

Even today when much of Noongar culture has been fragmented, Noongar people *malap* [still know] and respect special and sacred places. Information about this has been provided inside the Museum by Ballardong Noongar Elder, the late Mr. Saul Yarran. Other places have special meaning to individuals. This garden walk is special to his sister, Mrs. Veronica McGuire, a Ballardong Noongar Elder.

"This corner was where I waited whilst Dad visited Mum when she was in hospital having a baby. It was a safe place to leave the children who weren't allowed inside the hospital as visitors. Many Noongar women travelled a long way to have babies in the [old] York hospital as some places would not let Aboriginal women give birth in hospitals - Beverley hospital had a tent for Aboriginal women. Even at York they were segregated in a small separate room which was cold and draughty".



Mrs Veronica McGuire, Ballardong Noongar Elder



Symbolic stone *karla-mia* [hearth or home] camp circles have been made by local Ballardong Noongar families to represent *moort* [their family group] who live or previously lived in this area, their *karla budjar* [home Country].

Courtesy Michelle Bateman

"My Grannie [grandfather] he was a mubarn [medicine] man, he used to get a stone, heat it in the fire, cover it with ashes after a time wrap it up with a cloth and put it on my brother's head, to take the headache away"



Mrs. Pat Narrier-Narkle, Ballardong Noongar resident

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All *Noongar** words in italics are drawn from the Nyungar Dictionary of the Avon Catchment Region published by Wheatbelt NRM in April 2009.

The Residency Museum acknowledges the traditional knowledge of members of the Ballardong Noongar community in this document, which can be found at: http://www.avonnrm.org.au/documents/nyungar_nrm_dictionary.

*Noongar** is an alternative spelling of Nyungar and is used throughout text in the Museum for continuity and as the preference of local Elders.

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Ballardong Noongar Six Seasons Garden Walk

"This garden walk is something to show that we respect our traditions. More than anything our ancestors respected their environment, respected the planet."

Laura Lee, local Ballardong Noongar resident.

Funded through a Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Network Incentive Development and Support Grant and the Shire of York in 2009.

Ballardong Noongar Six Seasons Garden Walk

This is a symbolic garden walk. It represents *koora-koora* [the past], *yey* [the present] and *mila* [the future] of *Ballardong Noongar Budjar* – Country and what it means to the *Ballardong Noongar* people.

Budjar [Country] is far more than just the land.

Noongar spiritual beliefs, traditional social structure, stories and song lines all come from nature.

Identity is influenced by the special qualities of *karla budjar* [home Country].

Today, it's harder for *Ballardong Noongar* people to connect with *Budjar* as there are many places where access is not available.

But *Budjar* and people are interwoven.

"I am always aware that thousands of my people have passed through the land from countless generations. I feel their presence, their spirit whenever I go bush to revive my creativity"

Merle Narkle-Goodwin, local Noongar artist



The *bidi* [path] represents *Bilya* [the Avon River] as it winds through the Avon Valley.



Booyi

[Long necked tortoise or turtle / *Chelodina oblonga*]

Courtesy of and ©B & B Wells/
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"Once you could walk over the river and see three or four turtles straightaway - but not now, you'd be lucky to see one"

Mr. Ivan Lawrence, Ballardong Noongar Elder

"We used to sit on the banks with our old people, they'd make a fire and cook a turtle in the ashes and we'd eat it"

Mrs. Pat Narrier-Narkle, Ballardong Noongar resident



This area at the foot of *Wongborel* [Mount Brown] is remnant *marlak* [bushland]. *Noongar* people understood and managed the land sustainably for over 40,000 years. It provided food, medicine and all their needs. European settlement drastically changed and damaged this fragile environment and its diversity of plants and animals.



"This garden walk is something to show that we respect our traditions.

More than anything our ancestors respected their environment, respected the planet. It's just that recognition of our culture that's important."

Laura Lee, Ballardong Noongar resident.