

## Place Name SUMMARY (PNS) 4.1.2/04

### PARNANGGA

(last edited: 25/2/2013)

#### Abstract

*Parnangga* is the Kaurna name of a large campsite somewhere on the undulating land north of Christie Creek at Morphett Vale; probably at Morphett Vale East near the primary school.

The place-name was recorded in the 1840s by the first surveyors and attached to a property on Section 639. It was also known to Ramindjeri informants around that time.

The body of Ityamaitpinna ('King Rodney') was prepared here for burial around 1860.

It could mean either 'place of the autumn star' or 'place of the procession leader' (the latter referring to manhood rites), and it is not known which.

There is no known evidence for Tindale's unpublished theory of a *Parna* 'autumn star' dreaming trail; and his assertion that *parna* is the Pleiades (Seven Sisters) is unsupported.

<i>Coordinates</i>	-35.121523° Latitude, 138.528929° Longitude.
--------------------	--

#### Language Information

<i>Meaning</i>	'place of the autumn star' <u>or</u> 'place of the procession leader'.
<i>Etymology</i>	<i>parna</i> 'autumn star' <u>or</u> 'procession leader in manhood rites' + <i>-ngka</i> 'at'
<i>Notes</i>	The star <i>Parna</i> has not been identified.
<i>Language Family</i>	Thura-Yura: 'Kaurna'.
<i>KWP Former Spelling</i>	Parnangga
<i>KWP New Spelling 2010</i>	Parnangga
<i>Phonemic Spelling</i>	/parnangka/
<i>Pronunciation</i>	<b>Pa-nangga</b> "
<i>Pronunciation tips</i>	Stress the 1 <sup>st</sup> syllable; every 'a' as in Maori 'haka'; 'ngg' as in 'finger'.

## Main source evidence

Date	<b>1840</b>
Original source text	<p><b>"parna</b> 'star indicating the autumn';</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>parna</b> 'one of the two men placed at either side of the line which the natives form when about to perform circumcision'.</li> <li>- <b>parnatti</b> 'the Australian autumn, when the star Parna is seen'."</li> </ul>
Reference	Teichelmann and Schürmann 1840
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Mullawirraburka, Kadlitpinna, Ityamaitpinna, etc.

Date	<b>Sep 1840</b>
Original source text	<p><i>"[section] 639 [printed] 'W. Brown' [plus red pen hand-written] "<b>Purnunga</b>".</i></p> <p><i>- [printed across sections 609, 610, 611] "Alexander Anderson".</i></p>
Reference	map Arrowsmith, 'Country South of Adelaide', London 1/9/1840, 'Sold by J Wyld, Geographer to Her Majesty' (BRG 42/120/28, SLSA).
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kurna survey guides 1839 / first surveyors.

Date	<b>Dec 1840</b>
Original source text	"(Morphett Vale and Neighbourhood)... Murray and Greig, <b>Pirnunga</b> ".
Reference	Bennett, <i>SA Almanac</i> 1841, Country Directory: 125.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kurna survey guides 1839 / first surveyors.

Date	<b>Dec 1840</b>
Original source text	<i>"[section, District B] 639 – <b>Purnunga</b> – John Alleyne – Well, 18 feet deep, with 3 feet of water."</i>
Reference	'Statement of the Extent and Cultivation... for 1840', <i>British Parliamentary Papers: Colonies: Australia: Vol. 7: 116.</i>
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kurna survey guides 1839 / surveyors / landowners.

Date	<b>Dec 1841</b>
Original source text	"(Morphett and Hurtle Vales)... Alleyne, Messrs., <b>Pirnunga</b> ."
Reference	Bennett, <i>SA Almanac</i> 1842, Country Directory: 123.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kurna survey guides 1839 / surveyors / landowners.

Date	<b>1843</b>
Original source text	<b>“Parna-ñgga, Neighbourhood of Emu Hotel.”</b>
Reference	HAE Meyer, <i>Vocabulary of the... Aborigines of the Southern and Eastern portions of .... SA: 50.</i>
Informants credited	Encounter Bay (Ramindjeri) informants.
Informants uncredited	

Date	<b>Dec 1843</b>
Original source text	<b>“Anderson, A., section 609, Emu Hotel”.</b>
Reference	Cotter, <i>The SA Almanack and General Directory for 1844: 162.</i>
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	<b>1857</b>
Original source text	<b>“<i>parna</i> ‘a certain star indicating the autumn; one of the two men who are leading on the procession at the site of circumcision’; [Note: <i>parn</i> seems to express the idea of from, separating, dis-, and <i>tarn</i> the very opposite, see there.]”</b>
Reference	Teichelmann MS <i>Dictionary</i> 1857.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Mullawirraburka, Kadlitpinna, Ityamaitpinna, etc.

## Discussion: AUTUMN STAR PLACE?

### WHERE WAS PARNANGGA?

In September 1840 W Brown was mapped as the owner of section 639 on Christie Creek immediately west of the Main South Road crossing. On a royal presentation issue of this map, an enthusiastic servant of the SA Company added in neat red pen the name of the farm: ‘Purnunga’. By the end of the year Mr Brown had ceded both the ownership and the name first to Messrs Murray and Greig, then to John Alleyne, and there was already a “well, 18 feet deep, with 3 feet of water”.<sup>1</sup>

Immediately downstream the south side of the creek was “marshy” at the confluence with today’s ‘Emu Creek’, but 639 was notable as the river crossing for the “native track” of the Kurna people on their way south to the indispensable ford at the mouth of Onkaparinga Gorge. No doubt they had led the earlier newcomers on this path, so that during the first country survey in 1839 it was already the “present track” of the settlers, sometimes dignified as the “Present Road to Unkaparinga”. McLaren’s surveyors marked a “Proposed Road to Unkaparinga”, which followed it closely most of the way and remains as today’s Main South Road. But section 639 was not noted

for fresh water at the surface: no indication of it had got onto Counsel's artistic field maps, and Alleyne had to dig.<sup>2</sup>

About a mile north in the sheoak scrub on section 609, there had already been since May 1839 a cleared patch where a "rough picket fence" enclosed the grave of an unfortunate ex-convict from Tasmania. Employed by McLaren's team as a bullocky, and with rum rations in short supply that month, he had drunk too much of the department's "vile substitute", stalled his dray against a tree, wandered off, and perished in the scrub.<sup>3</sup> Sixteen months later Alexander Anderson owned this section as Alleyne's neighbour, and by the end of 1840 had opened the 'Emu Inn' there.

Over the range, Meyer's mission was being established at Encounter Bay among Aboriginal people who, though they spoke a completely different language, were frequent visitors to the Onkaparinga-Christie plains area as allies and trading partners of the Kurna. By 1843 Meyer had published his *Ramindjeri Vocabulary*, and it included two sets of place-names. The second of these, he wrote, contained

*several... names, especially of those in the vicinity of Adelaide, [which] belong to the Adelaide language, as their terminations show; and, indeed, are known only to a few individuals who have been in the habit of visiting the Adelaide tribe, and who can speak both languages".*

One of the list was "*Parna-ñgga, Neighbourhood of Emu Hotel*".<sup>4</sup>

To those Ramindjeri travellers, talking about land which was not their home but merely a place to pass through, 'Parna-ñgga' was probably a campsite, one of the relatively few familiar landmarks whose Kurna name they had learned during their visits into Kurna land. Before the 1840s they had visited this far northward only for special occasions, although traffic between Encounter Bay and the southern Kurna at Rapid Bay and Yankalilla had always been common.<sup>5</sup> For some other northern places they gave hybrid versions like 'Pattawillyangk' for *Patawilyangga*, combining Kurna morphemes with a Ramindjeri locative suffix *-angk*.

Meyer's gloss "neighbourhood of Emu Hotel" was designed for contemporary settlers who had no other named landmarks closer to this than 'Morphett's Vale' (which before the town was built would have meant much the same thing), or 'Horseshoe' and 'Onkaparinga' southward, or 'Hurtle Vale' (today's Old Reynella) northward. Meyer allows for a much larger area than section 609, and Tindale was justified in considering two sites about a mile away as candidates for *Parnangga*.

One was section 639 a mile south.<sup>6</sup>

The other was the big archaeological site which "dominates the whole of Morphett Vale (Cooper's 74 site)"<sup>7</sup> with camp relics both ancient and recent. The SA Museum is currently (August 2010) unable to find records of this either among its site cards or on its archaeology database.<sup>8</sup> I have

not been able to locate it from Tindale's published plan of one campsite; but on an unpublished map he marked it on sections 625, 626 and 640, on a northern tributary of Christie Creek immediately northwest of today's Morphett Vale East Primary School,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile southeast of the old Emu Hotel.<sup>9</sup> This *might* be the Morphett Vale campsite whose plan he published. It had a water source by the creek near it. But the plan contains inaccuracies, and he gives no precise location for it.<sup>10</sup> According to Tindale this site was the "Old camp at Morphett Vale where 'Rodney' died",<sup>11</sup> and "the last place inhabited by them before their final disruption, following the death of [Ivaritji's] father [Ityamaitpinna or 'Rodney']... It was here that her father's body was trussed, rubbed with red ochre, and smoked over a fire".<sup>12</sup> We can presume that it was Ivaritji who told him these things, though I have not yet found any original notes among his papers.

#### THE NAME:

The almanacs spelt this name 'Purnunga' and 'Pirnunga', which reflect variant pronunciations. Meyer and his Ramindjeri informants gave it in clear standard Kaurna form and spelling.

*Parna* is a known Kaurna word which, combined with the usual Locative *-ngga*, gives *Parnangga* 'at *Parna*'. It is the common pronoun 'they'; but 'in or at them' is a very unlikely meaning for a place-name. It is also 'a certain star indicating the autumn'; and also one of two men who led a procession during manhood rites: "Then a line is drawn, on one side of which stands a person called *Parna* (the name of the stars of autumn), and on the other one called *Tappo* (the name of a fly)".<sup>13</sup> Perhaps in that situation he was the Autumn Star. And *parn-* has a locational meaning as 'the very opposite' of *tarn* (?*tarna* 'back side'), but this is obscure and seems contradictory.

So *Parnangga* might mean 'autumn star place' or 'place of the procession leader', and conceivably (as a variant of *parnatti*) 'on this side'.

Teichelmann allowed that *Parna* could be 'stars', plural. There are no known Kaurna sources which identify the astronomical *Parna*, but we do know it had ecological resonances in Kaurna culture. *Parnatti* is "the Australian autumn, when the star *Parna* is seen". It is probably *Parna* that signals the beginning of April, *wādlaworngatti*, the "autumnal season when the natives commence building their huts before fallen trees (*wadlawornga*)".<sup>14</sup>

Tindale believed that *Parna* was the Pleiades (a star cluster also known as the Seven Sisters). About *Parnangga* he wrote, "This is one of the places linked with the mythological story of the Pleiades group of stars and their heliacal rising in the autumn of the year": i.e. the cluster emerging into view from the glare of the sun.<sup>15</sup> However this cannot be right, since the heliacal rising of Pleiades at the latitude of Adelaide is not until June; it is not visible here in autumn, and in any case, the Kaurna name for the Pleiades was *Mankamankarranna*. Neither can Venus or any other

planet be attached to a particular season, since their heliacal rising happens at different dates from year to year.<sup>16</sup>

If it referred to ‘star’ or ‘procession leader’ or a combination of both, *Parna* probably did have mythological resonances, though few traces are left around Adelaide: “We do not know the story behind Parnanga, but from what we know of Kurna cosmology, it is likely that Parnanga is the place from where the Ancestral Being Parna ascended into the heavens, or where he or she performed some other feat.”<sup>17</sup> It is possible there was a *Parna* songline, shared by both *Parnangga* and ‘Panalatinga’ near Reynella, and probably across neighbouring cultures and lands. But if so, we know nothing about it – except (perhaps!) in hints from Milerum as recorded by Tindale and mingled with his own speculations.

Tindale’s records, such as the card for ‘Pa:nganga’ above, include undeveloped references to a *Parna* Dreaming trail. This seems to have come from his own combination of several sources. One is the old Kurna information about the autumn star. Another is a version of the Ngurunduri story from Milerum, in which the wives became stars or planets. A third is the public name ‘Para-nanacooka River’ at Second Valley, which Milerum interpreted as “*Pana-ranakuko*”, and either he or Tindale related this to “the ‘Pa:na women (autumn star)”.<sup>18</sup> Tindale also associated this trail with “Baan Hill near Bordertown”.<sup>19</sup>

How much of this is from Milerum and how much is from Tindale’s desk-work? It’s hard to know because of the ambiguities in the way Tindale has recorded his information. Knowing how much speculation Tindale sometimes built upon small data, one is doubtful: see also my discussion in the management File of PNS 5.4.1/2 ‘Parananacooka’.

Some widespread public interpretations of the name are inaccurate. *Parna* does not mean either ‘autumn’ or ‘rain’ in Kurna. These ideas came from Tindale and his SA Museum colleague HM Cooper. Although Tindale *also* noted the correct gloss elsewhere, he wrote both errors at different times.<sup>20</sup> Cooper popularized ‘autumn rains’ in several editions of his *Australian Aboriginal Words*, 1949-1969. Probably they were misled by the Ngarrindjeri word *parnar* ‘rain’, which is irrelevant among Kurna-speaking people.

THE PLACE again:

*Parnangga* most probably referred to the big campsite at Morphett Vale East. Its water supply nearby, marked on Tindale’s plan of the campsite, was probably the site which Piesse called ‘Maundarilla’: *Mandarrilla* ‘place of the handle or [girdle] string’.<sup>21</sup>

Was Morphett Vale, or a place or places near it, perhaps a place for manhood rites? The possible meanings of *Mandarrilla* and another Morphett Vale place-name *Marndudla*<sup>22</sup> may also hint at men's and perhaps also women's business in the vicinity. But these guesses are very uncertain.

The old Emu Inn was demolished long ago. Ironically, the probable *Parnangga* site is closer to the new Emu Hotel (by the creek on the eastern side of the main road) than to any of the old sites on the western side with which its name was once associated.

.....

POSTSCRIPT: 'PORT PARNANGA':

Port Stanvac would have been Port Parnanga if the SA government had followed the advice of its own Nomenclature Committee in 1958.

The government wanted the name 'Port Stanvac', a classic piece of Orwellian 'New-speak' in honour of the Standard-Vacuum Oil Company whose refinery was to be built there. The story is told in sedate but pointed language in the Minutes Book of the committee:

"6/10/58. Present: HL Fisk, Chairman; Messrs AHH Davison, FR Martin [and] NB Tindale. The Chairman welcomed Mr Tindale to the Committee and referred to tasks of the Committee and explained the likely calls on the services of Mr Tindale.... CSO 494/58: Port Stanvac:... Mr Tindale submitted the following aborigine names 'parnanga', 'kawimane' {sic}, 'maundarilla', 'tainbarang'. It was resolved that Port Stanvac was not acceptable and that PORT PARNANGA be adopted (PARNANGA = 'place of much rain' – plural 'rain')".<sup>23</sup>

A loose sheet at the end of the book, scribbled with the same information, seems to indicate that Tindale left it to Cooper to get his suggestions minuted; which might also account for the incorrect gloss of 'Parnanga' as "*plural 'rain'*". In this situation Tindale was happy to suggest his own spellings of Aboriginal names from Port Noarlunga, Morphett Vale and Hurtle Vale, all 4 km or more from the refinery site.

The disagreement dragged on with Tindale overseas in USA. The committee tried again to veto the New-speak:

"5/6/59. CSO 494/58: Discussion on proposed refinery name – suggestions were names MAWSON. O'SULLIVAN. PARNANGA. KAWIMANE {sic}. MAUNRARILLA. TAINBARANG. Unanimous approval by Ctee for adoption of MAWSON, after Sir Douglas Mawson".<sup>24</sup>

But they were over-ruled by their employers.

.....

*End of Summary*



- <sup>1</sup> 'Country south of Adelaide', maps C 256 and C 274, SLSA; Bennett *SA Almanac* 1841, Country Directory: 125; 'Statement of the Extent and Cultivation... for 1840', *BPP: Colonies: Aust:* Vol. 7: 116.
- <sup>2</sup> Richard Counsel, Field Book 94: [105b] [108b], GNU; maps C 256 and C 274, SLSA.
- <sup>3</sup> James Hawker 1899, *Early Experiences in SA*, 1:40-1.
- <sup>4</sup> Meyer 1843, *Vocabulary*: 50.
- <sup>5</sup> See my history *Feet On the Fleurieu, Language On the Land* (forthcoming 2013).
- <sup>6</sup> Kaurna place-name card 589 'Pa:nangga'.
- <sup>7</sup> Tindale, 'Trip to Halletts Cove 27.7.1937' in AA338/1/35 'Notes on the Kaurna': 150a.
- <sup>8</sup> Keryn Walshe, email 7/8/10.
- <sup>9</sup> Annotated map Hd Noarlunga, AA 338/24/73.
- <sup>10</sup> Tindale 1974, *Aboriginal Tribes*: 55-6. cp. James Knight 2003, *Testing Tindale Tribes*, unpublished thesis, University of New England, NSW: 459-60.
- <sup>11</sup> Site plan in AA338/2/85 'Kaurna Data: Supp. Papers'.
- <sup>12</sup> Tindale 1974, *Aboriginal Tribes*: 55.
- <sup>13</sup> Teichelmann / JP Gell 1841, *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science*. v.1; reprinted *Roy. Geog. Soc. SA Proc.*, Vol. 7, 1904: 94n.
- <sup>14</sup> Teichelmann and Schürmann 1840, *Outlines of a Grammar...*
- <sup>15</sup> Kaurna place-name card 589 'Pa:nangga'.
- <sup>16</sup> Tony Beresford of SA Astronomical Society, p.c. 27/7/10.
- <sup>17</sup> Amery 2002, 'Weeding Out Spurious Toponyms...', in Hercus et al, *The Land Is a Map*: 167.
- <sup>18</sup> Tindale map, Hundred of Yankalilla, AA 338/24/101.
- <sup>19</sup> Kaurna place-name card 588/1 'Pa:naranakuko'.
- <sup>20</sup> See Kaurna Vocabulary card 'Pama' and map AA 338/24/73.
- <sup>21</sup> See PNS 4.1.2/3.
- <sup>22</sup> See PNS 4.1.2/2.
- <sup>23</sup> Nomenclature Committee Minutes Book: 125, GNU.
- <sup>24</sup> Nomenclature Committee Minutes Book: 126.