



**Aboriginal Heritage Stories**  
**Queanbeyan and surrounds**  
**Ngambri Local Aboriginal Land Council**



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**Cover image:** 'Bogong Moth Dreaming' by Jim 'Boza' Williams, © 2000.

The background features a circular arrangement of various Aboriginal art motifs. At the center is a large, yellow, oval shape with a white, shell-like opening and a decorative border of small dots. Surrounding this are several hands in different colors (grey, brown, yellow) and various butterfly designs in shades of brown, yellow, and grey. The entire composition is set against a light, textured background.

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## Acknowledgments

This community project would not have been possible without the support and direction of the Ngambri Local Aboriginal Land Council, based in Queanbeyan, and the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage. The collection, collation and publication of the stories has involved a number of people over the past four years including Cathy Vincent, Paul House, Col Williams, Cheryl Williams and Susan Dale Donaldson. Racheal Brühn undertook graphic design work, Penny Cook and Alison Worthington edited the collection, Sonia Bazzacco produced the map and the historical content in 'remembering our ancestors' is based on the work of Ann Jackson-Nakano.

A special 'thank you' to the five Aboriginal men and five Aboriginal women who generously shared their life stories and photographs for this publication. Your stories will broaden awareness and understanding of how it has felt to be an Aboriginal person living in Queanbeyan and in townships across country New South Wales, today and over the past century.

Ngambri LALC would also like to express their appreciation to Holcim (Australia) Pty Ltd for supporting the book launch celebrations.

## Dedications

This book is dedicated to Ngambri - Ngurmal ancestors.

Sadly, Victor Dunn and Shirley Knight, who graciously contributed to this publication, passed away before it was finished.



# Introduction



Ten Aboriginal women and men have contributed to this publication to help raise the profile of the unique historical experience of Aboriginal women and men living in the Queanbeyan region of New South Wales today. They have talked about their lives leading up to the time when they moved to and settled in Queanbeyan, with many of the men and women having relocated to the area from various parts of central New South Wales. Whilst some families moved back to Queanbeyan to reconnect with their ancestor's country, others left their traditional lands and moved to Queanbeyan to find work, education and a stable place to call home.

During the late 1800s, the NSW Government forced Aboriginal people to live on government reserves, missions and stations across New South Wales, usually with disregard for the placement of other family members and the location of tribal lands. Recollections of life throughout the mid-1900s on 'Hollywood Mission' near Yass, 'Erambie Mission' near Cowra, and 'Brungle Mission' north of Tumut, reveal the interconnections between the story tellers, their kin and a web of places across country New South Wales. Families moved between base locations searching for work, education and to keep kin together during the welfare era. Memories of these times carry sadness, joy and nostalgia. The story tellers share a sense of loss when remembering elders who have passed away and the children who were stolen.


Each individual story gives a brief insight into how Aboriginal people contributed to the social and economic development of the places they called home, and to the cultural fabric of their community. In an era when segregation was the norm and Aboriginal citizenship rights did not exist, Aboriginal people had marginal options, hence manual labour was often done in exchange for no wages; the landowners usually offered food and rudimentary shelter for the workers and their immediate families. When low paid,

unskilled work was offered, daily meals consisted of farm produce combined with possums, crayfish, echidna and kangaroo, whilst accommodation comprised tents and bush shelters established along local rivers.

This publication highlights the broad range of work undertaken by Aboriginal people across country New South Wales throughout the 20th century including, but not limited to, hay carting, railway construction, bullock transport, water carting, house cleaning, fruit picking, child minding, teaching, fencing, rabbiting, stock work, carpentry, mining, timber milling, slaughtering and burr chipping. These tasks were essential to the economic growth of the region and were proudly undertaken by Aboriginal men and women.

Many of the stories have a recurring theme of how times were hard but life was good; there was always work to be done, fish in the river to be caught and family to be around. Community relationships were very strong as reflected in the stories of celebration and survival. Cultural practices were maintained as children were taught to enjoy roaming the bush, swimming in the river and finding a feed. Playing sport, joining a band, seeing a film and attending town shows were enjoyed by both black and white; common ground was found in these public places.

These cultural connections and histories are very important for the story tellers, for their families and for the broader community, especially when considering the gains achieved when Aboriginal people mobilised in the 1960s to gain Aboriginal citizenship, in the 1970s to establish the Aboriginal Tent Embassy, and in the 1980s to form Aboriginal Land Councils and Legal Services. The process of seeking justice and reconnecting with traditional lands, wherever they may be, is an integral component to the identity of the Aboriginal men and women who call Queanbeyan home today, in 2014.



*'...Dad had to take out an exemption ticket and declare himself a non-Aboriginal, so we could attend school...'*

**Ethel Baxter**

*'...we use to throw a bike wheel in the shallow end and trap the fish. That's how we went fishing; we caught the biggest and the nicest crayfish you have ever eaten..'*

**Victor Dunn**

*'...in those days travelling with our grandparents was really a wonderful experience. Being taught the bush ways of life and listening to the stories...'*

**Matilda House**

*'...I loved living on the Lachlan. It was really a special place for me. We had our own swimming hole and a swing hanging down from the tree...'*

**Shirley Knight**

*'...you really had to live under strict rules at the mission. You had to see the mission manager for bread in the morning. That was your daily ration of bread...'*

**David 'Crocket' Newton**

*'...it was certainly a different environment back in those days, where families, relatives and kinships were much closer...'*

**Col Williams**

*'...Canberra is my great grandfather's country and the Bogong Moths are my totem...'*

**Jim 'Boza' Williams**

*'...it most mostly seasonal work for the old people. It was a hard life. You just didn't get a fair go if you were Aboriginal...'*

**Wilga Munro Williams**

*'...My Aboriginality comes from my great great grandfather, John Luke Barber. He was known as a good worker...'*

**Dale Luke [Barber] Winters**

*'...My family worked really hard at everything. I remember they would hunt and catch rabbits, go picking mushrooms, cherry picking in Young and even cart wood...'*

**Jim Winters**



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*Photo looking out across Weereewaa  
(Lake George) Onyong's birthplace.*





A collection of stylized moth silhouettes in various shades of brown and orange, scattered across the top of the page.

# Remembering the Ancestors

**Onyong** [Hong-kong] was a Ngambri Walgalu man born in the early **1800s**. In 1834 Onyong was recorded as having two wives, Mary and Nanny, and three children [two boys and one girl]. He was found to be living in the mountains beyond the Murrumbidgee, the limestone plains and also Wanniasa [Tuggeranong]. Onyong's tribe was said to be 'Namwich' and the other members of his group included Charley, Tommy, Neddy and Mr Davy. They were described as 'wild blacks who seldom go near the haunts of white men..'. Onyong died in 1852 and was buried in a ceremonious manner on top of a hill at Tharwa.

**Noolup** [Newlop] also known as 'Jemmy the Rover', was a Ngurmial Walgalu man born in the early **1800s**. In 1834 Noolup was recorded as having one wife, Maria. At this time his 'usual place of residence' was recorded as being 'the Limestone Plains', 'the Murrumbidgee' and the 'Condore Mountains' and his tribal group was recorded as being 'Hagen Hope'. Other members of his group included Neddy Cheetmutt, Jacob Pendau, Charley Muntumorko, Billy Macka, Tommy 'Tomima' Hamilton, Captain Brooks and Old Cry. Apparently, Noolup had a fight with Long Jimmy, after Noolup's fellow tribesman Neddy was killed. The tribal payback took place at Tuggeranong. Noolup died in 1864.

**Kangaroo Tommy** or murer.dun.min, was born around **1825**. He was part of Onyong's group recorded in 1844 at Yarralumla. At that time he was married to Kitty, later marrying Jenny. He worked as a 'black tracker' locating thieves in the 1860s, as recorded by Shumack. Kangaroo Tommy died sometime before 1869 at a camp near Emu Bank. Both

Jenny and Tommy were buried at the 'native burial ground' at Glenwood, a property owned by McCarthy on Ginninderra Estate.

**Nanny** or Jun.in.mingo was born in **1826**. She was one of the first, if not the first member of the Ngambri group with a mixed heritage, said to be from a relationship between James Ainslie and an Aboriginal woman guiding Ainslie to Pialligo, where there was 'good land'. Nanny was one of Onyong's wives and had many children who all used the surname of Duncan, including Sarah McCarthy Duncan, who married 'Black Dick' Lowe. Nanny was a close friend of Nellie Hamilton and identified with the Ginninderra district all her life. Nanny tragically died of measles in 1873 and was buried at the McCarthy property, Glenwood, alongside Kangaroo Tommy, Jenny, Bobby Hamilton, and Bobby and Nellie's two children, Eddie and Millie.

**Bobby Hamilton** was born in **1830** and was seen by Samuel Shumack in 1858 when 'the tribe' was camped near Shumack's house at Ginninderra and referred to this group as the 'Pialligo tribe'. Shumack's father saw Bobby break in an outlaw horse; the horse tried every trick in the book to unseat Bobby, with no success. Bobby's wife was Nellie, they had three children, one of whom died in infancy. Their son and daughter, Eddie [Edward] born in 1856 and Millie born around 1860, also died young after contracting measles. They were buried at Glenwood, near Hall, on the property owned by James McCarthy, who always welcomed Aboriginal visitors to his home. Bobby died in Queanbeyan Hospital in 1873 and was also buried at Glenwood.



# Henry 'Black Harry' Williams

**Henry 'Black Harry' Williams** was an Ngambri – Ngurmäl Walgalu man born in the Gudgenby district around **1837**. He was orphaned quite young and brought up under the guidance of Onyong and Noolup. Harry was closely associated with the Murrumbidgee district, particularly Cuppacumbalong, Lanyon and Booroomba stations. Local European children on the surrounding stations were his playmates, and he was referred to as 'Black Harry' by his contemporaries to distinguish him from a local man, from whom he got his 'European' name.

Harry's main camp was at Cuppacumbalong located at the junction of the Murrumbidgee and Gudgenby Rivers. He also had summer camps up in the mountains and acted as a mountain guide for George De Salis and his guests, taking them up Tharwa Mountain (Mt Tennant) and into the alpine ranges. Harry was an accomplished stockman and an excellent sportsman, particularly in running and horse-racing. He broke in, trained and exercised his own horses, which he kept at Spring Station near Cuppacumbalong.

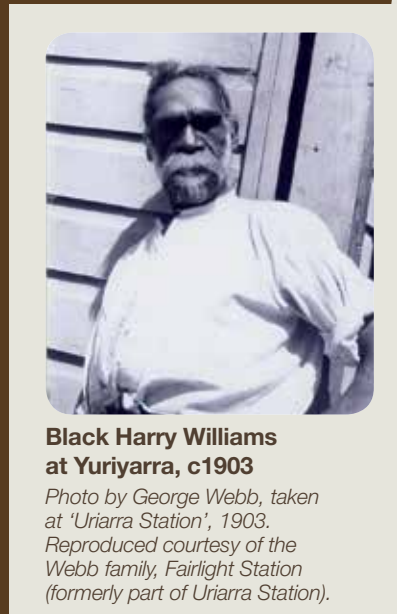
According to his contemporary European friends, Harry always had lots of exciting stories to tell about the Hairy Men of the Brindabellas. When he was in his seventies, Harry told his friend George Webb of Uriarra that as a 10 year-old he watched from behind a rock as his elders killed a 'hairy man' at the junction of the Murrumbidgee and Goodradigbee rivers near Wee Jasper.

Harry married Ellen Grovenor, nee Howe and had three children: Daisy, Harold 'Lightning' and John Roderick 'Roddy' Williams. Following



the death of Ellen in 1903, Harry returned to labouring work on Uriarra station. Harry died while on a trip to Yass in August 1921 and was buried in the Roman Catholic Cemetery in Yass the following day.

Both 'Lightning' and 'Roddy' maintained their ancestral connections to Ngambri – Ngurmäl country, which includes the Australian Capital Territory and parts of New South Wales. Lightning helped run cattle from Jindabyne to the Brindabella Ranges and Roddy worked as a labourer on the building site of the provisional Parliament House and helped reconstruct Yarralumla Farm, which became the residence of the Governor-General. Roddy died at his camp at Russell Hill in 1951 and is buried at Woden Cemetery.



**Black Harry Williams at Yuriarra, c1903**

*Photo by George Webb, taken at 'Uriarra Station', 1903. Reproduced courtesy of the Webb family, Fairlight Station (formerly part of Uriarra Station).*





# Remembering the Ancestors

**Nellie Hamilton** was born in **1840**. Her father was Bobby Deumonga or 'King Bob' of the Molonglo group. Nellie accompanied her father and his three wives (Ireland, Maria and Kitty) to meet George Augustus Robinson, the Chief Protector of the Aborigines, at Yarralumla in 1844.

Nellie had three husbands; Bobby Hamilton, Parson Williams and King Billy from the south coast. Nellie lived a long life, straddling quite different worlds; she maintained her extensive cultural connections across the region and was constantly employed by local European families as a domestic or nursemaid. Nellie was drawn to Queanbeyan, which was a frontier shared by the Molonglo and Ngambri in the earlier days. Nellie died on the 1st January, 1897 and was the only one of the three so-called 'Queanbeyan Blacks' to be buried in Queanbeyan, albeit outside consecrated ground.



Nellie Hamilton was a prominent Aboriginal elder of Queanbeyan and the Monaro.

Right: Photo of Nellie Hamilton and the remains of her house at Morisset Street, Queanbeyan.

*Photo by Ann Jackson-Nakano, with valuable assistance*



## Remembering the Ancestors

**Richard 'Black Dick' Lowe** was a Ngurmal Walgalu man born in Kiandra around 1845. His father was a white man, also called Richard Lowe, and his mother's name is unknown. Dick married Sarah McCarthy Duncan, daughter of Nanny, and they had eleven children, some of whom died young while others produced many children whose modern

descendants are scattered all over the Australian continent. During the 1891 NSW Census Sarah and children were living at Cuppacumbalong, where their son, Dicky Lowe, worked doing odd jobs. Sadly, Richard 'Black Dick' Lowe died at Kenmore Mental Hospital in Goulburn on 30 March 1916.



Kembarri Group photo taken at Lanyon circa 1896. Reproduced with permission from the National Library of Australia; MS 7989 part of De Salis photograph collection.

Sarah McCarthy Duncan (facing group, seated left with small child), Dick Lowe (standing right) and some of their children, with Nellie Hamilton (seated right with dog) and King Billy from the south coast (standing left, with breastplate).



# Remembering the Ancestors

**Johnny Taylor** was born in **1845** and was the son of Jimmy Taylor. Shumack referred to this group as the 'Pialligo tribe'. Through the 1850s Johnny grew up on 'Gininderra' Station owned by Mr Davis. Jimmy Taylor, Johnny Taylor and Johnny's tribal Uncle Bobby Hamilton were excellent cricketers and played for the Ginninderra Cricket Club. Following the death of his father in 1864, Johnny moved to Tumut and accepted a job as head stockman for Mr E. G. Brown at Blowering. Ironically, Mr Brown had also employed Hamilton in earlier years. Johnny became the resident star of the Tumut Cricket Club and was frequently honoured at the club's gatherings as their highest scorer. Sadly, Johnny succumbed to measles, dying in 1875 at the age of thirty. He was buried at the Pioneer Cemetery at Tumut.

## ON THE DEATH OF THE ABORIGINAL CRICKETER, JOHN TAYLOR.

Farewell to all the games on earth,  
Where honestiy thou play'dut they part,  
Then let me sing the native worth  
Of Jackey Taylor's cricket art.

The willow-bat he handled well,  
And urged afar the flying ball  
His bow is dead on she wicket fell—  
Best all-round player of them all.

We'll miss him at his wanted place,  
Y'ben the next Wagga match is play'd:  
And see no more the Darkey's face  
When friendly after-frost is laid.

Now sports he in another land—  
Perchance a spirit fair and bright  
As any of the chosen and—  
Among the happy sons of light.

Within the many-mansion'ed ball  
I feel there is a place for thee:  
Blackfellow of the white man's fall  
Thou'll rise as sure and fair as her

**June 29.**

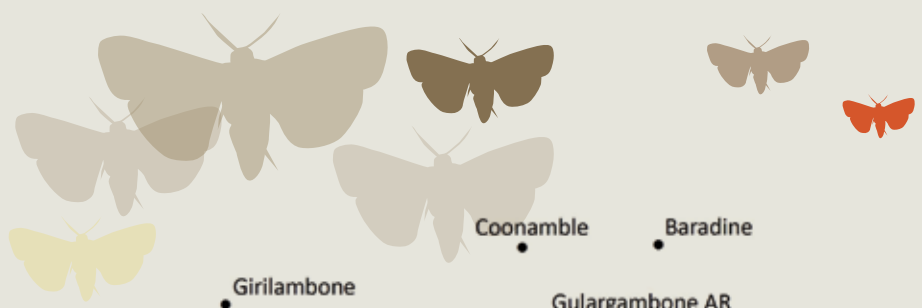
**WHITEFELLOW.**



*Bogong moth sculpture located at AIATSIS, Canberra. Produced by Jim Williams and Matthew Harding for the ACT Public Arts Program 2001.*







Special places mentioned by the story tellers.

Map produced by Sonia Bazzacco.





*Granny Dunn with her grandchild  
Tommy Vincent at Loosik's  
market garden, Wellington 1960s.*



*Ethel's dad [left] and uncle.*

# Ethel Baxter

*"I think mum taught us well, to respect and care about other people, and that's always been my motto too."*



*Ethel Baxter.*

## I WAS NAMED AFTER MY TWO GRANDMOTHERS

My name is Ethel Emily Baxter. I was born as Ethel Williams in Dubbo New South Wales in 1944 and was named after my two grandmothers. I am the second eldest child in my family, there are seven of us. My mum's name was Lorna Dunn, she comes from Brewarrina. Her parents were Emily Dunn nee Darcy and Gindin Smith. Emily never spoke about her parents; she was a member of the stolen generation. My dad was Alex Williams. His mother was Ethel Williams and his father was Harry Williams. My grandmother passed away through child birth. I never really had the chance to meet her. Brewarrina is where my parents had met and they married at Coonamble.

## LIFE GROWING UP ON THE STATION

My dad worked on a station outside Gulargambone. A few families lived and worked on the same station so the children had lessons over the radio and that was my first experience of school. My mum and another mother had taken turns teaching the children. The mail man would bring our school work out to us.



*This is my mother and father, Lorna Dunn and Alex Williams.*





*My brother Billy and dad  
at Baradine around 1948.*



*Mum with her sisters; Vivienne on the  
left, mum and Pearl on the right.*

We would live in the shearer's quarters most of the time but when shearing season was on we moved into tents so the shearers would have the quarters. I remember my dad working seven days a week as a station hand; he did not shear.

Dad ended up getting so sick that we moved into Baradine for a while but then dad got so ill we moved to Dubbo. From Dubbo we moved to Wellington to be closer to my grandmother, Emily, and that's where we lived on the market garden. I remember meeting Harry Phillips, his nick name was 'Mudgee' because that was the town he had come from. I remember seeing this old man with the biggest smile on his face and a bunch of red roses he brought to mum the day dad died.

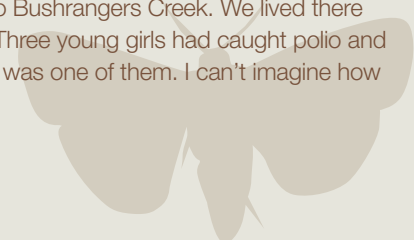
We lived in a shack in the market garden and I remember my dad going to hospital and he never came home. I was only 10 years old when I lost my dad.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE**

Just before my dad passed away he went to see the school principal at Gulargambone Public. Dad had to take out an exemption ticket and declare himself a non-Aboriginal so we could attend the school. That is why I find education very important, as an Aboriginal person, because of what he had done for us. In Wellington, we would walk three miles to school and I laugh to this day, I would have to put cardboard in my shoes because of the holes from walking so much, but we never complained. It was something we just had to do. I was in third class then and I liked school.

## **LIVING AT BUSHRANGERS CREEK**

When Wellington got flooded we moved from the market garden to Bushrangers Creek. We lived there for a few years. Three young girls had caught polio and my sister Donna was one of them. I can't imagine how



devastating it would have been for my mum at the time. She was a very strong woman and after that she just more or less lived for her family, she took great care of us.

I remember the house that we lived in. Mum used to get galvanised iron, and cut out a willow branch to use as one of the beams, I remember this one beam had leaves coming from it so we had an indoor garden! We had chores; every day we would sweep the floor because they were only dirt floors. We used fennel to splash around and settle the dust. It would settle like cement.

Mum divided the rooms with hessian bags, she would use newspaper as wall paper to stop the cold air coming in. You had to plaster the walls with it and we would sit and read the walls. We slept in them big old cast iron beds with big bags stitched together for doonas and blankets. We always had a lot of children coming through our house. I guess my mum was one of those ladies that made everybody feel welcome, so all the children would be in the same bed which really kept us warm.

## MY MUM, SHE WAS ONE IN A MILLION

My mum was a very strong lady to look after six of us and at the same time as she was working in the market garden. When things were tough she'd go rabbit hunting! We were pretty lucky to live on the market garden and we had plenty of veggies. Mum could get the cheapest cuts of meat. She was a good cook so we always had a nice meal on the table.

Mum had the basic things in life; we made do with what we had. Mum had a little battery radio that she would listen to. She had a table in the kitchen and old tin drums for seats. I remember mum putting little clothes over the drums and she also had a cupboard in the



*My pop Gindin Smith holding two of my cousins; Johnny and Richard Welsh.*

kitchen which had pieces of cloth hanging from it and that's where she kept her plates, cups, tins of food, flour and sugar with the meat safe alongside it. I remember it made such a difference.

I remember the fire place which didn't have a chimney and our cast iron pots which hung from it. The winter was pretty cold so mum would have a big steel fire bucket in the middle of the kitchen and the old people would sit around it to keep warm. The cold weather really knocked them around, I guess us kids didn't really feel the cold. I'll also never forget the old smelly kerosene lamp.



We use to have a big bath tub that we used to carry water from the river to wash ourselves. The girls would go first and then the boys. We would wash our clothes in a cast iron tub and then Mum would hang the washing over the briar bushes. I remember the old cast iron later on and then mum had the old Shelite iron.

Sitting with mum and hearing the stories of what life was like when she was a little girl was the best stories in the world.

It was a really hard life for my grandparents. I remember my mum telling us about the old days, how they travelled all along the Lachlan River, all the drovers and shearers going from one property to the next telling us about life through the Depression having to live on pigeons and all the children in the back of the wagon.



*Me as a child in the market garden, Wellington.*

## NEW CLOTHES FOR THE WELLINGTON SHOW

When the show was on we would get new clothes and shoes. I remember the Bobby Tuet and Jimmy Sharman's boxing tents. I laughed; all the Aboriginal kids didn't have to pay to get in because one of the Aboriginal boxers would lift the tent up and let us slither under.



*This is me and my brothers and sisters at the showground in Wellington in 1960. I am at the back, Harold is in front of me, Irene is next to me, Donna is in the front with Alec.*





## LOOK WHAT GRANNY GOVERNOR SENT ME!

Mum was in hospital at one time and we were living at Peak Hill with Granny Dunn. I laughed; Granny Dunn had sent us down to see Nan Governor who had a parcel for Granny Dunn. We thought it must have been fish and chips because it was wrapped in brown paper and we were ripping it and putting our fingers in it and licking them. It tasted nice at the time.

Once we had got back to Granny Dunn's house Nan had opened the parcel and said "Oh, look Nan Governor sent me a goanna!" I was out the back door trying to make myself sick thinking it was fish and chips.

## YOU ARE WHAT YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU MAKE OF YOURSELF

I found life to be pretty good for me as a kid. I didn't have any problems; the only thing was there was a lot of prejudice. If we went to the pictures in Wellington we would have to sit down the front and look up at the picture screen which left us with a stiff neck by the time the night was over. The only good thing about sitting down the front was the kids behind us would throw lollies at us, thinking they were hurting you, but we didn't really mind because we would pick them up and eat them! Often we would try and sneak up the back of the theatre especially if we had boyfriends but you would see the torch light coming around and you were hunted back down the front again.

As a teenager I found it to be ok. I had a couple of really good friends, they were both Chinese. Living on the market garden meant that we had a lot of Chinese people around us. I made a lifelong friend with Yvonne Loosik. We called her Bonnie and to this day we have



*Granny Dunn aka Emily Dunn  
nee Darcy in the market  
Garden Wellington.*



*This is me in the Wellington  
market garden, 20 years  
of age.*



*Donald and me in the early days,  
Wellington.*

kept our friendship. Our children would play together and they live down this way today. I remember working in the market garden and when I looked up and all I could see were vegetables; rows and rows of them for as far as the eye could see.

The Chinese people never really had any prejudice towards them so I would often wish I was Chinese, I would walk around squinting my eyes so that I looked Chinese. When I look back now I know how silly I must have looked. You are what you are and what you make of yourself.

## WE DIDN'T KNOW ANY OF MUM'S LANGUAGE

One thing we didn't know was mum's language. None of the old people taught us and we never thought to ask. We would pick up a few words from the old fellows in Wellington, they often told us different words. They would come and go for the seasonal work. That was good because we got to know lots and lots of people and today some of those people are still friends; so we have friends in Bourke, Brewarrina, Walgett, Moree, Dubbo and all around the outback.

Mum passed away at the age of 50 in 1971. I think it was all the hard work and the struggle and heartache she went through. I think mum taught us well, to respect and care about other people, and that has always been my motto too. You really need to keep that respect amongst family. My mum; she was one in a million.

## I FELL IN LOVE WITH QUEANBEYAN BUT SORRY 'NO ACCOMMODATION'

When I was 20 I met Donald Baxter. We had Adrian and Donald then moved from Wellington to Sydney. In 1972 we moved to Queanbeyan just after mum passed away. My sister Beverly Smith was sick and had to go to hospital. I stayed and helped with the children, mind you I had to convince my husband to come to Queanbeyan.

It was hard to find accommodation in Queanbeyan 'No flats or houses for rent'; we got the same reply so we lived with my sister. There was this one estate agent who said if my husband could paint this unit we could live there. My husband found work in the housing industry and after a year we moved into our housing commission home. When the children were old enough for school I had a part-time job working for Woolworths.



## CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

I have always been active within my community. I clearly remember the 1965 freedom rides that travelled through Western NSW. Charles Perkins and Gary Williams led other Sydney University students. I was 21 at the time.

In 1986 I formed the Aboriginal Education Consultative Committee in Queanbeyan to promote and support Aboriginal education; the teachers and principals are very involved. In 2003 I won an award for Elder of the year, and in 2007 received the Healthy Communities award. I was named Queanbeyan Citizen of the year on Australia Day in 2009. That was a very proud moment in my life. I had the opportunity to run in the Queanbeyan City Council elections in 2004 and although I wasn't elected, I am proud to say that at least I had the opportunity of doing so.



*In 2009 I was the Queanbeyan Citizen of the Year.*



*This is me with all my grandchildren.*

I have worked at Karabar High School for ten years, first as a Teacher's Aide and later after completing formal qualifications at university; as an Aboriginal Education Assistant. I did enjoy it.

## CARING FOR OUR CHILDREN

I have three beautiful children and 12 grandchildren and I am a foster carer. I love having children around me, hearing their laughter and seeing them smile. I can say I know how my mother would have felt and the enjoyment she had from her children. I couldn't imagine life without them.





*My mother Mona Dunn.*



# Victor Sylvester Dunn

*'...Emily Dunn was my grandmother. She was the loveliest lady that had reared me up...'*



*Victor Dunn.*

## BORN IN NYNGAN

I was born in Nyngan NSW, on the 29th October 1941. My father was Sylvester Murray and my mother was Mona Dunn. George Dunn was my grandfather and Emily Dunn was my grandmother. She was the loveliest lady that had reared me up. I am the second of six; Valerie was first, then me, then George, Amy, Harold and Richard.

## JOHNNYCAKES FOR SCHOOL LUNCHES

We had lived in a few places; Gulargambone, Girilambone, Wellington, Peak Hill and Dubbo. My grandmother she didn't have much in life. All she worried about was the grandkids. Every Sunday we would have the big dinner and people would get together and have lunch. At one stage she had 16 kids.

We used to take Johnnycakes and damper with golden syrup on it for lunch at school; it was yummy.

## SUNDAY CHURCH

Every Sunday we would go to church but the old people still believed it was the earth that was their God.



*Victor, Amy and George late 1940s at the Wellington Show.*



## GROWING UP ALONG THE BELL RIVER

*'...nan had a small place along the river and that's where we grew up along the Bell River, Wellington...'*

Nan would often say that the old people used to come and camp along the river and that's why nan had a small place along the river and that's where we grew up, along the Bell River, Wellington. I asked nan why we lived here. The floods they were pretty bad. We would have to carry everything up on high land.



*George Dunn, 'Frimpy Towney' and Victor Dunn aged 17 years old; 1958, at the Wellington Show.*

## THE NICEST CRAYFISH YOU HAVE EVER EATEN

We used to go throw a bike wheel in the shallow end and trap the fish. That's how we went fishing. We caught the biggest and the nicest crayfish you have ever eaten. Water rats made good eating as well and we would sell the skins of the rats, possums, rabbits and foxes.

## CHRISTMAS TIME WAS REALLY FUN

Christmas was really fun. Not a lot for Christmas, the girls would get the little dolls and the boys would get boxing gloves or even something for school. We always had the best Christmas dinner though.

## MY BEST MATE WAS MY BROTHER

My best mate in life was my brother George Dunn; we would do everything together. All the boys just hang ...playing marbles and hunting.

We enjoyed the dances. That's all we had; they were good fun.

## WORKING IN THE SHEARING SHED

My Uncle Harry Darcy had given me a start in the shearing sheds; that was my first job. I was working in the shearing sheds Northwood side, around Gulargambone and I was getting 11 pounds a week. That was a lot of money in them days.

## BURR CHIPPING

When shearing season was over we would then go chipping burs. Bathurst Burr, Galvanised Burr they were the worst of the lot. It was hard work.





## BOB TUET'S BOXING TENT

Bob Tuet was a little man. He came from Mudgee with a boxing tent. He was a good man. All the Aboriginal men would follow him around boxing for a few months in his tents.

He would often feed us by going out shooting a bunch of galahs. You would get subs off him; it was like a loan, and when Bob was touring we were able to pay him back. So when pay day came around we were getting more subs off him. It was funny, we were always broke.

## WORKING TO PLAY FOOTBALL

*'...the school teacher had gotten me that job because they wanted me to play football and in those days if they wanted you to play football they would get you a job...'*



*Victor Dunn, 'Caltex Rugby League Knockout', Wyangala, 1966.*



*Caltex Rugby League Knockout', Wyangala, 1966. Wyangala won the final against West Wylong 16 - 0; Victor Dunn front row on left.*

After all that I had a job working the bar along the dam for about 5 years. It could have been longer, the school teacher had gotten me that job because they wanted me to play football and in those days if they wanted you to play football they would get you a job.

I played football for the Wellington Reds; I was 17 at the time. I think they are called the Wellington Roosters now.

I then went to play football for Cowra and then I had a job at Wyangala Dam. I had stayed in Cowra for about 5 years.



## MARRYING A LOVELY LADY

I married a lovely lady by the name of Beverley Keed from Peak Hill. We had a happy life together Bev and I had a beautiful daughter also named Beverley Kay Dunn. We were married for about 13 years.

We moved to Queanbeyan in 1968 as I was playing football with the Canberra Workmen's Club. I worked in this area for 20 years or more. I worked on the National Library and then after that I worked for the Yarralumla Shire as weed inspector. I did that job for a few years; it was good fun.



*Our wedding day, Peak Hill 1964.*



*Four generations: Amy, Beverley and Victor holding 3 month old baby Jorja. Queanbeyan 2007.*





*In the 1980s there was a demonstration in front of Old Parliament House about land rights and other issues.*



*My great great-grandparents Frederick 'Babbo' Freeman and Sarah Broughton around 1948, probably taken at Brungle Mission.*

# Matilda Williams House

*'In those days travelling with our grandparents was really a wonderful experience. Being taught the bush ways of life and listening to the stories...'*



*Matilda House 2013.*

## BORN IN COWRA

My mum and dad moved from Yass to Cowra and soon after I was born. Mum then had another nine kids, and being the eldest of ten, I was always helping Mum and dad with my siblings a lot. I remember getting my brothers and sisters to school from an early age and supporting them in their meals, sport and homework.

My mother and father were Pearl Simpson and Harry Douglas Williams. Mum's parents were Louise Wedge and 'Froggy' Ruben Jack Simpson. Dad's parents were Cissy Freeman and 'Lightening' Harold Williams, we called him Grampy.

## MOVING AROUND TO AVOID WELFARE

During the 1950s we moved between Erambie Mission in Cowra and Hollywood Mission in Yass, mainly to avoid welfare. Dad played Rugby League for both Yass and Cowra but his work took him mainly to Cowra.

At Erambie we lived next door to Nanny Louise. Grandfather 'Froggy' lived in the men's quarters; he was always looking for work. Living on Erambie with mum and dad I learnt a lot of things from them. They taught me how to cook; a wonderful task. Mum taught me



*Matilda with her great-aunt Violet at Hollywood, Yass, c. 1952. Hollywood Aboriginal Reserve.*



*This is me at School at Erambie Mission I was five years old. This photo was sent to me by Mr King, my old school teacher.*



*Cowra Public School when I was eight years old. I am in the middle of the front row.*



all the basics of many ingredients; flour, salt, dripping, sunshine milk, meat, fresh vegetable when we could get it, tea, sugar, jam, making brownies and damper. My father did not accept rations but we sometimes got them off Nanny Lou and others. Everything was in moderation as well as johnnycakes, onions, gravy, soups, Sunday roasts. I was taught how to bring all those things to the table. Mum showed me how to make bread and butter puddings, curries and cook rice. Most of our food back then was prepared on an open fire and old wood burning oven. My aunts also did some great feeds, but mum taught me everything. My brothers and sisters always had a feed, mum would always see to that. Through listening and learning they also became good cooks themselves.

I had my first experience of school when I was five years of age. I went to the Erambie Mission School and my school teacher was Mr King. When the mission school closed down I moved to Cowra Public School,

I remember my grandmother Louise took me on my first day but didn't know which school so she took me to the Salvation Army which was of course the wrong place. I eventually started at the local public school and my three brothers Harold, Arnold and Neville later followed.

My experience of Cowra Public School was both good and bad. I realise now just how we were discriminated against and how this stopped me from learning.

I was a shy girl and always felt as though I shouldn't make any trouble. I didn't learn to read until I was 11 when a teacher took the time to teach me during playtime and lunchtime.



When we were in Yass, we lived with my grandparents Lightening and Cissy on Hollywood. We lived in a corrugated iron house, all the houses at the mission were the same. I attended the mission school and later the Mt Carmel Catholic School. The teacher Sister Pauline looked after me and would send me to the Nun's kitchen for a feed and allow me to take left overs to my grandfather's house on Hollywood.

## A GREAT POSSUM ROAST

Living on Hollywood Mission, my Uncle Mark and Aunty Jacqueline would make great dampers and Uncle Mark could knock up a great possum roast. My father Dougie was a great cook. Listening and watching is the only way to learn. Being the eldest I was always helping mum to make up feeds for my younger brothers and sisters which I never got sick of doing.

## BEING TAUGHT THE BUSH WAYS OF LIFE

Travelling back and forward between Yass and Cowra with Nanny Cissy and Grandfather Lighting we always had a camp stop at the Borowa Road. Grandfather Lightening was a police tracker based at Wee Jasper, that's where he met grandmother Cissy.

Nan and me would make up a feed while Grampy and my younger brother Arnold would care for the horses and fix anything wrong with the sulky. In those days travelling with our grandparents was really a wonderful experience. Being taught the bush ways of life and listening to the stories about the times. Grampy and his brother Uncle Roddy Williams lived and camped in and around Canberra. I was taught to sit and listen to them stories and what connects me to my great-grandfathers' country (Ngambri) and Honyong's (Allianoyongyiga) country as well.



*'Grandfather country' by Matilda House 2010.*



*Me and my mother, Pearl Williams nee Simpson, March 1999. Erambie Mission, Cowra.*



## OUR BEAUTIFUL COLOURED OCHRES

My Uncle Roddy and my dad camped at Russell where the Canberra Defence Academy is now. Dad also stayed at Red Hill later known as Red Hill Hostel where the new Parliament House stands and where our beautiful coloured ochres are found and used in our local ceremonies. By using our local ochres we are able to express our love and connection for our country.

I visited Canberra in the 1950s as a young child with my grandparents Cissy and Lightning; they came here for work. Cissy cleaned homes and Lightning chopped wood and did odd jobs around the place. I remember camping at Red Hill, by a creek that runs into the Molongo River. I have very fond memories of that time. The camp site is still there.

Coming back to connect with the land of my grandfather and great-grandfather I lived in many places including O'Connor where I incidentally met and made friend with girls from the stolen generation. That was in 1963. I was walking to the shops with my young son



*Dad played Rugby League in Cowra.*

Queanbeyan and surrounds



*In the late 1950s I was sent to Bribbaree, NSW to work on a farm as a domestic servant. The property owner's wife made a dress for me and took me to a ball.*

Joe and we stopped to talk, they were very shy, but they soon started yarning with us.

Their names were Lola and Beattie and they were very happy to meet us as much as I was to see them and have a yarn. They had come from the Cootamundra Girls Home as domestic servants for local white families. Slave labour is what it was as I also had gone through similar experiences at the infamous Parramatta Girls Institution. I will skip this horrible chapter of my life; just thinking about it makes me sad.



*Doug Williams singing at the Australian Aboriginal Country Music Festival, Narrabundah Oval 1976.*



*Paul and I sitting in front of our house in Pearce, early 1970s.*

Living in Canberra at first was a bit scary but I found it easy to make friends. After living at O'Connor I moved to the Carotel Caravan Park where my first daughter Julianne was born. I liked living in the park, it was pretty good.

We waited patiently for four years to be allocated a 'Govy' house in Pearce; this was the same time as the 1967 referendum. It was a three bedroom house with the biggest backyard I had ever seen. We were one of first families to move in to Pearce. My son Joe started school at Chifley Primary and was the only Aboriginal child in attendance. After they built a school in Pearce my four children went there; Joe, Julie, Michelle and later Paul who started school in 1975. At this time I commenced work with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. The main office was located in Woden at the MLC tower.

## ESTABLISHING THE ABORIGINAL TENT EMBASSY

In 1972 the Aboriginal Tent Embassy was established by people for land rights. At that time news had drifted down from Gurindji walk off. My brothers Harold, Arnold, Neville, Boza and Michael helped set up the Tent Embassy. I was there too in a supportive role. The police and others wanted to get rid of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy. I walked, talked and fought it out with the police, government and others who wanted to see the demise of blacks who only wanted justice. The only good thing to come out of the Tent Embassy was the making of the Aboriginal flag. Harold Thomas had done his work well. Even to this day I always thank Harold Thomas for his idea of the flag which has become our identity. The Aboriginal Tent Embassy is still there as a reminder to Australia and the world that the Australian Government has let Aboriginal Australia down.





To this day every state and territory still has not done anything of great significance for Aboriginal people. I often think about how nothing has changed. The mission—welfare mentality is still there and no matter what the government does, no matter how many advisory groups it sets up, nothing changes to improve the health, education and well-being of Aboriginal people.

### SEEKING JUSTICE

After they set up the Aboriginal Legal Service in Redfern in the early 70s, my brother Arnold Williams and myself helped to set up a branch of the Aboriginal Legal Service in Queanbeyan in the early 80s. We fought hard to address the injustices that were putting blacks in custody and making sure they had better legal representation in gaol.

From this Colin Williams, Bomber Ingra, Olive Brown and myself set up a call-out service for those picked up by the police. This call-out service is still ongoing today. It is sad know Aboriginal people are still dying in custody.



*This is me with the Prime Minister Julia Gillard and Jenny Macklin, after doing the Welcome to Country for the 43rd sitting of Federal Parliament in 2009.*



*Matilda, Lake Burley Griffin, 1970.*

In 1983 my brother Arnold set up the Local Aboriginal Land Council in Queanbeyan and called it Ngunnawal. We were all proud. Yass named their Land Council Onerwal and Goulburn Pejar. It was great; it felt as though we were on the road to land rights and justice, so I thought. The ACT Government didn't have any legislation for state Aboriginal Land Councils for traditional owners to have any rights to own land. As much as the ACT Government tried, life still wasn't better because they didn't take the time to listen and learn about Aboriginal people and the custodians of that land, the Ngambri.





## WELCOME TO COUNTRY FOR FEDERAL PARLIAMENT

In 2008, I conducted the Welcome to Country for the 42nd sitting of Federal Parliament. This welcome was a first in the history of federal government. I wore a possum skin cloak made by a wonderful Yorta Yorta girl Treahna Hamn. Treahna had made the cloak by burning the art work onto the skin of the possums. The design included Bogong moths, the rivers and mountains it was so wonderful. For the 43rd sitting of federal parliament I wore a possum skin cloak I made, that when the government apologised to the stolen generation. We wore Treahna's beautiful cloaks again at the 44th sitting of federal parliament, in 2013, when Louise Brown wore one I had made.

## THE HAPPIEST GRANDMOTHER IN THE WORLD

In between all the coming and goings, I raised my family and then the grandchildren came along. This is what made me the happiest grandmother in the world. My grandchildren to me is getting another chance in life. However something went wrong and my grandson Nerrin Nerrin died and I still can't believe he has gone. When this happened I felt sad and depressed and I will always be there for my grandchildren.

All my grandchildren have established themselves working and getting the best education their parents can give them. They are making their own journey in the footsteps of their ancestors to make a better life for themselves. Their journey is just beginning.

This story is some memories of my grown up time and my family, my children and their children always in the struggle. So many memories of people that helped



*'Keeper of the land' painting by Matilda House 2010.*

support us on Ngambri country, my grandfather's and his ancestor's land. I always feel grateful for being a descendant of a great many people of the countries of Wiradjuri, through my grandmother Matilda Freeman and her mother Sarah Broughton; Wallabaloola of the Ngunnawal speakers, through my mother's country and her mother Louise Wedge; Pajong from Fish River of the Gundungarra speakers through the Simpsons and through Black Harry of the Ngambri, and Walgalu speakers. I dedicate this story to my grandson Nerrin.



*From left Veronica, Debra, Shirley, Mona Montey and Maude.  
Absent: Brenda (deceased), Robo (deceased), Percy and Peter (deceased).*

# Shirley Knight

*'...Dad would show us how to catch yabbies. We would catch them quickly with our hands, start a fire, boil them up and eat them...'*



*Shirley Knight.*

## I WAS BORN IN GRIFFITH

My name is Shirley Knight and I was born on the 12.5.1947 in Griffith N.S.W. My dad would call me 'Millie'.

## DAD'S SIDE

My dad's name is Monty Knight. Agatha Goolagong is my nan. Nan lived at 'The Murie' near Condobolin and had the tidiest little tent and the most beautiful voice. Nan would play the piano every Sunday at church and the town people would often talk about hearing us singing on the mission.

After church on a Sunday we would have lunch at Nan's. It was a special day of the week: the roast, pudding, custard and jelly. We would get our rations of a Sunday and it was the women that had done all the cooking. I can remember seeing nan hanging the pudding from the Christmas tree.



*Left to right Pj, Darren, Otis, Leon.*



## MUM'S SIDE

Maude Gwenn Knight is my mother and my grandmother is Sophie Goolagong. My great-grandfather's name was John Johnson; he was raised on a station by the name of Moolabong for 10 to 15 years; that's how he acquired the name Jacky Moolabong. The station is on Billabong Creek, near Moulamein.

Mum would tell us funny stories of when she was young, like playing cricket with paddy melons, hockey at school and the sports carnivals once a year against the kids who lived in town. They would play tunnel ball and the captain ball, and buy black liquorish for a penny. Mum told us stories, growing up.

Mum was a very superstitious lady. She kept her eye on the magpies. If they came to the house, one meant sorrow, two meant joy and of course three magpies meant death. Another bird that wasn't liked amongst the old people was the curlew bird. If they fly over in a flock it meant that the floods are coming and one bird on its own, flying over crying, meant death was coming. The old people really did believe in this.

## MUM AND DAD GAVE US OUR PLACE OF PEACE AND HAPPINESS.

*'...Mum was strict but fair and my dad was a peaceful, quiet man. We had the good times and the bad times ...'*

I come from a family of eight. We had our chores and we had a happy life growing up on the mission as children. We made our own fun but mostly we made do with what we had. Mum was strict but fair and my dad was a peaceful, quiet man. We had the good times and the bad times but mum and dad gave us our place of peace and happiness.



My dad was in the war but didn't really like talking about it. He was in the dispatch and would do the mail run on a motor bike. We only found out about dad being in the war because one of the boys had a motor bike and dad said he could ride it, because of riding the motor bike in the war. Dad hopped on and the bike took off straight into the river. We laughed. We still laugh about that. Later in life dad worked on the council.





We lived two miles from town and right next door to the mission so I went to mission primary school but once you were finished in primary school you had to go to town for high school. I remember the kids getting the cane, including the girls too. Outside the schoolyard was a great big pepper tree. We used to pick the leaves, rub them in their hands and it wouldn't hurt so much; it would stop the stinging of the cane from your hands. It was funny seeing them run to the tree.

The missionaries would ride their bikes to the church along the dusty old road. It was really a great atmosphere in the church. The townsfolk could hear the organ and the gospel hymns. When I go back home I realise how small the church is. It was all good fun. I used to love going to Sunday School and the company of the other children was great. We all got along well.

## LIFE ON THE LACHLAN RIVER

I loved living on the Lachlan. It was a really special place for me. We lived in a little house alongside the river and when the floods came all us kids would be running down to the river with our sticks, measuring the water and yelling back to mum how it was coming up to the veranda. I remember the men would catch crayfish off the veranda. That's how close the flood had come to the house.

Because of all the floods it meant the river water wasn't much good for drinking. Mum would scatter ashes from the fire over the muddy water and within an hour it was as clear as crystal and drinkable. We would always swim downstream because the drinking water was better.

We had our own swimming hole with a swing hanging from a tree. All the girls were scared of the leeches because they would stick on your body and suck the



*My dad Monte Knight.*

blood. The boys would turn the leeches inside out to make it rain. The girls would spend their time making dolls out of wooden pegs and all the kids would play rounders and marbles. After the rain we would slide down the bank into the river on cardboard boxes. We would be covered in red mud from head to toe. It was fun and once we finished we would jump in the river clothes and all and have a wash.



## YABBIES, MUSHROOMS, RABBITS, KANGAROO TAILS AND JOHNNYCAKES FOR US

Mum had shown us a bush by the name of old man weed. We use to bathe in it when we had boils or sores. There was another plant we called Julamine and it tasted like celery. Dad would show us how to catch yabbies. We would catch them quickly with our hands, start a fire, boil them up and eat them. Catching rabbits was also a big part of our lives along with kangaroo tail and fresh mushrooms from across the river.

As soon as it stopped raining we would be out in the surrounding paddocks picking mushrooms. Dad cooked up the best mushroom gravy. We had fresh fruit also from across the river. The boys would make a bridge and sneak over and get quinces, apples and peaches from the fruit orchard. We would go and milk a cow for fresh milk too and I remember the bread man but we never had any money; it was johnnycakes for us.

We also had to collect dry cow dung to burn at night. Living close to the river meant there were lots of mozzies and the smoke from the cow dung would keep them away. Dad would take us kids off into the paddocks with chaff bags; we would fill it up with cow dung, crush it down and then burn it in the open fire place inside. It was that hot everybody would be sleeping out on the veranda in the summer time. I can still remember the smell from just talking about it.

## GOING TO THE MOVIES ON SATURDAYS

We would see a matinee at lunch time and a movie in the evening. It was great. We would even walk into town that was our Saturdays. It wasn't much fun having to

sit up the front. We would come home with sore necks from having to look up at the big picture. A lot of things weren't that fun in town. We weren't really allowed to go into town, except just for the rations

I remember my brothers building a bridge; it was exactly like the bridge in Tarzan, and it worked too. I remember the movie first coming out. We would cross the bridge to see the movie at night. The boys would get ahead of us and in the dark coming back home they would shake the bridge and scare us.

## THE CONDOBOLIN SHOW

I remember every year in August we would get new clothes because the show was coming to town. The main event of the show was The Royal Bells Boxing Tents. A lot of the men would travel around with the show; it was one way of seeing the country. I would take my children to the show when I had the chance; it was great fun.

## MY FIRST JOB

I worked on a farm and the pay was three pound a week. It was a lot of money in them times. I remember the boss saying that I could take home some flaps for my family and me saying 'no thanks i am too flash for that'. When I went home and told mum I think mum was ready to give me a hiding. I laugh about that today.

We were encouraged to leave the mission to look for opportunities in the city and when the time had come I raised my family in Queanbeyan. I found that my boys would go to school and have more opportunities there.







*Celebrating 100 Years Cent*

*Erambie Mission Centenary 1850 to 1950. My mother was on the koori float that drove along the main street in Cowra in 1950. She is in a white dress standing next to the girl with the banjo. She was 16 years of age.*



*Uncle Ginger Simpson, mum's brother, he was a drover. This picture was taken in Cowra and we don't know who the young boy is. It is not me.*



# David 'Crocket' Newton

*'Everyone knows me as 'Crocket' but my name is David Newton and I am a Wiradjuri man.'*



*David Newton.*

## I AM A WIRADJURI MAN

I was born in Cowra New South Wales on the 19 March 1957. I have four children, Dave Jnr, Jason, Aaron and Anne-Marie. I have three sisters, Priscilla, Rhonda and Annette. Sadly both Priscilla and Rhonda have passed away. I have five brothers, Barry, Warren, Tommy, Shane and Anthony.

I was named after my dad, David Newton. My dad came from Cowra. His nickname was 'Duck'. It's funny how Aboriginal people have nicknames for each other. They don't really call them by their real names. His mum's name was Nanny Peena. She was an Ingram. My dad's father was Pop Ruben. Pop was from Cowra and lived behind Erambie Mission along the railway line. They had tents and tin shacks set up there. All the Newtons lived along the Lachlan River. I remember camping along the Lachlan River at one stage too.

My mum was Joan Newton nee Simpson. Mum came from a big family and she was born in Orange, New South Wales. Mum's family moved to Erambie when she was a young girl. She lived with her mother, Nanny Louise Simpson, in the old quarters of the mission. I lived with Nanny Louise from time to time. Times were pretty tough for the old people. You really had to live



*David Newton, Queanbeyan 2010.*



under strict rules at the mission. I remember you had to see the mission manager for bread in the morning; that was your daily ration of bread. You just couldn't get up and go without permission of the manager; you were being watched all the time.

Dad and mum met in Cowra, fell in love and got married.

## THEY WERE GOOD WORKERS

My dad was a pretty smart man; he was able to give us a good life of living and working in the bush. Dad got different contracts on farms doing seasonal work. Dad and my uncles and aunties had a good reputation through New South Wales with the property managers. I remember the managers talking about them and having respect for my people for being good workers, especially my Uncle Slab, Uncle Micky and Uncle Ginger Simpson. Uncle Ginger would put me on the back of a horse to learn how to be a stockman; all the boys would have to go droving when the season was on, only the girls stayed back with the women.

## LIFE IN THE MALLEE IN AN ARMY TENT

When I was six years of age we lived at Tharbogang, just out of Griffith, in a big army tent that mum kept so spotless. When the fruit season was on mum and dad followed seasonal work and made a living with that. My parents had to work hard to get money. I remember in the school holidays we moved to Griffith and I would work picking oranges and peaches. My two older sisters were good workers.

We never went hungry, we always had tucker. Dad would go and get a kangaroo or echidna and we always had fresh fruit and vegetables. We would swim across the channels doing all the fun things kids would do and our fathers would work for the Italians, another big mob in Griffith. It wasn't always hard work for us kids, we had our fun.

One day dad was injured on his drive back to Cowra from Griffith. He was fixing a flat tyre by the side of the road and was hit by a drunk driver. My cousin Crow Williams saved his life. Dad ended up in Sydney Hospital for about six months. It seemed like a long time to us kids, we missed our father. We moved back to Erambie while he was away; we wanted to be with Wiradjuri people, with our aunties and uncles. When he came back he took us off the mission; he was determined to recover. He got some money out of the accident, insurance money and bought some land and houses at Billimari for us to live in.



*David Newton, Billimari, Cowra  
New South Wales.*





*Erambie Mission.*

Key identification and research by Robert Merritt

1 Archie Bamblett 2 Terry Carbre/Carbury 3 Dick McGuinness 4 Harry 'Muddy' Tonkin 5 Mervyn Williams 6 \*\*\* Simpson 7 George 'Benda' Merritt 8 Bert Cray 9 Jimmy Hughes 10 'Genda' Bamblett 11 Daniel Joseph Perry (John Shirl's Grandfather) 12 'Major' Murray 13 Arthur 'Nino' Williams 14 Ray Williams 15 Billy Tonkin 16 Doug Williams 17 John Bugg 18 \*\*\* Murphy 19 \*\*\* Horn 20 Harry Murray 21 Joe Moulder 22 \*\*\* Hughes 23 Frank Broughton 24 Doolan Murray 25 Dave Perry 26 Lachlan Ingram 27 Doris Williams 28 Mrs J. Whitty 29 Mary Murray 30 Gertrude Hines 31 Anne Hines 32 Jane Murray 33 Morris Kennedy 34 Agnes Ryan 35 Mary Simpson 36 \*\*\* 37 Doris Kennedy 38 Thelma Bugg and baby Joyce 39 Mariel Williams 40 Mrs Ashmore 41 'Tilly' Charles 42 Bella Hughes 43 Lizi Ingram 44 Arthur 'Nino' Williams Jr 45 Nureen Williams 46 Sister Bamblett 47 Beryl Whiteing 48 Ruth Tonkin 49 Rouny Newton 50 Lea Coe 51 Mervyn Murphy 52 Dora Williams 53 Louisa Ingram and baby Esther 54 Margaret Draper and baby Clyde 55 Alice Newton 56 Claude Murray 57 Mabel Grant 58 Micky Souden 59 Norman Carol 60 E. Coe 61 Ma Ryan with baby 62 \*\*\* Ryan 63 \*\*\* Bowdes 64 'Tilly' Carbre/Carbury 65 Mrs Murphy 66 Nelly Smith 67 Gertrude McGuinness with baby Ted 68 Hazel Murphy with baby brother Laurie 69 June Murray 70 Margaret Murray 71 Doreen Grant 72 D. McGuinness 73 Kath Wallace 74 \*\*\* 75 Silvin Ingram and baby 76 Joyce Wallace 77 Edna Wallace or 'Dollo' Bamblett 78 Pauline Coe 79 \*\*\* 80 Val Williams-Simpson 81 \*\*\* Bowden 82 \*\*\* Charles 83 \*\*\*



Whiteing 84 Ella Kennedy 85 Connie Whiteing with 86 baby 87 \*\*\* 88 Rosie Whiteing 89 Colin Bamblett 90 \*\*\* 91 Jimmy Wallace 92 \*\*\* Carbre/Carbury 93 Laurie Newton 94 Jean Carbre/Carbury 95 Colin Newton 96 Joan Bugg 97 David Newton 98 Ken Simpson 99 Sam Simpson 100 Gary Draper 101 Isaac 'Lingo' Ingram 102 Philip 'Choc' 103 Clancy Charles Jr 104 Kevin Williams 105 Blaney or Billy Williams 106 Harry 'Buck' Williams 107 \*\*\* 108 \*\*\* Williams 109 \*\*\* \*\*\* Identification not possible.

Carbre/Carbury 3  
'Muddy' Tonkin 5  
Simpson 7 George  
ay 9 Jimmy Hughs  
Daniel Joseph Perry  
12 'Major' Murray  
s 14 Ray Williams

Williams 1  
\*\* Horn 20  
22 \*\*\* Hu  
oolan Mur  
Ingram 27  
y 29 Mary  
anne Hines  
dy 34 Agne  
\*\*\* \*\* 37  
and baby Jo  
Ashmore 41  
3 Lizzi Ingt  
Jnr 45  
Bamblett 47  
onkin 49  
Mervyn Mur  
Ingram an  
er and baby

Claude Murray 57  
owden 59 Norman  
Ryan with baby 62  
64 'Tilly' Carbre/  
66 Nelly Smith 67  
baby Ted 68 Hazel  
er Laurie 69 June  
Doreen  
Wallace 74  
and baby 76 Joyce  
or 'Dollo' Bambliett  
22 M. L. W.



*My sister Priscilla's funeral notice.*



**Rhonda Joan Dolbel**  
**(Newton)**  
**'Boo'**  
**23.5.1955 - 13.6.2009**

*My sister Rhonda's funeral notice.*

Whiteing of Edna Kennedy 85 Connie  
Whiteing with 86 baby 87 \*\*\* \*\* 88 Rosie  
Whiteing 89 Colin Bamblett 90 \*\*\* \*\* 91  
Jimmy Wallace 92 \*\*\* Carbre/Carbury 93  
Laurie Newton 94 Jean Carbre/Carbury 95  
Colin Newton 96 Joan Bugg 97 David  
Newton 98 Ken Simpson 99 Sam Simpson  
100 Gary Draper 101 Isaac 'Lingo' Ingram  
102 Philip 'Choc' 103 Clancy Charles Jnr  
104 Kevin Williams 105 Bluey or Billy  
Williams 106 Harry 'Buck' Williams 107 \*\*\*  
\*\*\* 108 \*\*\* Williams 109 \*\*\* \*\*





## LIVING IN A HOUSE AT BILLIMARI

So when I was about eight or nine we moved into the old farm houses at Billimari, just north of Cowra. There were two houses and because pop was a builder by trade, he was versatile; he did everything, I still remember him coming out to the property to fix things up. Dad was always away working.

We lived in one of the houses and rented the other one out to a Koori family. We all went to school out there, that was primary school and for high school we caught the bus to Cowra. There was no water out there, so dad used to fill up 44 gallon drums with water from the Lachlan River. Years later council piped water from Cowra to Billimari. I lived there for nine years, I guess you could say I spent most of my childhood there but we always went back to Erambie Mission to visit family. Mum and Dad would take us back to see our people, aunts and uncles and cousins. I especially enjoyed spending time with well-respected elders like Aunty Pearl, Aunty Pansy and Uncle Doug. I have some happy memories of going back to Erambie for Christmas.

## FOLLOWING IN OUR FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS

When we were still living at Billimari, I lost my dad and Uncle Ginger Simpson 18 November 1972. Both died tragically in a drowning accident in the Lachlan River. The current got them. I was 15 and mum sold the property; it was too much for her. She got sick and moved back to Cowra. I moved around a lot after that. There were nine of us, so I did not want to burden mum. She pined for dad but she battled on. All us boys moved on. We were workers, following in our father's footsteps.

*'...I thank my Dad and Uncles for teaching me the skills and knowledge to be a hard worker...'*

I moved around following work. I worked on tractors, cattle mustering and fencing. I also drove a stack cruiser and carted hay for many years, well for six to eight months each year. I've still got scars on my fingers from the bail hooks. I remember one time going out and picking up dead wool with Uncle Micky. We'd sell it for some extra money. The property manager Col Pengelly once asked me, 'What's your name?' I said 'Dave Newton.' He said he remembered my dad and my uncles as good workers; they worked for his father Norm. Col asked me to come and work for him. I thank my dad and uncles for teaching me the skills and knowledge to be a hard worker.

In the early 80s I completed a carpentry and joiner apprenticeship and worked to rebuild some of the old mission buildings at Erambie Mission. I did three and a half years there and built the day-care centre where my grandchildren go to today. I was transferred to Moruya with the Public Works Department. I worked at Broulee, Moruya, Batemans Bay; we were Aboriginal carpenters and worked all over. I finished my apprenticeship in Moruya in 1989. After that I moved around following building work, along the coast, back out to Cowra, and to Queanbeyan.

## LIFE IN QUEANBEYAN

I first came to Queanbeyan when I was 17. Me and Uncle Micky got work at the quarry at Mugga Lane. I lived with my sister Rhonda in Queanbeyan. Later I had three boys in Cowra: David, Jason and Aaron and then after I moved to Moruya I had Anne Marie. We keep in contact with each other. I have 14 grandchildren but no greats.

I returned to Queanbeyan in 1996 for work and to visit my sisters and brother. I got work in Queanbeyan doing Landcare. That's how I came to know all the native plants. I have been in this house for 17 years now; it could be the longest I've been anywhere. I am happy here; I live in a quiet area with good mates around. We look after one another. I was raised to respect everyone, especially the elders.





*L to R: James A Williams (Jim) (Father of Sandy, Billie, Bluey, Kevin, Nell and Elsie) taken with his brothers Peter and Arthur (Neno) at Brungle.*



*My dad Roy [Sandy] Lawrence Williams aged seven with his father James Andrew Williams at Brungle Mission.*



*L to R: Bluey John Williams (in check shirt), Peter Johnson (centre) and Donny Tompkins.*

# Col Williams

*'I remember my grandmother would take us fishing, I guess that is why I really enjoy it today...'*



*Col Williams.*

## BORN AT HILLSTON

I was born in 1958 at Hillston, western New South Wales, which is 100 miles on the other side of Griffith. That is where my mother's parents lived and where I spent a lot of holidays as a child. I remember my grandmother would take us fishing. I guess that is why I really enjoy it today. I really looked forward to those holidays. I am now over 50 and look back fondly on my years for growing up and having closer contact with my relatives. It now feels just like yesterday.

I'm more or less in the middle of my family. I have two older sisters and two older brothers plus two younger brothers and one younger sister, so there are eight of us kids altogether, including me!

My dad is Roy Williams but was commonly known as 'Sandy' and he comes from Brungle Mission, the same as my Nan. Our nan is Amy Williams, who is well known in the Brungle-Tumut area. My pop's name is Jim Williams.

My mum was born in Narrandera, the same birthplace as my wife. My mum lived at Warangesda Aboriginal Mission, close to Darlington Point, sometime in the 1920s. How they finished up at Hillston is still a mystery.



*Me and my son Craig Williams,  
Narrandera 1979.*



*Brungle All Black Rugby League Team '1930' D. Davis,  
A. Williams, F. Simpson, P. Williams, F. Collins,  
G. Duncan, W. Tonkins, C. Penrith, J. Wallace, W.  
Podham, R. Hickey, P. Freeman, F. Broughton.*



*'Bluey' John' (in singlet)  
and Kevin Williams.*





Mum has now passed away. Her brothers have also passed away except for one, Uncle Colin. Mum's three aunts are Auntie Pattie is living in Griffith, Auntie Carol is living down at Shepparton and Auntie Kay is in Tamworth.

## LIFE IN YOUNG NSW

I remember my days growing up around the cherry orchard out from Young, and Cowra being so close. Dad would take us to Erambie Mission. Growing up on the cherry orchard was quite good. I remember one time at home a storm had come through and ripped the roof off the house. Mum and dad moved all the kids into the Army Barracks. Mum told me later I was still in my bed asleep and they realised I wasn't there and they had to go back for me.

I remember my grandparents on my father's side, but dad's father died when I was young, as did two of my uncles on dad's side. One auntie is left to tell their story now. Mum died in Brisbane in 2000. She was 72.

## I AM REALLY PROUD OF MY HERITAGE

It was certainly a different environment back in those days, where families, relatives and kinships were much closer; a point that now seems lost to our young generations, trapped as they are in a mainstream environment that moves so fast.

I imagine life would have been difficult for Mum and Dad, I think the reason why we grew up in Young on a cherry orchard in the late 50s and early 60s was

because Aboriginal people weren't allowed to vote until after the 1967 referendum. I think in all honesty and logical reason they moved out of the way to protect all us children and to have a low profile themselves because of the way the government managed Aboriginal people.

## THE 1967 REFERENDUM

After the 1967 referendum we moved into Young. We got a housing commission house in town, which mum had fought hard for through the local member of parliament. It seemed quite strange when we moved in. I remember one morning my sister running out the back door to go to the toilet I said 'No, no. We have a toilet inside now!' We grew up there and then moved away. I have a sister in Cowra and another living out towards Grenfell on one of the farms.

I actually moved to Canberra in 1974. Our eldest daughter was born here. In the late 70s we moved back to Narrandera for a while and lived in the country. In the late 80s we were back in Canberra again.





*My brother Wayne [Jim] and mum,  
Brisbane 2002.*



*My brothers and sisters... in Sydney at Wayne's  
Wedding. 2004.*





My daughter Tanya, who was born in Canberra, identifies with the local Aboriginal community here, whereas my other two children Natasha and Craig identify with the Wiradjuri because they were born in Wiradjuri country. I now have 12 grandchildren scattered about!

Nowadays, my family and I are settled in Queanbeyan. I have a long history of working in Indigenous Affairs, including with the old Aboriginal Consultative Group, in Canberra, TAFE NSW Aboriginal Education Unit and

the Housing Unit. I worked with the Corrective Services in Brisbane's Aboriginal Unit for 10 years looking after Aboriginal programs across the state, and then back down to Canberra in 2006.

I also spent some time working at Boomanulla Oval and now at the Ngambri Local Aboriginal Land Council, utilising our assets and developing employment opportunities and carbon trading. My favourite pastime however is fishing!



*My son Craig and my grandsons Tre [standing], Corey holding Junior and Jordan on the right. 2009.*





*Bogong Moth Dreaming - Tidbinbilla,  
Jimmy Williams, Artist, around 2010.*



*Bogong Moth Dreaming.*



*Bogong Moth sculpture, AIATSIS, Canberra.  
Produced by Jim Williams and Matthew Harding 2001.*

*Photo courtesy of Diane Erceg.*



# Jim 'Boza' Williams

*'...We got food from the bush, things that were easy to kill like rabbits, goanna, echidna; we ate them all. It was good stuff...'*

## BORN IN COWRA

Il was born in Cowra in 1952; we were living at Erambie Mission. My parents were Pearl Simpson and Harry Douglas Williams and I'm one of ten children. Mum's parents were Louise Wedge and 'Froggy' Ruben Jack Simpson. Dad's parents were Cissy Freeman and 'Lightning' Harold Williams.

I spent time with my grandparents, Harry 'Lightning' Williams and Cissy (nee Freeman) Williams at Hollywood Aboriginal Reserve at Yass. My grandfather 'Lightning' was the son of 'Black Harry' Williams.

## I WAS VERY FOND OF NANA LOUISE

We lived next door to Nana Louise on Erambie Mission. Grandfather 'Froggy' lived in the men's quarters. My mother used to tell us about hard times in the early days. Our Nana Louise, for example, would go out fishing and milking cows when Grandfather Simpson was away. She had to carry water from the river for washing and cleaning.

Nana Louise eventually passed away in Cowra Hospital. I was very fond of Nana Louise.



*Jimmy Williams.*



*I went rabbiting at Erambie Mission in 1974 with Uncle Robbo, Buddy Card and Anthony Williams.*



*'Untitled' painting by Jimmy Williams 2011.*



## NAN, POP AND THE FOUR LITTLE CHILDREN BETWEEN THEM

I remember travelling on a horse sulky from Yass to Cowra. It was great out in the bush and dad would pull up and we would have a picnic in a little creek bed the other side of Boorowa. There was fresh water and we would camp under the stars in the sulky up off the ground, Nan, Pop and the four little children between them. The road wasn't like it is today; it was travelling through the scrub. We got food from the bush, things that was easy to kill like rabbits, goanna, echidna, we ate them all. It was good stuff.

## DAD WON LOTS OF TALENT QUESTS

I went to the convent school in Yass for the first years and then we moved to Cowra, and I went to Cowra Infants School. My best friend at school was Joe Bugg; we went to school together in Cowra.

I got to high school and stayed two years; I didn't like school, but liked going to cricket and football. I also played in a band called 'The Image'; I played rhythm guitar and sang. We entered 'The Battle of the Sounds', in Bathurst and we were beaten by 'Happy Valley Hounds', from Peak Hill. George Robinson was in that band. George Robinson later introduced me to my future wife, his sister, Cheryl Robinson from Peak Hill. We married in 1974.

Dad was also pretty good at singing and playing the guitar, and he would enter talent quests. My dad did win lots of talent quests and his band won the "Australian Amateur Hour" in 1952, the year I was born.



*Arnold, Jimmy and Michael Williams at the old LALC office, Lowe Street Queanbeyan around 2000.*

## FLOATING DOWN THE LACHLAN ON A LOG

I remember the floods on the Lachlan River, we'd go up to the second rock and float back down on a log. No more than half a mile up the river was the first rock, then another one about a mile further up. We were only kids and as we got older we'd collect watermelons from the farms along the river, then we travelled back down the river with watermelons balanced on our logs!

The Lachlan has changed now though. I remember running up Billy Goat Hill in Cowra and playing as a boy. I would have been 11 or 12 then.





*'Untitled' painting by Jimmy Williams 2003.*





*'I remember Uncle Kenny cooking possums in a hole.....'*

We always had a great feed of fish when the water went down. Uncle Kenny Simpson was a 'brown bottle fisherman'. Every time he went fishing he'd have a brown bottle with him and he always brought a big feed of fish home for the family. He always had a fish in his bag. I remember Uncle Kenny cooking possums in a hole; he called it 'dolmulli' when he cooked it in the ground. There were no kitchens back in them days, they cooked outside. They always cooked wild tucker outside in a little hole in the ground with hot ashes on top.

## MOVING TO CANBERRA

I moved to Canberra in 1967, when I was 15 years of age. My sister was living here at the time and I got work roof tiling. Even after I came to Canberra I'd still go back and forth to Erambie Mission, meeting up with family and friends.

After that I got work on seasonal fruit picking and saved enough money to buy a car. I bought a FC Holden station wagon for \$35. It was two-tone, white and reddish up the side. I travelled to Griffith, Cooma, Canberra and Peak Hill in that wagon.

It was around that time I met Cheryl, I went to Sydney with her brother, George. Later, I asked her to marry me in front of Parliament House, back in the Tent Embassy days. We've got five kids: Daniel, Deanna, Trisha, Arnold and Aaron and have thirteen grandchildren.



*Cheryl's 50th birthday at Cornwall Farm House, 2004. Daniel, Trisha, Arnold, Deanna, Aaron, Cheryl and Jimmy.*

## BOGONG MOTHS

I paint Bogong moths into most of my painting. I see goodness in the Bogong moths that gather on my country. They are good eating and are best cooked on ashes, turning them over to burn the wings off.

Maybe it's the moths that brought us back to our ancestral country; where I have the right to call myself a Traditional Owner.



Making music. Wilga and Ron Munro  
of Tamworth

*Musical Wilga and brother.*



*Sister Gwen on the right  
who joined the Air Force.*



*Top left: Gran Blair, my grandmother, and family.  
Granny Blair is in the middle, Gwen and Malcolm  
are on the left and Merv or Max is on the right.  
The photo was taken in Tamworth.*



*My mother Stella.*

# Wilga Munro Williams

*"I've often said to people if you have nothing to do in life go and join the forces. I joined at 19. I was looking for a different kind of life."*



*Wilga Munro Williams 2013.*

## I AM A KAMILAROI WOMAN

I was born in Tamworth, New South Wales, in 1943. I lived at Tingha until the age of three and then the family moved to Tamworth. I come from a family of seven: three sisters and four brothers. We were a sporting family.

I am a Kamilaroi woman, both my parents are Kamilaroi. Walter Munro is my dad. He was born in Tingha. Stella Blair is my mum. She was born in Bundarra, NSW. My mum was 17 and dad was 20 when they married.

Jimmy and Florey Munro are my Dad's parents. On my mother's side of the family is Fred and Ella Blair. They come from Tingha and Inverell.

## SEASONAL WORK FOR THE OLD PEOPLE

It was mostly seasonal work with the old people. It was a hard life. You just didn't get a fair go if you were Aboriginal. My grandparents on both sides travelled all around the New England area, working.

Old Granny Blair used to say to the boys, 'I need a new broom. You boys go and fetch me some tussock.'



*Harry and I in the mid-80s.*



*This is me at the Oxley Lookout, just out from Tamworth. I was about 16 at the time.*





*Wilga family group - sons and daughters, grandchildren  
at Kathy's 40th birthday. Queanbeyan 2006.*



*Stella Munro.*



## SHOPPING WITH COUPONS

I can remember, after the war ended, instead of going to the shops with money, we had to use coupons to do our shopping. I remember that well.

## OUR TINY LITTLE HOME

I remember my home, Dennison Street Tamworth. It was a tiny little two bedroom house. Mum and dad had one room and we kids shared the other. There were six of us, Wally, Gwen, Eric, me, Ronnie and Malcolm. Dad worked in Tamworth on a big stone crusher and made stock troughs and wash tubs at a cement factory.

Mum would line the walls with brown paper bags, the ones that sugar and flour came in. We had an open fireplace in the kitchen and that's how you would heat the old stone iron that mum would use to iron clothes. They were heavy rotten things. I remember mum would have four irons going at once.

We never had electricity, only the old tilly light. It ran on fat with gauze stuck in it. I remember when we had electricity for the first time when I was about nine or 10. We had to plug the cord into the socket which was on the ceiling! I always remember that big long chord, it reached from the ceiling to the kitchen table. It was a struggle for us kids.

We had a big backyard not far from the Peel River. We all had good swimming spots. I also remember the baker man with his horse and sulky cart. Then the veggie man with his little ute with all the vegies in the back. He'd go all over town, selling his wares.



*My mother and father's wedding, Tingha.*

## LIFE WAS WHAT WE MADE IT

We made it through the tough times with the help of our family. Aboriginal kids weren't allowed to do any "Little Athletics" back then, so we had to try and make a name for ourselves in other sports.

Two of my brothers, Ronny and Malcolm, made a name for themselves in football and boxing, and my other brother, Eric, made his in boxing. As for me, I was good at basketball and netball. I was in the country zone for basketball when I was 17 and we played QLD.



*Wilga.*



*Harry Williams (Snr)  
3CR Studio, Melbourne,  
Victoria. early 80s.*



*Wayne, Wilga, Lionel Rose, Cheryl,  
Michael, Arana and Nioka, Red Ochre  
Festival 2009, Dubbo, NSW.*



*Wilga and Harry in 1981,  
Australian Country Music  
Hands of Fame, Tamworth  
NSW.*



*Wilga, Harry and Wayne,  
9 years of age, on tour in  
Alice Springs, Northern  
Territory, 1975.*



*Country Outcasts  
promotional Flyer mid 80s.*



*Michael, Wilga, Harry and  
Wayne, New Guinea and  
Solomon Island Tour, 1980s.*



*Wilga performing at  
the Red Ochre Festival,  
Dubbo, NSW, 2009.*



*Wilga and her band, Country  
Outcasts, Red Ochre Festival,  
Dubbo, NSW.*



## SCHOOL

I went as far as Year 9 at school but I didn't like it much. I went to Tamworth High and I remember one teacher making such a fool out of me in front of everyone. I went home and told mum. She said, 'Well, you're old enough to leave school', and I did. It's been a struggle ever since. I don't regret leaving school but I would of liked to have finished Year 12.

## TINGHA: A SPECIAL PLACE

Tingha's my special place, a place that offers peace and tranquillity, especially in the bush. The cows still roam the streets and both old and young still look for nuggets of tin. Dad would take us all the time to Tingha in his T Model Ford which had a canvass roof and no seat belts.

## CHRISTMAS WAS A SPECIAL TIME

I remember from a young age dad and us girls singing Christmas carols for Granny Munro. She was a very religious woman. Dad would play the button accordion and the piano accordion. He was self-taught.

We never had presents that the two old people could afford. I guess our present was singing Christmas songs after a big Christmas dinner. It was fantastic! I remember the shillings, thruppence and sixpence in the huge, big Christmas pudding and my brother ransacking the shillings! Mum or Granny Blair made the pudding.

## A TELEPHONIST FOR THE PMG

When I was 17 I was the first Aboriginal woman to work as a telephonist for the Postmaster General. I passed my exams but I had problems getting in until one old bloke told the supervisor to 'start this girl!' He knew

our family, and the PMG employed Aboriginal people because of this supervisor. He helped us get a foot in the door. I went to do further courses at TAFE, but I'd never get a job as a typist, so I gave up.

## WOMEN'S AIR FORCE

In 1962 when I was 19 I joined the Women's Royal Australian Air Force and was based in Edinburgh, South Australia. My sister Gwen also joined the services. I stayed for 18 months. My job was on the telephones, operating all the calls during night shift for Woomera rocket range. During that time Australia had been threatened by war and all leave was cancelled. It was time to get out!

## COUNTRY MUSIC

These days were the highlight of my life.

In 1972 my second husband, Harry Williams Snr, introduced me to a musical life and from there on I achieved only what I could have previously imagined, making a name for myself and my family in the country music industry. We had formed a band, the 'Country Outcasts'. We played together for 25 years, were based in Melbourne and travelled to New Zealand, Canada, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands promoting Aboriginal music. Harry sang and played lead guitar. I played bass guitar and sang too. We would run country music festivals all over Australia and in every capital city.

## I AM CONTENTED

I have six kids; Kate, the twins Michael and Wayne, Nioka, Arana and Ngarra, 26 grandkids and four greats. Some are into sport and some are into music. I have lived in Queanbeyan for nine years now. I am contented.







*My fifth class school photograph, taken in 1952 Cootamundra New South Wales. I am 3rd from the left bottom, my sister Margaret is in the 2nd row, 4th from left. My friend Ruth Samuels is in the 3rd row, 2nd from the left.*

*The small boy is my father Stanley Luke standing next to his father Mark Henry Samuel Luke. His mother Mary Theresa Luke is on the left nursing one of her grandchildren, Koorawatha, NSW around 1910.*

# Dale Luke (Barber) Winters

*'We were always on the move. I remember travelling through to Condobolin and the big floods. We couldn't get through the town so we had to wait for a while.'*



*Dale Luke  
(Barber) Winters.*

## BORN IN TEMORA

I was born in Temora, New South Wales, in 1941. I am from a family of seven children: Shirley, Lionel, Margaret, Noelene, Henry, Mary and me.

## MY PARENTS

Stanley Luke is my dad. He was born in 1907 at Koorawatha. I remember my dad saying his first job was as a water boy. He kept water up to the chaffcutter. Doris Annie Duffey nee Allan is my mum. She was born in Crowther, New South Wales. After marrying, Dad and Mum lived at Koorawatha, Temora, Bethungra, Peak Hill, Lake Cargelligo and Cootamundra. They have passed away now and are buried at Lawn Cemetery in Queanbeyan.

## MY GRANDPARENTS

My Dad's father is Mark Henry Samuel Luke. He was born in 1850 in Toongabbie, Sydney. He passed away in 1926. My Dad's mother was Theresa Whitaker.



*My father and mother Stanley and  
Doris Luke. Taken in Cootamundra in 1969.*



*John Luke Barber, my  
great-great-grandfather.*



*Andrew Barber, son  
of John Luke Barber,  
in the 1850s.*



*Jim and Dale on motorscooters  
in the 1950s, Cootamundra,  
New South Wales.*



She was born in 1869 at Koorawatha. She passed away in 1944. My grandmother was a very well-known midwife and delivered babies all around Koorawatha and the Crowther area.

On my mother's side, I only ever knew mum's mother, she was Grandma Elizabeth Duffey. We got to know her. They lived around Crowther, on a property.

## MY GREAT-GRANDPARENTS

On my father's side, my great-grandfather was James Luke. He was born in 1817 at Central Cumberland. My great-grandmother was Mary Leabeter.

## MY GREAT-GREAT-GRANDPARENTS

My Aboriginality comes from my great-great-grandfather, John Luke Barber. He was known as a good worker. He was born in the 1800s at McDonald Valley, Windsor, NSW, and died in 1905. John Luke Barber was a 'full-blood' Darkinjung Aboriginal who was brought up from a baby in a European family by the name of Luke. John Barber ended up having had 29 children and numerous wives. His Aboriginal wife was Ballendella, a 'full-blood' Wiradjuri woman, who he married in 1847. Ballendella was 15 years old when they married and she already had a daughter, Mary, who was born in 1846. After that John Barber and Martha Luke had my great-grandfather, James Luke. He should have been a Barber after his father, but he got 'Luke' from his mother's side.

Two of John Barber's other sons were Andrew and Henry. In 1850 Andrew Barber lived on John Smith Hall's property, "Lillurndale", Sackville Reach. The property owner said that Andrew (as an adult) could

do anything. "He was equal to one and a half men ploughing, fencing and breaking in horses." The Barber boys were well-known cricketers around the Sydney area. Henry Barber's wicket keeping was compared to 'a kingfisher sitting on a tree and darting down for a fish': "that's fast!"

## FOLLOWING WORK

*'...we moved from Temora to Bethungra...to Peak Hill, to a place between Hillston and Lake Cargelligo, then onto Lake Cargelligo...'*

Soon after I was born we moved to Bethungra, where we lived in tents, and my Dad worked on the railway line. Around 1945 the family moved on to Peak Hill following work on the railway.

When I was about six we moved again, this time to place between Hillston and Lake Cargelligo where dad worked as a stone crusher. When we arrived at the property we lived in a large farmhouse. We would walk a couple of miles for fresh milk through a deep creek, which was home to a large number of goannas. I was only little but I remember those goannas. That was scary!

I remember dad putting nets in the Lachlan River and the fish would be our dinner. I remember dad having a ute; mum and my baby brother were at the front and the rest of us kids in the back. Dad would chase the emus away to get the eggs.

## SCHOOL FOR THE FIRST TIME

We never had any electricity. I remember dad making a wooden frame and covering it with hessian; he'd







*Our children Timothy, Sandra and Mark Winters, late 1990s.*



wet it down and that's how we kept our food cool. We moved back to Lake Cargelligo and dad got a job on the railway. I went to school for the first time at Lake Cargelligo. I was seven.

We were always on the move. I remember travelling through to Condobolin and the big floods. We couldn't get through the town so we had to wait for a while. We were on our way to Cootamundra; that was about 1952, I was in 5th class.

## BUSH TUCKER

I remember when I was growing up we lived on fish, meat and of course plenty of rabbits on the farm. When we moved to Cootamundra we would have fresh crayfish too! We also caught turtles but did not eat them. Dad worked at the meat works in Coota, so we would sometimes have fresh meat.

## MY WORKING LIFE

I worked as a domestic cleaner with R&R Laundry, the Revlon factory and then the War Veteran's Service before I retired in 2005.

## WE CAME TO QUEANBEYAN IN 1973

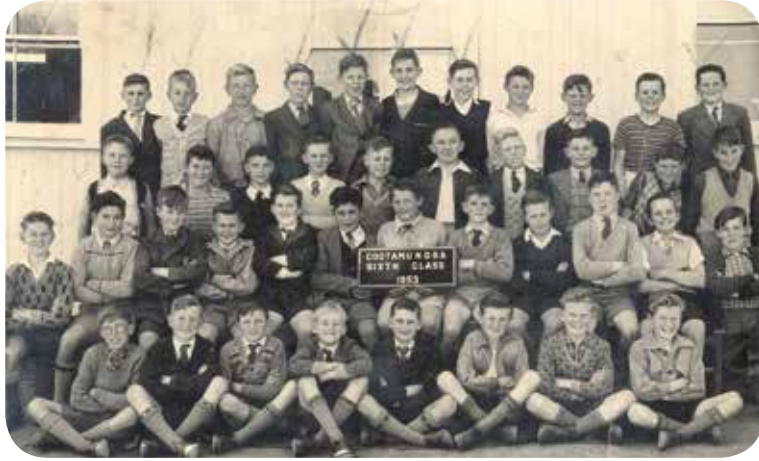
My husband and I moved around following work and came to Queanbeyan from Tarago in 1973 to give our sons Mark and Timothy and our daughter Sandra a better chance for their education. We now have five grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

*'...I was happy to become a member of the Land Council and meet other Aboriginal people, it was wonderful...'*

My cousin, Robert (Bob) Luke, who was born in 1938 in Cowra, died in 2009. Bob had done our family research and family book and adopted two Aboriginal babies. After I retired, I became a member of the Ngunnawal/Ngambri Local Aboriginal Land Council. I was happy to become a member of the Land Council and meet other Aboriginal people, it was wonderful.



*Our grandchildren in the late 1990s:  
L to R: Matthew, Kristie, Tara, Carley  
and Sara.*



*My sixth class school photograph, taken in 1953 Cootamundra New South Wales. I am on the left in the second top row.*



*Jim Winters on Gress, "Pylara" Station, Tarago, between Canberra & Goulburn, New South Wales.*



*My grandparents Mary Bell and Sydney Winters, Cootamundra around 1950.*

# James (Jim) Winters

*... 'I was born in Cootamundra  
in New South Wales in 1940...'*



*James Sydney  
Walter Winters  
around 1990.*

## BORN AT COOTAMUNDRA

I am from a family of eight: Leslie, then me, then William, Edward, Peggy, Geoffrey, Thomas and Robert.

## MY PARENTS

My Dad's name was Leslie Walter Winters. He was born in Cootamundra. Dad was 81 when he passed away. My dad's mum's name was Maude Winters (nee Hardy). Mum was born in Harden, NSW. She was 82 when she passed away, so both my parents lived a long life and are buried at Cootamundra.

## MY GRANDPARENTS

My mum's father was Jack Hardy, 'Pop'. Mum's mother was Florence Maude. My dad's mother was Mary Bell. She was born in 1878 and died in 1972; she was also from Gundagai. Dad's father was Sydney Spencer Winters. He was born in 1879 and died in 1965. He was from the Goulburn area.



*My parents Leslie and  
Maude Winters, outside the  
Cootamundra Church of  
England, at our wedding. 1960.*





*My brothers and sister enjoying a Winters' family gathering at mother Maude's 80th birthday, Bowral 2000.*



*My grandfather Jack Hardy with his bullock team at Cootamundra Show in 1934.*



*Taken at my 50th birthday in 1990 at the Queanbeyan Tigers Club.*



## MY GREAT GRANDPARENTS

*'..Joseph was the son of a convict who was sentenced to 14 years for stealing a gumboot when he was 14 years of age...'*

My grandmother on my dad's mum's side was Mary Ann Jane Williams; she was born in 1860 and died in 1937. She married a man by the name of Joseph James Bell. He was born in 1853 and died in 1928. He was originally from Gundagai. Joseph was the son of a convict who was sentenced to 14 years for stealing a gumboot when he was 14 years of age.

## THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER AT THE COOTAMUNDRA SHOW, 1934

*'...Lucky for mum, Jack was very forgiving about what had happened!..'*

The Duke of Gloucester attended the Cootamundra Show in 1934. My Pop's 'Jack Hardy's Bullock Team' carried the blocks of wood that had been sawn down for seating for the royal visitors. Jack had treasured the blocks the Duke had sat on so much he had taken them home and stored them in the laundry. One night mum was asked to go and get a log for the night, but poor mum had picked up the prized seat that the Duke had sat on and put it in the fire! Mum would always joke about the mistake. Lucky for mum, Jack was very forgiving about what had happened!



*My grandfather Jack Hardy at the Cootamundra Show meeting the Duke of Gloucester, 1934.*



*Our children Timothy, Sandra and Mark Winters, late 1990s.*





*My school football team, Cootamundra 1953. I am the last boy on the last row on the right.*





## THEY WORKED REALLY HARD

You know, my family worked really hard at everything. I remember they would hunt and catch rabbits, go picking mushrooms, cherry picking at Young, and even cart wood in a horse and cart. Dad even did a bit of breaking in horses and then worked at the meat works at Cootamundra, too.

## EVERYONE KNEW GEORGE

*'...Dad used to see the wobbly tracks the next morning; everyone knew George. It was very funny!..'*

I remember George was a man from China. He would come to Cootamundra from Bethungra, 15 miles on his horse and cart selling vegetables from his market garden. George would finish his day down at the local Royal, drinking his takings! Then he'd hop back in the back of his cart and his horse would take him back to Bethungra on the outback dirt road. He would sleep all the way home. Dad used to see the wobbly tracks the next morning; everyone knew George. It was very funny!

## I MET MY FUTURE WIFE WHEN I WAS 15!

*'.....We had both attended Cootamundra Public School; we were one year apart but didn't know each other....'*

I met my wife, Dale Luke, when I was 15 and she was only 14½. It was 1955 and I was riding down the main street of Coota on my horse and Dale's cousin introduced us. That was that; we got married in Coota five years later. We had both attended Cootamundra

Public School; we were one year apart but didn't know each other.

When I met Dale, I was working in the refreshment room at Cootamundra Railway Station. I was transferred from refreshments to the loco yard and later on had the chance to become a fireman on the steam engine 3102. We would take that beauty of a train on a run to Gundagai, Tumut, out to Parkes and down to Goulburn; they were the routes.

## I WORKED IN A FAIR FEW PLACES

After we got married I picked up work at the Ultimo Flour Mill and then we moved back to Cootamundra. In 1964 we moved to Bourke where I worked at the meat works. From there we moved to Ardlethan where I worked in an underground tin mine and at a wheat farm. Soon after I left the tin mine it collapsed and killed the boss. It was hard work and I got out just in time. From Ardlethan we moved to Tarago where I worked on a merino hereford stud property.

## WE CAME TO QUEANBEYAN IN 1973

We came to Queanbeyan in 1973 to give our sons Mark and Timothy and our daughter Sandra a better chance for their education. We've lived in Queanbeyan for 36 years now. I picked up work at the Hume Pipes in Queanbeyan and stayed there for 10 years. Then I did 22 years at the timber mill in Hume.

Nowadays, we still live in Queanbeyan and we have five grandchildren and eight greats. After I retired I became a member of the Ngunnawal/Ngambri Local Aboriginal Land Council in Queanbeyan. I was on the board for a while, now I let the younger ones look after things.

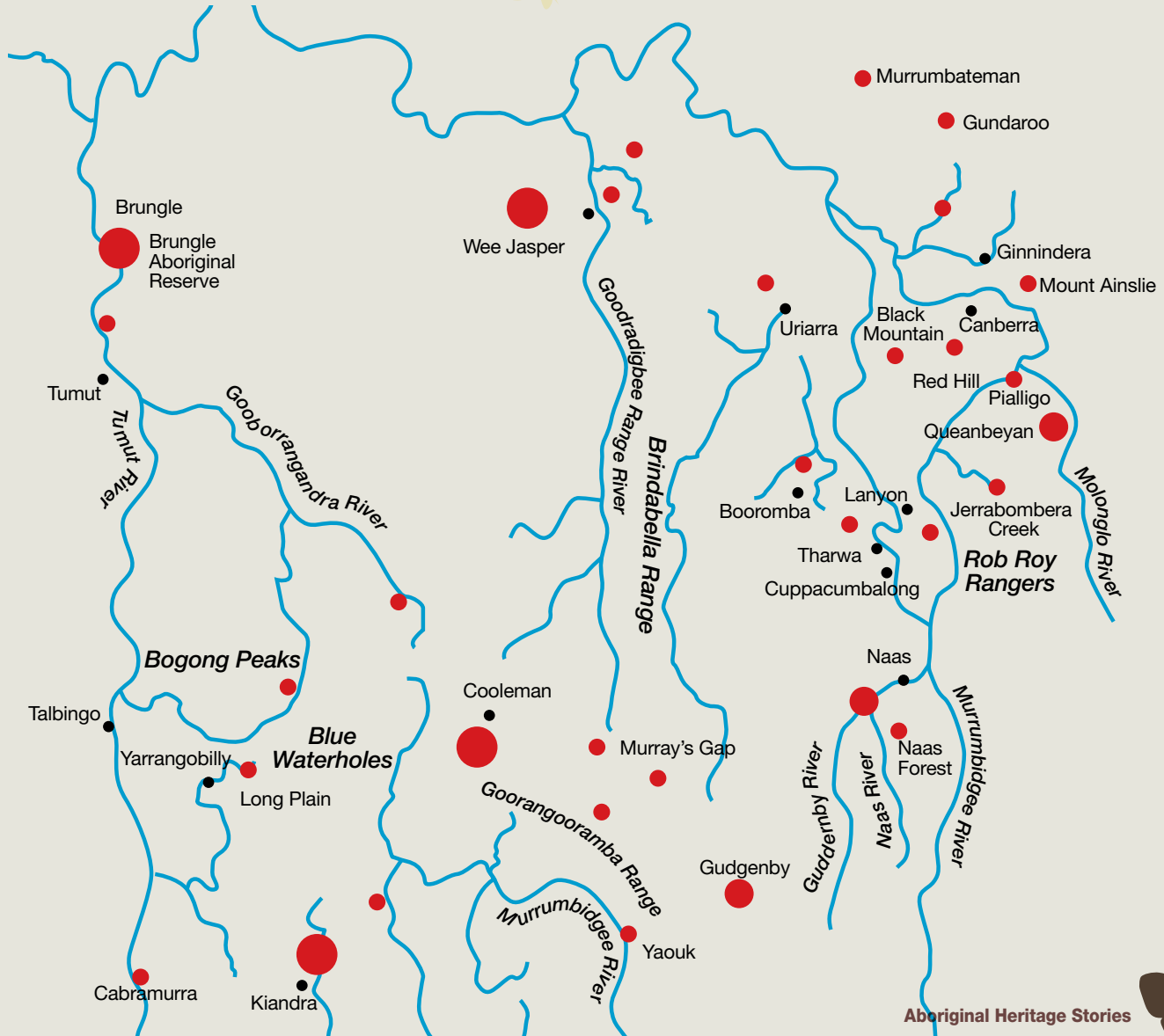






# Remembering the Ancestors

Ngambri, Ngurmäl and Queanbeyan camps, 1800~1880



## Records of the distribution and return of blankets to 'Natives' at Janevale, near Tuggeranong in June 1834

### People associated with the 'Hagen Hope' tribe from the Limestone Plains, Condore Mountains and Murrumbidgee districts.

Noolup, aka 'Jemmy the Rover' (aged 30) – 'chief'	1 wife, 2 boys and 2 girls
Neddy aka Cheemutt (aged 17)	1 wife
Jacob, aka Pendau (aged 58)	1 wife, 1 boy and 2 girls
Bikko (aged 26)	1 wife, 2 boys and 2 girls
Naungo (aged 27)	1 wife [Boenda aged 18], 2 girls
Mittu-mun-gallee (aged 20)	1 wife
Charley, aka Muntumorko (aged 21)	–
Billy, aka Muntu-macka (aged 24)	1 wife, 1 boy, 1 girl
Tommy Hamilton, aka Tomima (aged 27)	2 wives, 1 boy, 1 girl
"Captain Brooks" (aged 29)	1 wife
Old Cry (aged 60)	1 wife

### People associated with the 'Namwich' tribe from the mountains beyond the Murrumbidgee, the Limestone Plains and 'sometimes reside about this part of the country' (=Tuggeranong).

Onyong, aka 'Hong Kong' (aged 30) – 'chief'	2 wives, 2 boys, 1 girl
Charley	-
Tommy, (20)	1 wife
Neddy	-
'Mr Davy'	-

### Some of the people passing through Janevale [near Tuggeranong] at the time of the blanket distribution in 1834.

Parramatta aka Bindin Billy 'chief' (aged 22)	2 wives, 1 boy, 1 girl
Gilbert (aged 14)	
Billy Buckley (aged 16)	
Cullernuny (aged 13 – young girl)	
Charley Liverpool (aged 27)	2 wives
Jemmy (aged 20)	1 wife, 1 boy, 1 girl; 'King of Narooma'
Keiributta aka Tommy (aged 74)	1 wife
Urrabang (aged 35)	1 wife
Bangyarra (aged 60)	"old woman"
Tommy Binganqunky (aged 18)	
Billy Button (aged 14)	'belongs to the Monaro'

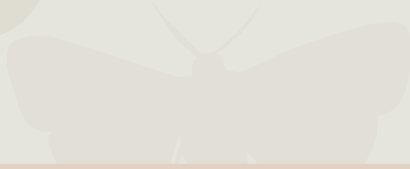
Information source: AONSW 4/2219.1, 34/5379; Jackson Nakano 2001.

## Records of the distribution and return of blankets to 'Natives' at Queanbeyan police office, 5th May 1841

Hong-gong aka Onyong (aged 35) - 'chief'	Wives Mary (aged 28), Nanny (aged 16)
Jemmy the Rover aka Newlop (aged 30)	Wife Maria (aged 30)
Tommy Bolera aka Jumania (aged 35)	Wives Eliza (aged 23) and Kitty (aged 25); son Young Joe (aged 7)
Jimmy Gigeline aka Mory Bong (aged 38)	-
Jemmy Bamilton (aged 30)	Wife Matilda (aged 20)
Kangaroo Tommy aka Boogolong (aged 30)	Wife Ellen (aged 17)
Mickey aka Condor (aged 30)	Wife Jenny (aged 22)
Billy Migarinyo (aged 28)	Wife Kitty (aged 19)
Jimmy aka Almoorda	-
Johnny aka Gluguga (aged 28)	-
Neddy aka Judgabby	-
Jim Hoolamooditat (aged 16)	-
Joe Jingiderra (aged 15)	-
King Jamie Gilbee aka Jemmygoba (aged 30)	Wife Jenny (aged 35], mother Jenny (aged 65), 1 girl.
Harry Smith aka Dooladwary (aged 30)	1 wife, 1 girl.
Boney Jack aka Warajola (aged 20)	-
Charley aka Monaboja (aged 20)	-
Caraty aka Coromary (aged 18)	-
Joe aka Hoojarah (aged 18)	-
Tommy aka Tommymaciell (aged 20)	Wife Maria (aged 17)
Solomon Moniary (aged 18)	-
Able aka Tomba (aged 20)	Wife Cabon Mary (aged 30), 1 girl Young Mary (8) and Mother Lady (aged 70].
Dickey Hoboboo (aged 18)	-
Harry Maneroo aka Balliaron (aged 20)	Wife Sally (aged 20)
Harry aka Benape (aged 18)	-
Jacky Jacky aka Gumallau (aged 30)	Wives Nari (aged 24) and Missus (aged 24), 2 girls Betsy (12) and Jane (10)
Billy Garook (aged 24)	1 wife
Cockatoo aka Biyadory (aged 30)	Wife Mary (aged 28)
Blowskins aka Curedory (aged 18)	-
Jemmy aka Newhadalahh (aged 30)	-
Dick aka Wandra (aged 30)	2 wives; Judy Gabaya (aged 30), 1 boy, 1 girl.
Jacob aka Yayaga (aged 18)	-

Information source AONSW 4/2219.1, 34/5379; Jackson Nakano 2001.





'Aboriginal Australian family and home, Australian Capital Territory, between 1890 and 1910'.

*Features King Billy, Richard Lowe, Nellie Hamilton and the Lowe children. Part of De Salis, Farrer and Champion families photograph collection. Reproduced with permission from the National Library of Australia; nla.pic-vn4656276; PIC/12641/91.*







Records made by Chief Protector of Aborigines, George Augustus Robinson, at Yarralumla House on the 12th September 1844.

**'Limestone blacks' at Mr Murray's**

Tommy, Pun.bun.gurn.ber.ler	aged 20
Biddy, Jem.umer.mor,	aged 19
Mo.mim.booker	aged 27
Maria, Ko.le.ger.bar, din.der.re	aged 27
Jemmy Bo.lore.rer, Yamoke Tower	aged 14
Jemmy Yal,Ko, "half-caste"	aged 7
Billy Buckley, O.bun.by.wer,	aged 19
Toomy, Joo.ler.gen.jan, Jow.ger.lyerer	aged 21
Mary Jane, Bin.me.ang	aged 17
Mary Mo.ner.run.gan, Booker	aged 21
Jhonny sic, By.woit, Bo.lare.rer	aged 9
Money, Bud.dat, Yare.run.gub.er.le	aged 35
Joolee, Pul.gar.go,	aged ?
Maggee, My.ac, wol.lare.re.gil	aged 15
Jacky, 1.U.re.mer 2. Tab.be.puss, Boo.rer	aged 35
Wellington, Mo.rid.jer.gong, my interpreter, Kundow.er.re sic	aged 16
Jacky, Keer.ke.dong, Brar.mun.ye	aged 12
Bobby, Min.yer.ne, Yi.oke	aged 14
Jacky, Jare.gowl, Hou-munje	aged 16
Paddy, Tal.low.in.ne, Ko.ber.er.munje	aged 27
Billy the Boy, Kubb.bert, son to above	aged 6
Kangaroo Tommy, murer.dun.min, Yar.ing guberle	aged 19
Kitty, Ky-min, Kallunder.er, wife to above	aged 17
Neddy, Jud.jerbin, Yi-yak	aged 19
Jemmy the Rover, Noo.lup, West Condore Mountains	aged 50
Harry, Koo.ro.mun, Too mut, Koo.ber.rer.dan.der.rer	aged 19
Kitty, mo.ker.much, Manero, Bul.or.rer.mang	aged 15





### 'Limestone blacks' at Mr Murray's continued

Sally, Nor.er.nin.ye, Bogon.ger		aged 12
Sharlotte sic, Ky.wun, Jin.jeer.re		aged 16
Hammilton sic at Gippsland, Jim.mut, Yi,yac		aged 16
Matilda, Buc.un.gang – wife to above		aged ?
Bol.erer Tommy, Tummime.nile, aka Jumania		aged 38
Burrer, mud.de. Jack, Beerre. Nageng.gong, Limestone		aged ?
Ong.gong, Jin.doo. mung, 'King', Mr Broadrib Onyong		aged 40
Nanny, Jun.in.mingo wife to Onyong;		aged 16
Eliza, Bin.er.leet		
Molongler Tribe at Mr Murray's		
Bob, Bim.mim.migal, King, country Molongler aka Bobby Deumonga and three wives Ireland Il.bar.re.dit, Maria Mut.ing.gal, and Kitty Bone.mal.mung and daughter Nellie, aged 4		
Jemmy, No-rung.gung native of sea coast		
Kitty, u.al, native of sea coast		
Old man Joe, Dal.lal.ler		
Molonglo Kitty, Pal.ler.kum.er.gong		
Joe Bug.gal,		
Jacky Jacky Cumm.er.cal,		
Mises, Dig.er.rid.je.ber and child, Little Mary		
Five 'half-caste' children Kitty aka weel.barrened.it, Maria aka Mud.jin.gal, Ireland aka Pone.bal.long wives to King Bob – see above and two unnamed boys.		

Information source: Clark 1998 and Jackson Nakano 2001





