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## HERITAGE

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Heritage can be defined as ‘the evidence of the past, such as historical sites, and the unspoilt natural environment, considered as the inheritance of present-day society’ (Collins Australian Dictionary and Thesaurus 3rd edition, 2004). Shoalwater Bay Training Area (SWBTA or the Area) has been found to possess high natural heritage values for heritage. European (historic) and military heritage have not been formally assessed but evidence suggests these values are also high. This chapter outlines each of these value sets. A detailed history of SWBTA including accounts of early European contact with Aboriginal people is already written (Cosgrove 1996), and readers are encouraged to refer to this work to supplement the account given in this chapter.

Old fence,  
Cape Clinton



## NATURAL HERITAGE

Natural heritage values of SWBTA are of such significance that they have been elevated internationally and nationally for protection and promotion. Much of these heritage values lie in the ecological integrity and complexity of the Area's natural systems and processes, some of them spanning geological timeframes. Discussion of heritage in this section includes all matters of national environmental significance under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999)* EPBC Act, as they are inherently considered to be of natural heritage value to the Australian community. These values are recognised within a complex array of government legislation and policy which are described in more detail in Chapter 2.

## WORLD HERITAGE

The marine components of SWBTA are part of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (GBRWHA), which was inscribed on the World Heritage list in 1981. The GBRWHA is the largest World Heritage Area in the world and one of only a few that meets all four natural World Heritage criteria (specific values relevant to SWBTA are indicated by italics):

1. Outstanding example representing a major stage of the earth's evolutionary history.

*Specific values relevant to SWBTA include formations such as intact and active dune systems, undisturbed tidal sediments, and a record of sea level changes reflected in the distribution of continental island flora and fauna.*

2. Outstanding example representing significant ongoing geological processes, biological evolution and people's interaction with their natural environment.

*Specific values relevant to SWBTA include ongoing processes of accretion and erosion of sand banks, erosion and deposition processes along the coastline, river deltas and estuaries and continental islands; inshore coral communities of southern reefs; the diversity of marine and terrestrial flora and fauna; remnant vegetation types (hoop pines) and relic species on islands (sponges); evidence of morphological and genetic changes in mangrove and seagrass flora across regional scales; and, feeding and/or breeding grounds for international migratory seabirds, cetaceans and sea turtles.*

3. Contains unique, rare and superlative natural phenomena, formations and features, and areas of exceptional natural beauty.

*Specific values relevant to SWBTA include the vast extent of the reef and island systems which produces an unparalleled aerial vista; coastal and adjacent islands with mangrove systems of exceptional beauty; the rich variety of landscapes and seascapes including rugged mountains with dense and diverse vegetation and adjacent fringing reefs.*

4. Provides habitats where populations of rare and endangered species of plants and animals still survive.

*Specific values relevant to SWBTA include large numbers of islands, including 600 continental islands supporting 2 195 plant species in five distinct floristic regions; seagrass beds; mangroves; and, species of plants and animals of conservation significance.*

Sand patterns, Port Clinton



Sandy Creek rainforest





## NATIONAL HERITAGE

The Great Barrier Reef, including the marine components of SWBTA, was included on the National Heritage List in 2007. The Great Barrier Reef meets a range of national heritage criteria that identify its outstanding heritage value to the nation. Criteria relevant to SWBTA include the Areas:

- importance in the course, or pattern, of Australia's natural or cultural history;
- possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Australia's natural or cultural history;
- potential to yield information that will add to an understanding of Australia's natural or cultural history;
- importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of Australia's natural or cultural places or environments;
- importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;
- strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons; and
- special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Australia's natural or cultural history.

## COMMONWEALTH HERITAGE

SWBTA was included on the Commonwealth Heritage List in 2004. In a summary statement of significance, the Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) noted that:

The Shoalwater Bay Training Area represents the largest coastal wilderness between Nadgee in southern New South Wales and the Cape Melville/Starke Holding Area on Cape York Peninsula. The place is significant in demonstrating a range of coastal, sub-coastal and aquatic landscapes and ecosystems, which occur in a relatively natural state and which generally, exhibit a high degree of integrity and diversity. As such, the place is of national importance to the maintenance and demonstration of geomorphological, ecological and biological processes of the coastal and coastal hinterland environment. (DEH 2006).

More specific values were also identified. The Area contains significant representations of many vegetation types, including pockets of araucarian notophyll vine forest, notophyll vine forest and littoral rainforest, which were once widespread in southern Queensland. The dune systems were identified to be of great significance in the understanding of the evolution of aeolian dunes in eastern Australia during the Quaternary Period. The Area contains some of the finest, undisturbed examples on the Queensland coast of a variety of relict parabolic dunes, inter-dune sand plains, dunes on tombolo barriers and strand plains.

Undulating hills, Pyri Pyri Sector



The biological diversity value of SWBTA was observed to lie in the assemblage of species rather than in the number, with a diversity of geomorphology and climatic gradients resulting in a complex mixture of vegetation in a relatively small area. SWBTA also has high numbers of species at or near their known distributional limits, reflecting its location on the boundary between two bioregions. The high degree of integrity, landscape diversity and steep climatic gradients have resulted in an area offering a unique opportunity for scientific benchmarking.

The AHC determined that SWBTA has Indigenous values of National Estate significance, and noted that historic values may also exist but these were not assessed.

### WETLANDS OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE (RAMSAR WETLANDS)

Freshwater and intertidal wetlands within Shoalwater Bay are recognised as being of international importance under the Ramsar Convention (Iran, 1971). The Shoalwater and Corio Bays Area (Shoalwater Bay Training Area, in Part – Corio Bay) (Ramsar Site Number 44) is an area of approximately 239 000 ha. The majority of the area falls within SWBTA. Ramsar criteria met by the site include representation of the region's terrestrial and estuarine and marine environments as the largest area in central east Queensland containing coastal, sub coastal and aquatic landscapes and ecosystems. These are relatively undisturbed habitat areas for significant floral and faunal assemblages, including populations of rare and threatened species. The area corresponds to a climatic overlap zone with an unusual mix of tropical, sub-tropical and temperate species (AWD, 1999).

Dismal Swamp







Tip of Clinton Peninsula

## WETLANDS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

Three wetlands within SWBTA are listed as Important Wetlands in Australia: Dismal Swamp – Water Park Creek (QLD044), Island Head Creek-Port Clinton Area (QLD048) and Shoalwater Bay (QLD054) (AWD, 2004a; AWD, 2004b; AWD 2004c). Their significance is listed as: contributing to the greater Shoalwater Bay area; distance from the effects of large rivers with highly disturbed catchments; and, in the case of the Shoalwater Bay wetland, being a particularly good example of a shallow marine and estuarine wetland type. It is particularly significant because of the extent and richness of the habitats due to the extreme tidal range (7.24 m), the sheltered environment and the relatively undisturbed nature of the area (AWD 2004b).

An overview of the wetlands across the Area is included on the list of Important Wetlands (QLD178 Shoalwater Bay Training Area Overview). This overview encompasses the Shoalwater Bay and the Dismal Swamp-Water Park Creek Wetlands, in addition to other areas.

## THREATENED SPECIES AND ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITIES

SWBTA provides habitat for a number of internationally protected rare and threatened species, both terrestrial and marine. A number of species found at SWBTA are on The World Conservation Union (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species, which aims to identify species most in need of conservation attention if global extinction rates are to be reduced (IUCN SSC, undated).

Currently two ecological communities in SWBTA is listed as threatened under the EPBC Act – beach vine forests and scrubs of the Brigalow Belt and littoral rainforests and coastal vine thickets of eastern Australia. Many more Regional Ecosystems mapped by the Queensland Herbarium are listed as 'endangered' or 'of concern'. These are discussed in detail in the chapter on Forests, Woodlands and Freshwater Wetlands.

## MIGRATORY SPECIES

Marine wetlands of SWBTA are protected from south-east winds and high energy processes and together with the high tidal range, this has led to the evolution of large expanses of mangroves, salt flats and extensive sand and mudflats. These environments support high populations of local and migratory waders and shorebirds. Sixteen migratory wader species which breed in Northern Hemisphere temperate regions have been recorded from the area, with numbers for six species exceeding 1% of their population in the East Asian-Australasian flyway (AWD 1999). A total of 26 bird species in SWBTA are protected by international agreements between the Government of Australia and the Government of Japan for the Protection of Migratory Birds and Birds in Danger of Extinction and their Environment (JAMBA) and 27 species in SWBTA under the agreement by the Government of Australia and the People's Republic of China for the Protection of Migratory Birds and their Environment (CAMBA) (DEH 1999). Listed migratory species also include those listed in Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreements (ROKAMBA).

By entering into these bilateral migratory bird agreements Australia is required to, amongst other things, protect and conserve important habitats for migratory bird species. In SWBTA this includes all migratory shorebirds and waterbirds

that inhabit the marine and freshwater wetland areas. These species are also protected under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (QLD), and some under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (GBRMP Act). Australia has further encouraged multilateral cooperation in the conservation of migratory birds through the Partnership for the East Asian–Australasian Flyway, which is a framework for international cooperation concerning the conservation of migratory waterbirds.

There are also a number of migratory species listed under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention) (DEH 2005). Six internationally protected migratory marine turtles occur within the waters of SWBTA and the area supports the largest known feeding concentration of the southern Great Barrier Reef genetic stock of green turtles. Marine turtles and dugongs are protected under several international initiatives including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and The World Conservation Union (Dobbs 2001). Other internationally protected migratory marine species found at SWBTA include the Estuarine Crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*) and seven mammals including the Blue Whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*), Irrawaddy Dolphin (*Orcaella brevirostris*), Indo-pacific Humpback Dolphin (*Sousa chinensis*), Bryde's Whale (*Balaenoptera edeni*) and the Humpback Whale (*Megaptera novaengliae*).

Top: Pied oyster catchers

Roosting Shorebirds, Port Clinton





## WILDERNESS AND SCIENTIFIC REFERENCE VALUES

Wilderness can be defined as a large area, free from human interference, remaining in a natural state, remote from impacts of development and landscape modification. Such a large and diverse natural tract of land along the mid eastern coast of Australia is now unique. Due to the demand for coastal land for development, these areas are becoming more scarce and fragmented and SWBTA represents a significant cog in the conservation of Australia's natural environment as a whole (Schodde et al 1992). In particular, the swamps and dunes of SWBTA form part of a coastal wilderness area that remains in a relatively undisturbed state.

Coastal areas of SWBTA are of geomorphological significance with respect to the evolution of sandy landscapes. Specifically, the evolution of aeolian dune systems, which contain relatively undisturbed depositional sequences, are significant in the understanding of the evolution of these types of landscapes on the east coast of Australia during the last two million years (DEH 1999). The integrity of much of SWBTA, along with the area's size and diversity make SWBTA a significant benchmark area for scientific research (EPA 2005; DEH 2006).

## VICARIOUS USE

While size, diversity, condition and integrity are all recognised as important parts of the heritage values of SWBTA, the vicarious value is an unquantified but important aspect. Vicarious value is used in environmental economics to describe 'welfare obtained from the indirect consumption of an environmental resource remotely'. In relation to SWBTA or any other large wilderness area, the term can be used to describe the pleasure and comfort gained from simply knowing that the area exists, is a safe haven for wildlife and plants, and is in a good condition. Desire to visit or gain direct benefit from a place is not a prerequisite to gaining vicarious pleasure from it. As natural areas continue to disappear through development, particularly in coastal areas, a remaining coastal wilderness such as SWBTA is likely to increase greatly in vicarious value. For many local people it is reassuring to know that some large natural areas such as SWBTA still exist where nature can be allowed to take its course.

Dunefields in Dismal sector



Switzerland's Beach





## INDIGENOUS HERITAGE

Our understanding of the original Shoalwater Bay Aboriginal people is limited. Little specific information about the people has been documented. Most of the observations stem from early settlers, pioneers, and those who were involved in 'Aboriginal protection' and anthropological observations in the late 19th century and early 20th century. The precious amount of information is available about the original people of the Area, is by courtesy of some of the descendants of these people, the Darumbal Aboriginal people. What information exists has been summarised here, in order to set the scene for a discussion of contemporary Indigenous interests in the Area.

There are limited documented accounts of specific mythologies associated with SWBTA. In the absence of these stories and accounts of the 'Dreamtime', our understanding of the original heritage values is poor. Knowledge of archaeological sites within the Area is also largely confined to areas of external interest, such as historic mineral sands prospecting.

What is equally and increasingly important, however, is the contemporary cultural connection of Darumbal descendants to the Area, and how the Area provides an important venue for cultural renewal amongst Darumbal people today.

It is important to point out a number of factors prior to presenting information on Indigenous heritage of SWBTA:

- The following information is sourced from publicly available material.
- It is recognised that there may be cultural sensitivities associated with some historical authors, owing to their historic role in the demise or 'dispersal' of Aboriginal people in Queensland, and references to these authors have been minimised as far as possible.

- Historical European accounts of the original Shoalwater Bay peoples are likely to contain some biases, owing to the way in which their observations were made, and the fact that most of the time, both authors and their informants were male, thus observations were limited to men's activities and men's knowledge.
- Native title is not discussed in this section. SWBTA is Commonwealth freehold land, and as such, extinguishes native title in accordance with the *Native Title Act 1993*. The possible existence of native title rights in offshore waters of SWBTA, however, is not disputed in this report.
- Aboriginal heritage is not merely regarded as archaeological items of interest, but all elements of a culture that are passed from generation to generation, including language, mythology, songs, stories and other aspects of cultural lore and law. Hence this Report treats the Aboriginal way of life as a holistic continuum of these elements, and acknowledges the interruptions brought about by European explorers, pioneers, settlers and their descendants in the Area.

## THE ORIGINAL SHOALWATER BAY PEOPLE AND THEIR LIFESTYLE

Researchers and authors have documented a number of interpretations of the tribal boundaries and names of traditional groups of the Area over the last century, which vary from one another to greater or lesser degrees (Cosgrove 1996; Howitt 1904; Memmott 1993; Roth 1898, 1910; Tindale 1974). Roth (1898) refers to two main groups, the Ku-in-murr-burra and the Taroombal people. The Kuinmurrburra people's lands extended from Broadsound south and east, to meet with the lands of the Taroombal from north of Yeppoon through to Rockhampton. Along the Queensland coast it is common for Aboriginal group names to carry the suffix 'burra' or 'bura', meaning 'belonging to'.

Howitt (1904) described six allied tribes that form the Kuinmurrburra 'nation':

1. Kutu-burra, meaning 'belonging to the end', referring to their country being at the end of the peninsula (Broadsound);
2. Riste-bura, meaning 'belonging to sandfly' between Pine Mountain and Shoalwater Bay;
3. Wandu-burra, meaning 'belonging to mountain', between the head of Broadsound and Shoalwater Bay;
4. Wuru-burra, meaning 'belonging to Wuru' (bread made from the wuru nut, east side of the head of Broadsound);
5. Pukan-burra, meaning 'belonging to track or road', the Agapina Range to the west of the head of Broadsound; and
6. Muin-burra, meaning 'belonging to ashes', south of the Pukan-burra and Wuru-burra.

Howitt then discusses a further 13 tribes, which are not regarded by Kuinmurrburra as '*belonging to themselves*'. Regardless of the lack of clarity on names, tribal boundaries and affiliations, a comparison of published linguistics quickly confirms that the Aboriginal people from Rockhampton, Rosewood/ Yeppoon, Torilla and Pine Mountain share a commonality of language that is distinct from the languages of Gladstone and Miriamvale people (HLA 2007).

Thus while debate regarding the details of tribal groups and their territories may remain open, the collective groups of both Kuinmurrburra and Taroombal are considered as part of the larger Darumbal Aboriginal group of today.

Early observations of the stature and appearance of people from the Area vary, and given the above descriptions of two main groups consisting of several smaller groups, it is not entirely surprising. Jukes in 1847 described the people he saw near Port Clinton as '*stout, strong broadshouldered fellows, in the prime of their life...*'. Flinders (1814) referred to the people he saw as '*being much inferior to the inhabitants of Keppel and Hervey's Bays; but they were peaceable, and seemed to be very hungry*'. It is possible that two different groups were observed by the two men.

Shoalwater Bay man drawn by William Westall, 1802



## MOIETIES

As with many other Aboriginal groups in Australia, Darumbal people were divided into two moieties (or classes) in which the marriage of two individuals of the same moiety was forbidden (Jardine 1936). The moieties were further broken up into sub-classes and totems within the Kuinmurrburra. The effect of this system was to enforce that the nearest blood relations that could marry were first cousins, the children of a brother and sister, but not of two brothers or two sisters, thereby ensuring a dispersal of the gene pool and reduction of the chances of in-breeding (Ehrlich 1922, Roth 1910 in HLA 2007).



In the majority of Aboriginal groups, a totem is an emblem or symbol that one belongs to, and it bears no relationship to moiety. The killing, maiming or eating of one's own totem is forbidden, and is punishable by death. Frazer (1910), Roth (1898) and others have attempted to explain the rationale for totems. Roth (1898) believed that totems provided a mechanism for regulating animal populations and the total quantity of food available to an Aboriginal group. Frazer (1910) on the other hand, concluded that the occurrence of totems is linked to ensuring multiplication of certain animals, and is thus a precursor to 'increase rituals'.

Totems in Australian cultures are not necessarily always animals, however, as demonstrated by the Kunjen-speaking people of Kowanyama, whose totems are inextricably linked with the various states of freshwater over the seasons. Whichever school of thought is applied, one can surmise that the existence of totems is an outward expression of an individual's responsibility to the environment, an obligation to respect and protect one's totem.

Interestingly, the Kuinmurrburra people are considered to be one of the rare Australian Aboriginal groups where class or moiety sub-class names are also totems. This phenomenon is thought to only occur within the Kulin tribes of Victoria, the Wolgal and Ngario of New South Wales and the Annan River tribe in Queensland (HLA 2007). For a Kuinmurrburra individual, it is therefore possible to have two totems – a moiety totem and an individual totem. This may explain why Frazer (1910) observed that multiple animals were prohibited to be eaten or killed by the Kuinmurrburra.



## THE STORY OF SONNY SUNFLOWER

The story of Sonny Sunflower provides a model of traditional Darumbal life. He has been described as the most definable Darumbal identity, and he is acknowledged widely by both anthropologists and contemporary Darumbal people as a prominent apical ancestor. Parts of his story are documented in records held in the State Archives. But because of his relatively long life, there are also family members who can recall meeting him, or who knew him well.

### *The Darumbal lifestyle*

Sonny Sunflower's language name was 'Bahdaweer', and he was born at Torilla Station, on the boundary of the Area in about 1893. His father is known as 'Pompey' and his mother, Kitty Mylrea, named after the pastoral family who lived and worked 'The Plain' cattle station in the centre of the Area at the time. Kitty passed on her totem to Sonny as was custom, which was 'rainwater'. Connection to land in many Aboriginal groups is passed from mother to child, and is described as matrilineal descent. Consequently his sisters Ettie and Lily also inherited the rainwater totem from their mother.

Much later, Sonny would describe his people to Norman Tindale as being light in colour and big in stature. Sonny and his parents and sisters lived in a traditional way, with little in the way of clothing, but possum furs were stitched together with strands of possum intestines and used for sleeping blankets and coverings.

After he was born, he moved with his parents to the Pine Mountain area (within SWBTA) and spent his childhood living in the wild, and living off bush tucker. Kangaroo, koala, wallaby, witchetty grubs, goannas and other lizards were sources of protein, along with what food the sea offered, such as oysters, fish, turtle and dugong.

Dugong was plentiful, and prized as a food. The canoes used for dugong hunting were not dug-outs as in northern Queensland, but made from three, more or less diamond shaped pieces of ironbark or blue gum wood - one piece forming the floor of the canoe and the other two forming the sides - which were sealed with ti-tree bark. The canoes reached lengths of 8 to 10 feet. Turtle was also caught using these canoes, and were harpooned with spears neatly pointed with pieces of quartz (Flinders 1802). Early European explorers noted the number of bones lying about the people's fireplaces indicating the rich food resources available to the people (Flinders 1802).

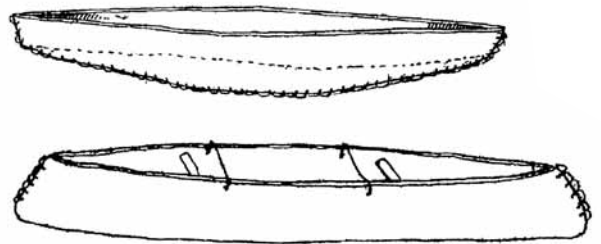


Diagram of a typical canoe used by Darumbal people (after Roth 1898)

Fish were caught using hand nets woven from the inner fibre of wattle branches, and mullet was plentiful during winter months. The season for mullet was heralded by the appearance of a star they called 'nia', indicating that the female mullet would be heavy with roe. Baskets were woven from vines and used to gather food, and stone axes were made and fixed with gum. A spokeshave was made by breaking the centre of a cockle shell from Broadsound, and was used to sharpen spear points. An extensive list of plant species were used for food, medicine and tools (Roth 1898). Over 130 species of plants have been identified in SWBTA as being of use by Aboriginal people for food and medicine (HLA 2007).

Sonny knew the language names for many places in the Area. Sabina Point was known as 'Happy Place', and the pinnacles of Mount Polygon that can be seen best from the south were known as 'Glowing Rocks', before the massacre that occurred in that area (Cosgrove 1996).



Top: Sonny Sunflower (deceased 1954)

*Helichrysum boormanii*



## SONNY'S PASSAGE TO MANHOOD

Sonny Sunflower was one of the last of the tribe to be initiated. The initiation ceremony is omnipresent among Australian Aboriginal groups, and can be described as the sacred passage to manhood for Aboriginal boys. Sonny was about 16 years old when he was called by the old men of the tribe, along with several other youths. They were going to take the boys away on a long hunting journey – it was time for the boys to become men.

Before they left for their journey, a great feast was prepared, and all the youths were given as much food as they could eat. Then they were each seized by male relatives and formally entered their period of 'probation'. Sonny was seized by his elders, held firmly and tickled by emu feathers tied to the end of a long sharpened stick. He was warned that if he tried to escape after this rite, he would be killed. Sonny stopped struggling. The boys were decorated with ochre and feathers along with every man present. The men then put on hats made of bark, and bound with possum fur strings. Sonny and his cohorts were shown several dances, and taught about the adventures of various totemic beings.

As he was going through the paces of the dances, the men called out in loud voices, saying we have caught the 'kuala' (novices). When the women, who had been hiding a long way off, heard this, they began to cry. This was the '*niring*' – the wailing rite – and one of the most important elements of the ceremony. Sonny was made to call out: '*inda minago ngiring ngatjunggir*' (why are you crying for me?), '*inda ram:a ngiri*' (you not cry).

During the probation period, the boys were given little by way of food. When the moon appeared, the men and boys set out for their hunting journey. Sonny's journey went for a period of six months, and he was taught the art of hunting. In the second part of the journey, the boys were taken to another important bora ground situated at an isolated hill on the plain country of the Darumbal tribe (Pine Mountain). They dug a shallow depression in the ground, smoothing it to form a dance place, on it they drew a circle shape, and the men turned to the boys and said: '*ngininan'gu ngindu mindara*' (you are mindara (under-graduate)). The men then taught them the details of the sacred stories and the dances they will be required to present in front of all the men of the tribe. He was taught to depict the story of the place at which they were camped. He was taught that the dog and the dingo camped together there, just as they were doing. It was also the place where the crow first brought into existence the practice of initiation.

After going through the ritual, he was a 'jangerainj' (graduate), and he was allowed to eat his fill of food, although some choice foods were still denied to him. The process of initiation in Aboriginal society is lengthy, complex, and in some parts, sacred. Periods of fasting and sleep deprivation are known to occur during initiation, which allows the elders to test the skills and characters of the boys with greater depth and speed. The elders are able to develop the boys' mental and physical strength, tolerance, patience, and fortitude.

Roth (1898) reported that cicatrices (scars) were commonly bestowed upon men following initiation, 'typically with three transverse cuts across the lower chest and trunk as far as the umbilicus with corresponding ones behind, and longitudinal scars down each shoulder'.

## THE MARRIAGE OF SONNY AND MAY

Sonny would have been around 23 years old when he married his wife May in around 1897. Their marriage was arranged according to the *kariera* system of marriage, whereby the bride-to-be is selected for the groom to be at a very early age – sometimes before she is even born ([Racliffe-]Brown 1913). It is reported that Sonny knew May for a long time before they were married, and knew that she was his promised wife. Sonny's maternal grandmother would have selected May as his bride-to-be, and would have asked May's grandmother for May's hand in marriage to Sonny. May's grandmother accepted.

When it came time for their marriage to be consummated, the young men, including Sonny, were dressed in eagle-down decorations with feather tufts tied to their arms, hair and waist belt. Two girls who were sisters, and brides-to-be, were similarly decorated and led to the youth's camp by Sonny's grandmother. The brides' uncle (mother's brother) scolded the young men, warning and entreating them to behave. In a loud manner, he gave the brides advice, telling them not to fight or quarrel with their grooms-to-be.

Then Sonny's aunty (father's sister) took the feathers off the girls and put them on the boy grooms. She did not touch the other girls or boys. Upon doing this she said to the bride: '*njininj nup:a'* (your husband) and then to the groom '*njininj inggil'* (your wife). According to Darumbal custom and lore, there can be no refusal to obey this command. Anthropologists are of the belief that Sonny and May's marriage may have been the last marriage to be held on Darumbal traditional country.

## INTERTRIBAL COMMUNICATION

Flowers (1956) detailed the formal protocols of people wishing to visit another tribe or group. Visitors walked to within 100 yards of the neighbouring group. If the host group wished to talk, they would send women to light a fire near where the visitors were sitting. Once the fire was alight and the women returned, some of the men would slowly walk over and sit by the fire, neither party speaking. 'After a time, both parties would start to cry and this went on for some minutes, then talk would begin. If all consented to a change and a general meeting, a corroboree might be arranged' (Flowers 1956).

As with other Aboriginal groups, the decision to hold a bora, along with the time and place, were conveyed via message sticks carried by runners chosen from active members of the clan.

While carrying a message stick the runner was considered sacred and when he got to the camp of the clan to which he had been sent, instead of sitting down and waiting for someone to come to him, he could walk straight in holding up the message stick, when the men of the clan came round him they were given the message verbally and the message stick handed in. (Flowers 1956)



## EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT ON SONNY'S HOMELANDS

By the 1860s, European land settlement in the Area was progressing, and Native Police were involved in the 'dispersal' of Aborigines in the Area from 1868. The Kuinmurrburra gained a reputation as 'great fighting men' by 1873, and it was apparent that the people were unwilling to relinquish their connection to the land. Many conflicts occurred between Darumbal people and the newcomers to their country. Sonny's people were described as great and fierce warriors

Throughout the late 1800s and early 1900s Aboriginal people were brought in from elsewhere to work on properties in the Area. The passage of the *Aboriginal Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act* (the Act) in 1897 spelled a new era for the Aboriginal people of Queensland, when Aboriginal people came under the control of government. People were removed from their environment and relocated to reserves.

By 1911, light-skinned children were being removed from their mothers and 'assimilated' into the white population. Government prohibited the employment of Aboriginal labour except by permit. Cosgrove (1996) reports that at least until the 1930s, Aboriginal presence was continuous and readily apparent in SWBTA, though these people may have been descendants of the original inhabitants, or may have been people brought in from elsewhere.

Sonny and his father were known to catch brumbies in the Area and take them down to Yeppoon to sell. This indicates that Sonny and at least some of his family were able to stay connected with their tribal land for some period beyond the passage of the Act in 1897, and probably had permits to work in the Area.

Whilst records show that he and May and their two children were moved to Aboriginal settlements under the control of the government in the early 1900's, Sonny is also known to have continued travelling back to his homelands for a great part of his life. He travelled on foot from the northern parts of the Area to Yeppoon to visit 'Grandfather Yorkie' – May's father, a Taroombal man.



Pine Mountain

Sonny and his family spent time in a number of Aboriginal settlements, including Durundur on the Stanley River north of Brisbane, Cherbourg and Woorabinda. In 1938, Norman Tindale interviewed him whilst at Cherbourg Aboriginal settlement, where he told Tindale that the 'inland people (of the Area) are all dead'. It is not known whether this statement related to the massacre that is thought to have taken place at the Polygon Range in the 1870s (Cosgrove 1996).

By the time the Army took over the properties of the Area in 1965, there were no Aboriginal people known to live or work in the Area (Cosgrove 1996).

## SONNY'S LAST PASSAGE

Sonny died on the 7th January 1954 after a lengthy illness. He would have been in his early 60's. He was buried the same day at Cherbourg Cemetery, as there were no means for preserving bodies whilst preparations for funerals took place. Had Sonny been continuing his traditional life on his tribal lands until his passing, his people would have buried him according to Darumbal lore, where his body would have been allowed to be defleshed by natural processes, and then his bones moved and placed in a tree hollow for permanent safekeeping.

Tree burials are exceedingly rare in Australia. Only limited evidence of tree burials exists, the first documented recording being from the Gulf of Carpentaria by Flinders (1802 in HLA 2007). The tree burial practice of Darumbal people is considered unique. Grandfather Yorkie was once asked why his people buried their loved ones in trees, and he responded 'just like white man going to church', indicating that the tree burial was a spiritual resting place for that loved one.

Sonny has been described as a very reserved man, who took life's knock-backs on the chin. He engendered a great respect from both Aboriginal people and Europeans alike throughout his life, and was considered a gentleman. He was highly regarded for his tribal knowledge, and he taught his children many of the old ways. Sonny's story provides detailed accounts of language words and phrases used during his life, which are verifiable because of the common origins of many words across many Aboriginal languages. Even today, Sonny's great grand-children can recall and sing the lullaby that Sonny first taught his children when they were young.

Oral histories suggest that Aboriginal people working and living in the Area in the early 1900s were the ancestors of the contemporary Hatfield, Ross and other families of Rockhampton. In particular, Minnie McPherson was part of the extended family operating The Glen in the 1920s, was the grandmother of Irene Hatfield.

Sadly very little is known about the mythology of the original Aboriginal people of the area. Roth (1898) records two legends or Dreaming stories conveyed to him by a Tarumbal man. The first involves the native bear and the whiptail kangaroo:

The native bear... and the whip tail kangaroo... were 'cousins' some considerable time ago: they were very much alike in colour and in those days, each was the proud possessor of a tail. It changed one day, during a hot weather, that they both got a bit thirsty and arriving at a neighbouring creek, discovered to their dismay that it had run dry. They thereupon started digging in the sand and water began to collect in the excavation made. As the bear dipped his head down in eagerness to drink, the kangaroo cut his tail off, and that is why he has never had one since.

The second story relates to the fate of the whistler ducks and echidnas:

In the times long before the advent of the whites, whistler ducks ... and porcupines need to share the country equally ie they lived peaceably both on land and in water, the one never disputing the claims of the other. But it so happened that the whistler duck, who required a 'quill' for his nose-pin, attempted to take one without permission from off the porcupine's back: the latter, naturally preventing such treatment shewed (sic) fight. Then commenced a battle-royal, the whistler calling to his assistance various black and other duck, with the result that the porcupine was driven to seek refuge in the holes...among the hills, where he still remains, the ducks mean time monopolising the waterholes.

*Jacksonia scoparia*



Seagrass patterns, Port Clinton





## ARCHAEOLOGY

Despite the rapid pace of settlement in the Area, and often brutal conflicts between Darumbal people and the settlers, the impacts of settlement on Shoalwater Bay have been generally benign and ephemeral. Consequently there is high potential for many cultural sites and places recorded in the literature to be still evident, including tree hollows, bora grounds, corroborees and camp sites. Damage from cattle grazing, feral pigs and human movements is likely to have occurred, but the potential impacts have been assessed as low in comparison with other areas of the east coast of Australia.

Border (1993) reviewed archaeological research carried out along the Northern Capricorn coastal mainland from Stockyard Point (just south of SWBTA) to Pearl Bay (within SWBTA). Of the five investigations, all but one has been conducted as part of Environmental Impact Statement studies for mineral sands mining proposals.

Consequently, research and survey efforts have concentrated on the dune systems of the south-east coast of SWBTA. The majority of documented sites consisted of shell middens and stone, with a possible stone arrangement and a possible scar tree at Cape Manifold (Neal 1985) which was confirmed by Cane (1989). He also identified three scar trees at Freshwater Bay (Cane 1985). Other significant sites reported within SWBTA include a stone arrangement located on a mud flat east of Mount Flinders, a stone cairn on a ridge near Mt Flinders, native wells throughout the Peninsula Range, carved trees near The Plain landing grounds and at Bramptonvale, a rock shelter with a possible burial at Notch Mountain.

There is anecdotal evidence relating to art sites, possibly located in the Polygon Ranges (Border 1993). A total of 135 archaeological sites within the Shoalwater Bay Region are registered on the Queensland cultural site database. Most

of these consist of stone artefact scatters or isolated finds and middens, with two scar tree sites and one ceremonial site.

The relatively recent rise in sea level of some 100 metres between the last Glacial Maximum (around 18 000 years Before Present (BP)) and the mid-Holocene (around 5–6 000 years BP) may have submerged many Aboriginal sites. This is supported by the existence of submerged inter-reefal Aboriginal story places offshore from the Whitsundays and Cairns.

Some cultural sites in the Area have been surveyed but have not been included in the Queensland cultural site database and are therefore not known by the wider public. This has been the choice of some of the Darumbal people, believing more protection will be afforded those sites if they are not publicly known. Given the bias of studies to coastal dune formations in SWBTA, it is highly probable that a vast number of archaeological sites remain to be properly surveyed and documented within SWBTA. Border (1993) estimated that, on the basis of the number of sites already recorded, a full survey of the eastern dune system of SWBTA would reveal in the order of 400 to 1 000 sites. The vast size and complexity of terrain within SWBTA makes a comprehensive archaeological survey extremely costly and time consuming.

### *Modelling archaeological sites in SWBTA*

Because of the vast size of the Area and the costs associated with surveying every part of the Area, Defence commissioned a predictive model in 2006 to determine the areas within SWBTA most likely to contain archaeological material or sites. This would allow Defence and Darumbal people to focus any future archaeological surveys on targeted areas. A number of assumptions about the possible location and densities of archaeological sites in SWBTA were made in order to predict possible areas of interest. These assumptions relate to the available resources and strategic location of a given area, and in summary:

- high site densities are expected in coastal dunes;
- the largest sites are expected along headlands;
- the highest density of inland-hinterland sites are expected along major creeks and their tributaries;
- site densities throughout inland plains are expected to be concentrated around permanent water sources;
- places that served as 'corridors' or major campsites, such as the isthmus of the Clinton Peninsula, are expected to have relatively high densities of sites;
- low densities are expected throughout the hills and mountainous areas, except where stone quarries may have existed; and
- offshore islands are expected to have high densities of sites, particularly Townshend Island.

(HLA 2007)

As a result of the modelling, a number of areas of interest have been determined, including: Diamond Creek (the area between the eastern arm of Shoalwater Bay and the western arm of Port Clinton); Pine Mountain; Torilla (outside SWBTA); Cape Manifold; Townshend Island; Port Clinton; and the larger creeks feeding into SWBTA (Shoalwater Creek, Georges Creek and Raspberry Creek).

Rock shelters with associated cultural deposits also often provide good information about the original inhabitants of an area. However the geology of SWBTA does not lend itself to forming rock overhangs or shelters, and these sites are rare, if not absent in the Area. The stone arrangement at Mt Flinders is considered to be rare and is afforded a high level of protection. The large occupation deposits located around the headlands will potentially provide the greatest amount of information and are regarded as a significant resource (Border 1993). Legislative requirements for heritage management are outlined in Chapter 2.

Below and far below:  
Stone arrangements,  
Strong Tide Passage



## DARUMBAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH SWBTA AND DEFENCE

Between the late 1960's and the 1990's, it is uncertain whether Darumbal people were able to visit the Area with any regularity or consistency, owing to the new custodians of the Area - Army. The Commission of Inquiry into the management of Shoalwater Bay in the early 1990s, however, provided an opportunity for contemporary Darumbal people to publicly state their connection to the Area. They voiced their opposition to mineral sand mining in the Area, their interest in preserving heritage sites, and their desire to formalise ownership and access to the land – particularly the area of Freshwater.

Whilst the Commission found that 'there is no evidence before the Commission that the contemporary Darumbal descendants are the owners, according to Aboriginal tradition of that piece of land they have asked to have excised', the Commission's charter was not one that included determining native title rights. Despite this statement, the Commission recommended that the area at Freshwater be granted as freehold title to the Darumbal Noolar-Murree Aboriginal Corporation for Land and Sea (the Aboriginal incorporated body representing Darumbal interests at the time of the Inquiry). It also recommended that, in the interim, 'arrangements be made to allow Darumbal people access to part of the Area... subject to Department of Defence's operational requirements, until tenure arrangements for the proposed grant of land be finalised' (Appendix 1).

A land claim was then prepared and lodged in 1994, however the claim was unsuccessful, and Cabinet did not consider the recommendations of the Inquiry relating to Darumbal interests. Darumbal people remained optimistic that, should Defence ever dispose of SWBTA, the Darumbal people would be given freehold title to the Freshwater Bay area.

In response to the Inquiry recommendation that 'interim access' be given to Darumbal people, Defence offered the Corporation opportunities for weekend camping at Freshwater Bay, subject to military training operations. Since 1994 up to 12 access opportunities have been offered each year, although in some years of extended military training use, that number has been much less.

Relationships between Darumbal people and Defence personnel managing SWBTA have been ongoing from the early 1990s but variable, owing to both entities going through changes in key people, and both entities experiencing changing priorities and focuses. In recent years however, Defence and Darumbal people have worked positively to improve relationships, which has resulted in a greater degree of cross-cultural understanding and a growing respect between the two entities.

Regular meetings have produced discussions about a wide range of Darumbal interests in and possibilities for SWBTA, including involvement in heritage management, employed involvement in land management, and most important of all, maintaining and improving Darumbal opportunities for cultural renewal during visits to the Area. New access arrangements were negotiated during 2007 and were agreed to by both Defence and Darumbal people in early 2008. The new arrangements improve the safety of Darumbal people, the security of the Training Area, and environmental management of the Area.





### *Towards the future*

Defence is committed to improving its corporate understanding of Indigenous interests outside of native title claim processes. Defence does not make determinations about which Darumbal families have most legitimate claims to access the Area based on ancestry. To date, the Freshwater Bay area in particular, is considered a cultural asset available for all Darumbal people.

Management of Indigenous heritage of the Area is a topic of ongoing development, and relies heavily on the participation of Darumbal people. Known archaeological sites are currently well protected, but there are vast tracts of land within SWBTA that have yet to be comprehensively surveyed. Predictive modelling has been undertaken to narrow the search during future surveys.

Despite the 'dispersal' of Aboriginal people and removal to reserves and other locations for work, current Darumbal descendants have maintained strong spiritual connections to the Area. The fact that the Area has been managed to maintain and conserve the natural ecology and environments and has not been developed or modified, provides Darumbal descendants with the certainty that this part of their traditional lands remains much the way it was during their ancestors' time.

Darumbal people of today look to the Area, and Freshwater Bay in particular, as a critically important venue for cultural renewal. It is the place where bush skills are practiced and honed by the older people, and the younger generations are taught those bush skills along with language, dance, song and stories as they are remembered. It is entirely possible that the importance of SWBTA to Darumbal people will increase over time, as a place of unspoilt beauty, of connection with ancestors, and of past and present cultural identity, in a landscape of diminishing opportunities for the maintenance or revival of culture.





Delcomyn Bay



## EUROPEAN HERITAGE

### EXPLORERS

Captain James Cook left no mark on the country as he sailed past in HMS ENDEAVOUR in 1770. Neither he nor his crew ever stepped ashore within SWBTA. He named Cape Manifold (he called it Cape Manyfold after the number of high hills above it) and Cape Townshend in his log, and Island Head, the Hervey Islands and Quoin Island on his charts (Parkin 2006). He noted Shoalwater Bay was 'a very large bay' and suspected that the land south of Cape Townshend was an island.

Matthew Flinders spent more time in the Area than Cook, and made some significant forays ashore (Flinders 1802). His journal contains the first detailed accounts of SWBTA. He passed Cape Manifold in HMS INVESTIGATOR accompanied by HMS LADY NELSON on 20 August 1802, and left the western boundary on 4 September 1802. His first impressions of the Area were uninspired and he wrote:

The island lying off Cape Manifold is stony and not very low. The back land is very hummocky, and of moderate height. The shore immediately about the cape is divided into rocky heads and small beaches, but elsewhere the shore is sandy. The country has but a barren appearance.

His impressions soon changed when he discovered headlands and islands covered in hoop pines (*Araucaria cunninghamii*), which were found to be excellent timber for fixing his ships. He recorded that:

The hills are abrupt and appear romantic; being well suited to the purpose of ascent and of affording good views.

He anchored near a site now known as Flinders Watering Gully where with some difficulty the crew managed to fill the ship's water casks. The ship's carpenters were employed felling hoop pines on nearby Entrance Island while Flinders explored Port Clinton, then known as Port Bowen.

Flinders ascended Mount Flinders at the eastern entrance of Port Clinton which afforded him views over the inlet, south to Cape Manifold and north to the Hervey Islands. He noted of Port Clinton that:

Fish seem to be more numerous here than in any port we have yet visited, amongst these, sharks, mullet and flying fish were most frequently seen.

He then moved the ships further north to the Hervey Islands, and climbed 'upon the highest part of the hummocky rocks...', possibly Split Island. From here he '... had a view of several islands to the northward and observed the latitude...'

Flinders took the INVESTIGATOR and LADY NELSON into Strong Tide Passage between Townshend Island and the mainland, where he anchored for the night. He lost the INVESTIGATOR's cutter here when it was overturned by the strong current. Both arms were broken off the anchor and the anchor line suffered wear. To this day Strong Tide Passage remains a treacherous place for navigation.

The 'botanical gentlemen' and Flinders then made the difficult climb to the top of Mount Westall. Flinders wrote:

The hill which I went on shore on the eastern side of the passage to ascend, proved to be further from the water side and of a more laborious ascent, than was expected. Its height is considerable, and consequently it afforded a very extensive view. Almost the whole of Shoal-water Bay with its numerous islands was visible, as well as those in the offing. C. Townshend was seen to be an island, as conjectured by C.C. [Captain Cook] as also the piece of land on the west side of it [Leicester Island], both being much indented by water, and of singular shapes.



Flinders had with him onboard the young and talented artist William Westall to make a pictorial record of places and events on the voyage. Westall sketched a number of locations in SWBTA including the coast around Cape Manifold and Flinders Watering Hole. He also climbed Mount Westall (named in his honour) where he sketched and later painted panoramas looking south to Island Head Creek and Port Clinton, and north over Townshend Island. SWBTA is a unique part of the eastern Australian coast because these same landscapes remain essentially unchanged today. If William Westall were to re-draw the same SWBTA sketches now that he drew in 1802, they would look no different. These unchanged natural landscapes depicted by Westall are national treasures in every sense — unique windows in time, rare and irreplaceable.

After visiting some small islands to the south-west of Townshend Island, Flinders travelled north-west to Leicester Island in the ship's boat before returning to the ship via Round Rock. From here he took note of the shoals in Shoalwater Bay.

The next day, on 30 August 1802, he sailed down into Shoalwater Bay itself. One object of this exploration was to search for the missing cutter, but he was also looking for a suitable place to beach the LADY NELSON in order to replace her sliding keel. He explored the three major creeks along the eastern shore including East Creek, and ventured as far south into Head Creek as Cockatoo Island. He landed on the west shore of Head Creek opposite Cockatoo Island where he walked about a mile inland. He saw frequent signs of Aboriginal habitation and noted:

Round the fire places were found the bones of turtle, and shells of crabs, and a kind of periwinkles, and oyster shells of a small kind lay scattered about. I observed small holes in the lowe[r] grounds, as if the natives had been digging for [indecipherable words].

Flinders' only other landing point in SWBTA was at Akens Island. He anchored in West Bight and went to the high ground at the northern end of the island from where he took a series of bearings and observations for the calculation of magnetic variation and latitude. At the same time some of the crew took the whale-boat to the mainland and climbed Pine Mountain.

SWBTA featured prominently in further voyages of discovery along the Queensland coast. In 1820 Phillip Parker King's ship MERMAID ran aground in Port Clinton during a voyage north to finish the survey work of Matthew Flinders. He stayed for two days to complete some repairs and gather water at Flinders Watering Gully.

In 1843 an extensive survey of Great Barrier Reef waters was carried out by Captain Francis Price Blackwood on HMS FLY and Captain Charles Yule who commanded HMS BRAMBLE. Both ships suffered damage during a storm in the Swain Reefs and retreated to Port Clinton for repairs. Again hoop pine was milled from Entrance Island, but this time no fresh water could be found as the Area was in the middle of a severe drought. The FLY remained in Port Clinton for a month and the area was extensively explored.

HMS FLY's expedition was the last of the great coastal explorations that included SWBTA. With the eventual establishment of settlements to the north and south there came regular shipping traffic past the Area. Local settlers in small boats visited the Area for fishing and provisioning, but the charts, surveys and maps in use were largely derived from the skills of those earlier explorers. Only in recent times has very accurate mapping using new technologies replaced some of the early maritime charts.

## PASTORALISTS AND FISHERMEN

In the 1850s, central Queensland was the northern frontier of European settlement in Australia. The Archer brothers, Colin and William, discovered the Fitzroy River and settled at Gracemere. Rockhampton was established as a busy port and flourished, and Shoalwater was identified as a vast run to the north.

With the passing of the *Crown Lands Alienation Act 1868* through the Queensland Legislative Assembly, the vast runs were divided and opened for leasehold selection. About this time various holdings were established in the Shoalwater area, with their boundaries apparently following those of the Aboriginal territories (Cosgrove 1996). Raspberry Creek station in SWBTA was one of the first established in this way in the late 1860s.

By the early 1900s there were 21 dwellings within SWBTA across 14 properties. Some of these structures were more substantial than others, and a few survive to the present day (Table 3.1). Raspberry Creek homestead is the oldest, largest and most significant surviving dwelling constructed in SWBTA. It was moved to Byfield in 1988, restored by the Byfield Historical Society, and is now open to the public.

Examples of the early timber slab method of construction are all but gone from SWBTA. The original slab hut built at Elanora contained rifle slits from which settlers defended themselves against local Aboriginal people, who had begun to understand that their land ownership and way of life was threatened. The old meat hut at The Plains is the single remaining slab construction in the Area, and is probably worthy of removal and preservation.



Raspberry Creek homestead in its original location in the 1860's and 1970's, and in its current location in Byfield, 2008.

**TABLE 3.1**

Status of dwellings associated with the pastoral history of SWBTA

Homestead	Year built	Construction type	Current condition and location
Braeside	1930s	Weatherboard and fibro clad residence with galvanised iron roof.	Destroyed by fire in 1988.
Brampton [Brompton] Vale	1883	Slab and bark homestead, temporary house built in the 1940s, replacement house built by Defence in 1968, new house built in 1993.	Little evidence remains of the original dwellings, house built in 1968 was relocated to Cooberrie. Current house built in 1993.
Commissioner's Hut	1800s	Galvanised iron hut, two rooms, outdoor kitchen.	Derelict and removed to rubbish tip in 1988.
Double Mountain	Unknown	Low set weatherboard dwelling, galvanised iron roof.	Left derelict by previous owner of Waratah.
Elanora	Late 1800s or early 1900s	Rough galvanised iron hut, built as outstation for Raspberry Creek.	Part of structure remains on site, poor condition, to be removed in 2008.
Goodnomda	Late 1930s ?	Rough building of galvanised iron and hardwood. No windows.	Derelict by the 1960s. Destroyed by fire in 1988-89.
Huttonvale	Unknown	High-stumped dwelling with pine cladding and galvanised iron roof, beaded pine partitions and linings, pine and hardwood floors.	Derelict by the 1960s, dismantled.
Khieva	Late 1800s ?	Three roomed weatherboard house of sawn timber with shingle roof and verandah. Also older two-roomed cottage.	Only stumps remain. Homestead moved to New Keiva in late 1930s.
Lynfield	1950s	Small but well built house of hardwood weatherboards and galvanised iron roof.	Structure remains on site, good condition.
Manifold	Late 1800s	Roughly built cottage in two sections: old structure with slab exterior and interior walls, newer structure on low stumps.	Destroyed by fire after acquisition.
Montait	1920s	Unusual bush timber dwelling, not unlike contemporary pole house construction. Several dwellings were eventually built.	Houses destroyed by fire at time of acquisition.
New Kheiva	Late 1800s ?	Weatherboard dwelling on stumps moved from Keiva in late 1930s.	Derelict, little remaining.
Noller's Hut	1957 ?	Low set dwelling, timber frames, fibro walls and roof built at Duckhole Creek.	Partly removed by owner at time of Defence purchase.



**TABLE 3.1 CONTINUED**

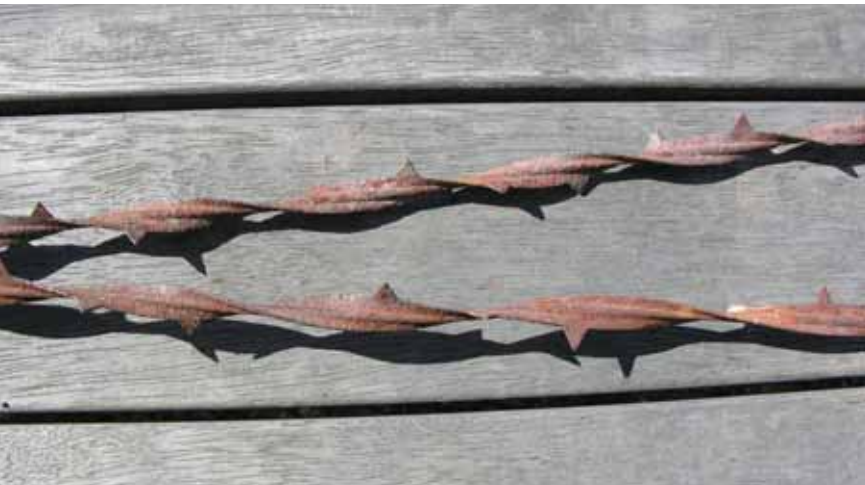
Status of dwellings associated with the pastoral history of SWBTA

Homestead	Year built	Construction type	Current condition and location
Pine Mountain	Early 1870s	Original bark hut destroyed by cyclone in 1874. Timber house with galvanised iron roof then constructed. Partly destroyed by cyclone in 1969, but renovated. Later destroyed by fire.	House from The Polygon moved to the site in 1990. Currently used as a caretaker's residence.
Raspberry Creek	1860s	Originally rough pit sawn timber and shingles, replaced with pine weatherboards and galvanised iron in 1890s.	Moved to Byfield in 1988 and restored. Used as Byfield Historical Society building.
Raspberry Vale	Early 1940s	Timber walls and fibro roof unlined. Two central rooms lined with plumwood.	Derelict by 2003. Roof removed, bulldozed and burnt.
The Bend	1920s	Weatherboard and galvanised iron construction, built as outstation for Mt Parnassus station.	Destroyed by fire after acquisition, little evidence remains.
The Glen	1907	Two storey Queenslander, timber weatherboards and galvanised iron roof, large verandas and lined with beaded pine and three ply ceilings.	Sold and relocated to Cooberie near Yeppoon in the early 1990s together with house from Brampton Vale.
The Plains	Early 1900s	High quality structure and design, with wide verandas, panelled cedar doors, brass light fixtures and ceramic door plates.	Used as a residence for CSIRO research staff until 1983, later relocated to Calliope.
The Polygon	1937	Original cottage extended to a substantial dwelling in 1960.	Dwelling relocated to Pine Mountain in 1990.
The Stables	?	Original mustering hut for Canal Creek Company.	
Sardine Creek	1920s	galvanised iron hut with raised timber floors, built as a mustering hut for the Canal Creek Company.	Destroyed by fire, 2008.
Spring Valley	1920s ?	Single storey construction. Wide verandas, weatherboards, galvanised iron roof.	Became derelict and destroyed by fire after acquisition.
Townshend Island	1880s	A single room construction on the ground with lapped pine slab walls and pine flooring. Exterior of horizontal stringybark slabs. A second, rough weatherboard house on short stumps shown in photo taken in the 1950s (Cosgrove 1996).	Only stumps remain.
Wadallah	?	Old timber house.	Left derelict by previous owner of Waratah.

Clockwise from top left: Old barbed wire, Grave on Townshend Island, Old well, Arrowhead fish trap remains

There are other reminders of the pastoralist history of SWBTA. While much of the old barb-wire fencing has been removed, fence lines are still evident in many areas because the posts remain. Some of these, such as that built across the salt marsh in the narrow-neck immediately south of the Kheiva homestead, are of a dog-leg construction. This fence was probably built in the 1870s (Cosgrove 1996) and is constructed of heavy, un-sawn timber logs crossed to form a series of tripods that supported the wire. Parts of other

SWBTA also had a history of gold mining and timber getting. Remnants of gold mining activities including mine shafts, diggings, stampers and other machinery, remain in a few locations. These include the Jubilee Mine site near Pine Mountain, the Southern Cross Mine site near Huttonvale and the mine site operated by a Chinese workforce south of Double Mountain. The old Hinz sawmill site on the eastern boundary near Byfield still contains relics of sawmilling activities including machinery, a sawpit and an old truck.



fences and yards exist that indicate slip rail construction, and some are located in the most remote parts of the Area.

Further remnants of early pastoralist's activities in SWBTA are scattered. Old cattle dips were filled in because of their toxicity, but a few original wells can still be found. Timber-lined wells in good condition are known to still exist on Townshend Island, at Old Kheiva and The Glen, and it is likely that others are present as most homesteads had a well nearby.

Gravesites are reminders of the connections that some families of the early pastoralists still have with this country. On Townshend Island there is the grave of Theresa Annie Simpson who died in 1895, and at Pine Mountain are the graves of Campbell Murray (1918), Mary Ann Tucker (1902) and the ashes of Elizabeth Shrive Tait (nee Murray) (1986). Raspberry Creek contains the graves of nine early settlers including Falconer, Emma and Margaret Hutton and an unnamed child of the Grant family dating from the nineteenth century (Cosgrove 1996). The 1911 grave of Lewis Tucker is near Kheiver homestead, and there are two unknown graves in the vicinity of The Bend homestead. The grave of an unknown Chinese gold miner also dating from the nineteenth century is thought to exist near the old diggings at Wadallah Creek.

Near Raspberry Creek there is a memorial arch built of tall bush timbers to the memory of Private C Sturzaker from the First Armoured Regiment who was accidentally killed in 1966.

## MILITARY HERITAGE

The role that SWBTA played in the preparation of troops heading to the Vietnam conflict is a special part of the Defence heritage of the Area. This connection was popularised and immortalised in 1983 in the first verse of the Redgum song *I Was Only 19 (A Walk in the Light Green)*:

*'Mum and Dad and Denny saw the  
passing out parade at Puckapunyal,  
(It was a long march from cadets).  
The Sixth Battalion was the next to tour  
and it was me who drew the card...  
We did Canungra and  
Shoalwater before we left.'*

[Copyright John Schumann: Universal Music Publishing Pty Ltd.]

By the early 1960s Australia's involvement in the conflict in Vietnam was imminent. There was a need for a large, undeveloped training ground removed from areas of residential growth and development but with reasonable access. The chosen area needed to be on the coast where it could accommodate combined training for the three services, including an amphibious capability. The selection was also to have a minimal social and economic effect on the State (Cosgrove 1996). Aerial reconnaissance had identified Shoalwater Bay as a suitable site in early 1961 and the Australian Government made immediate plans to purchase it. The Area met all the identified training requirements and was located strategically on the central Queensland coast.

Without the Vietnam War, SWBTA would not have been purchased for Defence training purposes in 1965, and the opportunity for conservation may have been lost forever. While the Vietnam War was pivotal in the decision to purchase the Area, it also influenced the types of improvements that were originally built and the way training was conducted. For most of the National Servicemen embarking to Vietnam, Shoalwater Bay was the location for final confirmation training. The country was seen as similar to that where Australians

Old Australian Army  
marker on Cape Clinton



were to operate in South Vietnam, and the remoteness and extensive vegetation allowed development of realistic training scenarios. A Vietnamese village was built and replica underground tunnel systems were constructed. At this point in time the Royal Australian Air Force operated the helicopters that were to play such an important role in the conflict. SWBTA proved an ideal venue to train troops and helicopter pilots in the coordination aspects of joint operations. Small helicopter drop zones were cleared in various locations.





All that remains as a reminder of the significance of training activities at SWBTA during the Vietnam War are memories and some photos. The tunnel system entrances are closed and many have begun to collapse. The replica village has long gone, as has the purpose-built obstacle training course.

SWBTA is at least as important for Defence training purposes as it was in the 1960s and 1970s. It continues to play a critical role during the preparation of ADF personnel before deployment overseas to areas needing humanitarian assistance or to areas of conflict. As happened during the Vietnam War era, memories of final training activities in the natural settings of SWBTA remain with participants, continuing to add to the already significant heritage of the Area.



Lynfield homestead

Memorial to F111 pilot & navigator, lost during training, Cape Clinton

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