

Stop 8

Hepburn Family Private Gravesite

GPS -37.30807, 143.96423

Walk across paddocks for 750m to gravesite. The Hepburn family graveyard is maintained by the National Trust. There is public walking access to the graves across privately owned paddocks via a car park on Estate Lane. John Hepburn was buried here in 1860 along with some of his immediate family.

If you take the 750m walk across the paddocks to the graveyard, you will be rewarded with views across the surrounding area. One view is towards Mount Moorookyle, another is towards Mount Kooroocheang. A third vista south overlooks the valley of Middle Creek, locally called 'Captains Creek', through scattered, remnant, ancient woodland eucalypts.

At the time of Hepburn's death in 1860, just 20 years after Mitchell's wagons rolled through this Dja Dja Wurrung landscape, the telegraph had arrived and the railway was advancing from Geelong towards Ballarat. The first 1851 gold rush in nearby Clunes was then only nine years old, but by the 1880s had spread for 100km in every direction and totally transformed the landscape and society.

On the drive back to Daylesford, stop by the historic town of Smeaton to visit the John Hepburn woodcarving and the National Trust listed Anderson's Flour Mill. You can then travel through Kingston and onto the Midland Highway back into Daylesford, past Hepburn's Lagoon. From the 1840 to 1860 the lagoon provided water to Hepburn's flour Mill, and later Anderson's Mill.



Reconciliation Tour

Reading the Country at Contact National Reconciliation Week



Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (Djaara)


For more information of the history of this region, visit the Daylesford Museum & Historical Society. Open Sat 11am – 3pm or by appointment. www.daylesfordmuseum.net


You will also find a large range of reference books at the local Hepburn Shire Libraries.


Read more detail of Adjunct Professor Barry Golding's research, including his 'Beyond Contact' page on his website at www.barrygoanna.com



For more visitor information contact the team -

 1800 454 891

 visitorinfo@hepburn.vic.gov.au

 **Daylesford**
Regional Visitor Information Centre

98 Vincent Street, Daylesford
Open Daily 10am - 1pm, 2pm - 4pm

Creswick
Visitor Information Centre

41/43 Albert Street, Creswick
Open Thurs - Tues 10am -

Clunes
The Warehouse
36 Fraser Street, Clunes
Mon, Wed - Fri 10am - 5pm
Sat 10am - 1pm & Sun 10am - 2pm

DOC/23/36196

This self-drive tour invites people to experience a range of important sites in the Dja Dja Wurrung landscape where there is evidence of contact from the late 1830s between the peoples of the Dja Dja Wurrung Aboriginal nation and the invading pastoralists, including John Hepburn, after whom the shire is named.

Follow the trail to visit several remarkable places around Campbelltown and Kooroocheang documented in George Augustus Robinson's diary in February 1840 whilst visiting Hepburn as Chief Protector of Aborigines.

Updated July 2023

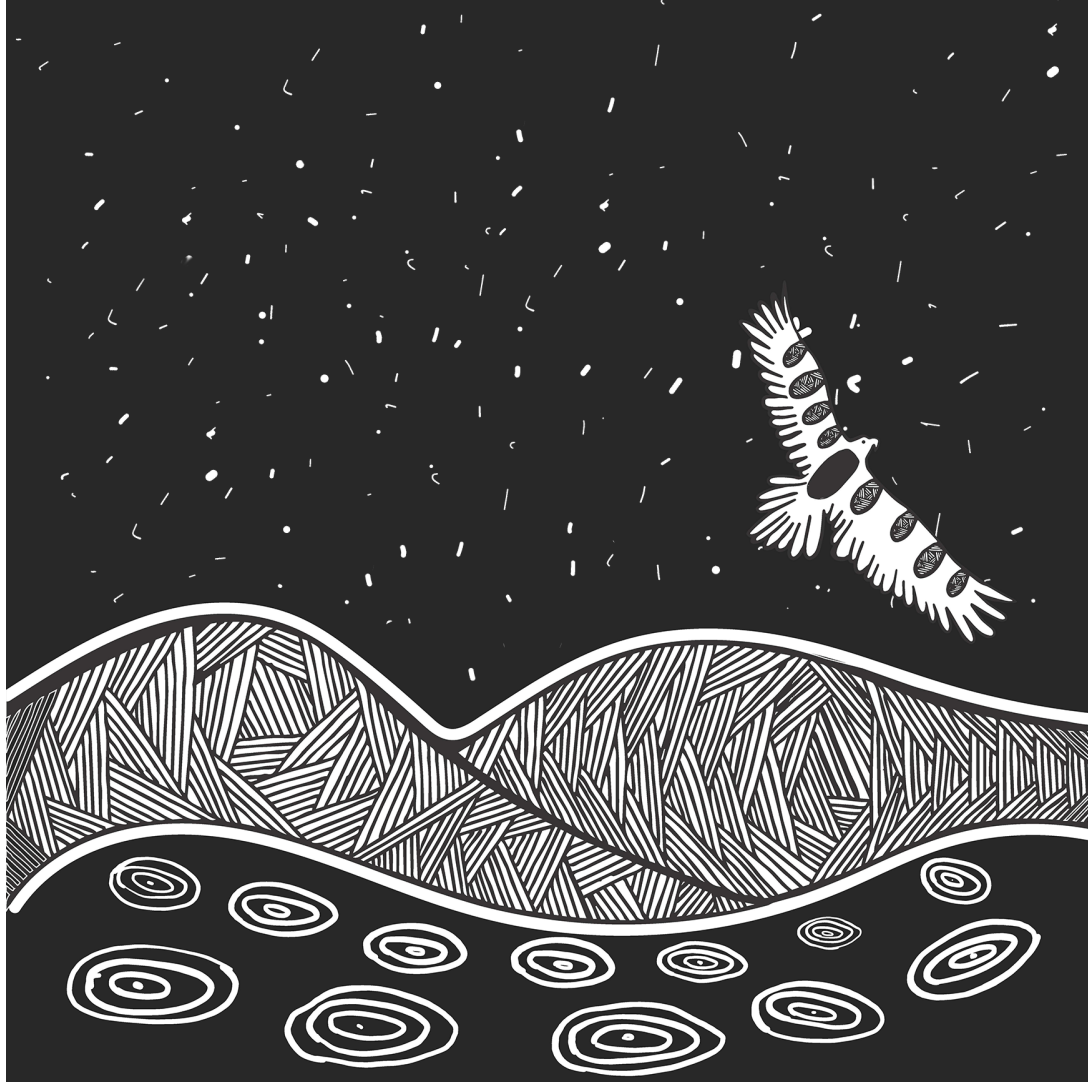


Hepburn Shire Council is on Dja Dja Wurrung Country.

Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. On these lands, Djaara have performed age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We recognise their resilience through dispossession and it is a testament to their continuing culture and tradition, which is strong and thriving.

We also acknowledge the neighbouring Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri to our South East and the Wadawurrung to our South West and pay our respect to all Aboriginal peoples, their culture, and lore.

We acknowledge their living culture and the unique role they play in the life of this region.



Stop 7 Williams Road

GPS -37.27005, 143.98837

An altercation allegedly followed and the Aboriginal group are alleged to have 'murdered' the cook, hanging his body in the cookhouse on a meat hook.

About a year after the cook's death in 1841, Dugald McLachlan's hunting dogs savaged to death an unnamed visiting itinerant traveller, who was buried beside the cook.

The third grave is of George McDonnell, the son of shepherd (and the original informant of the oral history) Donald McDonnell, who died of natural causes in 1841.

The Aboriginal group thought to be those associated with the death of the cook were tracked down with the station owner's dogs and they hid in the waterholes on Middle Creek. On seeing the approaching men on horseback with guns, the Aboriginal men jumped into the creek to swim to the other side or hide under water.

The mounted men fired on the Aboriginal men in the water. Some had hollow reeds to breathe through while submerged, which still grow at the site today. By the time the firing stopped at least 12 Aboriginal men were dead and floating in the bloody water. The place (on private property) is still known locally by some residents as 'The Blood Hole' or 'Slaughter Hole'.

Williams (gravel) Road beyond the Tuki entrance provides excellent vistas from the Stony Rises and Smeaton Plan towards Kooroocheang. The road later intersects a number of huge original Red Gums referred to in George Robinson's diary on 14 February 1840. Some of the original trees are on the roadside. Being a fine and pleasant day, John Hepburn took Robinson to the top of Kooroocheang. Hepburn then;

'Showed me a plain with some open forest on it, 3 miles [5km] from his house in N [northerly] direction. Said it was a favourite place for the natives. He has seen 30 women on the plains at a time digging murnong [Yam Daisy] while the men went into the forest to hunt kangaroos, opossums, which are abundant.'

Robinson continued:

'We saw the remains of 30-40 screens or shelters of boughs where the natives had been. Also several of the native ovens or fireplaces where they baked their murnong. Some 10 feet in diameter. ...Returned through another part of the native camp. Saw some more native huts or screens. Rode round the S end of Koretanger. The dogs killed a native cat, dark color and white spots.'

Dozens of Aboriginal oven mounds have been recorded in this area around Kooroocheang, all on private property.

Stop 5 'Joyces Creek'

GPS -37.1102, 143.97104

Joyce's Creek, like the Loddon River, was then a well-travelled and settled Aboriginal highway. Robinson reported many Aboriginal huts and ovens 'where the natives had been', with many freshwater mussel and emu shells. There are some remnant buloke trees along the road.

This area was an important food resource for the Dja Dja Wurrung people, being the meeting point of many ecosystems. Food was plentiful with Emu, Kangaroo and Yam Daisy on the Moolort Plains; Murray cod and Macquarie perch in the Loddon River; possums and small mammals in the River Red Gums along Joyce's Creek; rich fauna and flora in the Banksia and Buloke woodlands and blackfish, yabbies and freshwater mussels in the creeks.

This stop provides views from the roadside, albeit different from what Robinson observed in 1840, though you can still see remnants of the diverse local ecosystems that sustained the local Aboriginal people.



Murnong Flowers

Stop 6 European grave site

GPS -37.18846, 146.95905

This is the site of three European graves. The first burial here in 1840 was associated with the 1840 Middle Creek Massacre. The memorial grave, which can be viewed from the roadside, is to the left of the road on private property, 1km before the Black Duck Hotel. A brass plaque on the grave displays the following text:

HERE LIE THREE UNKNOWN
PIONEERS OF THIS DISTRICT.
A COOK ON GLENGOWER STATION
KILLED BY THE ABORIGINES IN 1840.
A TRAVELLER KILLED BY MIS-ADVENTURE
BY THE STATION DOGS IN 1841.
AND A YOUNG EMPLOYEE,
DIED FROM NATURAL CAUSES IN 1841.
MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

The three European people buried in the Pioneer Memorial Graves were all associated with the Glengower run, established by Dugald McLachlan in 1839-40.

The first burial is that of a cook at the Glengower station who was killed by a band of Jadwajali Aboriginal men returning to the Grampians after obtaining greenstone axe blanks from Mt William, near Lancefield. The Aboriginal men are said to have stopped at the station for food. The cook is alleged to have added *Plaster of Paris* to a damper he had cooked for them, which once ingested would have caused a horrible and painful death.

Self-Drive Day Tour

Reading the Country at Contact

Distance 108km round journey
Travel Time 1hr 34min
Without stopping. We encourage you to travel at your own pace, pausing at each site for contemplation.

Please note that this flyer and tour involves powerful truth-telling and confronting content.

Start at the Daylesford Visitor Information Centre and travel along the Midland Highway to Guildford. After Guildford you pick up the 1836 trail of Major Mitchell at Newstead, a trail followed in 1838 by John Hepburn and family to what became the Smeaton Hill Station at the foot of Mt Kooroocheang.

Whilst this tour concentrates on the confronting things that happened locally following first contact with Major Mitchell, it acknowledges and celebrates that around 2,000 Dja Dja Wurrung descendants have survived.

This tour focuses on events and sites before the commencement (in mid 1841) of the Loddon Aboriginal Protectorate at present day Franklinfod, that operated until December 1848.

NOTE: Most sites mentioned on this tour are roadside stops. On no account should participants trespass on private property.



The National Reconciliation Week dates, 27 May – 3 June, commemorate two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey in Australia: the successful 1992 Referendum, and the High Court Mabo decision respectively. NRW is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements.

This self-drive tour was put together as part of Reconciliation Week 2019 with assistance from the Hepburn Shire Council's Reconciliation Action Plan Community Reference Group. Research content was provided by Adjunct Professor Barry Golding.

Stop 1

Mt Franklin (Lalgambuk | Lalgambook) & Mt Franklin Crater (Larnebarrumul; 'Nest of the Emu')

GPS -37.27073, 144.16639

The road into Larnebarrumul follows the path left by the lava flow when breaking through the rim. Mount Franklin and the surrounding areas were of considerable importance and significance to Aboriginal people.

Evidence found here indicates that frequent large ceremonial gatherings took place in the area. The crater was referred to as Lar-ne-barrumul, literally 'place of the emu', likely due to the shape of its nest-shaped crater.

Here you can take a walk from inside the crater up to the rim of the former volcano for views across the surrounding region.



Big Tree Guildford

Stop 2

'Big Tree' Guildford

GPS -37.14949, 144.1633

The Big Tree is one of the largest Red Gums in Victoria. It is 32 metres high; the age is estimated to be at least 500 years. Some massive branches on the north side of the tree have been grafted together.

It is listed as a tree of State significance on the National Trust's Register of Significant Trees of Victoria for its *"outstanding size, curious fusion of branches, as an outstanding example of the species and as an important landmark"*.

Stop 3

The Loddon Valley at Strangways

GPS -37.14372, 144.10364

At this point you are on the fertile Loddon River flats. This was a former, important Aboriginal highway.

Stop here for views of the river flats & opposite is the Guildford Plateau. The large quartz boulder is evidence of the massive size of the stream that once flowed through this area underneath the lava flow millions of years ago. There is public access to the river via the road easement.

Stop 4

The 'Majors Line'

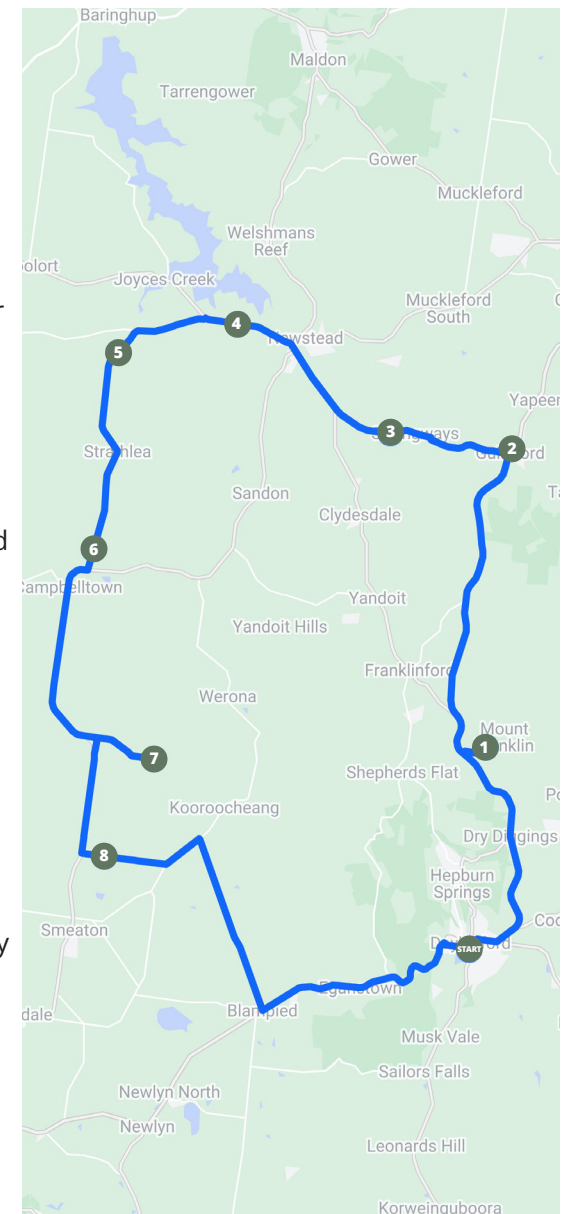
GPS -37.1012, 144.02931

You are now on the 'Major's Line', once marked by the wheel ruts of Major Mitchell's huge wagons as they headed back from Portland to Sydney in October 1836.

A lot is known about this area in 1840 because of the detailed diary records of George Robinson, Chief Protector of Aborigines (1839-1850) who came through here in Feb 1840. He was loaned a cart by John Hepburn and ventured down from Hepburn's Station to present day Newstead.

Below Newstead he described the massive pools as *'the fishponds on the plains'* on account of the huge Murray cod and Macquarie perch in the big water holes downstream of Newstead. In many places on this Feb 1840 journey, typically on the edge between the woodland and the plain, Robinson noted many *'bark huts of the natives'* and *'ovens'*.

Stop here for views across the countryside, north you will see Mount Tarrengower. The Loddon flows nearby into Cairn Curran Reservoir. Robinson came here with Edward Parker in Feb 1840 seeking out a site for the first Loddon Aboriginal Protectorate. It operated for less than a year from late 1840 at Neereman, 6km north of Baringhup, before being moved back to Franklinford.



Scan here to view and follow this map on Google Maps