, People of the Swan River, 2012.

“This is a picture of the Swan River and the river goes diagonally across the page. When I think of the river, I think of it like a long stream. I think of the birds flying here and drinking from it. The grass bits at the end of the page are where people live and stand on. In my imagination, I can see people living on the edges, on the grass with

people fishing. The brown bits are rocks which people can also stand on and use to walk across. The Swan River connects to the sea. There’s a sky and a red sun like the Aboriginal people used to draw. The grey part is the river at night. If you peeked in, you’d be pitch black but sparkling in the water.

The river is important to me and I can feel the waves going through me. When the water comes out of the tap, I think I can feel, when I drink, the fresh water of the river.” (Fionn Pitman, 8, Mt Claremont Primary School)

# Riversounds

How does the river sound to you? What do you think of when you hear the river in your mind? Where does it take you to?



Spring at Success Hill, Guildford © Gina Pickering

“Without water we can’t live and how important that water was and the river was to Noongar people because it supplied fish and jilgies and crabs and all sorts of things for people, and water, and it made an abundance of life there, the birds and so forth it was a part of that complete circle of life, without it Noongar people could never have existed. And a very special place too, always special, because Noongar people believe that the Waugle made all these places and still believe and will always believe, and that’s the law, and what we follow.” (Jean Boladeras)<sup>18</sup>

“You say ‘no fish in the rivers, shell fish, &c’. Surely I have not said so. I think I told you I assisted in taking 10,000 at one haul near Perth. Up here they are not numerous, or rather I can not manage to catch them without a net. You say winter will bring them. Remember, I have often called this

a topsy turvy country as compared with home. The fish come most abundant up the river in summer when the salt water makes its way up. At Guildford, the people were on one occasion actually alarmed by the noise of fish leaping and rushing up the river.” (George Fletcher Moore, letter, 22 [21st] December 1832)<sup>19</sup>

“The tribe of the quiet and inoffensive Yellowgonga, was lately fired upon while fishing on the river, driven into the bush and plundered of their fish. The cry of this deeply injured race must be heard by the judge of all the earth; and their blood will assuredly call for vengeance.” (Robert Menli Lyon, *Perth Gazette*, 23 March 1833)



Europeans at sea in a topsy-turvy world? A partly submerged park bench becomes a 3D immersive experience putting visitors in touch with natural, Aboriginal and historic river values – it’s free, try it! Current seating arrangements at Mount Pleasant foreshore © Gina Pickering

“Enjoyable Launch Picnic: A delightful river outing on Saturday was a launch picnic given to a number of her young friends in Perth by Miss Marjorie Maitland-Brown, of Sydney. ... in the nature of a farewell “spree.” Some 30 guests boarded a launch at the Barrack st. jetty shortly after 4 o’clock and had a delightful cruise down the Swan and up the Canning as far as Mt. Henry. On the return journey a halt was made for a bathe, the chance being eagerly availed of by most of the party. Later the launch proceeded across Freshwater Bay to the Coombe. at which charming haunt a tempting repast was laid on the grass. Pleasant hours were spent in the cool of the evening, and the trip back to town began shortly after 10 o’clock. The weather conditions being ideal, the river was seen at its best, the brilliant lighting effects at Point Walter and the general beauty of the outlook evoking many an expression of admiration. Lively music from a gramophone and a liberal supply of light refreshments tended to heighten the pleasure of the excursion, and the popular young hostess was overwhelmed with gratitude when she took leave of her guests.” (*The Daily News*, 27 January 1927)





Tjilylungoo, Kuldjuk Boorangur, acrylic on canvas, 152 x 92 cm

“The ‘Bibbulmun’ are the Aboriginal people of the South West region of Western Australia from Geraldton to Esperance. The great Black Swan totem group of Bibbulmun – the ‘Kuldjuk Boorangur’ of ‘Djindjinuk’ (now known as Gin Gin) came into being in the ‘Ngyitting’ – cold times of long ago. There were all Kuldjuk (swans) in the cold times and when they were changed into Nyoongar (men), the Spirit Kuldjuk told them that the swan was to be their ‘Boorangur’ – (elder brother) and their chief meat food. They must not kill in mockery, or for any other reason than to eat, or to give to their friends and relations in due season. At certain times a special ceremony would be performed at ‘Winaatj’ (a sacred place), where they would grease and decorate their bodies with down from their ‘elder brother’, and sing swan songs and make the motions that the swan makes when gathering materials for its nest. These ceremonies would ensure an increase in swan numbers

and plenty of food. When the ceremony was faithfully performed a great crowd of swans came flying to the ‘Djindjinuk Beenja’, (Gingin swamps) and made their nests and laid many eggs. When the men saw great flocks of swans coming they sent messengers to their ‘Moorurtung’ and ‘Weea-binuk’, (blood relations and relations-in-law), North and South and East, and the visitors came and partook of the great egg feasts, and there were many ‘Ke-ning’ (corroborees) given by the visitors, each group showing its own local ‘Ke-ning’. The ‘Kangaroo men’ who had come from the North-East, the ‘Possum men’ from the East and the ‘Gum and Honey and Root men’ from the South. It was also a time for ‘Beeda-wa’ (Initiation) ceremonies. Barter was always associated with initiation ceremonies, with human hair string, kangaroo skin cloaks, fur string, white pipeclay, red ochre, spears and many other articles manufactured for ceremony and exchange. Every article exchanged

ted  
 sensitive gloomy  
 pessimistic  
 embarrassment  
 regret  
 homesick  
 amazed

at these times acquired some special magic property, small or great, from the ceremonies, and later on were eagerly purchased by those who were not present at the initiation. Every object was enhanced in value through its having been bartered at these formal initiation gatherings, for the initiation ceremonies of the Bibbulmun, were of a three-fold character – sacred, secular and economic, and might be said to be comparable in this respect to the Nijni Novgorod fairs in the Latin Carnivals and the American religious revivals. The initiated boys relatives were well fed with swan eggs. The ‘Kangaroo group’ might be given permission to hunt their totem during their visit, also the ‘Possum men’ and other groups gathered for the ceremony, as harmony must always prevail at these times, but the Kangaroo men ate swans eggs and gave their kill to the host as also did the other Totemists, for that is law at such times.” (Tjilylungoo)





Kids on rocks, Coffee Point, Applecross © Gina Pickering

“It is only an act of fair justice to the first inhabitants or discoverers of any spot, to retain the name that they may have conferred upon it.” (Governor Hutt, dispatch to the British Parliamentary, 1840)<sup>20</sup>

“The naming of the Canning River twin bridges in Langford as “Djarlgarra”, the traditional name for the river, was selected after consultation with local Noongar as the “meeting of Aboriginal and European

cultures as the general area is where Europeans first chose to settle in 1829”. (Alannah MacTiernan, WA Planning and Infrastructure Minister, September 2003)<sup>21</sup>

“The irony is that as kids it was always a special and cultural place for us - but we never bothered with acknowledging its Noongar name – now that it is Noongar named and signed – it is a bridge used for

modern forms of transport and the cultural and recreational aspects of its Noongar heritage is lost.”<sup>22</sup>

“Junior sailors often sing when they first hit the water. They just sail around, sing and collect jellyfish! It is amazing how many sing and come in grinning. Our River brings people together, it is a wonderful thing.” (Melinda Davies, Yachting WA).



# Riverstories

What are your memories and feelings about the river? Record or write your stories, memories, poetry or experiences here.



Celebrating the 2012 Year of the Dragon - Chung Wah Dragon Troupe (right) and Pak Mei Yaolin Dragon Troupe display their dragons by the side of Swan River, Photograph by Dan Zhou © Chung Wah Association.

“According to Chinese myths and legends, the dragon is a fictional creature combining the characteristics of nine different animals with the eyes of a shrimp, antlers of a deer, mouth of a cow, nose of a dog, whiskers of a catfish, mane of a lion, tail of a snake, scales of a fish, and talons of an eagle.

In Chinese culture, the dragon is capable of changing its shape and figure, produce rain and clouds, and aid the growth of all life forms. Revered by the Chinese people, the dragon symbolizes power, wealth and good fortune.

Regarded as the ancestors of the Chinese, Huang Di (Yellow Emperor) and Yan Di were said to be closely related to the dragon, hence the Chinese people call themselves ‘descendants of the dragon.’  
(Courtesy of the Chung Wah Association)



Jo Darbyshire, *The Narrows*, 2005, oil on canvas, 150 x 150 cm.



“Ghost River: For many people, the Swan River, especially at night, is a place of peace and reflection. It is then that one can best imagine what has happened under the surface, for the river hides many stories by day. It is fitting to remember the river can be perceived as a site of immersion and ‘disappearance’. In 2005 I created a series of paintings about what lay under the surface of the Swan River called Ghost River paintings. What interested me was the world of jellyfish and illuminated invertebrates seen by night divers, the history of the reflection of light on the Swan, and the stories of the many people including my great aunt, who chose a ‘death by drowning’ in the Mt Pleasant foreshore waters.” (Jo Darbyshire)

“They were continually calling out for help, the boys being very cool indeed, except Wittenoom. .... He fully expected that assistance would come. He was continually cheering the boys along, as Beddoes kept calling out that he could not keep up much longer. He turned around to cheer the boys up, as they had fallen behind. He then saw that Wittenoom had left go of the stern-sheet, and he called out to Beddoes to bring the stern-sheet back and he did so. Witness then put Wittenoom on the stern-sheet again as well as he could, but the boy was becoming almost unconscious then. At last Wittenoom got less able to resist the water, and kept swallowing it more and more, and at last got right under. He was face downwards when witness last saw him.”  
(*The West Australian*, 2 March 1892)

“Sensation ran high yesterday when it was known that the body of a fully-clothed woman, enclosed in two sacks,

had been taken from the Swan River in the vicinity of the North Wharf, Fremantle harbor. Subsequent to the finding of the body, developments followed in quick succession, culminating with the arrest at 12.5 a.m. [sic] today of Leung Yon, aged 29, greengrocer, who conducts a business in Hay-street, Subiaco, one door west of Coghlan-road. The body of the woman has now been definitely identified as that of Mrs. Luong Yen, the wife of the accused man.” (*The Daily News*, 24 July 1925)

“Migrant’s Tragedy: ‘Drowned by Own Act’. Harry Brooks came by his death on April 16 or 17 by drowning, by his own act, whilst in a despondent state of mind.’ Thus the Acting Coroner (Mr. T. Y. A. Lang) found at an inquest today. Brooks, a middle-aged Englishman, was found drowned in the Swan River near Mill-street, on April 17. Today Emily Kirwan, who keeps a boarding-house in Subiaco, gave evidence which told a tale of worry and despair culminating in the taking of his life. She said that on April 16 she saw Brooks hanging his coat on a clothes line. It was turned inside-out. He had a large scratch on his left arm. She asked him what he had done, and he burst into tears. He told her that the previous night he had been drinking and had fallen into the river while crossing the Causeway. His shirt and trousers were wet, but later in the day she found, that his coat was only wet on the inside of the sleeves — as if it had been put on over a wet shirt. She chaffed him about falling into the river, trying to cheer him up, but he seemed very despondent and quiet. She made him go to bed, but in the afternoon he got up. He could not eat any dinner that night, and during the evening he went out for a walk. She never again saw him alive. He had told

her previously that he was a timber-worker, but had had no work for 18 months.” (*The Daily News*, 8 May 1931)

“In the fatality that occurred in the river at Claremont on Saturday we have received a painful reminder that unsuspected danger lurks in the waters. Hitherto Western Australia has been singularly free from the shark menace, but Saturday’s tragic occurrence demonstrates that bathing in unprotected river waters is not devoid of hazard. The lamentable affair, which has stirred the most poignant emotions, will impress upon the controllers of public baths the necessity of ensuring that the structures are shark proof. No blame is attachable to those who, as the result of long immunity, believed the river to be free from danger”.  
(*The West Australian*, 30 January 1923)



Bertie Wittenoom's grave, East Perth Cemeteries  
© Gina Pickering



Sandra Hill, Six Seasons, oil on canvas stretcher, 120 x 180cm

“The painting is sectioned into rectangles, representing the breaking up of the land by the white people, turning Nyungar country into ‘acreage’, a monetary commodity that defines ‘ownership’ by individuals. However, even this can’t relinquish the traditional heritage of the original people and their existence throughout this, their country. The Waugal, the sacred snake of the Indigenous people, has touched every ‘acre’ in the painting. It moves across the land showing its ongoing presence, leaving its cultural track or footprint on all

land throughout the southwest of the state, just as we have done as a people. The six ochre dots represent the six seasons and the ongoing custodial responsibility that we have in regard to our traditional lands.”  
(Sandra Hill)

The Waugal has also been described as easing and coiling his way down the Swan River, “creating the bends in the river at Belmont and Maylands as he went. Before he reached the islands at the Causeway, he rattled his skin, shaking all the scales off in the mud as he wrestled to gain access to Perth Water. When he finally emerged through the Narrows, he made another big coil to create the open expanse of water downstream of the Narrows. Waugal then ascended Mount Eliza through a gap in the limestone cliffs, by way of the small valley or stormwater gully situated behind where the Swan Brewery Stables were built.”  
(Ken Colbung)<sup>23</sup>

Garungup: Two caves at Rocky Bay (place of anger or place to be avoided)  
“Two caves at Rocky Bay (Garungup) are believed to be the final resting place of the rainbow-serpent Waugl, who created the Nyungar and their world, before it made the tunnel underneath out to the Gabee-Warden or the Indian Ocean. The rainbow-serpent slept at Garungup after it had created the local hills ‘Seven Sisters’ said to be the back of the Waugl. Before this time, the Waugl made the Avon River, got sunburnt, constipated and had to shake off its skin. The stones at Garungup represent its hard-baked excreta. The name means the ‘place of anger’ or a place to be avoided.”<sup>24</sup>

on Anxiety  
lonely  
respect  
delirious  
vengeful  
troubled  
sadness  
sorrow  
happy  
optimistic  
inspired



Submerged car on the Esplanade, 1927 © Margaret McLean

“It was a glorious day. And it was a glorious company. It was even a glorious launch. No doubt, it was a little erratic. Sometimes it would go off at a furious rate, and sometimes it would suddenly change its mind, and stop dead still. But that was not really a drawback; on the contrary, it helped to impart to the excursion an element of excitement. We went up the Canning River near to the surviving remnant of the old canal, once used for the carriage of timber. ‘We moored at a stump of one of the old jetties, and proceeded to wage war on all the crabs and prawns in the locality. ... it was a happy day, a very happy day. For have not all the philosophers demonstrated that happiness lies, not in the object pursued, but in the pursuit itself? We did not get many crabs, but we got whole heaps of happiness. The sun shone

brightly, the breezes played upon our faces, and now and then we went down into the little cabin to eat and tell stories ... it was a glorious day, and if it did nothing else, it impressed us all, as we had perhaps never been impressed before, with the almost inestimable value of Perth’s greatest asset — the Swan River.” (“Rover” in *The Daily News*, 5 February 1912)

“During the 1940s, we travelled each weekend from Nedlands to South Perth to visit relatives & always drove along Riverside Drive to the Causeway. On many occasions in winter, the road & Esplanade were flooded, making for a splashy journey. Disappointed sports fans packed their equipment for hockey, netball & soccer matches as water inundated their sports fields. Our Dad, who grew up in East Perth

near the river’s edge, recalled many floods & was able to show us his photos of the 1927 floods, when he said there were large lakes all along the foreshore. He told us of the aerodromes that were on the Esplanade & in Maylands being affected. It rose over their jetty & almost lapped the front door of their house in Trafalgar Road next to the Gas Works. It was all exciting for youngsters to see such quantities of water so close to the city & it made us just a little apprehensive as we negotiated the deep water, perhaps stalling the car & being stranded!” (Margaret McLean)

“Before each crossing of the Indian Ocean from Perth to Colombo; the planes, both Catalina flying boats and the Liberator landplanes, are tested in the air so that nothing on the long hop is left to chance. ... A full crew went aboard at the Crawley base with passengers and dummy mail bags. “Blisters” were closed, engines started and with Captain J. Ross in charge of the flying; boat taxied out on to the broad waters of the Swan. A light breeze ruffled the sunny surface to conditions almost perfect for take-off. Spica nosed into the wind and soon was throwing up two creaming bow waves as her engines thrust her forward. The test flight had begun. ... Fremantle passed speedily below the Catalina’s wing and soon Rottnest was under her snub nose. ... Spica swung back in a great sweep to the mainland, cast a shadow over Scarborough and in a minute or two was circling the marine base, losing height and approaching the alighting area. A hail of water spattered the metal hull as its keel kissed the river and carved up a foaming wake. The test flight was over. It lasted only an hour.” (*The West Australian*, 4 January 1945)



# Riverscenes

Record and upload your own movies about the rivers. Take the time to share your favourite riverscenes.



Alan Muller, Derbarl Yerrigan I 2011–12, acrylic on canvas, 120 x 120 cm, City of Perth Art Collection.

(left) “This work is a re-imagining of the Swan River as the Derbarl Yerrigan and the surrounding City of Perth, as Whadjuk Nyoongar Country, before English Settlement. A lot of research was needed to create works like this and in the process it has completely changed and deepened my sense of identity, place, country and home.” (Alan Muller)

“I also embarked on a boat from the galliot and so we came in a short time within the estuary, where we entered with much trouble because of the rocks there.” “At midday we deemed that we had reached 9 to 10 miles following the river where it was deepest and in order to enter a bay we were forced to push the boats with our shoulders. Then we saw in the water several snakes, even though it was still a bit brackish...we turned around about 3 to 4 miles and set foot ashore in a very attractive place.”

(Willem de Vlamingh, January 1697)<sup>25</sup>

“they have found little beyond an arid, barren and wild land, both near the shore and so far as they have been inland, ... nor have they found there any peculiar animals or birds, excepting that especially in the Swaene-revier they have seen a species of black swans, three of which they have brought to Batavia alive, which we should have been glad to send over to Your Worships, but that shortly after their arrival here they all of them died one after another.” (Letter of the Governor-General and Councillors to the Managers of the East India Company at the Amsterdam Chamber, 30 November, 1697)<sup>26</sup>



Willem de Vlamingh's ships, with black swans, at the entrance to the Swan River, Western Australia, copper engraving, hand coloured, in Johannes van Keulen, & Francois Valentijn, *Het Eyland Amsterdam; Het Eyland St. Paulo; Swarthe Swaane drift op het Eyland Rottenest.* (1726). National Library of Australia, an5598203.

“The Swan River, which was explored for 18–20 leagues, offers no resources at all. Here and there some fresh water was found in the streams that enter it, but they are very small.” (Nicolas Thomas Baudin, a sub-lieutenant in the French Navy and cartographic surveyor and naturalist, June 1801)<sup>27</sup>

“As the Swan River had been very minutely examined in Baudin’s voyage by MM. Heirisson and Bailly, the former an enseigne de vaisseau, the latter a mineralogist, an account of which is fully detailed in De Freycinet’s and Peron’s respective accounts of that

voyage, without their finding anything of sufficient importance to induce me to risk leaving the brig at anchor off Rottneest Island for so long a time as it would necessarily take to add to the knowledge of it that we already possess.” (Phillip Parker King, on the Bathurst, 15 January 1822)<sup>28</sup>

lonely  
sad  
hap  
delirious  
Anxiety  
respect  
delirious



Robert Vere Scott, The Narrows from Kings Park, c 1900-1910. Silver gelatin photograph. 22.5 x 57.5 cm, City of Perth Art Collection.



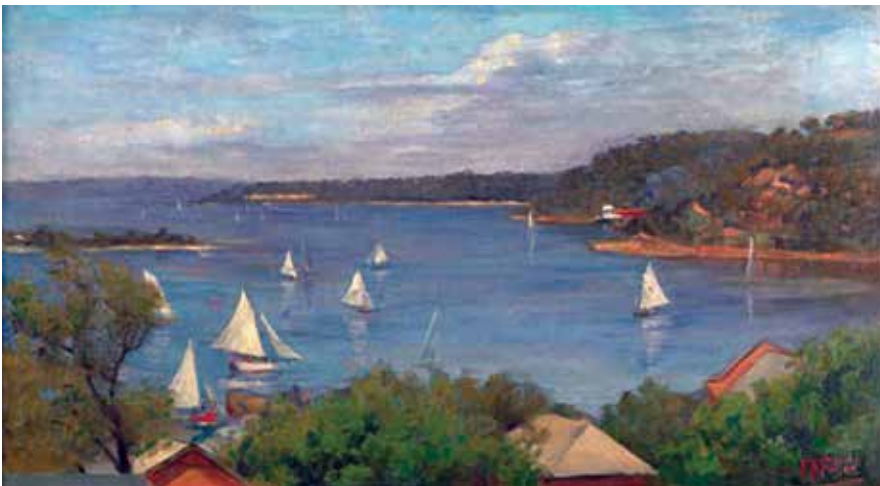
Canoeing on the Swan, behind Government House Gardens, 1890s. State Library of Western Australia, Image 55632P.

“When will the people of Perth awake to the fact that they possess one of the most beautiful rivers in the world? The Swan is not appreciated as it ought to be. It should be patronised by thousands where it is now patronised by hundreds. It should be, in a sense, the great playground of our people. All its shores and reaches should teem, on public holidays and weekends, with happy men and women and children drinking in the health and vigor that lurk in its refreshing breezes. ... we come from a race into whose soul has entered the spirit of the sea, and after all, our beautiful Swan is not so much a river as an arm of the ocean stretched out lovingly towards us, as if claiming comradeship.” (“Rover” in *The Daily News*, 5 February 1912)





George Pitt-Morison, Swan River Foreshore, 1901, oil on canvas, 44.5 x 100 cm, City of Perth Art Collection.



Florence Fuller, Perth Waters – Swan River Foreshore, 1906, oil on canvas, 24.5 x 40 cm. City of Perth Art Collection.

“Old Soldier Back at His Childhood Playground. Because the most vivid memories of his youth were of boating and fishing on the Swan River, NSW service man William Hamilton (64), of Bondi, who died at Sydney Repatriation Hospital on June 1, asked that his ashes be scattered on the Swan after his death. The NSW and WA RSL branches co-operated to bring Gunner Hamilton’s ashes to Perth and at 2.15 p.m. today his last wish was granted.” (*The Daily News*, 26 August 1950)

“Nothing could be more fun on a hot summer’s day, than for the Mums of the street to organize a picnic on the river’s edge! We all packed into the couple of old cars & drove to our favourite Peppermint Grove, at the foot of Johnston Street, where the cool trees shaded the grassed verge close to sand and the lapping river. Exploring, we paddled, under watchful parental eyes, finding shells, jellyfish, blowies and driftwood. We sailed our homemade war



Margaret McLean (right) at Peppermint Grove, 1943.



Irene Carter, The Narrow, Perth, 1945, watercolour on paper, 23.5 x 32 cm, City of Perth Art Collection

ships, all grey and black, that had been lovingly fashioned by our handymen Dads. Every minute of our romp was enjoyable, though our Mums had to bring babies, bassinets, pushers and picnic food. But cool breezes and social chit chat was a welcome break for kids and Mums!” (Margaret McLean)

“At the end of 1963, we moved to St James and our fishing spots changed to along the river not far from the Burswood Rubbish Dump and at night near the Swan Brewery. I did not like it when we caught the fish because they would flip about gasping for air and I would feel sorry for them.” (Irene Stainton)<sup>29</sup>



The Swan at night from the Royal Perth Yacht Club  
© Gina Pickering

“River King and Queen: Scuba diving 20 meters under the Swan River at night hearing the far off drone of boat engines and your torch light illuminating the bright eyes of prawns and crabs and the sense of remoteness and flying over an underwater landscape was like no other. It was bliss. I’m missing it now. The seahorses, the white, yellow and orange sponges, wrecked hulls of rowing boats, the harvest and the feast. We felt like a royal court sitting on a green carpet of lawn peeling and eating the most delicious offerings from the river. We were the King and Queen of this royal river court. What bounty and richness lay beneath the surface. We were new to Perth from Melbourne and in awe that this river you could swim, dive and play in. The diving on the river is a night time culture that not many people in Perth would know about. Being swept in the darkness by fast currents along the submerged cliffs of Blackwall Reach was thrilling. But to be able to feed yourself directly from a river running past a city was extraordinary.”  
(Rebecca Millar)



Tjyllyungoo, Maali, acrylic on canvas, 120 x 91 cm.

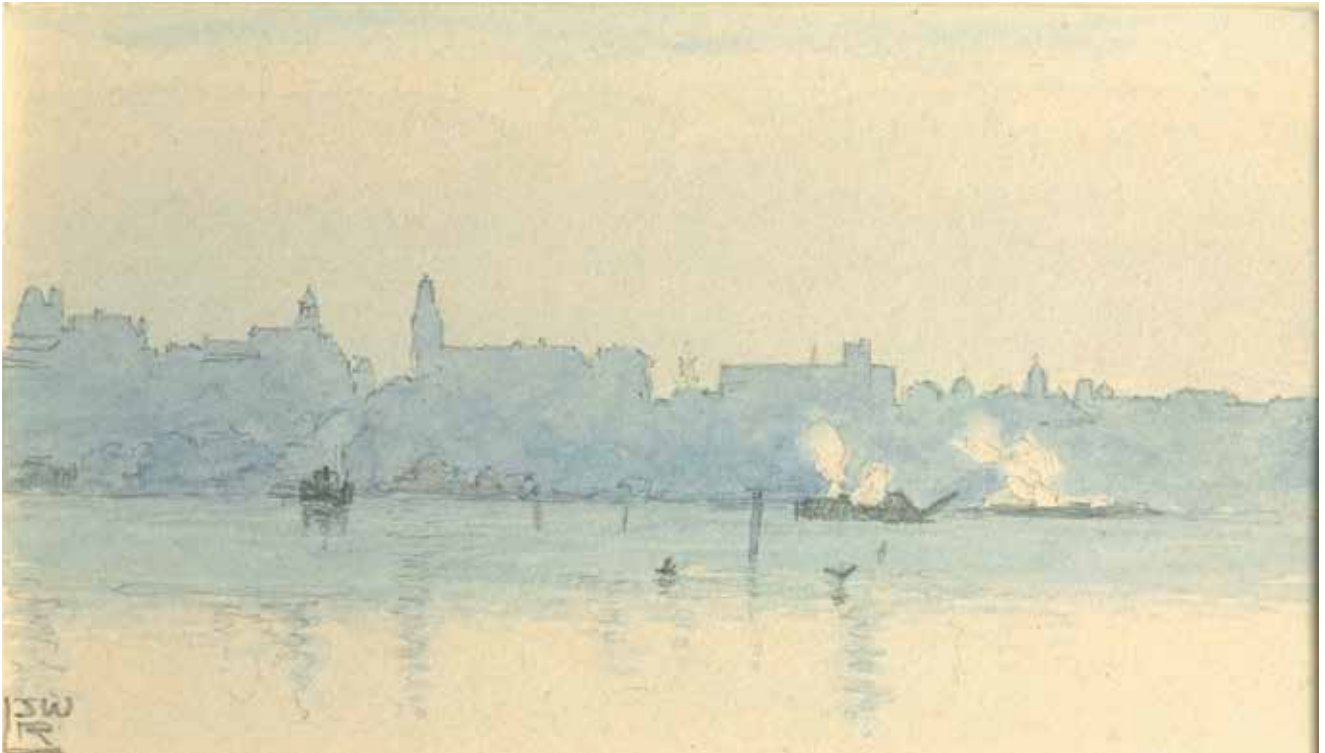
“Maali is celebrating ‘Djilba’ ( spring ) and the ‘Happy Times of life’ depicted by children having fun in the water and the abundance of flowers and hatchlings.”  
(Tjyllyungoo)

“So far this season the Swan River Rowing Club has not been able to enter a senior eight for competition, but shortly it may surprise its opponents by boating what may be described as an ‘international’ eight. ... a Dutchman and a Greek with considerable senior rowing experience in their own countries, joined the club. Both are big men and they probably will be included in a senior eight which will begin training soon. The Dutchman, who has rowed in senior events both in Holland and England, was so eager to get the feel of an oar again that he found his way to the clubhouse the day after he arrived in Perth. The Greek searched through the telephone directory looking for a rowing club when he came to Perth and the fact that the Swan River club was the only one possessing a telephone enabled it to sign up another new Australian.” (*The West Australian*, 27 July 1951)



Summer days at Crawley foreshore, January 1981  
© Melissa Johnson

“My earliest memories of the Swan River are at Matilda Bay on hot summer’s afternoons. My parents would drive us down for a swim and picnic, and I would watch the ‘big’ kids swimming out to a floating platform and diving off it into the water. I was too scared to negotiate the jellyfish in the shallows so waded on the sandy shores. Later the river came to be associated with river rowing. While at University I became a keen rower for a few years and spent many a cold winter’s morning on the river, enjoying the peace and quiet of pre-dawn, (whilst occasionally avoiding ferries in the darkness), until the sun rose blinding us as we turned for home.” (Melissa Johnson)



James W.R. Linton, Perth from South Perth, c 1900, watercolour on paper, 7.5 x 13 cm, City of Perth Art Collection.



Karoleeya © David Morse

“I learnt to sail on the confluence of the Swan and Canning Rivers. I was 15 and with my best mate Les Brooker, we careered around in an old Cherub dinghy spending as much time upside-down as right side up. In the brisk seabreezes of summer we would shiver around the course wearing cotton stubbie shorts and wool football guernseys. As age and

experience grew so I moved on to larger and more sophisticated boats, still racing on that body of water we call Melville Water, learning the vagaries of wind and water and the subtleties of sheet and vang and halyard and the skills and tactics to beat our opponents on the water who were our friends ashore and in the clubhouse. But ... my home port has always been the conjoined waters of the Canning and Swan Rivers. This is where I learnt what it truly was to live and to be the master of the ship

of my life. And now I have returned from those wanderings to find a little wooden boat sorely in need of love. I have given her that and she now carries me through these same waters that I sailed over 40 years before. Little Karoleeya a little wooden yacht just a little younger than I beautifully crafted in 1958 and rebuilt by me in 2009, reflects the essence of all that is lovely and beautiful of life; strong and gentle, true and honest, unpretentious and quietly successful, full of grace.” (Jay Lawry)

lonely  
Anxiety  
respect  
delirious  
vengeful  
troubled  
sadness  
sorrow  
happy  
optimistic  
inspired





Ryan and Grace from Year 4, Orana Catholic Primary School

“When the students of Orana Catholic Primary School went down to the river to explore its history, test its water quality and ‘yarn’ with a Noongar elder ... little did they know they would end up deep in conversation with their families about the emotions that rivers evoke.”  
(Lyn Perrigo)

“When I see the river, I feel I can just see a row of animals walking freely, like kangaroos, echidnas, and foxes and I think when we visit the river, I think we should take care of it as well as the animals. You might think there’s no way the animals can help, but these are my feelings, not yours. Since we just chuck rubbish in, some animals can clean up. Sharks are more likely to clean up fish though, not rubbish. I wonder if the animals are helping the river.”  
(Cai Pitman, 7, Mt Claremont Primary School)



Sandra Hill, Koorra Katitjiny (long ago knowing) oil on linen stretcher, 1800mm x 100mm (6 pieces)

“The painting consists of six individual canvasses each representing one of the six Nyungar seasons. The Derbarl Yerrigan (Swan River) wends its way across the work. The waterways are the lifeblood for Nyungars, not only in terms of food but also other resources and uses that were relied on for everyday life. It also marks and defines territory and, in my work, symbolically represents the Waugul (sacred serpent) who created the individual features that make our country unique. The Waugul, the sacred snake, touches every ‘section’ in the painting. It moved across the earth, its ongoing presence, leaving a cultural track or footprint on all land throughout the southwest of the state, just as we have done as a people. The painting represents the six seasons, our intimate knowledge of the land and the ongoing custodial responsibility that we have in regard to our traditional country.”  
(Sandra Hill)

excited sensitive gloomy embarrassed zest homesick fear amazed  
pessimistic love enlighten animal  
regret

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Here's how. Simply create a User Account on the website and upload your own scenes, sights, sounds or story content.



# Notes and Credits

<sup>1</sup> Andrea Witcomb and Kate Gregory, *From the Barracks to the Burrup: The National Trust in Western Australia*, Sydney: UNSW Press, 2010, pp. 315-16.

<sup>2</sup> 'House of Commons Journal Volume 1: 22 March 1604', *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 1: 1547-1629 (1802)*, pp. 142-149. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=8962>.

<sup>3</sup> Email correspondence to Susan Broomhall, 25 September 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Heritage Audit of the Swan Canning Riverpark to inform an Interpretation Plan for the Iconic Trails Project, Final Report, November 2011, p. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Cited R. H. Major, (ed), *Early Voyages to Terra Australis, now called Australia*, London, Hakluyt Society, 1859, p.124.

<sup>6</sup> Captain Phillip P. King, *Narrative of a Survey of the Intertropical and Western Coasts of Australia performed between the years 1818 and 1822*, Vol 2, London, John Murray, 1827, Appendix A, section 5. <http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks/e00028.html> accessed 21 August 2012.

<sup>7</sup> Pamela Statham-Drew, James Stirling: Admiral and Founding Governor of Western Australia, Crawley WA, University of Western Australia Press, 2003, p. 80; Report to Admiralty, 31 August 1827, Captain J. Stirling, HMS Success, Madras Roads, to J. W. Croker (rec. 6 August 1828), CapS172, ADM1/2556.

<sup>8</sup> Statham-Drew, James Stirling, p. 75; Original in Report to Colonial Office 21 April 1827, Governor Darling, Sydney Dispatch 56 per Australia to Bathurst (rec. Oct 1827), CO201/182 f208, HRA I xiii, p.264 and ff. enclosure Captain Stirling to Governor Darling, 18 Apr 1827 (encl no.1).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> *The Millendon Memoirs: George Fletcher Moore's Western Australia Diaries and Letters, 1830-1841*, (ed.) J.M.R. Cameron, Victoria Park, Hesperion Press, 2006, p. 22.

<sup>11</sup> As told to Gina Pickering, 18

August 2008, Swan and Helena Rivers Management Framework Heritage Audit and Statement of Significance. Final report, 26 February 2009, p. 48.

<sup>12</sup> Karl Marx, *Das Kapital*, (1867), Part 1, Akademie Verlag, 1976, Vol. I, Ch. 33, p. 292.

<sup>13</sup> Debra Hughes-Hallett (compiled and presented by), *Indigenous history of the Swan and Canning Rivers: A Project with the Swan River Trust*, 2010, p. 34, downloadable at [http://www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au/riverpark/culture/Content/indigenous\\_history.aspx](http://www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au/riverpark/culture/Content/indigenous_history.aspx)

<sup>14</sup> As told to Cheryl-Anne McCann, 19 September 2008, Swan and Helena Rivers Management Framework Heritage Audit and Statement of Significance, p. 50.

<sup>15</sup> *Western Australia Parliamentary Debates*, vol. 73, 1925, p. 2490 cited in Swan and Helena Rivers Management Framework Heritage Audit and Statement of Significance, p. 24.

<sup>16</sup> Joanne Shoobert, (Principal ed.), *Western Australian Exploration, Volume 1: December 1826-December 1835: The Letters, Reports and Journals of Exploration and Discovery in Western Australia*, Victoria Park, Hesperian Press (in conjunction with Department of Land Information), 2005, p. 59.

<sup>17</sup> Research note 38, Battye Library, State Library of Western Australia.

<sup>18</sup> Hughes-Hallett, *Indigenous history of the Swan and Canning Rivers*, p. 59.

<sup>19</sup> *The Millendon Memoirs*, p. 187.

<sup>20</sup> Despatch from Hutt to Marquis of Normanby, 11 February 1840 with enclosure, BPP, Papers relating to Aborigines, *Australian Colonies, 1844, Colonies, Australia*, Vol 8, Shannon University Press, 1968, pp. 372-3.

<sup>21</sup> Media Release, Portfolio: Culture and the Arts, Planning and Infrastructure 19 Sept 2003, <http://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/ByPortfolio.aspx?ItemId=114633&search=&admin=&minister=&portfolio=Culture+and+the+Arts&region=&page=4>

<sup>22</sup> Nicole Cheree Macdonald, "Images of the Swan and Canning Rivers: creating 'Barometers' of Change," Dissertation. BSc(Psychology) Hons. Curtin University of Technology, 2009, p. 47.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in P. Vinnicombe, Gooninup: a site complex on the southern side of Mount Eliza : an historical perspective of land use and associations in the old Swan Brewery area, Perth 1989, p. 12.

<sup>24</sup> Hughes-Hallett, *Indigenous history of the Swan and Canning rivers*, p. 25.

<sup>25</sup> Phillip Playford, *Voyage of Discovery To Terra Australis*, Perth, West Australian Museum, 1998, Appendix, pp. 88-9, Translated from the original French by C. de Heer and C. I. Clark from the manuscript at the Archives Nationales de France, Marine 3JJ 391 no.18.

<sup>26</sup> J. E. Heeres (ed), *The Part Borne by the Dutch in the Discovery of Australia 1606-1765*, London, Luzac & Co, 1899, pp. 83-4.

<sup>27</sup> Cited in Christine Cornell, Trans and ed., *The Journal of Post-Captain Nicolas Baudin, Commander-in-Chief of the Corvettes Geographe and Naturaliste*, Adelaide, The Friends of the State Library of South Australia, 2004, p. 503.

<sup>28</sup> King, *Narrative of a Survey of the Intertropical and Western Coasts of Australia*.

<sup>29</sup> As told to Gina Pickering, 6 September 2008, Swan and Helena Rivers Management Framework Heritage Audit and Statement of Significance, p. 51. Back page quote: Julian Rappaport, "Empowerment Meets Narrative: Listening to Stories and Creating Settings." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 23(5) 1995, p. 805.



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Twilight racing on the Swan © Gina Pickering

*If narratives are understood as resources, we are able to see that who controls those resources, that is who gives stories social value, is at the heart of a tension between freedom and social control, oppression and liberation, and empowerment versus disenfranchisement.*

excited. pessimistic  
sensitive gloomy affection Anxiety  
embarrassment love bewildered respect lonely sadness  
zest homesick regret enlightened shy delirious  
fear amazed compassion animosity  
vengeful  
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