

## Fairy Placenames in NSW

– Jim Wafer



'Faeries Crossing', Kyogle Shire, NSW.  
Photo by Jim Wafer

The origins<sup>1</sup> of the names 'Fairy Hill' (a village north of Casino, in Richmond Valley Shire, NSW) and 'Fairy Mount'<sup>2</sup> (a mountain to the east of Kyogle,<sup>3</sup> NSW) are appropriately mysterious. Although the two localities are only about 15km apart, there is no obvious historical connection between them. But the fact that both names probably date from the same period – the 1830s to 1840s – is at least suggestive.

The name 'Fairy Hill' was applied to other places in the region before it became fixed in its present location. It was already in use by 1848, when the early settler Wellington Cochrane Bundock is listed as applying for a lease on a run called "Wiangaree, formerly Fairy Hill".<sup>4</sup> But apparently Bundock had used the name earlier for another run, in the vicinity of present-day Tabulam, that he took over from Peter Cunningham Pagan in the early 1840s (Hendley 2001: 3). Whether the name had already been used in the same way by Pagan is unclear. As John Hendley observes, it is plausible that the station was 'named after the area from which either the Pagan or Bundock families originated' (loc. cit.)

Bundock was from Devon, and Pagan from Dumfries in Scotland.<sup>5</sup> I have been unable to trace a Fairy Hill in Devon (the closest being in Somerset, Dorset and the Isle of Wight). However, there are numerous fairy hills in Scotland, the most famous of which is the Fairy Hill near Aberfoyle, where the

Revd. Robert Kirk is said to have been kidnapped by the fairies. Kirk was a Gaelic scholar, and in 1691 wrote a book called *The Secret Commonwealth of elves, fauns and fairies*,<sup>6</sup> 'in which he described these creatures and their subterranean habitat in a remarkably candid manner' (Grant 2009).

The contemporary Gaelic scholar Alison Grant (2009) makes the following helpful etymological observations about the connection between fairies and hills:

The Gaelic word *sìth* or *sìdh* (pronounced *shee*) can mean 'fairy' and 'hill' and in Scottish place-names is usually considered to denote a 'fairy hill'. It probably derives from the ellipsis of the Irish phrase *aos sídhe* 'people of peace'. According to medieval Irish sources such as the twelfth-century *Book of Leinster*, the *aos sídhe* were an ancient supernatural race who dwelt beneath the surface of the earth, a belief which is reflected in the fact that in Ireland a number of *sìdhe* sites are pre-Celtic burial mounds.

In Scotland, *sìth* is found in place-names including Glenshee 'fairy glen' or 'glen of the fairy hills', *Sìdh Beg* and *Sìdh Mòr* 'small fairy hill' and 'big fairy hill' respectively, *Schiehallion* 'fairy hill of the Caledonians', *Ben Hee* from *Beinn Shìth* 'fairy mountain' and similarly *Ben Tee* above Loch Lochy is *Beinn an t-Sìth* 'mountain of the fairies'....

Related to *sìth* is the term *sìthean* or *sìdhean* (pronounced *shee-an*) which also refers to a fairy hill. The *sìthein* are often small conical hills, and in Celtic mythology they were reputed to have hollow interiors, with the fairies dwelling inside.

It's unclear why the name 'Fairy Hill' was changed to 'Wiangaree'. But in any case, the newly available name was not applied to its present location until some decades later, when Thomas Reeves, 'who worked on Fairymount Station, selected in 1871 on what is now Fairy Hill. He named the property "Fairlee" for the vessel<sup>7</sup> on which he came to Australia, and the name was later changed to Fairy Hill' (Richmond-Tweed Regional Library 1983). Other accounts (e.g. Hendley 2001: 3) suggest that it was Reeves himself who called the place (or changed the name to) 'Fairy Hill Farm'. The fact that Reeves worked at Fairymount, and that the name 'Fairy Hill' was already in use in the area, suggests that local fairy names

*Continued on page three*



## From the editor . . .

## in this issue...

### Letter to the Editor

#### Rhodes NSW

Dear Editor

I saw a reference recently to the Sydney suburb of Rhodes stating that "It was named after a place near Leeds in Yorkshire, England". I lived in Leeds for a number of years and am sure that no such place exists. Can you help?

Yours sincerely,  
Jane Herrick

The editor replies:

The western Sydney suburb of Rhodes was, in fact, named after a house named Rhodes. This had been built on the banks of the Parramatta River at Concord by army officer and settler Thomas Walker, born in Yorkshire in 1791, who came to Australia after serving on Wellington's staff in Europe. He named the house Rhodes after his grandmother's property Rhodes Hall (in 17th century documents referred to as Rhodes Hall Farm) in Rothwell, a very ancient market town near Leeds. Why this was named Rhodes Hall is not known, but the West Yorkshire Archives record that Rhodes (meaning 'clearings') was a fairly common surname in Yorkshire and there may have been some local connection with a Rhodes family. Thomas Walker's house in Concord was demolished in 1919.

#### References:

ADB online – Ida McAulay, *Walker, Thomas (1791 – 1861)*  
West Yorkshire Archive Service, Leeds

Basil Cottle, *The Penguin Dictionary of Surnames*, 2nd ed. 1978, p.316



The International Council  
of Onomastic Sciences

The 2011 ICOS Congress is to be held in Barcelona, 5-9 September. Placenames Australia is a supporter of the Congress, and the organisers have let us know that discounted registration is available to PA members who wish to attend. Onomastics is, of course, the study of names, and it includes toponymy as one of its specialist areas. We commend the Congress to all our readers, and suggest that a visit to the Congress website might be a useful first step:  
<http://barcelona.onomastica.cat/en/>

Published by Placenames Australia (Inc.)  
ABN 39652752594

ISSN: 1836-7968 (print)  
1836-7976 (online)

Contact: Editor: David Blair  
or Sub-Editor: Tricia Mack  
c/- ANPS, Linguistics Dept.,  
Macquarie University NSW 2109  
Email: [editor@anps.org.au](mailto:editor@anps.org.au)

Fairy Placenames in the Northern Rivers .....	Page One
From the Editor .....	Page Two
Exploring Eneabba .....	Page Four
Placenames puzzle no. 36 .....	Page Seven
Placenames Australia Membership .....	Page Eight

### 2010 AGM of Placenames Australia

The Annual General Meeting of PA was held in Sydney on 26 October. Readers will be interested to hear of the election of PA's Management Committee for the ensuing year.

Dale Lehner was elected President; Joyce Miles was re-elected Vice-President; Jan Tent was re-elected Secretary and Treasurer; and Helen Slatyer, Michael Walsh and David Blair were voted on to the Committee as members, as was a 'nominee of the NSW Geographical Names Board'. There is still one vacant place on the Committee.

The meeting welcomed Dale to the President's chair, and expressed its gratitude to Colin Yallop for his dedicated service as President over several years.

### Murray Chapman Award

The NSW Geographical Names Board has approved an award of \$5000, to be known as the

#### MURRAY CHAPMAN AWARD FOR RESEARCH INTO ABORIGINAL PLACENAMES.

The award will be for a research paper into Aboriginal placenames in NSW, and is named in honour of Mr Murray Chapman, a former member of the Board and champion of Aboriginal languages, who died in 2007. The author of the winning paper and other papers of high quality will be asked to submit their work for inclusion in a new edition of the book *Aboriginal Placenames: Naming and Re-naming the Australian Landscape*.

Placenames Australia will assist the GNB with the administration of the award. Further details will be available in our next issue.



The 1st International Conference on Indigenous Place Names (<http://www.icipn2010.no>) brought about fifty people to Finnmark (northern Norway) from around the world. The nature, recognition and transmission of original placenames was in lively focus for the thirty or so presentations through the week, 3-8 September. Our hosts were the Northern Sámi, and we convened at their *Sámi allaskuvla* (Sámi University College) housed in a very well-appointed modern institute, one of the biggest buildings in Guovdageaidnu/ Kautokeino, one of the two main Sámi towns some 250km north of the Arctic Circle. The convenor was Kaisa Rautio Helander who had attended the ANPS Ballarat conference in December 2007. There were three Māori, two Greenlanders, and people from several Canadian nations, Guatemala, Peru, and several southern African countries, and of course a number of Sámi from Finland and Russia too; non-Indigenous attenders were a small minority.

It was resolved to form an Indigenous Place Names society, and to meet again in 2013 (to be hosted in British Columbia, Canada).

Jane Simpson's overview of the conference is at [http://blogs.usyd.edu.au/elac/2010/09/snowflakes\\_indigenous\\_placenam.html](http://blogs.usyd.edu.au/elac/2010/09/snowflakes_indigenous_placenam.html)

– David Nash



*Continued from page one - Fairy Placenames in NSW*

may have influenced him, or whoever was responsible, in the naming of the new selection.

As for the name ‘Fairy Mount’, again, the precise origins are hard to pin-point. The historian Louise Daley tells us unequivocally that ‘Henry Mayne and Charles Fawcett, who had just arrived from Northern Ireland with capital to invest, bought Sir John Jamison’s station at Richmond Head<sup>8</sup> for a song in 1844, following the old colonist’s death, and named it Fairy Mount’ (1966: 42). But Bruce Wilson’s account (197?) of Jamison’s acquisition of the property suggests that the name ‘Fairymount’ may already have been in use before the station was transferred to Mayne and Fawcett.

If Mayne and Fawcett were indeed the people who gave that station its name, they may have done so drawing on an analogy with the name ‘Fairy Hill’. Alternatively – and here we have to assume a degree of coincidence – they may have come up with the name ‘Fairy Mount’ independently, perhaps as a nostalgic reference to some place in Ireland. (I have been unable to trace any localities called ‘Fairy Mount’ in Northern Ireland, but there are two, spelt ‘Fairymount’, in Eire, one in County Roscommon, near the town of Roscommon, and the other in County Laois, near the town of Crettyard.)

Such a coincidence cannot be discounted out of hand, especially when we consider another similar one. At the present day there is an intentional community in the vicinity of Kyogle called ‘Faerieland’. It occupies a property that, on some old maps, is recorded as ‘Kyweong’. (The linguist Margaret Sharpe suggests [pers. comm.] that this is probably an anglicisation of the Bundjalung word *gayiwang*, meaning ‘big waterhole’. There is, indeed, a big waterhole in the vicinity, known as ‘Hanging Rock Waterhole’.)

Possibly further historical research will be able to throw greater light on the precise origins of the names ‘Fairy Hill’ and ‘Fairy Mount’ as used in the Northern Rivers. But it is also possible that the information required for greater accuracy is simply not available. In that case, we will have to content ourselves with the kind of compromise between evidence, speculation and folklore that has been presented here.

**References**

Brisbane Courier 13 March 1928, p. 17.

Daley, Louise Tiffany 1966. *Men and a river: A history of the Richmond River district, 1828-1895*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Feain, Dominic 2010. ‘Firies angry over name change.’ *The Northern Star* 15 February 2010. Available online at <http://www.northernstar.com.au/story/2010/02/15/firies-angry-over-name-change/>

Grant, Alison 2009. ‘Gaelic place names: *sìth* and *sithean*.’ *The Bottle Imp* 6. Available online at <http://www.arts.gla.ac.uk/ScotLit/ASLS/SWE/TBI/TBIIssue6/Sith.html>

Hendley, John V. 2001. *Fairy Hill revisited*. Casino NSW: the author.

Kirk, Robert and Andrew Lang 1893. *The Secret Commonwealth of elves, fauns and fairies*. London: Nutt. Available online at <http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/celt/sce/index.htm>

Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser 10 June 1848, p. 3.

Richmond-Tweed Regional Library and Richmond River Historical Society 1983. *Place names of the Richmond region*. Lismore NSW: Richmond-Tweed Regional Library.

Wafer, Jim 2007. ‘How Nimbin got its name.’ *Placenames Australia: Newsletter of the Australian National Placenames Survey* June 2007: 1, 3, 4, 6. Available online at: [http://www.anps.org.au/documents/June\\_2007.pdf](http://www.anps.org.au/documents/June_2007.pdf)

Wilson, Bruce 197? *Kyogle and district early settlers 1844-1920; Kyogle business people 1902-1950*. Vol. 2 of Wilson 1977-1981, *A history of Kyogle* (4 vols.). Kyogle NSW: Kyogle & District Historical Society.

**Footnotes**

- 1 The author wishes to thank the following individuals and organisations for their assistance with the research for this article: Jim Arachne, Pascal Destandau, Dominic Feain, John Hendley, Tricia Mack, Elaine McLean, Margaret Sharpe, and the Kyogle & District Historical Society Inc.
- 2 The Geographical Names Board ([http://www.gnb.nsw.gov.au/name\\_search/extract?id=JPQlvqsuyj](http://www.gnb.nsw.gov.au/name_search/extract?id=JPQlvqsuyj)) gives this as the official spelling, although the name is often written as a single word, ‘Fairymount’. GNB also informs us that the geographical feature was formerly called ‘Fairy Mountain’, and that it gives its name to a parish, a trig-station and a creek.
- 3 For the origins of the name ‘Kyogle’, see Wafer 2007: 6 (note 5). This note also makes reference to the Bundjalung name for Casino, which, mysteriously, has been glossed by the informant as ‘fairy godmother’.
- 4 ‘Claims to leases of crown land beyond the settled districts.’ *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser* 10 June 1848, p. 3. Bundock is also listed as applying for a lease on “Dyraaba, formerly Bridgman” (loc. cit.). This is probably the run that was originally settled by P. C. Pagan. (My thanks to Tricia Mack for providing me with a copy of this article.)
- 5 For a brief overview of the life and death of P. C. Pagan, “Tabulam’s first settler”, see *The Brisbane Courier* 13 March 1928, p. 17.
- 6 First published in 1893, in an edition by Andrew Lang.
- 7 The name of the vessel is more commonly spelt as ‘Fairlie’. According to Hendley (2001: 3), Reeves had arrived on it in 1848. I have been unable to substantiate Feain’s story (2010), according to which there were two Reeves brothers who arrived on a ship called the ‘Fairymount’. (A search of the records gives no indication of any ship by this name arriving in Australia in the period in question. The *Fairlie* is amply attested over a range of years, including 1848.) One of these brothers is said to have named Fairymount Station, while the other named Fairy Hill. This conveniently neat formulation has the tone of folklore, and is not supported by the available (admittedly patchy) evidence.
- 8 This name refers to a run between the former Wyangerie and Ellerby Stations, north-east of the present day town of Kyogle. Not to be confused with the name ‘Richmond Head’ as used to refer to the headland on which Ballina lighthouse (built 1866) stands, at the mouth of the Richmond River.



Parish Map: Kyogle 1903 No. 10709801  
Land and Property Management Authority

# Exploring Eneabba

– Rupert Gerritsen

It is surprising how easy it is to be misled when it comes to Australian placenames, particularly when the name is of Indigenous origin. The potential for confusion arising from differing cultural assumptions and practices in assigning names to locations, localities and physical features in the landscape has been well documented.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, in many cases such placenames can only be understood in their cultural context, such as when they refer to a mythological account in which the named feature, locality or place forms a significant part of the story. But when there are no informants available who have any proficiency in the applicable language, providing an explanation for the name can become even more difficult. Often, by default, ill-founded local traditions then gain currency, becoming in time the accepted derivation. In such circumstances the best hope of arriving at the proper meaning of the placename depends on historical recordings of that language and some form of linguistic analysis. Here Amery's "principles"<sup>2</sup> provide an invaluable guide, as will become evident.

Eneabba (population 300) lies about 280 km north north west of Perth in Western Australia. It is a relatively young town, only being gazetted on 27 January 1961.<sup>3</sup> The area around Eneabba is mostly flat scrubby sand plain, with the town servicing the local farming community and the mineral sands mining industry. The town was named after "a nearby spring," Eneabba Spring, which lies 13 km to the east. This name was first recorded by a surveyor, G. M. Nunn, in 1903.<sup>4</sup> In endeavouring to explain the origin of the name, the current body responsible, Landgate, states that:

*"The meaning is said to be 'small water', from ena meaning water, and abba meaning small. The spring was known as 'Pocket Knife Spring' by the early settlers who told stories of the magical power of a pocket knife dropped in the spring."*<sup>5</sup>

This curious bit of history about the name probably derives from an anonymous typescript held in the Battye Library in Perth, "Native Meanings of Townships North of Gin Gin".<sup>6</sup> This document, which seems to have been written in the 1960s or 1970s, lists a series of placenames and their etymologies, much of which is highly questionable. Typed alongside "Eneabba" is "ENa is water. Thabba is spring; Enathabba is 'Spring Water' (Nellie Parker)", but underneath this, written in by hand, is "Enda = Pocket Knife" "abba = small" "Pocket Knife Springs – Legend amongst early settlers."

The document lists a number of sources at the beginning. The Nellie Parker mentioned is listed there as "a member of the now extinct Carnamah tribe." Carnamah is a town 170 km southward, but there was never any Carnamah tribe as such. While Eneabba sits within an area in which the Amangu language was formerly spoken,<sup>7</sup> Carnamah is considered by some to be in the Amangu area,<sup>8</sup> or on the border of Amangu and Badimaya by others.<sup>9</sup> However, it is not clear in the document what is Nellie Parker's contribution, apart from 'Spring Water', and what is that of the anonymous compiler. Consequently, the language information provided cannot be relied upon.<sup>10</sup>

In endeavouring to arrive at the meaning of Eneabba, the critical question is whether the appellation was being applied



to the locality in which the spring was situated, was it the name of the spring, or was it simply a common noun for a spring? The confusing and uncertain information supplied, upon which the current derivation appears to be based, is certainly not much assistance in this regard. We have: *ena* = water, *abba* = small, *thabba* = spring, *enda* = pocket knife *enathabba* = spring water. I would suggest this information in fact contains a litany of errors, as will become apparent.

As mentioned earlier, the Amangu language was formerly spoken in this area. While there were two speakers alive in 1966, alas no material seems to have been elicited in modern times. Consequently the primary source for the language is a number of word lists compiled between about 1851 and 1959.<sup>11</sup> In those lists the words 'e-na',<sup>12</sup> 'ena',<sup>13</sup> 'enah',<sup>14</sup> 'enner'<sup>15</sup> and 'eena'<sup>16</sup> appear, meaning 'foot'. A feature of Amangu, and its dialectical relative Nhanda, is 'initial phoneme dropping',<sup>17</sup> In cases where there was shared vocabulary with adjacent languages, the initial consonant was often absent in corresponding Amangu and Nhanda terms. So, for example, in most languages from Ngaluma in the north west of WA to Minang on the south coast the words for 'foot' were cognates of 'tjen/tjena/tjin/tjina'.<sup>18</sup> Consequently 'ena' would appear to be an Amangu cognate referring to the foot, with the initial consonant missing. Confirmation of this is the observation that there are no recorded occurrences in Nhanda and Amangu of 'ena', or any cognate of that, as the word for 'water'.

If one considers the word for 'water', there appear to have been two different cognates recorded in Amangu and Nhanda, 'owwa/howa' and the allophonic variants 'apa/aba/appa/abba'. The former was only recorded in the northern part of Amangu, around Geraldton and Dongara, as 'ow-wa',<sup>19</sup> 'ow'wa',<sup>20</sup> 'howah'<sup>21</sup> and 'howa'<sup>22</sup> (hence the placename Howatharra just to the north of Geraldton). Elsewhere in Amangu and Nhanda, the 'apa/aba/appa/abba' form has been recorded.<sup>23</sup> This is another example of initial phoneme dropping. For many languages to the north, as far as Ngaluma in the Pilbara at least, the equivalent terms was 'baba/babba', while to the south, in the Nyoongar languages, it was 'gabi/kapi'. It would seem, on the basis of this evidence that 'abba' actually refers to water. This is confirmed when cognates for 'small', or 'little', in Nhanda and Amangu are taken into consideration, they are all of the form 'puri',<sup>24</sup> ruling out 'abba' as 'small'.

The next etymology for Eneabba based on 'Thabba' as spring, in combination with 'ena' as 'water', is found wanting in the first instance because of the problem that 'ena' was not a word for 'water'. Recordings of terms for 'spring' as a common noun are rare in Aboriginal languages in southern WA, although



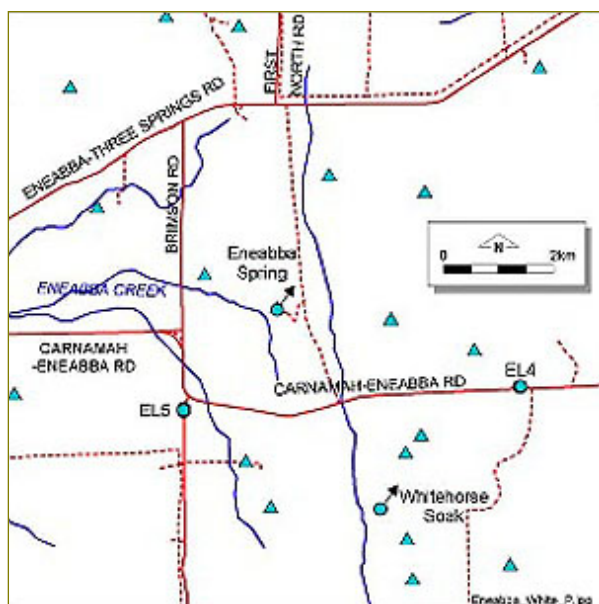
### Exploring Eneabba

what appear to be names for specific springs do occur in the region.<sup>25</sup> While words for ‘spring’, such as ‘ngura’ and ‘ngirgo’, have been recorded in the past in Nyoongar languages,<sup>26</sup> the only example recorded in the Nhanda/Amangu region appears to be ‘-carah’.<sup>27</sup> However, if the word ‘thabba’ itself is considered, it should be noted that Daisy Bates recorded this as a Nhanda term for a stone ‘knife’.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, Nyoongar recordings of the name for such knives have included cognates such as ‘dabba/dabber/dabbah/dtab-ba/tabba/taap’.<sup>29</sup> Consequently, one is led to conclude that ‘thabba’ does not in fact mean ‘spring’ but ‘knife’ instead.

What significance ‘Enda’, the last of the terms suggested as having some bearing on the etymology of Eneabba, has is unclear. Although followed by ‘abba = small’ it would appear that the intent was to ally it with ‘thabba’ as ‘spring’ to produce ‘Pocket Knife Spring’. Apart from the issues of the phonological divergence of ‘Enda-thabba’ from Eneabba, and the conclusion that ‘thabba’ probably meant ‘knife’, ‘Enda’ is also problematic. Clearly it is a neologism, so is it feasible that could have entered the Amangu lexicon by 1903, when Eneabba Spring was actually named? As pocket knives were not common at the time the spring was named,<sup>30</sup> the likelihood of a neologism for ‘pocket knife’ coming into existence in Amangu and then being applied to the spring would appear remote.

Having called into question the basis for the various proposed etymologies for Eneabba, what then is its true meaning? Perhaps the answer may lie in the correct attribution of its linguistic components. With ‘ena’ being the word for foot and ‘abba’ the one for water, the literal translation then is ‘foot-water’. From this I would conjecture the real meaning is ‘ground spring’, water found at the foot, at ground level. As such it would appear to be a common noun and not the specific name of that spring or the general locality. This may have been the meaning that informants were trying to convey when ‘small water’ and ‘Spring Water’ were suggested, just that the linguistic justification became flawed and confused. Some support for the ‘ground spring’ conjecture can be found in a description of Eneabba Spring, one of a number of springs which are formed by a siltstone outcrop sitting “just below the height of the watertable in the Leederville-Parmelia aquifer, and as such represent aquifer overflow.”<sup>31</sup> Consequently I would conclude that the most likely meaning of Eneabba is simply ‘ground spring’.

### Footnotes



- 1 Hercus, L. (2002) Is it really a place name? In L. Hercus, F. Hodges and J. Simpson, (eds) *The Land is a Map: Placenames of Indigenous Origin in Australia*. Canberra: Pandanus Books, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, pp.66-70.
- 2 Amery, R. (2002) Weeding out spurious etymologies: Toponyms on the Adelaide Plains. In Hercus, Hodges, and Simpson, pp.177-8.
- 3 Western Australian Department of Lands and Surveys Nomenclature Index – Eneabba: Western Australian State Records Office. See also <http://www.landgate.wa.gov.au/corporate.nsf/web/History+of+country+town+names+-+e>
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 <http://www.landgate.wa.gov.au/corporate.nsf/web/History+of+country+town+names+-+e>
- 6 Anon. (n.d.) Native meanings of townships north of Gin Gin: State Library of Western Australia: Ephemera - Printed Record 342.
- 7 Tindale N. B. (1974) *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia: Their Terrain, Environmental Controls, Distribution, Limits and Proper Names*. Canberra: Australian National University Press, Maps: Australia SW Sheet; Thieberger, N. (1993) *Handbook of Western Australian Languages South of the Kimberley Region*. pp.70,74.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 e.g. Dunn, L. (1988) Badimaya, a Western Australian language. *Papers in Australian Linguistics* 17: 19-149. *Pacific Linguistics Series A-71*, p.22.
- 10 Daisy Bates in fact recorded ‘gabbee’ as the word for water from an informant from Carnamah around 1905, which is consistent with other recordings from this area. See ‘Native vocabulary compiled by Baandee or Manninggoo (male) of Carnamah’. (n.d.) Section XII Pt.2B.20/folio 42. Daisy M. Bates Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 365.
- 11 Thieberger pp.74-5.
- 12 Foley, R. J. (1865) Vocabulary of the Champion Bay tribe. *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London* 3:297.
- 13 R. T. Goldsworthy (1886) Champion Bay. In E. M. Curr (comp.) *The Australian Race*, vol. 1, p.315.
- 14 ‘Anon. (n.d.) ‘Native vocabulary, Champion Bay, Victoria District (from Leaflet)’. In Section XII Pt.2B.25a/folio 43. Daisy M. Bates Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 365.
- 15 R. T. Goldsworthy, R. T. (1886) Northampton – Eaw tribe. In E. M. Curr, p.315.
- 16 ‘Native vocabulary compiled by Marratharra for Winjarroo of Dhoongara,’ (n.d.) Section XII Pt.2F.1/folio 54. Daisy M. Bates Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 365.
- 17 Blevins, J. (1999) Nhanta and its position within Pama-Nyungan. *Oceanic Linguistics* 38(2):299-302.
- 18 Douglas, W. H. (1976) *The Aboriginal Languages of the South-West of Australia*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. *Australian Aboriginal Studies Research and Regional Studies No. 9*, pp.6,74; Bindon, P. and Chadwick, R. (comps. and eds) (1992) *A Nyoongar Wordlist from the South-West of Western Australia*. Perth: Anthropology Department, Western Australian Museum. p.268.
- 19 Foley p.297.
- 20 ‘Native vocabulary compiled by Marratharra’
- 21 ‘Native vocabulary – Leaflet’
- 22 Goldsworthy – Champion Bay p.317
- 23 e.g. Oldfield, A. (1865) The Aborigines of Australia. *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London* 3:295; Goldsworthy – Northampton p.315; O’Grady, G. N. (1959) “Significance of the circumcission boundary in Western Australia,” BA thesis, University of Sydney p.51; Douglas, W. H. (1976) *The Aboriginal Languages of the South-West of Australia*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. *Australian Aboriginal Studies Research and Regional Studies No. 9*. p.7; Blevins, J. (2001) *Nhanta: An Aboriginal Language of Western Australia*, University of Hawai’i Press Honolulu. *Oceanic Linguistics Special Publication No.30*, p.165.
- 24 O’Grady p.45; See for example Oldfield 3:296 (‘boorie’ - small);

*Continued on page seven*

# Bungle Bungle Range

– Dale Lehner

The tourist guide (available in July 2010) to the Purnululu National Park in the Kimberley region of Western Australia gives information on the naming of the beautiful Bungle Bungle Range. It contains a plea for further details because the origin of the name is far from clear.



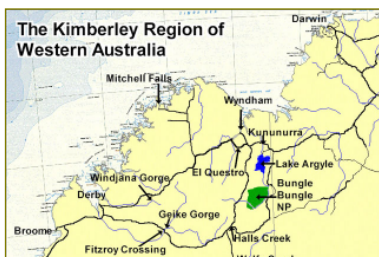
The Bungle Bungle Range  
Photo by Brian Lehner

‘Research by historian Dr Cathie Clement showed that a pastoralist, Arthur Muggleton, started using the term Bungle Bungle in 1930 as the name of a station to the north west of the current park. Muggleton’s mate Fred Terone told Australian author Ion Idriess, in 1934 that they chose the station name because ‘no man can find it who had not been there before.’” Other theories listed in the article include derivation from the local bundle bundle grass, a linguistic corruption of the Aboriginal name Purnululu which when spoken sounds like Burnululu, or another tale about Sam Muggleton who ‘bungled’ a salt mining operation in the area.<sup>1</sup>

It was during the 1980s that a television travel show promoting Western Australia brought the Bungle Bungle Range to prominence. Aerial footage of the towering domes that form part of the range brought tourists eager to see the magnificent structures for themselves. In 1983 the Department of Land and Surveys named the range after Muggleton’s nearby station. The name Purnululu for the World Heritage National Park comes from a Kija Aboriginal word meaning sandstone.

## Footnote

- 1 “Where did the Bungle Bungle Range get its name? Purnululu National Park, Department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia p3



## A further note on Manildra

– David Nash

As Joyce Miles shows in her note on Manildra (June 2010, page 2), the origin of the name is obscure. Yet a few more clues can be added.

Joyce Miles traces the name back to an 1866 Gazetteer. We can take this back 18 years earlier, when the Manildra pastoral run was advertised for sale on page 4 of *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Saturday 18 November 1848 (thanks to <http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/>). Note that there has only ever been one spelling of the name.

A little more feeble light can be thrown on possible origins of the name. We can add the name likely involves the comitative suffix of the local Wiradjuri language. This suffix, reconstitutable as **-dhuray**, occurs on Wiradjuri nominals with the meaning ‘with’, and survives in placenames such as Canowindra, Cootamundra, Gilgandra, and in less well-known placenames closer to Manildra (Nash 1974). To support this analysis of Manildra, we would look for a Wiradjuri nominal of form like **\*manil**, but the extant vocabularies lack a clear attestation of such a root. The closest in form is *Mannirra* (Günther in Fraser p.97) but it is still rather too different, and the gloss (‘to be too heavy to be carried’) cannot be related to the place.

Miles tells us that

According to a local historian, this name could have come from the Aboriginal Millidwa ‘junction of the creeks’, or ‘snake hole’, a name given to a waterhole below the railway bridge.

The form ‘Millidwa’ seems too different to be the source, and I don’t find support for this word in relevant vocabulary sources. The ‘hole’ connection looks like a later inference from the Wiradjuri word **munil** ‘hole’ recorded in early vocabularies such as Gunther’s; however the first (stressed) vowel, assuming it is **u**, would be unlikely then to have been written down as ‘a’ in a placename (we might expect ‘oo’). Also, other placenames with the Wiradjuri comitative suffix are generally derived from a specific fauna or flora term, not a feature generic.

A more distant but helpful clue could be in the neighbouring language to the north, Kamilaroi, where, in relation to the placename Manilla, Ridley recorded *munila ngai yani* ‘I go round about. This river makes almost a circle, and returns to the Upper Namoi.’ (Ridley 1878:239) The modern Gamilaraay dictionary (2003) reconstitutes the word as **manila-y** (verb) ‘to go hunting; to hunt; to find, look for’. The sense ‘hunting’ would have easily been understood as ‘round around’ especially when applied to a verb of motion. The comitative does not usually suffix to a verb, but possibly some similar word might have been used in Wiradjuri, and has not been recorded; if so, its meaning would explain the gloss ‘winding river’ as repeated from the Wikipedia entry on Manildra. It remains to inquire where this recent gloss has come from, as I have not found it in 19th century records of NSW placenames, and there is a noticeable gap in the late 19th century RASA questionnaire. Curiously, in a composite return from the Orange area, there is a section headed ‘Manildra’ with four local placenames but no attention to the name Manildra itself (page 34 of 476 of the RASA PDF). It does seem that all the known ascriptions of meaning to the name are 20th century guesses, and do not derive from knowledgeable speakers of Wiradjuri.



*A further note on Manildra*

**References**

Ash, Anna, John Giacon and Amanda Lissarrague. 2003. *Gamilaraay Yuwaalaraay Yuwaalayaay dictionary*. Alice Springs: IAD Press. <http://www.yuwaalaraay.org/gypublications.html>

Günther, James. 1892. Grammar and vocabulary of the Aboriginal dialect called the Wirradhuri. Appendix D to *An Australian language as spoken by the Awabakal*. Sydney: Charles Potter, Govt. Printer. [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Page:An\\_Australian\\_language\\_as\\_spoken\\_by\\_the\\_Awabakal.djvu/419](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Page:An_Australian_language_as_spoken_by_the_Awabakal.djvu/419)

Nash, David. 1974. The comitative affix in Wiradhuri. ANU Linguistics (Arts) term paper. <http://www.anu.edu.au/linguistics/nash/papers/1974/>

Ridley, William. 1878. Australian languages and traditions. *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Feb. 1878.

RASA: *Royal Anthropological Society of Australasia manuscripts dated 1900*. CD-ROM produced in 2004 by the New South Wales Geographical Names Board.

*Continued from page five - Exploring Eneabba*

Goldsworthy – Northampton p.315 ('pureraber' – little).

25 e.g. 'Ebanawa', 'Yandenooka' and 'Muralyong' in Colonial Secretary of Western Australia (1904) *Western Australian Aboriginal place names (continued)*. *Science of Man* 7(1):9

26 Bindon and Chadwick p.391

27 Bain, M. A. (1975) *Ancient Landmarks: A Social and Economic History of the Victoria District of Western Australia 1839 – 1984*. Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press. p.178n8.

28 Bates, D. M. (n.d.) Section IX Pt.3 'Weapons etc.', p.49/folio 30. Daisy M. Bates Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 365.

29 Bindon and Chadwick p.305.

30 See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pocket\\_knife](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pocket_knife) and [http://www.ehow.com/facts\\_4909777\\_history-pocket-knives.html](http://www.ehow.com/facts_4909777_history-pocket-knives.html)

31 Rutherford, J. L., Roy, V. J. and Johnston, S. L. (2005) *The Hydrogeology of Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems in the Northern Perth Basin*. East Perth: Government of Western Australian, Department of Environment. *Hydrogeological Record Series H11*. p.19.



## A Poem for Australia Day

– Keith Collicoot

It's been called the world's fifth continent, by those who are more eloquent.  
*Downunder's* pretty prominent, and the *Lucky Country's* pertinent;  
*New Holland* was another claim, in force the year old  
 "Cookie" came.  
 Call it *Oz* if you're game—Australia is its proper name.



## Placenames Puzzle Number 36

**Food, Glorious Food**

The clues reveal some placenames connected with food (disregard spelling)  
 E.g. (NT) An open tart with a cakelike filling .....Bakewell

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. (WA) Fuji, Pink Lady, Gala for example, Kings .... or The Southern ....</li> <li>2. (QLD) An oblong coconut sponge cake named after a Lord</li> <li>3. (QLD) Main dish in a traditional Christmas dinner; stretch of sand</li> <li>4. (NSW) Bowl for hand-mixing ingredients; prospect of a landscape</li> <li>5. (NSW) Goes with eggs or in a sandwich; tract of unenclosed waste land belonging to a community</li> <li>6. (NSW) Used for making chips; sharp or tapering end</li> <li>7. (NSW) Popular for afternoon tea with jam and cream</li> <li>8. (NSW) Definite article; thick sauce served with biscuits at parties</li> <li>9. (SA) Large pre-cooked thinly sliced pink sausage sold on deli counters; area of land reserved for public recreation</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. (SA) Smoked or cured ham or thickly sliced bacon; old fashioned kitchen stoves with ovens</li> <li>11. (VIC) Purveyors of meat; chain of hills</li> <li>12. (VIC) Barramundi, snapper, trout etc.; a small inlet</li> <li>13. (VIC) Lettuce, peas, cabbage etc.; floorboards can make this noise</li> <li>14. (VIC) Main meal of the day; not fancy</li> <li>15. (VIC) Uses a lot of dough</li> <li>16. (VIC) Ingredient in a meringue pie; <i>Alex. Pope</i> says hope does this "eternal"</li> <li>17. (TAS) Eaten at breakfast or at Easter; area of salt water separated from the sea by low banks</li> <li>18. (TAS) Pink or red, smoked, tinned, poached; small bodies of water in gardens</li> <li>19. (TAS) Marine bivalve, sometimes used in soup, municipality</li> <li>20. (TAS) Known in Australia as a yabby; small stream</li> </ol> |
|---|---|

© Joyce Miles 2010

**ANSWERS:** 1. Applecross 2. Lamington 3. Turkey Beach 4. Basin View 5. Ham Common 6. Potato Point 7. Scone 8. The Dip 9. Devon Park 10. Gammam Ranges 11. Butchers Ridge 12. Fish Creek 13. Greens Creek 14. Dinner Plain 15. Baker 16. Lemon Springs 17. Egg Lagoon 18. Salmon Ponds 19. Musselboro 20. Crayfish Creek.

# Placenames Australia...

## Become a Supporting Member!

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

The Survey has no funding of its own—it relies on the generosity of its supporters, both corporate and individual. We will try to maintain our current mailing list, as long as we can; in the long term, priority will be given to Supporting Members of the association, to our volunteer Research Friends, to public libraries and history societies, and to media organizations.

Please consider carefully this invitation. If you wish to become a Member, write a cheque to Placenames Australia Inc, or arrange a bank transfer, and post this page to the Secretary at the address below.

To ensure your continued receipt of the Newsletter, even if you are unable at this time to support ANPS by becoming a Member, please take time to tick the appropriate box below and return this form to the Secretary.

Dr Jan Tent, *Placenames Australia*  
Linguistics Department  
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY NSW 2109  
Fax: (02) 9850 9199 Email: [director@anps.org.au](mailto:director@anps.org.au)

Name and/or Organisation:.....

.....  
.....

Address:.....

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

Email:.....

I am unable to become a Member at this time, but please keep me on the newsletter mailing list and send me newsletters  by post OR  by email

Please remove me from the newsletter mailing list

Please note my change of address (new address above)

I wish to become a Member of Placenames Australia (individual)—my cheque/transfer for .....\$25

OR

We wish to become a Member of Placenames Australia (organisational/corporate)—our cheque/transfer for...\$250

Date .....

- Cheques made out to *Placenames Australia*. ABN 39652752594
- Direct tranfer to Bendigo Bank: BSB 633 108, a/c 131212649

## We say thankyou to...

our corporate sponsor, the Geographical Names Board of NSW—and to the Secretary of the Board, Greg Windsor. This year's newsletters could not have been published without the support of the GNB.



## Contributions

Contributions for *Placenames Australia* are welcome.

Please send all contributions to the Editor,

by email: [editor@anps.org.au](mailto:editor@anps.org.au)

Electronic submissions and photographic or other illustrations are greatly appreciated.

Closing dates for submission are:

31 January for the March issue

31 July for the September issue

30 April for the June issue

31 October for the December issue